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MADRAS**

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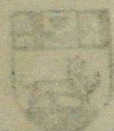
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P R E F A C E

This number of the Bulletin closely follows the principle mentioned in the previous issue, viz. to devote greater attention to Tamil Traditions and Tamil Culture and, at the same time, emphasise the bonds of the traditional cultures of the other regions of South and South-East Asia.

In view of the larger number of articles from scholars and, the length of the proceedings of the Seminars, some sections like 'Institutions, Scholars and Artists' had to be omitted. As in the previous issue, the authors were left free to use such diacritical marks as conformed to the system they followed, in view of the separate systems of transliteration in languages like, Tamil and Sanskrit.

The Institute is grateful to all scholars who have contributed a variety of articles on Culture and Traditions which appear in this issue. It had to hold over some valuable articles for considerations of space, for publication in the next issue.

The Government of Tamil Nadu and the Government of India have kindly continued the financing of the Institute and its activities. The University of Madras under its distinguished Vice-Chancellor, Padmashri Thiru N. D. Sundaravadivelu, continues to accommodate the Institute in its building providing it, with the concomitant amenities and, the full and hearty co-operation, of all its departments in the activities of the Institute, and also bears the cost of paper and printing of issues of the Bulletin. The Institute is grateful for all this valuable help, which has enabled it to continue to function and carry on its activities.

The Executive Committee has also given valuable assistance in running this Institute. Due to the increased costs of printing and paper, a cut in the distribution has become unavoidable. There has been delay at the printing stage of this Bulletin due to severe power cut resulting in its rather late publication.

Madras, }
18th June 1974. }

DR. K. K. PILLAY,
Director.

CONTENTS

	Pages
Preface	... iii
ARTICLES :	
Aesthetics in Pre-literate Societies	... 1
— <i>Dr. M. S. Gopalakrishnan</i>	
All About Yoga	... 17
— <i>Maharshi Suddhananda Bharathi</i>	
The Centre and Summit of Self-Surrender	... 45
— <i>Prof. R. N. Sampath</i>	
The Divine Lover of the Saṅgam	... 61
— <i>Thiru M. Sundar Raj</i>	
Buddhist System of Education in South India	... 73
— <i>Dr. S. Gurumurthy</i>	
Islam in Negapatam	... 85
— <i>Thiru M. Abdul Rahim</i>	
Endowments in Early Tamil Nādu	... 101
— <i>Thiru D. Natarajan</i>	
Origin and Development of Tamil Prose	... 119
— <i>Thiru A. R. Muthian</i>	
REPORTS OF SEMINARS :	
Humanism of the Saivaite Saints	... 141
Temples and Āgamas	... 185
OBITUARY NOTICE	... 231

ARTICLES

AESTHETICS IN PRE-LITERATE SOCIETIES

BY

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It is difficult to think of any culture without art or aesthetic expression. This does not mean that the various kinds of aesthetic expression are fully developed in every culture. But we find from this that human beings have developed from time immemorial the need for expressing certain things as a fundamental characteristic.

Art is part of society and a study of art is indispensable in a society for, it is one of the important means of achieving social integration. Without doubt, art belongs to the field of culture and artistic differences are to be taken as culturally determined differences. Art is universal and we cannot think of a society without some form of art. In fact art is a necessity. Gutorm Gjessing agrees with S. F. C. Northrop, "that for a properly nourished man, art is not a luxury, or an afterthought, or something in which a blank, empty, traditional ethics tells him he ought to believe because of goodness, beauty and truth in general; instead it is a concrete absolute and elementary necessity, as much the daily bread of his emotional and intellectual, spiritual nature, as sufficient scientifically balanced calories are the daily bread of what science indicates the physiological theoretic component of his nature to be."¹ Art exists because man has need for it. Its social function is obvious. We find testimony to the social function of art in an interesting way in modern states. According to Lenin, "art belongs to the people, and the great slogan for the Soviet painters from 1932, when the great majority had identified themselves with Stalinism, was: 'The art in the service of the people.'"² The

1. Gutorm Gjessing: p. 259.

2. *Ibid.* p. 260.

artist was expected to aid in the creation of a new social and political order. Art is always social. The artist is always part of the society and it should be noted that just as science, art also forms inter-related systems which are again related to the entire socio-cultural value system. In fact it is through the society that a painting or a poem or any other artistic work gets artistic recognition and value. Style is socially determined artistic form, because style is the artistic form, integrated with the socio-cultural system. The style in art helps to identify the socio-cultural groups. The style cannot be kept separate from aesthetic feeling because, in the words of Gutorm Gjessing, "the commonness in aesthetic feeling makes the style create social cohesion".³

Essentially all art is abstract. To explain more clearly we can say that pure art has as its object the universal, and therefore it is abstract. Any art is to be taken as signifying a selection and an abstraction, from the real things one is able to observe. Art and religion are similar to an extent. As in religion, in art the attempt is to see through the subjective observable reality, into the unconscious and objective and, in both religion and art there is to face with an unconscious social and cultural aspect. Really the social function of art is to be found out in its socially cohesive force. In rhythm, its effect is made impressionable when sensed both by the eye and the ear. The eye sees the actual dance while the ear hears the music. In a picture the effect is only visual. By its strong creative power art becomes something essential for religion. We find Hindu art essentially as a means to give life to the philosophical truths and form of religion. Even among the primitives, art has been viewed as a product of religion.

Broadly speaking art is of two kinds, that section comprising the Fine arts such as painting, drama, music, sculpture, etc. and the other consisting of all other human activities where the doing of the work gives satisfaction to the person who does it and the person who holds, sees and enjoys the same. In the latter category there is an 'aesthetic' component. Taking this factor

3. Gutorm Gjessing: 1956, p. 269.

as the basis, Art can be broadly defined as any activity wherein both the worker and the viewer get pleasure from it. From this point of view decorated baskets, painted pots and such other things as these can be said to be artistic. From the anthropologist's view Art can be said to mean, to quote Hoebel, "the overt expression of impulses in line, form, colour, rhythm and tone as in drawing, painting, sculpture, dance, music and literature. The impulses are both emotive and rational but feeling tone predominates over thought".⁴ This in effect, corresponds to our general definition of art. In fact even though man can do without art, yet he is not like that. He and his art are inseparable. This inter-relationship between man and art dates back to very ancient times. Even the so called primitive man had his own idea or conception of culture. However, what the primitive man viewed as art is quite different from what we view as art today.

The history of primitive art cannot be traced to a definite previous period. The earliest evidence we have got with regard to primitive art is to be found in the mineral pigments such as ochre collected by the Neanderthal man. According to Robert H. Lowie, "the birth of art is set back to the latter part of the Old Stone Age because, incised tools, ivory carvings and clever animal paintings date back to about 20,000 years ago. Actually art is still older."⁵

The term 'Primitive Art' is to be taken to mean the 'Art of the Primitives' and the term 'primitive' is to be applied to people of early times who do not come within the present day European civilisation or the early Oriental or Middle American Civilisations. There is a general impression that this primitive art or more clearly the art form of pre-literate people is crude in workmanship and not fully developed. But this is not a correct view to accept or follow. What we have to understand is that the art object of the primitive is something produced with insufficient means of expression. It is something unlike a modern work of art produced with more accuracy and sophistication.

4. Hoebel: 1958, p. 252.

5. Lowie: 1947, p. 177.

Hoebel who also defines Primitive Art as the art of the primitive people says, that it would not be fair to describe primitive art as crude, for 'some primitive forms of artistic expression are exceedingly complex.'⁶ Further explaining the primitive art, the same author goes on to say, "The art of primitive peoples runs a wide gamut from technical clumsiness to high skill, from child-like simplicity to confusing complexity, from naturalism and realism to conventionalised abstraction."⁷ This clearly gives us in a nutshell what primitive art exactly is. From the point of view of aesthetic expression an art can be said to be the art of a culturally primitive people without the art itself being primitive. In fact, maturity of understanding and sophistication in doing a thing can be found in the art of any tribe or society, if only we first understand what exactly is the culture of that tribe or society which produces the work of art. For them only, we can qualify ourselves to be capable to understand and appreciate that work of art. Referring to Navaho sand paintings, designs made of coloured vegetable and mineral materials against a background of bugskin and sand, Beals and Hoijer quote Kluckhohn thus: "These highly stylized paintings serve in somewhat the fashion of medieval glass painting to make visible and concrete, the holy figures and religious concepts of The People."⁸ The distinction which a person is able to make in a modern society between a professional artist and the ordinary worker is not perceivable in a primitive society. In the modern society the artist and his art are readily distinguishable whereas in a primitive society the master carpenter and the master sculptor are often one and the same individual. Further in primitive society everybody is an artist for the skills are very widely distributed among the people.

Before proceeding to discuss primitive art in its various aspects, we have to understand the nature of the art, and here we find a number of points that distinguish primitive art from modern art. When viewing modern art, three characteristics are taken into

6. Hoebel: 1958, p. 254.

7. *Ibid.* p. 254.

8. Beals and Hoijer: 1955, p. 646.

consideration to judge the same, viz., the technical skill with which the work is done, the form and the design with which the work is executed and the abstract general reasoning behind the work. As for primitive art it is more descriptive in the sense that it portrays a certain thing by being representative of it. It is expected to be understood by the person viewing it. And the persons who view the art are members of the artist's own community who have been brought up in the same mythological traditions. World over among the primitives every group possesses its own aesthetic traditions. One can understand a work of primitive art provided he understands what the work was intended to portray, for e.g., the religious unity of the group or the prestige of a single individual.

Primitive art is closely associated with craft. In other words the form of the work to be done, the materials used for it, the colour, etc. all these things also give a great value to the work of art. For example when we take decorative art we find that hard stone gives us better result than ordinary earthenware. We find Australians good at this, for they work out accurate rounds they figure out on stone with opossum teeth. The quality of the stone also has to be taken into consideration. The tools handled by the artist are also important, for e.g., the Mangbettu make superior carvers in Africa because of their one edged knives. In spite of his innate intelligence the artist's capability is limited by the implements and materials he uses. This shows that art and craft coexist. Where art thrives we will find that craft also has developed. When a craftsman has control over his technical means then he becomes an artist in the sense that he can imagine well in finishing a work of art with his artistic skill. But without technical capability he remains merely an ordinary artist. In West Africa, Melanesia and British Columbia the artist's genius is found in woodwork, while in California it is found in basketry work, and in the case of Pueblo Indians, in pottery. A fine example of the artist's imagination is to be found in the device adopted by the people of New Guinea for hanging utensils. Here the device consists of double hooks which are shaped like "inverted birds" heads which in turn merge in

the legs of a native who dominates the whole appliance".⁹ Art can never portray reality. To quote Lowie, "art is never naturalistic in the sense of being an exact copy of reality. The artist always differs from a photographer in giving values which nature does not supply, in stressing this or that part of his canvas, because either he individually or his school considers such emphasis essential."¹⁰ This principle applies to every field of art whether it be drama, painting or sculpture. Art is only representative in character. We find for example, among the Indians of British Columbia a beaver is shown merely by putting his tail or his incisors. Again we find in northern Spain single animals are painted by the artists of the Old Stone Age almost accurately but never we find a single picture where the distinct figures are combined.

One has to judge representative art by finding out and bearing in mind what the artist intended to make and how far he was capable to do it. The Greeks made their very best effort to picture up the live form as it actually appeared in any possible position but this was achieved by them not then and there, but through systematised and dedicated work over several hundred years. Only after 500 B.C. the Greeks were able to figure out and carve men as naturally as possible. People of different times were able to do certain things to the best of their understanding and capability. The Chinese were never able to draw correct human figures nor the European painters of the Middle Ages to bring reality to what they did. At best they were able to make suggestions about certain things. Realistic art can never be true to the fullest extent, the more so when we understand that it assumes various forms depending upon the various aspects of reality. When we consider any art we cannot forget the individual artist and his relationship to art. Even in a case where many people collaborate to do a thing, for e.g., a picture in effect, it is the putting in of the work of so many individuals, who in their capacity as individuals, have worked for the total result. We

9. Lowie: 1947, p. 181.

10. Lowie: 1947, p. 184.

have also to note the fact that the artist works in a social and cultural environment of which he is a member and really the competence of the artist lies in the awareness of his relationship to the social and cultural environment. The artist works for the gain of the society, not for his own, in the sense that he has often to express something, an idea or emotion that he tries to convey to others who see his work of art.

We have said earlier that art can never be naturalistic in the true sense. Therefore realism has to be understood as a relative term and when we refer to a particular style as realistic, what we mean is, that to a possible understandable extent it pictures something real. A particular form of realism prevalent in different parts of the world is pictography. This is not something which we can call art but something related to art and its main purpose is to put something in evidence or to convey or communicate something. To quote an example, "Plains Indian men wore or displayed pictures of their deeds on shirts or robes".¹¹ A pictograph like this followed an established custom like the one found in art. The symbolic embroideries on moccasins showed ideas quite similar to those communicated by the pictograph. We find in the palace of the king of Dahomey in West Africa, walls decorated with coloured clay bas-reliefs which narrated events in his or a predecessor's reign. Again to quote the same author Lowie, "Very commonly a ruler had himself represented symbolically as a powerful animal—as a buffalo, shark, elephant or fabulous giant bird with a beak so strong and powerful that it could seize anyone".¹² The pictographs should not be confused with narrative drawings, in that the pictographs do not necessarily contain spoken words, syllables or sounds, but may be demonstrated by some similar utterances. For example, the Plains Indians represent a house or dwelling by the pictograph A. This is different from the graphic symbol house which means one spoken word definitely and no other. The Saoras in Orissa practise pictography to a very high imaginative

11. Lowie: 1947, p. 188.

12. Lowie: 1947, p. 189.

level compared to other Indian tribes. These Saora pictures are called 'Ittals' and they are made in order to honour the dead people, to ward off disease, to have more fertility and also to celebrate certain festivals. Any person who knows how to make an 'ittal' can do it but one who achieves perfection in this through dedication is called 'Ittalmaran' or 'picture man'. The 'Kuranmaran' of the tribe who are the regular shamans are famous in this, which they combine with their profession. Generally the Saora 'ittal' is a house which is exhibited in the form of a square, circle or rectangle. The Saoras have both kinds of 'ittals'—those involving elaborate detail and those which are characteristically simple and pleasing.

Though it can be presumed that writing originated from drawing, yet the real phonetic writing had a beginning in about 1000 B. C. when the Phoenicians learnt to write from the Egyptians and, from the Phoenicians the Greeks borrowed it. What was developed by the Greeks was followed by the Romans and so it spread. World over the various systems of writing originated from the Egyptians, the Babylonians and the Chinese. Going back to the Bronze Age they mark an epoch in human civilisation. They were much more than a means of communication because they helped acquaintances to converse. "Writing meant that any fruitful idea instead of having to be transmitted by word of mouth could be conveyed to future ages by a more precise and safer method and to a far larger circle of people in both present and future".¹³

In the development of human culture, writing marks an important landmark. The art of writing was very difficult to understand. But as it developed, it partially performed the task of being a magico-religious service. Extensive trade transactions in the Near East helped writing to spread. In fact writing is one of the very important inventions which has developed from the early times to the present day.

13. Lowie: 1947, p. 193.

Literature forms part of art. Language which is the medium of literature is used by everybody to communicate with others. The use of speech for [giving joy to people creates literature. Primitive literature is full of words used for vocabulary and every community has its own set of words and phrases. Every community or group has its own set phrases also. For example, "in Crow Prayer the seasons are described as 'when the leaves turn yellow', 'when the cherries are ripe', and so forth."¹⁴ The primitive 'word artist' has good stock of word power. This he uses with originality. For the sake of literary effect certain words and phrases are repeated and this is a device adopted in many primitive communities. The repeating of lines as they are or with certain changes called parallelism is to be found in Navaho and Eskimo poetry. This repetition provides a built up structure and also results in rhythmic effect. Changing phrase without the change of thought is adopted by the Hawaii people. 'Linger not, delay not your going' is a typical example. The different literary types such as sonnets, odes, lyrics, essays, etc., are also to be found in the literature of old world people. In Africa, an orator puts forth his case with enough number of adages. We find riddles in Australia and these occur also in Polynesian romances. We find a number of political stories in the literature of Europe and Asiatic tribes.

We find among the people of South Africa many of the literary types prevalent such as songs extolling the qualities of the king, poems, dirges, riddles and proverbs and also many plays and religious songs. Many varieties of folk tales are also to be found, for e.g., the Eskimo songs of travel and war. Dramatic element is also not lost sight of among the tribals and we find that scenery is given much importance by the Tongans. One fact we have to note is that literature is associated or linked up with culture. We find many poems eulogising the king, praising the chief of the tribe, singing the qualities of a patron, etc. In effect we find that literature was influenced by the social life of the time and also by political and other considerations. Profes-

14. *Ibid.* p. 194.

sional people in these lines came into existence and the whole thing became complex.

In the field of drama the general opinion is that drama is based on religious aspects. But the distinction between religious forms and other material forms is not clear. We find that opera is the oldest form of drama consisting in its simplest form of a single player who portrays different roles or actions on the spot out of his imagination. A noticeable feature is that the group of people who witness the performance, joins with the solo performer in repeating the vocal utterances. A good example of this type is to be found among the African Pygmies. The story is generally about love and hunting. In the culture of food-gatherers we find regular dramatic performances wherein the content of the drama is generally animals fighting with one another or the hunting of animals by human beings. A typical example of this is the Kangaroo play performed by the South Aranta of Australia. Another type of drama found widely among all food gathering people is, that based on the expression of sounds and this is mainly religious in its content. Conceiving god as a spirit unseen, the earliest food gatherers made god 'heard' only and did not make him appear on the stage. God was heard by producing sound similar to that of thunder. In fact the early instruments of the primitives such as the bull-roarers small, flat, conical slabs of wood, bone or stone which produced songs through vibrations on a string, imitated the voice of god and other ancestors and different kinds of spirit. The notable instruments are the wooden trumpet of the African Pygmies and the Pot instrument of the Ituri Pygmies. Any instrument which can produce rhythmic sound is used by the primitives.

The mask plays an important part in primitive drama and we find entire disguise of the body with feather, twigs, bark strips, animal skulls, etc., at later stages. The mask is believed to contain some special power and is produced by people in secret places and the people who do it are specially initiated for this purpose.

The primitive people enacted dramas for various purposes, for entertainment, for emphasising certain religious rituals, and also for certain magical purposes. The play always emphasised a purpose whether it be initiation of boys and girls in tribal lore or to bring success in hunting expeditions or increase the fertility of game animals. Of particular relevance to note is the spirit dramas enacted by the Eskimo shamans to get rid of evil spirits. Drama is made much use of also by the primitive agriculturists for various purposes connected with agriculture.

Closely related to drama but quite varied from other pictorial and decorative art forms, is music. "Music is not only a universal human achievement, but one which man does not share with any animal."¹⁵ In establishing the social and individual standard of what is welcome and approved in any society music has a great deal to do in the sense that it exhibits in clear terms the effect of cultural traditions. Even though, to the person brought up in European tradition the music of pre-literate people may seem to be something ununderstandable and meaningless with a mere jumble of words, really it is not so. No doubt rhythm has predominance in primitive music with a number of percussion instruments and there is no harmony also. But we find well laid-down patterns in the music of the primitive people. The primitive people also have well established principles for the phrasing of the songs and for the demarcation of clear and established intervals. Further we find that certain patterns and musical intervals exist in common for many tribes.

Primitive people compose songs for various reasons. Mothers compose for the pleasure of their children; young for the pleasure of their sweethearts while wandering in their areas at night; many learned for sacred purposes such as to invoke supernatural powers. Songs are composed on ceremonial occasions also. Further songs are sung when a party starts for war or returns after the successful completion of the war. We have also funeral songs. A feature of importance in the music of the primitives is the abun-

15. Lowie: 1947, p. 203.

dance of different kinds of instruments such as the idiophones, aerophones, membranophones and chordophones. These different instruments differ from one another depending upon their vibrations. Even before 2000 B.C. the Egyptians developed the bow-harp and later they developed another instrument called the lyre which is made using both skin and strings. The natives of Australia and New Guinea produced a deafening sound by whirling an instrument called bull-roarer to imitate the voice of spirits. This was done when boys were raised to the status of adults. We find a similar custom among the African and South American tribes. The tambourine is held by the Siberians as a venerable instrument. In Aztec dances and ceremonies, they used an instrument called tomtom. When considering the variety and richness of instruments among the primitives we find the Negroes excel all others and it is said that kings of Uganda and other countries had big orchestral groups.

The primitives hold dance as an overt expression and exercise in delight. The primitive dance is an exhibition of delicate grace and at the same time of physical energy. When both men and women participate for social and religious purposes dance assumes much importance. The style of dance differs from tribe to tribe and can be viewed from various angles religious, aesthetic, recreational, etc. Among the Africans we find solo dances by the king before his subjects. In Northern Siberia, men and women dance together with arms clasped with one another in a circle without definite pattern or principle. This dance continues to the point of exhaustion. Australians regard dance as a social amusement and their dances are mainly operas and ballets. Dancing is the important entertainment for the Shilluk and he practises daily in the evening to become an adept in it. Men and women dance together before an audience.

A point of importance to note while considering art in any society, whether modern or pre-literate, is the conventions and symbols adopted by the artist to communicate his own ideas and emotions. When a thing is represented by symbols or signs then it is called symbolism. A symbol represents something and is closely identified with the symbolised object. Symbols are gene-

rally overt; they must be seen, heard, felt or smelt. They make abstractions into delimited objects. Words are vocal symbols. Symbolism is different from natural representation; and stylisation and conventionalisation are intermediate forms. In conventionalised art, the process of selection and elimination of detail extends to such an extent that even though the representation possesses an appreciable similarity to the original object it becomes more symbolic than real. Meaningless geometric decorative design is not much in existence among the primitive people. Their art shows their concern for symbolism. The meanings of the symbols, however, are standardised according to the person and the culture.

According to an early study by Kroeber among the Arapaho, the bead work patterns had symbolic values. To quote Hoebel, "Certain patterns had multiple symbolic values however variously interpreted in accordance with their context and the intent of the bead worker. The simple diamond, listed as a star symbol, can also stand for a hand, an eye, a lake, a person, life, a buffalo wallow, or the interior of a tipi. The personal factor loomed so large in symbolism that conscientious Indians refuse to interpret ornamentation on another person's article on the ground that they do not know the artist's intent".¹⁶

Modern writers on history and critics of art have not found anything appreciable or valuable in the art of the pre-literate people and for them primitive art is only an outward manifestation of primitive man's daily life. There is nothing like art for art's sake in primitive culture. Every act of the primitive man is for his day to day living and in this sense, art is to be regarded as utilitarian. It is also more certain from the point of view of magic and religion. However, as we have remarked earlier, primitive art is not really something crude and unappreciable. Modern mind is not able to accept and understand primitive art because there are many reasons for this. The foremost is that primitive art deals with something based on abstract general reasoning; we can even say that it deals with supernatu-

16. Hoebel : 1949, pp. 270-271.

ral things. A second reason which in fact goes with the first is, the abundance of non-naturalistic representation in primitive art. The modern art critic views the art of the pre-literate community with a certain amount of superiority which prejudices his vision for a proper appreciation of the primitive art.

The view that primitive art is based more on magic and religion than anything else has been disputed by many anthropologists. Ruth Benedict is of the view that there is ample evidence to show that the primitives have some form of difference between art and religion. She says that in South West America among the Pueblos art products connected with rituals are quite different compared to their textiles and pottery. The purpose of primitive art is both secular as well as religious. There is utility as well as artistic excellence in primitive art.

To conclude with E. R. Leach: "Everywhere there is some intimate relationship between ethics and aesthetics and, since ethical systems vary from one society to another, so aesthetic systems must vary too. The aesthetic values of any primitive work of art are only to be understood in the light of a knowledge of what is thought to be right or wrong or socially desirable by the artist concerned and the patrons who employed him".¹⁷

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17. Leach : 1954, pp. 37, 38.

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ALL ABOUT YOGA

Kaviyogi Maharshi SHUDDHANANDA BHARATHI

I. LIGHTS ON MASTERS

This is Yoga.

This is the Yoga pure and true
Sans I or he or she or you
It is to see in the Cosmic whole
All in the self and self in all.
The Yogin is a fount of bliss
Upon the dizzy height of His.
His touch opens receptive souls
To life divine and psychic thrills
His flaming dreams take forms of light
His gentle smile kindles abright
The hope of a happy golden dawn,
The joy of life in New Eden,
He does not live for fame and name.
His songs breathe out a new perfume.
To transform earth-life is his theme
His home is heart and his name Aum !

Among Modern Yogins.

“Be a yogin ! The yogin is more than a man of askesis (tapaswin), more than the man of Knowledge. Live and act as a Yogin in Divine consciousness”.

This is the clarion call of Sri Krishna to humanity through the medium of the heroic Arjuna.

Sri Aurobindo

Sri Aurobindo the modern Superman rediscovered the virtue of yoga as the dynamic force of the living harmony of existence. He declared : “Live in yoga with the Divine, a life divine.” He maintained with Sri Krishna that the entire range of existence is

Yoga and Yoga is skill in work; it is the love dedicated to the Heart's beloved; it is the light of Knowledge which enables us to live in conscious communion with the Divine. "Yogi is myself *Yogi tu atmaiva*," says Sri Krishna.

Ramana Maharshi

Ramana Maharshi who lived in Sahaja Samādhi all his life had one significant message for humanity "Live conscious of the Supernal 'I' speaking in the heart "I am I am here; to establish oneself in the I—heart is yoga, yoga of love or light".

I had the unique delight of spending thirty years in Yogic silence, steeped in Mahāturya Samādhi at the feet of these two great Yogins of our days. I have recorded my intuitions in the Yoga for All, Secrets of Yoga, Gospel of Perfect Life, Pilgrim Soul and Bharata Shakti which these two spiritual titans appreciated and blessed.

Mahatma Gandhiji

I was in close contact with Mahatma Gandhi, the ideal *Karmayogin*, who dedicated his life to Truth and Ahimsa and won our freedom fight by his moral-force. He once told me the essence of the Rāmāyana and the Gīta in one memorable dictum—*Bolo Ram Karo Kam*. Say Ram and do work.

Sai Baba of Shirdi

Sai Baba of Shirdi when I saw with Lokamānya Tilak after attending the Lucknow Congress in 1916 declared "Allah Malik-Chuproho—Allah achcha Karega". The Almighty God is our Lord, our Master; His will is done. He will do good. Let the ego-you, keep quiet and silent consecrating everything to His will." This is Yoga, complete surrender to the Divine Will. I lived at his feet for five months and learnt the supreme secret of Surrender to the Divine. Once he touched my heart and said: "He is Here - Be aware of Him with every heart beat, That is Yoga.

A Psychic Science

Maharshi Pūrṇānanda taught me the Gīta and Patanjali's Rāja Yoga and steeped me in meditation. He taught me Āsans,

Prāṇāyāma mantra, Japam and meditation in the heart centre. It was a mystic Himalayan Sage-Jñāna Siddha—who was my real Guru in initiating me in the Yoga of the Vēdic Rishis.

Yoga is a psychic science, a dynamic life in communion with the Divine that is the heart and soul in us. It is to live in touch, union, contact and psychic communion with the inner Divine to begin with and, progressively, it is to attain atonement with the Self-Divine. It is consummation of the human in the Divine. It is neither ascetic bareness nor pragmatic denial. It is not other-worldly escapism; nor life-extinction. “I live in wealth and royal luxury” said *Janaka* “but my mind is not attached to them”. Jñāna Siddha taught me how to live and move in the world like sun and moon, spontaneously doing our duty in detached peace.

Sama Yoga

Epictetus affirmed “All philosophy lies in two words *sustain* and *abstain*”. We must abstain from the restless mind and lower nature and sustain life in tune with the Self-Bliss that is our truth. Jñāna Siddha taught me all systems of yoga but maintained that they are limbs of the *Sama yoga* that enables one to live conscious of the unique ONE - the One that thinks in the brain, feels in the heart, sees through the eyes, hears in the ears and acts through the motor and sensory nerves. The Divine self in us lives in a fort of five encirclements—gross body, vital-nervous body (*Vīrya sharīra*), subtle mental body (*sūkshma Sarīram*), gnostic body (*Vijnāna*) and bliss body (*ānandamaya Kosham*). He is Truth consciousness-bliss. So to realise the central self-Divine, one has to transcend and surpass these encirclements by prescribed *sādhana*s—Hatha yoga for the physical body, Prāṇāyāma for the vital body, meditation for the mental body, self-enquiry for the supramental plane and self-aware delight in the Bliss plane and *mahā-Samādhi* or *Sahaja Samādhi* in the plane of *chit* and *sat*. The *Ātma* is *Sat+Chit* Consciousness—Truth. Beyond these seven planes—Physical, vital, mental, supramental, bliss, consciousness and Truth, I probed into the inner psychic realms and discovered the higher planes of purity, Peace, Power and Aumkar. The Supreme Light that enlightens all these planes flashes from

the Sahasrāra above when the inner communion is intact. A powerful Guru switches the current of Grace-Light which lights all planes.

Mūla Yogin

This is the process of the Mūla yogi who gave us the unique book of Yoga—The *Tirumandiram* which I have elaborated in Tamil and English. The Mūla Yogin says: “One can’t discern God even after many many years of Yoga. One must open inner communion and inner vision. Then he can find out the intrinsic peace which receives and reflects the Light Divine.” The Upanishad says: “Control of the senses and stilling of the mind is called Yoga.” But *manō-nāsh* or annihilating the mind alone will not do. Body, vital and the mind are lower planes. Sat-chit Ananda are higher planes. Vijñāna or the super mind is the link plane. How to transcend all these planes? Jñāna Siddha said: “They are the seven planes of our beings. Hatha yoga, Rāja yoga, Karma yoga, Bhakthi yoga, Jñāna yoga, Mantra yoga and Tantra yoga are the seven yogas that can conquer these planes. But these yogas are not separate and elusive. They are like body, nerve, brain, brawn, heart and soul of one Yoga-Sama yoga. Equal-vision is yoga-‘*Samatvam yoga uchyatē*’, says the Gīta. “Go ensemble—be equal minded—be equal-visioned in the heart,” commands the ancient Veda. Lord Māhavīra organised a *Samava-Saranam*, and seated around him savants, sages and devotees even animals and made them self-conscious. Know the one and you will be aware of the All—This is the yoga that can unite all in soul’s harmony.

Jñāna Siddha

A word about the Jñāna Siddha is relevant here for it was he that mapped out my existence and guided me impersonally from within. Such an inner guidance comes to Vidhya Kala, or self-knowers according to Siddhānta. I was with him in my last birth doing tapasya on the banks of the Ganges at Vāranasi. He taught me the secrets of yoga and died requesting me to record them for the good of humanity. A sudden flood swept off my body and this birth came for recording in yogic silence, inner intuitions. The same Jñāna Siddha came early in my boy-

hood to awaken me and activise my self-consciousness. It happened like this :

My soul was not satisfied with books and teachers. The class room was a prison to me. I often spent my hours in composing poems on God. I lisped in numbers with the inner Divine. My teacher one day snatched away my poems, took to task my craze for poetry and frapped me with his cane. I ran and ran like Thompson's Hound until I reached a mango grove, a mile off. I sat in contemplation on a bridge and saw my care-worn face reflected in the lake below. The Hamletan pessimism of "to be or not to be" possessed me. I stood up and was about to jump into the lake when a strong hand dragged me into the grove. My mouth would not open before that awful personality so tall, strong, luminous and lovely. I sobbed muttering "Why should I live in this miserable world. Home and school disgust me". "My child", he said, "you are mine. You have a mission. I will give you force to fulfil it. Be quiet and self-composed. Here is your secret". I felt a new peace and joy-thrill as he passed his magnet-like fingers across my spinals and often patted my chest saying "Jago Jago, uto, uto - Wake up wake up and stand up. He spoke Hindi and fortunately I knew Hindi fairly well. He initiated me in inner prānāyām, in Jayāsan, in Prāna mudra, in deep meditation, in introspection and at last in *manō-nāsh* and *sahaja Samādhi*. He trained me for six months. He impressed me so deeply that I could not forget him all my life. He gave me twelve instructions and promised to guide me from within. He chalked out my pilgrim life which went from Saint to Saint until I settled in inner Silence. I once met him near Kēdārinath. He led me to the Agasthya Guha five miles off and there I was able to finish the Sādhana Kandam of my life work Bharata Shakti. He gave me for food, the green lichen covering mountain rocks and taught me how to control hunger, thirst and sleep and remain conscious of the Self-Divine. Even today I get his guidance within and his sunlike smile shows me light. His teachings have touched my heart and influenced my life. I shall give a few of his teachings here for they form the bases of *traditional yoga*.

TWELVE TEACHINGS

1. Keep the body and nerves strong and fit by easy Āsans and inner cleaning.
2. Do inner Prānāyām and Sabda prānāyām after doing rhythmic breathing.
3. Take pure food, pure boiled water. Prefer fruits, nuts and leaves more than cooked stuffs. Earn your livelihood and never beg or depend on others. Gain need and shun greed.
4. Observe silence and solitude. Then the soul will speak to you. If needed, speak to the point and keep to yourself away from crowds.
5. Read and contemplate on inspired works. Cultivate thought force. Write down intuitions and pass them on to mankind. Your *book* must come from inner *look*. Bharata Shakti is your life work.
6. Seek the company of great sages like Sai Ram, Ramana and Aurobindo but be yourself. Rise above personalities to the impersonal Self that is in your heart. Be God-centric always.
7. Read but think more and write more. Let intuitions flow through your pen. Be silent and alone when you write.
8. Think in terms of one God, one better world and one transformed humanity and not in terms of names, forms, images and personalities. Off with petty-minded casteism, religionism, and separate egoism. *Religion divides; Yoga unites.* Live in Yoga with the Inner One.
9. Fight against hostile forces by prayer and silent meditation and Japam. The Divine will shall prevail and you will find guidance in inner peace and equipoise.
10. Do not waste time in listening to demented bagatells of unripe minds and half-baked effusions. Prefer silent self-communion before realised Sages, more than wordy discussions of book-worms. Avoid Mr. Ego and Madame Vanity.

11. Observe the routine of Five Āsans, Inner prānāyām, sun bath, water bath, pure food, pure water, meditation at dawn and dusk and midnight, mantra Japam, holy study and writing, dedicated work (writing for you). Cultivate God-love; go deep into the heart for union with Divine. Develop cosmic-consciousness and Cosmic energy (Kundalini). Regard women as "Mother Shakti" like Ramakrishna. Serve Saints and Sages. To write their life and teachings is a Sadhana for you.

12. Call on me, "*Aum Jaya Aum. Shuddha Shakti Aum*" in all difficulties. Do continuously with every breath, your Japam Shuddha Shakti Aum Sivam. You will see and feel my Guidance from within.

Be Alive to the Eternal - I

Yes, the Siddha kept his word. His Grace opened my heart like the rays of the rising sun which opens lotus buds to exude honey and spread aroma. "Be happy like a moon-kissed lily and sun-kissed lotus and a Grace-kissed soul". Yoga is to feel in the soul the embracing unity of God", He used to say. One day He led me to the grave yard and said: "This is the end of man, the body. His bones are scattered here. Where is the soul? Be dead to the flesh and alive to the self." Read "Experiences of a Pilgrim Soul" for more details and now I turn to the traditional Yoga got from the Vēdas, Upanishads, Gīta, Patanjali and modern Sages who preserved the traditions. Many Yogins have disappeared into the limbo of oblivion. I have seen more than hundred Yogins and read about thirty Yogins. St. Francis, who perspired the blood of Crucifixion, St. Theresa the seraphic virgin, Attar Hafis, Byozid and Jalaludin Rumi, all sufi Saints; Buddha, Milarepa, Bodhi-dhamma, Leo-t-se the Chinese sage, Kabīr, Mira, Tulsidās, Sūrdās, Tukāram, Rāmadās, Chaitanya, Vallaba, Rāmanuja, Mādva, Shankara, Patanjali, Nammālvār, Āndāl, Appar, Jnānasambandar, Sundarar, Manikka Vāchakar, Tirumūlar, Tayumānar, Pattinattār, Rāma-lingam, Rāmakrishna, Vivēkānanda, Dayānanda, Sri Aurobindo, Ramana Maharshi, Sāi Rām, Siddharuda, Meherbāba, Sivānanda — these are some of the prominent personalities that stand foremost in the galaxy of graceful saints and yogins. I am making a synthesis of their teachings and Sadhanas in the following pages.

II. TATVAS

There are two distinct parts in our being: the one is Matter otherwise called Nature, Prakriti, Field or Kshētra. The other is the Spirit or the pure Soul. Matter is of twenty-four Tatvas or primary substances, that go to form the mechanism of the body—gross and subtle.

They are as follows:

1. Five elements: ether, air, fire, water, earth.
2. Five rudiments: Sound, touch, form, taste, smell.
3. Five organs of feeling: body, tongue, eye, nose, ear.
4. Five organs of act: hands, feet, mouth, bowels, pudenda.
5. Four inner instruments: Mind, intellect, chitta, egotism.

These twenty-four tatvas are Nature—primary substances (tatvam) that constitute the gross and the subtle human body. This is Prakrit or Nature body. Imagine a liṅgam. It has two triangles the lower triangle contains all these 24 tatvas and they begin with the gross body of elements and senses and go up subtler and subtler to unite with the widening upper triangle. It is the realm of the Spirit. It consists of the seven Vidhya Tatvas or conditional elements. Time (Kāla), destiny (Niyati), power (Kala) limited knowledge (Vidhya), desire (Rāga) and Purusha (the Individual) and Māya the deluding and multiplying force. These seven form the mixed primary elements (Shuddha—Shuddha tatvas).

Upon this wide triangle is installed *Siva Tatvas*. They are the five principles of divinity in man—the pure Gnosis (Shudda Vidhya), Supremacy (Iswaram), the balance of the forces of knowledge and action (Sādākyam), Shakti the cosmic Energy and Shivam the Bliss Eternal. The liṅgam set upon the Vidhya tatvas looks like the rising sun. St. Manikka Vāchakar points these tatvas in the Siva liṅgam in his swan songs before he vanished into the bursting splendour of divine effulgence declaring. “This is the meaning of the word of God—Tiruvāchakam. “O Light, Thou has lit my being and consumed me so that my thought is Thine, my eyes see Thee alone, my tongue sings only Thy glory, and my heart

feels Thy Presence everywhere. To-day, Thou has risen in my heart like a Sun (இன்றெனக்கருளி இருள்கடிந்து உள்ளத்து எழுகின்ற ஞாயிறே போன்று) to dispel my ignorance. My ego form has been effaced becoming subtler and subtler and I have become one with Thee. O Unique One in the multiplicity of beings, immutable Transcendence, Thee alone I behold as the All everywhere in and out. Hail eternal bliss."

This is the Sādhana and Siddhi, the practice and perfection of Yoga—to merge Jiva, the Soul in Siva or the Divine in the human. The Gīta speaks of these three principles as Prakrit, Purusha and Purushothama. Saiva Siddhānta and Tirumandiram clearly bring out the way in which Jiva melts into the Light of Siva by fervent prayer and absolute surrender. St. Appar says: "He can be comprehended only by the inner eye of Grace opened in the fervent devotee!" The whole world is the temple of God. All souls form His body, desireless Service is worship, the joy of seeing all happy is mukti or spiritual freedom.

Aalayam lokam akhilam
Rupam Sarvaatma sankulam
Nishkāma Sēva satpūja
Mukti Sarvātma maṅgalam."

Purity, Unity, and Divinity are the three aims of all Yoga Sādhana. Hatha Yoga and Rāja Yoga vouchsafe purity, Karma and Bhakti Yogas unity, Jñāna and Tantra Yogas accord divinity to human existence. Any religion or yoga worth its name must accord purity, unity and divinity. A copper vessel needs scrubbing before it shines in its natural colour. Even so the mind must be purified, the body too, before the being is prepared for meditation.

III. SĀDHANAS OF PURITY AND ENERGY

Behold a watch. It tick-ticks a message for you. It declares, "I am not the hands, not the wheels and the hair-spring. I march and show time on the dial only with the force granted to me by some one who turns the key. That force is the Cosmic energy awakened in man and woman by turning the mind

with *Abyāsa* and *Vairāghya*, in discipline and dispassion. The watch itself suggests a discipline—Watch has five letters and they say (W), watch your Word; (A) watch your Action. (T) watch your Thought, (C) watch your Character (H) watch your Heart. Inner watching is otherwise called introspection. Siddhānta prescribes four sādhanas: *Charya* (good conduct), *Kriya* (act of worshipping god), *Yoga* (psychic unity) and *Jñāna* (Knowledge or awareness of Siva in the Jiva). The Jiva-Siva atonement is experienced when the Jiva is free from the bonds of ego, illusion and karma. This is represented by *chinmudra* in which the thumb representing Siva touches the forefinger representing Jiva. Jiva surrenders to Siva. The three other fingers represent freedom from the bondages of ego, illusion and Karma.

IV. VĒDĀNTA VICHĀRA

Vēdānta prescribes four sādhanas for attaining purity, peace, bliss and liberation:

- (1) Discrimination between the Real and the unreal. (Nityānitya Vivēka Vichāranam).
- (2) Aversion to the desire of enjoying fruits of deeds here and there. (Iha amutra phala bhoga virāgam).
- (3) Yearning and aspiration for freedom.
- (4) Cultivation of Six fundamental virtues :
 - (a) Sama - Steady mind, mental control
 - (b) Dama - Sense-control
 - (c) Uparati - Withdrawal from attachments
 - (d) Titiksha - Forbearance, endurance
 - (e) Shraddha - Deep faith and sincerity
 - (f) Samādana : Inner tranquility

The Vēdāntin takes to Vichāramārga and launches the enquiry or self-quest of Who am I, and traces the source of Thought. Sankara to Ramana, all Vēdāntins have advocated strongly the *Vichāramārga* for the realisation of the Self that one is. "*Nāham* = I am not the body. *Koham*: then who am I? *Soham* I am He, the pure Atman in the heart". This is the formula of

Self enquiry. The whys and wherefores of the world and the riddles of existence are quickly solved by Self enquiry.

The mind is nullified in the process and the yogi attains the Brahman that he is. Ramana says: "He is the supreme yogi who has attained *made nil the mind, Nashta-manas-utkrishtha* yogin." St. Vidhyāranya lights fifteen lamps to give us the light of self-effulgence. He throws lights on Tatvas or fundamentals, five elements, five psychic planes (Pancha Koshas), on duality, introspection, inner stability on the witnessing soul (kūtasta), on Dhyāna, on the World-play (Nāṭaka Dīpam), on Divine Bliss, Self-bliss, absolute monism, Vidyānandam (spiritual lore), on sensual pleasure and at last on intrinsic integral bliss. "Off with the thoughts of the non-self; meditate upon the Central Self which is Bliss, your reality. That alone will accord you liberation from cares and anxieties of mundaneness—*Anāṭma chintanam, tyaktva, chintaya*".

Ātmanam anandam

But there are so many inner elements around the Ātman. You cannot eat the coconut as it falls from the tree. You have to peel out the outer coverings, the fibres, break the hard shell and reach the white kernel and the sweet water. The body, the nerves, the senses, the mind and the psyche are there surrounding the self. There are graded systems of yoga that can gradually liberate man from the thick human labyrinth encircling the Blissful Self. The Self is the Man within the man—Man the unknown. He is surrounded by five encirclements:—

(1) The gross body of flesh and bone (Annamaya Kosha)
 (2) the Vital body of life and nerves (Prāṇamaya Kosha), (3)
 the mental sensorium (manomaya Kosha), (4) the gnostic body (Vijñānamaya Kosha), (5) the bliss plane of existence (ānandamaya Kosha). These are the planes of consciousness in which the Self is involved.

The third part of the Taittirīya Upanishad, the *Brigu Valli* analyses these five planes and builds up the ladder of self transcendence. Yoga gives us the means to reach the end which is Self-bliss. The Upanishad says. "Yoga is the science of keeping

the mind and senses calm and firm - *Sthiram indrya dhāranam*. But the senses and the mind are encased in a body of nerves and muscles. If the body is sick, the mind also feels uneasy. Many sages suffer and suffer from ill-health and die of diseases like T. B., asthma, cancer, fever, piles and even sex diseases prematurely. The sex energy, the vital fluid must be emmagazined and sublimated into *ojas* (magnetic aura) by intense *sādhana*s. Hatha yoga is Yoga for Health and vigour. We will review it now :

V. YOGA FOR HEALTH

The human body is a wonderful net-work of protoplasmic cells and a combination of many elements. It is marvellously built of bones, muscles, tendons, skin, hair glands, endocrines, alimentary canal, blood vessels, heart, brain, nerves, lymphatics, ganglions, hormones etc. They are maintained by the five elements, by balancing, metabolism and katabolism. Balanced diet, sun-bath, water-bath, rhythmic breathing, herbal massage, spinal bath, internal cleaning, *āsana*s, *mudra*s, *prāṇāyāma*s are the ground principles of Yoga for Health. A weakling cannot attain the Self. A strong body is necessary to contain a strong soul. Hatha, yoga develops a virile and shining body free from diseases. It prevents the inroads of age and senility and keeps man young and agile until the inevitable destiny rings down the curtain. It is a physical—vital yoga done through the exercise of the voluntary and the involuntary nerves, glands and endocrines, through rhythmic breathing etc. All graded *sādhana*s of Hatha Yoga are described in the Yoga For All. We give here the names of exercises that stimulate harmones from the endocrines which are the chemical messengers of the body :

(1) Massage the muscles vigorously.

(2) Stimulate the nerves and glands by turning the neck right and left, by swinging arms clock-wise and counter clock-wise, by first rolling, hip bending by doing *Udyan* and *Nouli*. Repeat mentally Aum, Aum while doing all exercises.

(3) Practice patiently these important poses under an expert:

A. *Poses for meditation*: (1) Siddhāsan, (2) Padmāsan, (3) Swastikāsan, (4) Simhāsan, (5) Gomukāsan, (6) Sukāsan.

B. *Complex āsans to stimulate harmones*: (1) Baddha Padmāsan (Lotus lock), (2) Bhujangāsan (snake pose), (3) Salabāsan (Locust pose), (4) Dhanurāsan (bow pose), (5) Peacock pose, (6) Triangular pose (Trikonāsan), (7) Spine twist (Ardha Matsyēndra Āsan, (8) Tankar Āsan, (9) Prāna mudhra, (10) Prāna dharan, (11) Siramudra (Ardha Sirasāsan), (12) Navāsan, (13) Jolāsan, (14) Kantāsan (neck or thyroid pose or Sarvaṅgāsan, (15) Matsyāsan (fish pose), Jayāsan (Sex-energy, sublimation pose), (16) Shanti Āsan (Relaxation of nerves).

Mere words and pictures will not do. You must learn them from a Master.

C. *Prānāyam* - breathing through nostrils.

(1) Kapāla bhati, (2) Prāna mudra, (3) Prānāyam (Inhaling 2 Aums, breath control 8, exhaling 4 Aums), (4) Breathing exercise for lungs and diaphragm, (5) Inner Prānāyam, (6) Nāḍha Sāḍhan-continuous Aum symphony, (7) Inner breathing in Sānti Āsan-Concentration on the root of breath, (8) Chara prānāyam (Breathing and walking), (9) Surya Namaskāram (Sun-bath), (10) Massage of the muscles with Vegetable oil, herbs, milk boiled with pepper powder or poppy. The bilva fruit is very good for the body. It must be burnt and rubbed all over the body. You must wait for half an hour and then take bath. Powder of cassia leaves (Āvārai) soap nut, and powder of bengal gram or clay can be smeared on the body before bathing. After bath expose the body for five minutes before the sun or in the air and then wear dried clothes. This will prevent cold; (11) Tub-bath and swimming in water stimulate blood circulation and invigorate nerves, reduce excessive heat and promote digestion. Water cures diseases and keeps the body cool.

Yogic Diet

Food must be good and simple, rich in vitamins. It must contain vitamin A, B, C, D, E.. Calcium, Sodium, Potassium,

magnesium, iron, iodine, chlorine, phosphorus, sulphur, and manganese are the chemicals found in human food. The human body is a subtle laboratory of Nature. Every moment chemical composition and decomposition are going on. Water, acids, ammonia and various salts are produced in it. The nitrogenous proteins, carbohydrates, fats etc. are the organic compounds of the body. The gastric juice contains hydrochloric acid, blood chlorate, bones calcium, urine and ammonia. Food is important as much as air and water, to keep the laboratory sound. I shall mention here things of nutritive vitamin value :

These can be taken raw: Plaintains, mangoes, apples, oranges, Jack, pomegranates, grapes, wood-apples, figs, guava, lemons, melons, apricots, dates, cucumber, tender bindi, tender snake gourd, tomatoes, cabbages, cauliflower, gobi, coriander, ginger, onions, soaked bengal gram and green dhal, groundnuts, almonds, walnuts, cashewnuts, peas, pistas, coconut, milk, curd, butter-milk, honey etc. Fine food combinations can be made from these edibles.

For instance adapt this food-nector !

Squeeze orange juice, mix slices of plaintains, mangoes, jack, apple—add honey and cashew or groundnuts. You can add milk too. This is an excellent fruit diet which I have tried for 50 years. You can drink coconut-water and lemon drops or butter milk. Fine salads can be prepared with cucumber, pumpkin, tomato, carrot, cauliflower, palatable greens, onions, coriander, tulsi leaves, ginger, pepper salt, lemon juice, coriander-leaves and butter milk.

Edibles that are hard for the teeth can be cooked. Rice, wheat, Ragi, maize, pulses, roots, dhal, potato, brinjal, tapioca etc. can be cooked in charcoal stoves. Knead plantains with wheat flour, add some orange juice, groundnuts, coconut scrapings, and make vitamin cakes. The flours of rice, wheat, black gram or ragi can be kneaded together with butter milk ; these can be patted into rice cakes and stamed into Iddali. They can be baked into Dosa cakes too.

Take this vegetable mixture : Cook together rice and green dhal. When half boiled add any of these vegetables : potatoes,

tomatoes, carrots, binds, cabbages, coriander leaves etc. Add some lemon juice, pepper powder, salt, coconut scrapings. This vegetable mixture is a health compound. This is a substantial monodiet. You can take butter milk after eating this diet and drink water.

Such a simple diet is enough for normal health. Eat with hunger and allow Nature to digest it before eating again. The bowel must move naturally once a day.

Make proper use of water, air and sun light, the best friends of health.

Observe fast twice a month taking Tulsi water or lemon juice. This will clear the colon, purify the body and the mind and give will-power.

Natural sleep is a restorative tonic for the nerves. Seven hours sleep is needed for health. Go to bed at nine and wake up at four in the morning and briskly begin the daily routine. Keep the body strong and the mind sound.

HATHA KRIYAS

The Yoga Sādhak rises up at 4 a.m., goes out, cleans his teeth and tongue and washes his nostrils by drawing water through the nose by a process called *neti*. A small glass tube can be used for this. Closing one nostril, water can be drawn through the other. The water must be drawn through the nostril that inhales. Then he does *kapāla bhāti* which keeps the brain clean and sharp. This is done by inhaling and exhaling the breath like the bellows closing one nostril after another. The yogi then drinks warm water, inserts the three middle fingers into the throat and vomits out all the gastral biles, phlegm and mucous ferments in the stomach and deodenum. This process called *Dhouti*, is also done by swallowing a long clean cloth one inch wide and fifteen spans long slowly to the last inch. Warm water can be taken to help swallowing. After doing the thyroid or neck pose, the yogi slowly draws out the cloth and with it all the food sediments come out. He vomits out the impurities stinking in the stomach. This prevents all stomach-born diseases. The next kriya

is *Bhasli* or enema. The Yogi taken warm water, does brisk rhythmic walking, inhaling pure air deeply until he takes eight steps and exhaling until he takes eight steps. This harmonises the breath and takes the water deep into the intestines. After cleaning the bladder he does Udyān and Nouli (abdominal suction and churning). The bowels naturally evacuate after these Kriyas. If not the yogi is able to suck water into the rectum as easily as an ink filler by inserting a glass or bamboo tube six inches long. Then he gives a clean-colon wash. The Yogi thus throws out all morbid matter, accumulated in the cells and keeps the human system clean and free from all fiendish diseases like gastritis, bronchitis, tonsillitis, constipation, dyspepsia, giddiness, fever etc. He keeps a perfect control over the three humours of the body, vāda, pitta and slēshma; wind, bile and phlegm. He does āsana and prānāyām. Then comes the process of Rāja Yoga, the yoga of the mind.

VI. YOGA FOR THE MIND

Mind is a mystery store-house of past impressions and ruminations. Sensations, perceptions, conceptions, impressions, sankalpams and sanskāric egoisms are huddled in its corners. They are impediments to peace and selfpoise. There are karmas, sañchita (past store of acts), prārabda (acts of previous birth) and aghāmya (acts to be enjoyed hereafter) and they are very difficult to wash off. Rāja yoga tells you how to purify and pacify the mind step by step until it yields to the psyche and the psyche to the spirit that is the Divine in men. A painter forgets other thoughts when he is steeped in painting. A poet forgets poverty when he paints a picture with rapt attention. Steep the mind in a skilful work; it is the first step in stilling it. It is the one way of turning it from *Priya* to *Sriya* from pleasure to virtue and goodness. But to conquer the passions and emotions of the mind, graded eight-fold psycho-physical accessories (Aśatāṅgās) are needed:

- (1) Moral virtue (Yama), (2) Ethical discipline (Niyama),
- (3) Steady pose (Āsana), (4) Control of the Vital energy (Prānāyāma),
- (5) Introspection (Prātyāhāra), (6) Concentration (Dhāraṇa), (7)
- Meditation (Dhyāna), (8) Superconscious trance (Samādhi). St.

Tirumūlar and Sage Patanjali elaborate them in Tirumandiram and Yoga sāstras.

The world is a battle field of two opposite forces—the evolutionary or regenerating force of good virtue and the other is the involutionary, degenerating downward force of evil. We will give here the virtues and their effect in our evolution.

A. *Yama*: (Moral virtues).

(1) Non-injury in thought, word and deed. Ahimsa frees one from enemies.

(2) Truthfulness (*Satyam*) gives force to our words and command over acts.

(3) Non-stealing (*Astēyam*) brings wealth and prosperity.

(4) Continence, celibacy (*Brahmacharya*) bestows light, vigour, and virile strength.

(5) Non-receiving of anything with craving selfishness (*Aparigraha*) gives freedom and self-reliance.

B. *Niyama*:

(1) Cleanliness in and out (*soucham*) frees one from diseases and physical bondages.

(2) Contentment (*santosham*) enthuses sādhanā.

(3) Austerity (Tapas) masters the outgoing senses.

(4) Study and japam (*Swādhyāyam*) helps knowledge.

(5) God-worship (*Iswarapranīdanam*) brings victorious aid of the Divine Grace.

These two Sādhana's give moral self-control and conquest over vital passions. Tapas consists of Brahmacharya, silence, food control, non-injury and peaceful life. To Patanjali, Iswara or the Lord is a distinct Soul (*Purusha Viseshah*) untouched by the vehicles of affliction, action and its result. He is the infinite, omnipotent, peerless, pure Atman, the Seer, the Witness ever free and immaculate.

The Yoga is developed by constant practice (abyāsa) and dispassion (Vairāghya) and one-pointed concentration (ekāgra). Diversion,, distraction, sloth, langour, sensuality, meanness, jealousy, greed, gluttony, treachery, egoism and unbelief are impediments to Yoga. The Sādhak must develop four qualities: (1) Universal love and amity (Mātrī) Compassion (Karuna), Complacency (Muditam) and indifference to pleasure and pain (Upēksha).

C. The third discipline of Rāja yoga is Āsan not the intricate meticulous Hathāsans but easy steady postures *Stira*, *Sukha* *Āsanam*. The principle is that the head, back and chest must be kept erect, without deflection. Such are Padmāsan (Lotus pose), Siddhāsan, Simhāsan (lion pose), Gomukāsan (Cow-head pose), Svastikāsan (cross-legs), Sānti āsan (Relaxation pose) and such easy natural poses are meant here in which one can sit conveniently.

D. *Prānāyām*:

Purifies the astral nerves and awakens inner energy. The mind is caught in prānā like a bird in the net. The mind stills with the control of breath. Behold the vertibral column. In its centre runs the spinal chord (Sushumna). It extends from the cerebral plexus or Sahasrāra down to the sacro-coccygeal plexus, Moolādāra. In its left runs Ida or the afferent sensory nerve. In its right runs Piṅgala (the efferent motor nerve). They are also called the moon and sun nerves (chandra and Sūrya Nādis). Inhaling (Poorakam), retention (Kumbakam) and exhaling (Rēchakam) must go on in the proportion of 2:8:4 Aums. Aum is the measured mantra for Prānāyām. By intense practice one attains steady control of breath in the heart (Kēvala Kumbakam). A warm current crawls through the nervous system.

The above four Yama, Niyama, Āsan and Prānāyāma are external Sādhana which prepare the mind for internal introspective Sādhana. They are given below:

E. *Pratyāhāra* (In-gathering of the mind):

This is achieved by mantra-japam, inner gazing, study and contemplation on holy ideas.

F. *Dhāraṇa* :

Intensified, concentration is developed by fixing the gaze on the rising and setting sun, by gazing at the camphor light, or an attractive picture of God or Aum. Serene equipoise is developed by this and the next step begins.

G. *Dhyāna* :

Meditation stills the mind and creates a thought-free tranquility. Sit firm, spine erect in a convenient pose before the dawn or ruddy dusk. Look at the charming, calming Nature. Look at the sky which is a form of the omnipresent Divine. Or sit in a calm room before a God-image. A Lamp must burn and incense fume there. Gaze at the flame, at the image or remember a spiritual verse; close the eyes; imagine that the image or idea is in the heart. Go deep, observe the root of breath. Be steady there—You will get meditation when the mind-stuff is emptied into Self-consciousness. You will then be conscious of Your Self-reality in the heart's cave. Meditation starts when mind empties itself into the serene peace of the heart.

Samādhi (Trance) automatically comes when there is clear sky in the heart. The self-awakening consciousness is known by a warm subtle vibration called Kundalini or Brahmakar courses the being and keep observing it or be conscious of it always and you get immersed into it—and that is Samadhi—Self-immersion. You will experience a lightning play also in the heart, just like the lightning flashing in the rain cloud. The mind is merged in the heart and the heart in the self. The Yogi rises to the supernal height of ineffable silence, immutable, joy and untrammelled peace. The Yogi enjoys Swarājya, Self-rule when his mind is under his control and when he enjoys the peace and bliss of the Supreme Self, his Reality—Now let us review the triple Yogas—Karma, Bhakti and Jñāna which develop the above Superconscious State.

VII. KARMA YOGA

The world is the work-shop of Nature. Life in the world is work-bound. Nature goads everyone to action. Even the

wisest man is drawn into to the vortex of work by the moods of Nature. The embodied beings must act either physically, mentally or vitally. From man to amoeba from mountain to molecule every thing is in incessant labour. Sri Krishna says: "I abide verily in the path of action although I have nothing to gain and nothing left unattained." King Janaka the Vidhēhi (one who has transcended body-consciousness) was an ideal statesman, householder and a sage. He worked without attachment. Sage Sukha worked with spiritual equanimity. Lord Buddha the compassionate, was an ideal Karmayogin who served humanity with deep sympathy. "Act unattached; do work as a sacrifice. Offer act and fruit to the Witnessing God within. Take refuge in Him and do your work-worship. Work as a Yoga Yukta, in tune with the Divine Will offering unto Him the fruit of work. Work purifies beings when done with the spirit of dedication and detachment. "Be my minded, my devotee, sacrifice act and fruit to me. I shall purify you and elevate your life", says the Lord of the Bhagavadgīta.

Behold the Sun. It draws vapour from the sea below, weaves rain clouds which clothe the earth green and gold. Work likewise, calmly.

Work is the easiest way to flow into the drift of Yoga. A true worker is calm, serene, equal-minded. He works with the pure dynamism of inner peace, free from self-seeking mental bonds. Hanumān was such a worker. His wounds announced the wars he made and not his mouth. He was Rāma-conscious. "Rām-nām is my power and whatever I do is an offering to Rām". The Karma yogin must rise above I and mine pettiness. St. Kabir used to say: "When *I* was, Hari was not. No more I when *He* is (Ab Hari hai, mai nahim) St. Appar maintained: "Mine is to serve with the spirit of surrender and His is to protect me." Sivaji once gave his throne to St. Rāmadās saying: "Nothing is mine. Everything is Thy Grace." and received the begging bowl from the Guru. But the Guru gave back the throne to the hero, saying: "Yours is to rule and protect Dharma and mine is to do tapasya and show what is Dharma. Protect Dharma under the flag of renunciation, under the orange flag."

Karma Yoga is thus based on Bhakti yoga, the Yoga of Love Divine.

VIII. YOGA OF PSYCHIC DEVOTION

Love is the laurel of life, love in tune with the Divine beloved. Love is the crown of knowledge. It is the motive force of work too. Knowledge, Love and Work are the triune forces of integral self-perfection. Knowledge is the height, love the width and Karma the mass of the Yoga of life in union with the Divine. Knowledge is the head, love the heart and work the nerves of spiritual life. Love softens, smoothens and sweetens the seeker's path to perfection. Love is the charm and warmth of wisdom. Life devoid of love is like a sapless tree and tree-less land. Knowledge is a mountain and love is the fountain and work is its flow for the good of humanity. To the lover, God is the heart's Beloved, to whom he dedicates all his passion and emotion. Not self-finding but self-giving, not Samadhi but surrender, not self-being but self-consecration is the joy of the devotee.

The devotee loves God in any aspect that appeals to him—as a Master, as a Mother, as a Father, Friend, Helper, as a Beloved, he adores the form he likes but is free from the narrow frog-in-the-well mentality. The lover sees in all, his heart's Beloved and renounces everything to Him. The lover hears the Beloved's name and attributes. He seeks his place and gives himself to the Lord of his love who is all in all for him. The touch becomes closer; the embrace goes to the soul. The lover and the beloved become one and enjoy the delight of soul-to-soul union. The delight of love out-delights the ecstasy of trance. To the lover God may be personal or impersonal. Like the ice He is personal, like water He is personal-impersonal and like the vapour He is impersonal. The lover believes, yearns, palpitates, sings, dances, prays, offers himself in surrender, adores, adorns and consecrates himself. The Beloved comes closer and closer as the lover's faith increases. He embraces his lover in the soul and both become one. Then the lover enjoys the serene, calm and peace of being with the Beloved. Devotion intensifies and transforms the love.

Love has five kinds of relationships with God :

(1) As mother and child in the case of Yeśōda and Krishna ; Father and son as in the case of Rāma lala and Rāmakrishna. This is *Vātsalya bhāvāni*.

(2) Master and servant relationship as in the case of Rāma and Hanumān. Guru and disciple relationship as in the case of Dhakshināmurti and Sanakas. This is called *Dāsyā Bhāvam*,

(3) Friendly relationship as in the case of Arjuna and Sri Krishna. This is *Sakya Bhāvam*. This is exemplified by the relationship of St. Sundara and Śiva.

(4) Lover and Beloved relationship as in the case of Rādhā and Krishna, Chaitanya and Shyāma. This is *Madhura Bhāvam*.

(5) Tranquil inner union in meditation as in the case of Vēdic Rishis. This is *Sāmya Bhāvam*.

Anyhow the Jiva must enjoy union with Siva ; Nara with Nārāyana.

The ineffable absolute is beyond word and thought. It is through a realised Master that we can know about God and His glory. Devotional service to the Real Master leads to God-awareness. I got Yoga realisation by my deep faith in my Divine Guru *Jñāna Siddha* of Himālayas. Vivēkananda became the lion of Vēdanta by his devotion to his Master Rāmakrishna. The devotee by single hearted love reaches the abode of God (*Sālōkyam*), comes nearer and nearer (*Sāmīpyam*, attains His form and beauty (*Sārūpyam*), His nature (*Sa Driśyam*) and at last atonement (*Sāyujyam*) in the heart, mind, life and consciousness. Thus Āndāl became Ranganāyaki. Nammālvār saw Krishna in the rain-clouds ; in flowers he saw His smile. He was lost in Him like butter in the ghee. He sat in meditation and developed cosmic consciousness. He kept inner communion with the Heart's Beloved and saw him in every thing in the union and his Aparā Bhakti blossomed into Para Bhakti which is unity of Divinity in and out. The Divine Love evinced by the Ālvār saints and Nāyanmārs kindled love in millions. The Divine faith and love that possessed Jesus and Rasul moved the world. They crossed all trials and

ordeals by the Divine grace and their life-example has inspired millions. Through pure love these saints reached the summit of knowledge. Let us now enter the realms of Divine knowledge.

IX. YOGA OF KNOWLEDGE

Knowledge is Jñāna, to know the Self that we are. "He who knows the Brahman or Supreme Self is the highest among men; Brahman is in the heart's cave" says the Vēda. All embodied beings live, move and have their being in the Brahman which is Truth, knowledge and infinitude. The seeker of the Self controls their senses, holds mind in-gathered, bears heat and cold, joy and sorrow, curse and bliss. His mind is firmly established in the heart. He is the *Stitaprajña* described at the end of the Second chapter of the Gīta. He rests self-centred unattached to things subject to time, space and causality. Sense-control is his Yama; firm faith in the Self is Niyama, Self-fixity is his āsan; self-awareness is his prānāyāma. Negation of non-I is his Rēchakam; Aham Brahmāsmi (I'm Brahman) is his Pūrakam. Stability in that thought - *tat vritti naischalyam* is his Kumbakam (breath control). *Ātmavichāra* is his sādhana, the thought of I am that, is his *pratyāhāra*; firm fixity in the heart is *Dhāraṇa*. "I'm Brahman and that alone is"—ceaseless unity with this truth is *Dhyāna*. To realise and be the Self-Brahman is the Samadhi of the Jñāni. He does not give place to lower vital emotions, to cares and anxieties which ruffle serene peace and waste our breath. He is calm cool, mystic, happy like a royal swan in the heart-lotus. Come what may, he does not change his self-fixity and inner passivity even during outer activity. The ego-I submerges and the Divine I awakes in him. He lives in the universal self law. He says: "What is in me is in the universe; my love is love for all; every heart throbs in my heart. The heaven-domed universe is my home. Eternity is my age; the infinite space is my bed." Like Sadāśiva Brahman he demands from God "O Lord, Grant me just the Self Bliss (Swarupānandam) that is intrinsically mine." His self-light radiates into love and love blossoms into work fructifying into Divine fulfilment. We have already seen the Vēdānta Vichāra that accords this fulfilment. (See Section IV).

X. TANTRA YOGA

The Yogas described above are Vēdic yogas. There is a dynamic, synthetic yoga known of *Tantra* yoga, yoga of Shakti. The basic principle of this yoga is the unity of the two currents of psychic life—Śiva and Shakti. This unity takes place when the psychic planes are awakened. The modern science has released nuclear forces of tremendous thermal effect; negative electron is bombarded by the positive proton and a mighty nuclear power bursts out. Every electric discharge is effected by the polarity of the static and kinetic currents. One electric current gives light in the bulb, heat in the heater, air in the fans, song on the radio, voice in the amplifier. Even so the cosmic energy, is the Kuṇḍalini generated by the Siva Shakti unity in Man and woman. The unique Divine Grace activates the play of the universs. The play is meant to liberate the souls from darkness and impurities. It quickens the evolution of the souls from darkness to light from bondage to blissful freedom, from Jīvahood to Sivahood. God's Grace manifests itself as knowledge, Beauty, Strength, Peace and Bliss to build, protect, evolve and re-evolve the universe of beings. Each function and power assumes a name which we tabulate below.

<i>God</i>	<i>Shakti</i>	<i>Function</i>	<i>Power</i>
Brahma	Vāni	Creation	Knowledge and skill.
Vishnu	Laxmi	Protection	Beauty and Prosperity.
Rudra	Kāli	Destruction	Strength and Valour.
Mahēndra	Mahēswari	Absorbing	Peace and Serenity.
Sadāśiva	Manōnmani	Resurgence	Bliss and felicity.

The universe persists through rapid changes in time and tempo by the Will power of Siva-Shakti.

The pure Tantric Sādhana that develop this Siva-Shakti in man and woman is elaborated in Tirumandiram (Tamil) and a number of Tantric works in Sanskrit. There are more than hundred works on Tantra yoga in Sanskrit. The essence of these innumerable works is this: The Divine Grace through Māya

adds a body to the soul, a mind to know the body, and a life in the world to enjoy the Karma and get rid of the impurities. This is just like the washerman mixing the fuller's earth with dirty clothes to beat them clean upon a stone. The Jīva, bound by mental impressions is like the ore from a mine. The ore has to be treated in a furnace to get rid of the dross and get out of it the pure gold. The soul attached to mind and body suffers bondage. It is laden with verdigris of desire, illusion, egoism, karmic blemish and impurities. The concealing blemish (Tirōdam) binds the soul to the fruits of actions. This can be removed by Sādhana. The instinct for enjoyment is in the nature of human existence. It cannot be cloistered and strangled. Life in the world cannot be neglected as snake in the rope or thief in the pillar. Tantra refutes illusionism and negative attitude towards the world and empirical life. It faces Nature to conquer it. It uses sex to surmount it and sublimate sex-energy. The Paryāṅka yoga of Tirumūlar shows the way to Polarise man with the woman energy by esoteric practices that do not waste the vital power but conserves it for mutual transformation. Just as the plugged current flashes light and heat, the sādhanā called *shad-chakra bēdam*, done without vital passion and waste of energy, awakens the Kundalini and thrills the nerves with its vibrating bliss. The woman is held high as the holy Mother in Tantra Sādhana. Tantric Sādhana sets ablaze the flame of Kuṇḍalini and melts the soul again and again to utter purification. It quickens the transforming touch of Divine Grace and engoldens the human entity.

Man and woman are equal souls. Every thing is dear due to the presence of the Ātman. The Ātman in the female loves the Ātman in the male. It is ātmic love that endears man to woman and woman to man. The simple sādhanā of pure meditation of both, after taking bath, doing japam and worship with flowers will do to awaken the cosmic force. *Tan* means to spread out the cosmic energy all over the body. Even sādhana like Vajroli and amaroli are not necessary. To strike open the spiritual dynamism from the Mūlādāra and take it through the six chakras and unite it to Siva in the Sahasrāra is the principle

of Tantra. The tangle of *Panchamakāra* orgies are not needed for this. For they are external and Tantric force is internal. Kunḍalini is the life-current, Prāna shakti. Introspection in the heart (Anāhata chakra) wakes up the latent divinity. Its consciousness intensifies as it ascends the amritanādi to the cerebrum. Self-bliss flows naturally and vibrates all over the nervous centres. This bliss-vibration is called Brahmakari in Vēdānta and Shaktinipadam in Siddhānta. When the self is realised sex-duality disappears. The false idea of he or she in body disappears and the soul-value of both comes up. The Guru that teaches Tantra sādhan must be an adept in meditation, mantra and Tantra yoga. He must be proficient in Āgama Siddhānta which is a philosophy of evolution and transformation. Simple Asans prāṇāyāma, mantra, japam, mudras, sex-worship and meditation are implied in the Tantric synthesis.

Tirumūla says:

“The joy of peaceful heart to heart union of the two (male and female) shall awaken and vibrate the divine energy and make them live long, hale and healthy. The pure soul-to-soul union shall awaken blissful Manōnmani Shakti and its bliss is beyond words.” Rāmakrishna and Śārada Dēvi stand supreme examples of Tantric realisation.

XI. INTEGRAL YOGA

Sri Aurobindo's integral Yoga is a definite departure from “traditional” yogas. It has no ultra cosmic goal and extra cosmic Divine. “Surrender and serve the Master and leave the rest to His will.” says *Vēdānta Dēśikar*. This is the Sādhana in Sri Aurobindo's Tantric synthesis. Surrender to the Mother is alpha and transformation is omega of this yoga. Sri Aurobindo's integral yoga is a Neo-Vēdāntic edifice based upon Tantra. *Yoga is bhōga; bhōga is yoga*; life in the world is the very field of liberation—says Kulārṇava Tantra and Mother fulfils this is Aurobindo' yoga. No mechanical rites, ceremonials or latā sadhana! The five Ms. are not needed, no pancha makāra. Only one M-Mother is needed. Consider woman as the Mother and meditate. “Offer, remember, surrender, be conscious and receptive.” says the

Mother. Keep yourself open in the heart; call with aspiration and the Mother's force descends.

XII. TAMIL SIDDHAS

The Tamil Siddhas have shown us how to keep the body and the nerves strong and youthful. Saints and Siddhas lived long and strong, pure in and out, self-fixed in the heart-lotus. They lived in the heart's cave as unattached witnesses to the play of three gunas in the world. They attained Siddha yoga being perfect in the eight disciplines of Rāja yoga. They heard the mellow symphony of the soul—*Hamsa: Soham*. The cosmic flame, Kundalini was ablaze in them. It shot up to the lunar region in the cerebrum. The Siddhas enjoyed the spiritual nectar that flowed from up and divinised their life. They lived in dynamic silence which is the spot-light of self-immersed bliss. They were cosmic citizens. Their high-soaring yogic life is an inspiration and a source of perpetual illumination to humanity.

XIII. VEDIC SAMA YOGA

The Vēdic *Sama yoga* declares that one Spirit pervades all and humanity is a collective efflorescence of that equal spirit, Walk together, think alike, live as one body, conscious of the Divine Spirit that throbs in the heart and thinks in the brain. Life is a mission. Every one is born for a fulfilment in life. Nature has provided man the instruments of victorious fulfilment. By concentration, contemplation, meditation, by purity in thought word and deed, by cultivating refined manners, by dignified bearing by developing cosmic consciousness, by awakening the ethereal fire, the divine energy by yoga and by finding in the Self the One that plays as the Many, mankind can lead a collective life of beauty, duty, purity, unity and harmony.

XIV. SPIRITUAL SOCIALISM

Party Politics has disrupted man's life. Not even Democratic Socialism serves a remedy. We must have put forth a spiritual front against religious invaders and a social front against divisive politics. We must develop knowledge of the self and the sphere by probing into the what, when, where, why, who and how of

things. We must build strength and go our length. Life was lent to man for a lofty purpose. He must come out of the ego-walls of the petty mind and divided homes of intellectual creeds and live a broad life of spiritual socialism. Spirit is the common substance of mankind—individual as well as collective. Spirit is the centre of energy, fountain of bliss, the home of harmony. It is the Divine in the human being. To realise it and expend life in its conscious bliss is the panacea of existence. The collective life of man must live in inner communion with the self, conscious of the one current that moves the various mechanisms of existence. Bees collect honey from several flowers into one honeycomb. Rivers from all directions pour into one ocean. All become one in the ocean Self.

This self is all; it is the Truth, Thou art that Self -
Etad atmyam idam sarvam: tat satyam Sa Atma; Tat Twam Asi - (Chandogya Upanishad).

This is the song of Sama yoga that unites humanity in the Soul's infinite harmony.

XV. PROSPER ALL !

The Earth is one, the breath is one
 The sky above is one
 Humanity in soul is one
 The goal of life is one
 North and South and East and West
 Are one in horizon
 This harmony of life is best
 When all are every one
 Prosper all, prosper all
 "Conscious of the one in all
 Peace for all, bliss for all
 This is Sama Yoga's call.

THE CENTRE AND THE SUMMIT OF SELF-SURRENDER

BY

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India has always been a land of religions.¹ and none need be apologetic for this, since man can ill-afford to exist without the elements of theology, ritual and Philosophy. Man is an integrated personality with many facets viz., physical, psychical, aesthetical, intellectual, biological, spiritual etc. Naturally these require a variety of vast and valid experiences to satisfy their needs. In the vortex of these varied, conflicting but not contradictory and awe-inspiring experiences, man has come to cognize a superior "Force" and has begun to recognize ITS importance in the context of their own mutual existence in the world.

The superior "Force" in due course of time by the process of improvement and modulation, has crystallized in the formation of "God"—a symbol to which all men have implicit obedience and an inter-relation is maintained by way of adulation and favour. Man however strong, cognizing his limitations has found expression for God by attributing to Him all possible ideals at their very highest, or better still in their absolute perfection, the absolutely good, wise, righteous, powerful etc.² Once God has been accepted in the working of the world then naturally, He is to be trusted and believed in with the whole heart³ and whenever human heart gets tossed in the eddies of worldly miseries a sense of consolation is derived from looking up to Him. This could be procured only by clinging to Him i. e. having the God ever in one's mind. Thus religion has come to stay in all the cases of men all over the world

1. Hopkins, E. W.—The Religions of India, p. 1.

2. Rudolf Otto—Mysticism—East and West, p. 110.

3. Ibid. p. 129.

and has become the oldest human⁴ problem. In the long passage of time from the God's point of view, religion has become in essence a ritual of practice.

The development of religion on the Indian soil is interesting and at the same time fascinating. Notwithstanding the presence of "Faith" in the superior Force as an inner core, in common with that of other peoples of the world, the "Faith" the core of the religion has grown here to a sublimation. The Vēdas being the earliest records available about the early inhabitants of India, present the concept of God and the relation between Him and the human petitioners. In the words of Hopkins, the position was "In the Vēdic hymns man fears the Gods and imagines God. In the Brahmanas man subdues the Gods and fears God. In the upanisads man ignores the gods and becomes God".⁵ It was only at the last stage that the religion of India had acquired for itself a purpose and discipline and became not divorced from Vēdānta or philosophy. Since that time various approaches were made to inculcate that 'ideal' of God-centred world into the unenlightened populace.

Among the various systems of thought propounded on the Indian soil to explain and expatiate on the mysterious relationship between "God and the world" the *visishtadvaita* system has not only accepted the world as a real entity but has also given to its votaries purposeful objectives to be honoured. Sri Rāmānuja in explaining the essence of this Philosophy has not only predicated the Supreme Force as the abode of all virtues and bereft of all conceivable blemishes⁶ but also as a veritable mine of love towards the jivas.⁷ Romachaudhry writing on *prēma* observes in similar vein. Thus Religion essentially means a personal conception of God. And such a Personal

4. Magdal Ramachandra—The Basic Science of the Soul, p. 2.

5. Hopkins, E. W.; The Religions of India, p. 216.

6. Svabhāvato nirastanikhiladoṣo Anavadhikātiśayāsāṅkhyeya Kalyāṇaguṇagaṇaḥ Puruṣottamaḥ—Śri Bhāṣya, Rāmānuja.

7. apārakāruṇyasauśilyavātsalyaudāryasaundaryamahodadhe—Śaraṇāgati Gadya Rāmānuja.

Conception cannot, evidently, be the Conception of a cold and Neutral Deity devoid of all feelings. Hence, we conceive of God as essentially a loving God (Prēma-maya). But Love (Prēma or Prīti) is a relative term - it essentially means a relation between one who loves and one who is loved.⁹ This knowledge as it dawns enables the Faith in one to grow and he understands that his relation to God is as one of complete dependence.⁹ Moreover the Scriptures reveal that God offers Himself to them alone, who have offered themselves to Him.¹⁰ Paranjoti remarks in a similar strain about the inter-relationship between God and Soul. The soul which is utterly helpless and desolate in the Kēvala State, cannot avail itself of the rich prospect before it by its own efforts. Its requirements are many and varied; it needs a body that will enable it to act; it needs instruments of knowledge to use its powers of cognition; it needs the world to serve as a platform for its activity; it is in *perpetual* need of God; it needs Him to *end* its state of isolation, in-action and ignorance; it needs Him to offer it the opportunities to choose and will; it needs Him through all its *long journey* of transmigration; and it needs Him *to obtain* the spiritual advancement that leads to salvation.¹¹ (*italics mine*). From this, springs the wisdom that the real obstacle to spiritual life is selfishness and not personality and the acme of Godly life is nothing but absolute self-suppression and the readiness to be a willing instrument of the Lord's purposes.¹²

Hence in the light of all shades of truth Rāmānuja has explained that the Bhakti or self-less love in Vishnu is the only means to attain Moksha—the Goal of humanity.¹³ As if to

8. Roma Chaudhuri Dr. ; Doctrines Śrīkantha, p. 51.

9. Hiriyanna, M. ; Essentials of Indian Philosophy, p. 13.

10. Datta, A. K. ; Bhaktiyōga, p. 190.

11. Paranjoti, V. ; Saiṣa Siddhānta, pp. 81–82.

12. Nagaraja Rao, P. ; Introduction to Vēdānta, p. 184.

13. Tasmāt Parabhaktirūpāpannamēva Vēdanām tatvati Bhagavat prāpti Sādhanaṁ—Bhaktiśca gñānaviśeṣaḥ, Vēdārthasāgrahaḥ—Rāmānuja Granthamāla, p. 45.

emphasise the impotency of the Jiva before the Omnipotent God he had enunciated the principle of 'Saranāgati' too as an offshoot of Bhakti, for the practice of Bhakti might prove beyond the competency of Jiva.¹⁴

This act of surrender unto the Lord has been prescribed for the faithful to get His Grace for obtaining immortality.¹⁵ Since God has been described in the Lores as *impartial* and at the sometime *compassionate* and *loving*, it became necessary for the explanators of this principle of 'Saranāgati' to get a workable solution. Moreover different and conflicting views prevailed in the field and just as time and environment give birth to Messiah—a saviour,¹⁶ Vēdānta Dēśika—the cream of Pontiffs had emerged to give an unassailable status and position to this principle of 'Saranagati' in the system of *visishtādvaita*.¹⁷

Saranāgati, Prapatti and Bharanyasa are synonyms. The definition of the word 'Saranāgati' is to comprise of six factors that are enumerated in the Ahirbudhnya Samhita¹⁸ - a Panca-rātra text. Etymologically the word Saranāgati contains - *sarana* and *āgati*. The word *saranam* is derivable from the root *sr-srai*-to seek shelter, to succour etc. and *āgati* from *gam-gacch*-to go with ā. From the soul's point of view the action is in the soul and he moves towards God (*gati*). Then the compound should be *Saranagati* (*saranam* + *gati*) and the presence of particle (a) before *gati* offers the meaning to 'return'. Return to where? Besides this, *saranam* means—home as well as protector.¹⁹ Man returns *home* in the full confidence to relax and to be free and peaceful. Similarly soul returns to its place (home) of source (Brahma) ultimately and hence *āgati* is more fitting. In this context

14. Bhaktiyogārambha siddhayā māmēkam paramakāruṇikam anālōcitaviśeṣa-śeṣalōkaśaraṇyam āśritavātsalyajaladhim śaraṇam prapadyasva—Gitā-bhāṣya, Ibid. p. 169.

15. Hopkins, E. W.; Religion of India, p. 386.

16. Magdal Ramachandra—Basic Science of the Soul, p. 2.

17. Ref. Caramaślokaḍbhikāra—Rahasyatriyasāra of Vedānta Desika.

18. Ahirbudhnya Samhita—Ch. XXXVII, Sl. 27 & 28.

19. Śaraṇam gṛharakṣitroḥ

the traditional significance attached to the word *ajagama*²⁰ in the Rāmāyana as Vibhīṣana sought asylum in Rāma's camp is pertinent. The word "Prapatti" is from the root 'pad' with *pra* to mean to fall completely and resignedly (to the influence of another) and *Bharanyasa* means the depositing of the responsibility of one's self. Hence all the three words though denote a slightly different significance, connote the same idea and hence synonymous.

The English equivalents of the word 'Saranāgati' are 'surrender' and 'refuge'. Surrender is from Fr. *rendre* with the prefix *sur*-meaning over i.e. to give over again for another, i.e. to render a thing back to the person who had greater demand over it. The word refuge is from L. *refugium* from *re*-again *fugio*-flee i.e. to run back to the place of safety. These words either in Sanskrit form or in English, denote only one thing i.e. in this action of the soul, the soul has a full confidence and faith that the refuge or asylum is non-failing in the expectations.

Though the principle of *Saranāgati* has been in much talk and occasionally ending in acrimonious discussions after the specific mention of it by Rāmānuja, it is as old as the Vēdas themselves. The word has not been spelt in that form, yet the idea is there. In the Rig Vēda two instances are cited that contain this idea. "I approach (*upahvayē*) that golden-headed Generator (*Savita*) for my protection and he alone knows to make me understand the position"²¹ "I approach (*upahvayē*) *Indrāni*, *varunāni* and *Agnayi* for drinking *Soma* and conferring auspiciousness (on me)"²² and in the supplementary part of Rigvēda (*Khila*) the *Sṛisūkta* contains the expression "*Saranāmaham prapadyē*".²³ Similarly in *Durgasūkta* "*Durgamdēvim saranāmaham prapadyē*" occurs. In the

20. Rāmāyana VI—17, 1b.

21. *hiraṇyapāṇimūṭayē savitāram upahvayē* |
sa cettā Devatā padam ||

—R̥g Vēda I, 22. 5.

22. *Indrāṇim upahvayē Varuṇāni svastayē*
Agnāyīm Somapitayē

—Ibid. I, 22. 12.

23. *tām padmanemīm śaraṇamaham prapadyē* |
Alakṣmīrme nasyatām tvām vṛṇe

—Sṛisūkta.

Taittiriya Āraṇyaka under the context of “qualifying mantras” (Brahmopasthana) we have specific mention of the word “Prapadyē” meaning “resort to”. The relevant mantra is “I resort to Bhuh, to Bhuvah, to Svah and to all the three mentioned above..... I resort to Brahma; that Brahma who sees all and encircled by him and his halo.....”.²⁴ In this context Bhatta-bhāskara commenting on the word *varivṛta* writes as—firmly accepted and with a view to protect.²⁵ Coming down to the Upanisads, the Isavasya and the Svētasvatara clearly mark the ascending influence of this principle. The Isavasya appeals to Agni as the ultimate, to lead the petitioner to greater prosperity by removing all the obstacles for that achievement. Vēdānta Dēsika and Kura-nārāyana in the analysis of this Upanisad aver that the last two verses spell out the potentialities of Prapattisastra.²⁶ In the Svētasvatara the words ‘Saranam’ & ‘Prapadye’ occur clearly meaning the development of this principle.²⁷

Coming down to the Gita, the eighteenth Adhyāya looms bright with this idea and the 66th verse keeps the Prapatti atop over all other ways of Moksa.²⁸

Badarāyana in his Vēdānta Sūtras circuitously comprehends this principle in his sutra. “Api Samārādhane Pratyaksanumānābhyam”.²⁹ The word *samarādhane* is significant in this context. Sankara defines ‘Samārādhana’ as the practice of concentrated meditation with bhakti all arranged into a telescopic formation.³⁰ Radhakrishnan observes in this context as “the

24. Bhūḥ prapadyē Bhuvah prapadyē Sivaḥ prapadyē Bhūrbhuvassvaḥ prapadyē Brahma prapadyē Brahmakośam prapadyē Smṛtam prapadyē... ..Harivṛto varivṛto Brahmanā.....

25. varivṛtaḥ atyartham vṛtaḥ rakṣyatvēna svikṛtaḥ.....

26. Vāyuranilamamṛtamathēdam Bhasmāntam śariram |
Aum Krato smara kṛtam smara krato smara kṛtam smara |
Agnē Naya supathā rayē.....Nama uktim vidhema ||

27. Yo Brhmānam Vidudhātīpūrvam.....Śaraṇam aham Prapadyē ||

28. Sarvadharmān Parityajya māmekam śaraṇam vraja |
Aham tvāsavapāpēbhyo mokṣayiṣyāmi māśucaḥ ||

29. Vēdāntasūtras : 3 : 2 : 24.

30. Samārādhanaṅca Bhaktidhyānapraṇidhānādyanuṣṭhānam.

presentation before the mind (of Brahma) which is effected through meditation and devotion".³¹ The words 'bhakti' in Sankara's commentary and 'devotion' in Radhakrishnan's, fully comprehend the inalienable presence of a spirit of duality as 'beloved object, and the 'loving person' or the "adored and the adorer", and their relationship must be one of "protector and protected". Unless there is a ray of "Faith" in the capacity and protectability of the 'adored' the adorer will not look upon for anything, much less salvation from the adored. Rangarāmanuja in this context of the sutra explains the content of the line in Kathōpanisad as "the absolute love towards God of the adorer engenders God's love towards him and enables him to get the salvation".³² Echoing these views Appayya Dīksita in his *Sivarkamaṇḍīpikā* observes that Isvara pleased with the dutiful observances of rituals enjoined on him, favours the soul (Jiva) with His Grace to enable him to come nearer to Him.³³

Hence in the long beach of sunny Sanskrit sacred texts there is a veritable presence of *one firm faith* in the supreme, as the benign protector and the Jivas have to yearn for that Grace and sooner they ask for *it* with all sincerity and earnestness, It visits them surprisingly without any advance intimation being chosen by Him as recipients.³⁴

Parallely we find the religious atmosphere created by the Āḷwārs. The Āḷwārs are the god-intoxicated mystics who had burst out their urges in fine mellifluous expressions in Tamiḷ and among them Nammāḷwār may be considered as the brightest gem in the glowing necklace that is the Āḷwārs. He echoes the Upanisadic

31. Radhakrishnan, S.—Brahmasūtra, p. 280.

32. Priyatamatvamca svasmin prītim.....yastu paramatmani
niratisayapritimān sa paramātmānam prāpnotiti |
.....tādṛśasya upāsakasya eṣaḥ ātmā svātmānam prakāśayati |
svānubhavamutpādayati ||

33. Dhyānayagñēnārādhanaśya samyaktvam—Paramēśvaraprasādalabhya
tadviśayadṛḍhabhaktipūrvakatvam |
.....madbhaktiā vṛtharthosyam bhavatviti katākṣayati ||

34. Nāyamātmā Pravacanēna.....tanūm svām || —Mundakopaniṣad 2:3

Truths about Brahman as the be-all and end-all in his composition known as the "Thiruvāimozhi". Nammālwār feels that he is only a reed (instrument) in the hands of his Master and that God sings His own glories through him.⁸⁵ In another context he sings, "Like the life hidden in the body the Lord dwells everywhere".⁸⁶ Though Nammālwār is grieved beyond measure by the agony of the world he always sounds a note of hope: and in his opinion it is the destiny of the earth-born to reach the kingdom of God.⁸⁷ As an easy cue to that, he suggests that all that one has to do is to seek the asylum in that Benign Personality who will certainly give salvation (Vaikundam) after the life-span.⁸⁸

The craving for the Divine Grace to end the evils of life which might occasionally become ego-centred is revealed in the stanza "what can this helpless 'I' do if you are indifferent to me? who can be a guide and help to me save yourself? After all I know my limitations. What is there that is mine? and firstly who am I? (I possess no individuality).⁸⁹ These ideas have rent the religious atmosphere with all the powerful and benign tendency of Nārāyana-Visnu and Saranāgati has been prescribed as an ultimate weapon to wreck the ship of transmigration. An analysis of these hymns of Ālwārs will reveal that a mighty hope in the Grace of Lord is the Key to the Kingdom of God as expressed in those of Bhootattar and Tirumazhisai.⁴⁰

The Pañcarātra Āgamas exerted much influence on a sect of people and they were not considered equal to others as they did

35. tānēyānenbānagit·tannaittānē tudittu. —Tiruvāimozhi 10-7-2b
36. Uḍanmisai uyirenak karendengum Parandulan. —Ibid. 1-1-7a
37. Vaikundam puguvalu maṇṇavar vidiyē. —Ibid. 10-9-9d
38. Śaraṇamāgum tanatāḷadain tarkkellam—
maraṇamanāl vaikuntam koduk kumpiran. —Ibid. 9-10-5ab
39. Enadāviyar? yānar? tanda ni kondākkinaiyē. —Ibid. 2-3-4d
40. Anbē tagaḷiyāga ārvamē neyyaga
inburugu cintai idutiriyā—nanburugi
gñanaccudar viḷakkētrinēn, Naraṇarkku
gñanattamizh purinda nān. —Bhūtattālwār, Iyarpā 1

not heed to Vēdas even though, the chief deity for them also was Nārāyaṇa. These texts too prescribe 'Surrender' as the means to the ultimate goal. It was only Ālavandār who reconciled the controversy over the authority of Paṇḍarātra Āgamas by his work Āgamapramāṇya and the followers of Paṇḍarātra have been acquiesced into the Vaishnava fold which has become already enlarged by the acceptance of the Srivaishnavas who paid more heed to the Divyaprabandhams and followed the ways of Ālwārs in practice. Incidentally it might not be out of place to notice that according to them the word 'Prapanna' meant only a person who had mastered the Prabandhams of Ālwārs and had the attuned emotional instinct of Bhakti in him towards the Lord; and not derived from 'Prapad' meaning a practiser of Prapatti.

After all, these religious principles are the digests of experiences and practices of elders (sistas) that stood by the Vedic injunctions and those practices got crystallized into various factors of a theological principle. In such a manner, the loose ends of this idea of "absolute craving" for protection by the Lord have crystallized themselves into six adjuncts to Saranāgati viz.,—to resolve to follow the will of the Lord, to reject what is disagreeable to Him, a supreme Faith that He will protect, seeking Him and only Him as the protector, to surrender one's self to Him and to feel meek and insignificant.⁴¹ Though the Paṇḍarātra system has prescribed six factors, Śrīnivasadāsa in his Yatīndramatadīpikā has enunciated only five, forging the last two into one. However, on clear analysis of these five angas or adjuncts one can easily find that the third one is the fundamental and essential. It is flanked in the order of enumeration on the one side by a firm resolve to accept Him as a succour and to please Him by not doing things that are proscribed and on the other side by a petition to that saviour and the recognition of one's meekness and insignificance before Him. Hence Visvāsa or the Faith becomes the central gem or the pith of the Principle of

41. Ānukūlyasya saṅkalpaḥ prātikūlyasya varjanam |
rakṣiṣyati viśvāsaḥ gopītvavaraṇam tathā ||
ātmanikṣēpakāraṇyē śaḍvidhā śaraṇāgatiḥ ||

Prapatti. It is not only the *centre* but in a close and minute understanding becomes the *summit* even—Summit because the existence of this Principle of *mahavisvāsa* is the same as the existence of the Lord in him.

That the Bhakti will culminate naturally in Prapatti has been evidenced in the sloka of Yamuna alias Ālavandār.⁴² “I am neither an ardent adherer of ritualistic practices, nor a knower of self (Brahma-j-jñānin) nor am I perfect devotee scrupulously following the Bhaktimarga; in fact I am nothing and possess no other refuge except your feet”.

Though Rāmānuja has not specifically discussed about the metaphysical and teleological aspects of Saranāgati in his Sribhāṣya, yet he in his, Saranāgati-gadya has made it clear that in practice Saranāgati would be successful in accomplishing the Truths. With the fine and lucid explanation of Vēdānta Dēśika, the status and function of Prapatti have become more powerful and efficacious than other means of realisation. In the Viśiṣṭādvaita Vaiṣṇavism, it has come to mean that Prapatti is all important or *angi* whereas the other means viz., jñāna, Karma and Bhakti have become *angas* or accessories and in terms of result (Phala), Prapatti has become *upayatama*—the best of all means. This is so because of quick transformation that this ‘means’ can achieve in the attitude of the Lord towards his devotee. This understanding once again implies a clear cut ‘Faith’ (sraddha) in the mental impression that “God will save”.

That this faith in the Lord is more important has been amply illustrated in the Purāṇas and Itihasas. Vēdānta Dēśika who has written five significant works to discuss the topic of Prapatti, succinctly presents in his *nyasadasakam* that Visvāsa is the centripetal point wherein all ideas converge.

In the Rāmāyana two instances occur effectively revealing the purpose of Prapatti. One is in the Sundarakāṇḍa and the other

42. Nādharmiṣṭhoṣminacātmavēdi nabhaktimamstavaccaraṇāravindē |
akiñcano ananyagatiṣ śaranya tvatpādamūlam śaraṇam prapadye ||

in the Yuddhakāṇḍa. No doubt in the Vaisnava parlour the Rāmāyana itself is regarded as "Saranāgati Sāstra". The Saranāgati starts from the very deputation of Dēvas to Visnu at the instance of Brahma to find a solution to the tortures of Rāvana in the Bālakāṇḍa and continues upto Vibhīṣanasaranāgati in the Yuddhakāṇḍa. Among them, the Kākāsura Saranāgati and the Vibhīṣana Saranāgati are important. In the former case, the Visvāsa that Rāma alone can protect, does not come to him earlier till he had exhausted all possibilities; whereas in the latter instance it is in full evidence. Sage Vālmiki narrates the advice of Vibhīṣana to Rāvana to desist from inimical approach to Rāma in nearly eight Sargas (8 to 16). Govindarāja in his commentary amply expatiates how Vibhīṣana was a deserving case for the kind treatment by Rāma and explains how the Mahāvisvāsa in him (Vibhīṣana) was inalienable. A steady, unwavering and firm faith in the protective capacity of Rama is enshrined in the heart of Vibhīṣana; whereas contrarily the Visvasa in the Kākāsura comes by force and out of fear of death.⁴³

That the Visvāsa of Vibhīṣana has paid ample dividend in time, is illustrated when he sought asylum in the shadow of Rāma. Whatever the disqualifications the younger brother of Rāvana possessed for being denied shelter, Rāma unambiguously clarifies his stand at that juncture and accepts his entry into his entourage.⁴⁴

In the Mahābhārata, the important instance wherein the principle of Visvāsa plays a prominent role is the outrageous action in the court of Kauravas against Draupadi.

It was only the supreme faith in the Lord that helped her in that dire and extreme situation from being publicly dishonoured.⁴⁵ Once again when Durvasa was cunningly instigated by

43. Rāmāyaṇa, Sundarakāṇḍa, 38 sarga, śl. 33ff.

Ref. Govindarāja's commentary.

44. Ibid. Yuddhakāṇḍa, sarga 18, śl. 33.

Ref. Govindarāja vyākhyā on "prapannāya".

45. Mahābhārata, Sabhā Parva, Adhyāya 61, śl. 44ff.

Duryōdhana to visit the Pāṇḍavas at the untimely hour (after Draupadi had finished her meal), it was the surrender unto the Lord by Draupadi that rescued them from being cursed by the irate sage.⁴⁶

The Prahlada episode in the Visnu Purāṇa⁴⁷ and the Bhāgavatam⁴⁸ and the Gajendra's Release from the Crocodile in the Bhāgavatam⁴⁹ all are teeming with illustrations to vindicate the same point of how Viśvāsa helps a person in danger to get the saving hand of the Lord.

Once again in the Mahābhārata, Kuntī impores upon Kṛṣṇa to make privations visit on them since man seeks God only in dire circumstances.⁵⁰

It is perhaps in view of these ideas and ideologies that Vēdāntadēsika too has expressed his attitude towards Prapatti succinctly in the Nyāsadasaka - a decade of verses on Saranāgati. Besides this, his other works that present Nyasa or Prapatti in an easy verse form for memorisation are - 1. Nyāsavimsati, 2. Nyāsa Tilaka, 3. Saranāgati Dipa in Sanskrit and 4. Adaikkalappāṭṭu in Tamil.

In Nyāsadasakam Vēdāntadēsika petitions to God that he is placing the entire burden⁵¹ of his at His feet backed by a strong faith⁵² in His compassion. On this transfer of res-

46. Ibid. Vanaparva, adh. 264, śl. 8 to 15.

47. Viṣṇu Purāṇa—Amśa I, sarga 16, śl. 12; Sarga 17 to 20.

48. Bhāgavata Purāṇa—Skandha VII, Adh. 5 to 10.

49. Ibid.—Skandha VIII, Adh. 2. Sl. 32ff.

50. Mahābhārata—vipadassantu naḥ śaśvat ||

51. Nyāsa Dasaka—(7)

mām madiyamca nikhilam cētanacētanātmakam |
svakāiṅkaryōpakaraṇam Varada svikuru svayam ||

52. Ibid.—(2)

nyasyamyakiṅcanah śrīmānnanukūlo nyavarjitaḥ |
viśvāsaprārthanāpūrvamātmarakṣābharam tvayi ||

possibility he requests the Lord to pardon petitioner's acts the of commission and omission.⁵⁸

Visvāsa or Faith though an *anga* of the principle 'Prapatti', can itself cater to the demands of the aspiring soul. As a matter of fact all the world over, every religion is solidly founded on the basis of Visvāsa. That is the begining and the very life of any religion or in other words the centre and summit of any religious faith or persuasion.

That this Visvāsa alone can satisfy the metaphysical, aesthetical and ethical standards is considered herein after.

Ontologically speaking Visvāsa is a means to an end, the end being the full comprehension of the nature of Īsvara as well as the true picture of Jiva in relation to Īsvara. It is only with the fullness of Visvāsa that a Jiva approaches God for his Salvation. Only then a Jiva can become a true instrument of God to serve His Own purpose. The creation of the universe by Īsvara is not merely to satisfy His own desires Līla and Iccha but it has certain design. The struggling and centrifugal Jiva looks at the myriad aspects of Nature Jagat and draws inspiration for his own sustenance in Faith that is at once deep-rooted and on-doubting.

The Jñāna as well as the Karmamārga, seperately or together form the basis for the understanding of Īsvara in proper perspective - which understanding culminates in Visvāsa and enables one either to resort to Bhaktimārga if mature, with qualifying experiences to realise salvation or to resort to Nyāsa or Saranāgati as the easy and quick method of attaining the same salvation. Moreover such an implicit Faith warrants the annihilation of ego or self on understanding that everything in the world is a part of Īsvara as he himself is. As a result of this knowledge and practice, attachment to the objects of senses sublimates into yogic concentration. Consequently the Jiva looks upto God not with a

53. Ibid.—(9)

akṛtyānāmṇa karanam Kṛtyānām varjanamṇa mē |

kṣamasva nikhilam cēva Praṇatārtīlhara Prabho ||

sense of fear or trepidation but with endearing concern. The mystery about the world and the Jīva in its midst is revealed and the soul (Jīva) marches ahead with greater vigour towards Self-realisation.

On an aesthetical plane, Visvāsa projects a picture of God which is the very embodiment of all good and auspicious things besides being compassionate and loving. The person having Visvāsa conjures up a fine vision of Viṣṇu that at once satisfies the expectations of an aesthete. The Vedas declare Brahman to be "good, auspicious and beautiful".⁵⁴

The Principle which is good could be ethically perfect and morally exacting is vindicated in the instance of Visvāsa. Born out of a correct understanding of the form and nature of Īśvara, the Visvāsa lays the foundation for a perfect and moral life. It disciplines the yearning soul and makes him follow the right things in life and desist from doing the prescribed activities. By performing in that way one can earn the "good will" and favour of the Lord which are "must" for attaining salvation. That this idea has led to the formulation of "Anukulyasya Sankalpa and Pratikulya Varjanam"⁵⁵ as the first two-adjuncts of Saranāgati is a natural corollary.

Visvāsa not only disciplines the individual soul and mind but it has a "social directive" as well. Sociologically too, Visvāsa has much to contribute for the universal welfare. Neither the Gñānamārga nor the Karma and Bhaktimārgas impress in so effective a manner as the Prapatti does, for the injunction of performing one's duties as enjoined in the Śāstras. This performance is done as service to God and not with any ulterior motive. This has been very effectively achieved by recognizing the three facets of Prapatti viz. surrender of one's self, surrender of one's responsibilities and surrender of the fruits of actions.⁵⁶

54. Śāntam, Śivam, Sundaram.

55. Ahirbudhnya Samhitā—XXXVII, 2, 27 ff.

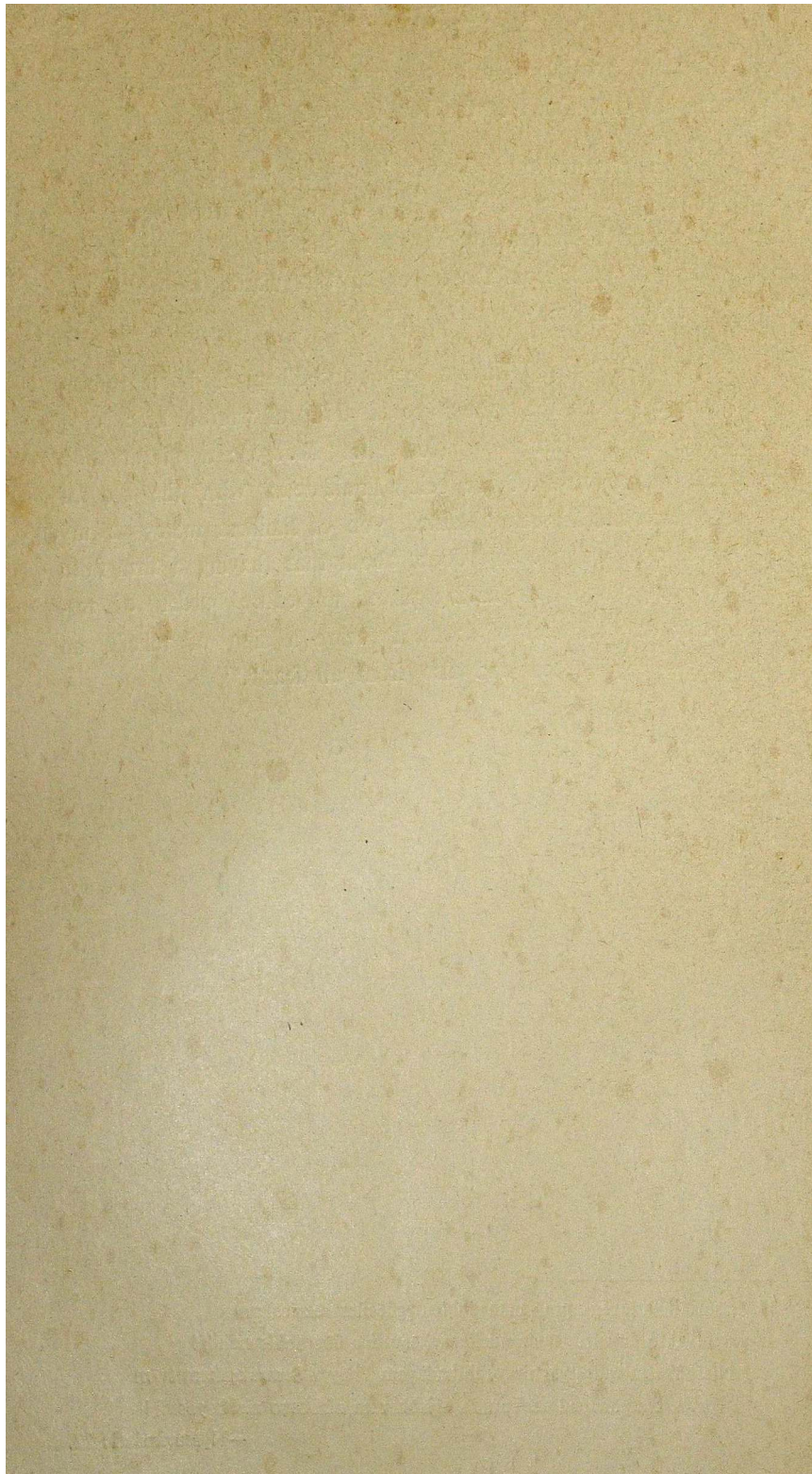
56. Ātma(svarūpa) samarpaṇa; Bharasamarpaṇa; Phalasamarpaṇa ||

All these are possible if only one has Visvāsa in Him and hence Visvasa and that alone is the backbone of Prapatti.

This dissertation on "Visvāsa" cannot be better concludes than quoting the verse of Vēdāntadēsika who in that verse had breathed an air of supreme confidence in the Lord Varadaraja and feels a sigh of relief from the throes of this world, to which the human flesh is an heir.

"Oh Lord Varada ! Having been glanced benignly by the preceptors whose glances abate the force of eddies of worldly life ; being abandoned by all other means (for getting Mokṣa) ; my infatuation over the wrong ways of life being liquidated ; with the aid of correct perception having obtained, you of limitless mercy as my Protector, and without any doubt about that (having a firm faith in that idea) ; and now having placed my entire burden of responsibility at your feet of lotus, I (heave a sigh of relief) am freed from any burden and also from all fear".⁵⁷

57. Samsāravartavēga praśamanaśubhadṛgdēsikaprēkṣitoḥam
Santyakto anyairupāyairanucitacaritēṣvadya śāntābhisandhiḥ ।
Niśsaṅkastatvadṛṣṭyā niravadhikadayam Prāpya Samrakṣakam tvām
Nyasya tvatpādapadme Varada nijabharam nirbharo nirbhayosmi ॥



THE DIVINE LOVER OF THE SAṄGAM

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As is well known, a certain amount of mystery surrounds the love story which forms the core of the “agam” (அகம்) section of the Sangam literature. The story of course, is very simple, and the number of incidents, in spite of the large volume of the literature, very limited. What gives mystery to it is the deliberate suppression of the names of the hero and the heroine. Since the personal details are very few, and generally follow a stereotyped pattern, the problem of identification becomes more severe.

It is the object of this paper to examine this mystery, and to see if any clue could be found to the identification of the couple.

The main events of the story can be disposed of very very briefly. They recount the love affairs of a young warrior with a maid which begins in a clandestine manner, but ends in marriage. In between, the young man becomes unfaithful and strays into the arms of a courtesan (பரத்தை). He also sets off on a distant journey in search of war and wealth. He is corrected by the pleadings of his mistress's companion and ultimately returns to domesticity and a staid married life with his wife and son.

What gives interest to this rather colourless story is the descriptions of the land and the seasons which are intertwined. Plant and animal life of the five natural divisions of the hills (குறிஞ்சி), the valleys (முல்லை), the plains (மருதம்), the seaside (நெய்தல்), and the desert (பாலை), into which the land falls are described in beautiful poetic forms. The aptness of the imagery and the simple terms in which it is put enhance the effect. It is art without

artlessness, and establishes beyond doubt the high level of culture of the poets.

There is, however, one aspect which may perhaps be considered a shortcoming of these poems, and that is the repetitive nature of the imagery and the set pattern of the descriptive phrases. The plant and animal life, the people's food and work, the seasons and the landscape conform to the rules of the "Thiṇai" (திணை), the natural categories of the Tamil "Ilakkiyam" (இலக்கியம்), i.e. grammar and literary conventions. It is not merely the plant and animal life of the land that is standardised, but these are also inter-linked with similar standardised divisions and descriptions of the seasons, and there is a close inter-connection between these.

It is not for me here to conduct a literary criticism of these works, or speculate on the stereotyped nature which seems to point to an advanced state of civilisation when spontaneity of thinking has been left behind and the poetic art consists in building round established symbolic formulae. Undoubtedly this is, in many respects, stylised literature. I would like merely to emphasise the already well-known fact that the Saṅgam poets revel in the art of suggestion (குறிப்பு), and of symbolic expression (உள்ளுறை உவமை), and that this is not a symbolism of individual idiosyncrasy, but of a whole school backed by the authority of tradition and of an Academy (here, the Saṅgam). The longer the functioning of the school, the deeper the symbolism, and the more the levels of meaning. Within the cultural environment this [poses no difficulty in understanding, a mere phrase being sufficient to evoke a whole range of ideas. It is only an outsider and—we are certainly at present in the position of out-siders here—who finds difficulty in penetrating the symbolism to its innermost depth.

It is in the nature of these formulae that by long usage they have come to develop various meanings at different levels, and the unravelling at one level may mislead the outside critic into believing that this is the final meaning where, however, deeper layers lie hidden.

An illustration of these principles at the first level is provided by Pulavar P. V. Somasundaranar in his introduction to "*Agananooru*" and "*Ainkurunooru*" (works published by Saiva Siddhānta Works Publishing Society). Firstly, quoting authorities such as Tolkāppiar and Nachinārkiniar, he has opined that the 'Agam' poetry might have provided material for dramatic performances. (We may extend the term "Drama" நாடகம் as performed in those days not merely to stage performance but also to type of "oral drama"). To illustrate the principle of "inner meaning" (குறிப்பொருள் உள்ளுறை உவமை) he has taken two poems, namely, No. 12 of "*Agananooru*" and No. 201 in '*Ainkurunooru*'. Discussing the former he has pointed out that in line 7, the reference to jackfruit (பலவின்பழுப்பாய்) should be taken as standing for the heroine, and the words "குரம்பை குதவை வேங்கை தாசுய தேம்பாய்" should be taken to refer to marriage since this event usually occurs when the Vēngai (வேங்கை) comes to flower. Here we see the operation of a hidden meaning at the first level. Were we to go further in, we may find a still deeper inner meaning, as would be shown in due course.

Before proceeding further to examine the poems in detail one fact which is not likely to be controverted, may be pointed out, and that is, these "sham" sections of the Saṅgam literature have only one particular pair in view as the principal "dramatic personae" of the love story. Neither the names nor clear traits are felt to be essential since the identity of the individuals is clearly known to the audience. In this particular case, it is possible that it was common in those days for lovers to have a clandestine affair before marriage, and that it is on this account that this subject has been chosen for these poems, but the volume of the poems, and the undoubted fascination which it seems to have attracted, make it clear that the identity of the couple was no secret to the people of that time. In fact it will be seen, as we go on, that it was essential that a thin veil of secrecy should be maintained in order to sustain the dramatic tempo of the composition. To have revealed the names openly—there are, as will be shown hereafter, the passages where they are

almost, but just almost, directly mentioned - would have destroyed "the dramatic irony" on which the entire works turn.

The story indeed seems to have had so great a popular appeal as to evoke local and regional sentiments, especially towards the hero—for reasons which will become clear later. It is with a view obviously to meet these sentiments that a local colour is introduced (within the five established categories of *Thiṇai* (திணை), in describing his residence, personality, dress, accomplishments, habits, entourage, etc. For example he is in *Neydal* (நெய்தல்), *Tuṇayan* (துறையன்) in *Kuṇiṇji* (குறிஞ்சி) a *Malai-Nāḍan* (மலைநாடன்), in *Marudam* (மருதம்) a *Uran* (ஊரன்) and in *Mullai* (முல்லை), a *Kurumpoṇai Nāḍan* (குறும்பொறை நாடன்). (The one region he is not a resident of, is *Pālai* (பாலை). We will not go into the implications of this here; I will discuss it on another occasion).

But in spite of the constraining elements of regional patriotism and scholastic conventions, these variations are subtly blended into one, and the final picture is of one which appears as many. In respect of his residence, for example, by repeated and subtle reference to hill and hilly features, we are made to feel that he belongs to hills and the mountains, and that elsewhere he makes just a transient passage. (For example, even in *Marudam*, his love lives on a high hill). There is in fact a very interesting poem (No. 183- *Ainkuṇnooru* (ஐங்குறுநூறு) where he is said to be the lord of all the five regions, and which has a completely syncretising effect.

We may now proceed to examine specifically who the undec-
lared hero (He) and heroine (She) are. (The references to verses unless otherwise mentioned are to *Aganānooru* and to *Ainku-
nooru*. A complete referencing would take up so much time and space that I shall limit myself only to a few examples. The symbols 'A' and 'Ai' stand for *Aganānooru*, and *Ainkuṇnooru* respectively. Other works are referred to by name in full),

It is very clear that She is a lady of the *Kuṇiṇji* (குறிஞ்சி) hills. She is described as a 'kodichchi' (கொடிச்சி) (256 'Ai'). Her father is a "kundra kuṇavan" (குன்றக் குறவன்) (257 'Ai').

Her brothers are “kuṛavar” (குறவர்) (132 ‘A’). She resides in a small hill-town (சிறுகுடி) (204 ‘A’ 12). A description of the hilly nature of Her residence is to be found in 84 ‘A’ (lines 1 to 10), the thinai (திணை) of which interestingly is Mullai (முல்லை). It is true that in 274 ‘A’ lines 1 to 12 her residence is said to be in Mullai (முல்லை). This is a rare instance and is apparently mentioned only to satisfy the regional requirement mentioned above, and in any case. this region is one in which hills do abound.

She is ordinarily dark in complexion (மாஅயோன்) (60 ‘A’ lines 1 to 12). But this is affected by His absence when she becomes pale, like the flower of the sponge gourd (பிர்க்கம் பூ 57 ‘A’ 1-12). She has slim shoulders like a swaying bamboo growing in the hills (குன்றவேயி) (15 ‘A’ 18). In 33 ‘A’ 13-15, she is compared to the bamboo with curved forehands and wide shoulders. She has wavy hips which sway like the lightning, and from Her dark colud-like hair-tress hang bunches of flowers (126 ‘A’ 16-22). Her nipples are like the buds of the ‘Kongu’ (கோங்கு) 240 ‘A’ 11). Her eyes are like the dark blue “kuvalai” (கருங்குவளை) flowers which attract the observer (129 ‘A’ 15). She is dressed in leaves (தழை ஆடை) (383 ‘A’ 6). The leaves are taken from the same golden trees (apparently வேங்கை) whose flowers adorn Him. She often dances with Her companions the peacock dance (358 ‘A’ 1-10). A natural fragrance emanates from her hair (173 ‘Ai’), like குவளை (225 ‘Ai’). Her hairtress fans out like the spreaded tail (தோகை) of the peacock who she resembles (385 ‘A’ க), and which in envy tries to imitate her dance and gait (300 ‘Ai’). In 74 ‘Ai’ her trees is compared to the தோகை of the divine peacock. The peacock, the mullai flower, and the deer, all reminded Him of Her (492 Ai’).

It is remarkable how much the plants, leaves, flowers, and creepers are connected with Her in these descriptions. Comparison is so close as to justify or identify Her with the creepers. A constant companion of Her fragrant hair tress is the bee haunting around for honey (59 ‘A’ 1-2). She is compared to the “poon-godi” (பூங்கொடி) (54 ‘A’ 22). One very interesting description is that of her body developing pale patches (தேமல் திதலை). (54,

21 'A') when he is absent. It is interesting to observe that this paleness of the body (தேமல்) is often referred to as "suṇaṅgu" (சுணங்கு), which incidentally also has the meaning of பூந்தாது, or pollen dust. During His absence She is like a creeper which has shed its flowers (பூவி கொடியின் புல் என). Her eyes are like flowers wet with dew drops (190 'Ai'). She is a flower-bed for Him (223 'A' 10-16). Her beauty which fades during His absence, returns with Him in the rainy season (கார்), or in the spring (இளவேனில்) (137 'A', 351 'A' etc.).

In No. 250 'Ai' it is clear that the phrase "நம்மலர்ந்த வள்ளி"—that is our Valli (வள்ளி) who has come to bloom, refers to her. This poem is worth quoting in full:—

“பொய்ப்படு பறியாக் கழங்கே மெய்யே
மணிவரைக் கட்சி மடமயிலாறு நம்
மலர்ந்த வள்ளியங் காணங் கிழவோ
ஞண்டகை விறல் வேளல்ல னிவன்
பூண்டாங் கிளமுலை யணங்கி யோனே”

She is a divine being, not of this world (சூரர்மகள்) living amongst flowers on the fearful "Kaviram" (கவிரம்) hills of Aai (ஆஅய்) (198 'A' 12-17), and has a divine figure (161 'A' 12).

As regards the hero (He), it has already been pointed out that in spite of the different terms applied to him, such as forester (கான நாடன்), townsman (ஊரன்), a resident of the seaside (துறை யன்), hillman (குறவன்), etc., he is specifically identifiable as a hillman (குறவன்) in view of the very graphic description of his land. It is a hill side where jackfruit, elephants, parrots, bamboo, and the "vēṅgai" tree (வேங்கை) etc. abound (12 'A' 6-13). Even in poems in which the "thiṇai" (திணை) is Palai (பாலை) (25 'A'), his land is a forest in which the waterfalls sound like music. Creepers and sugarcane abound in his land, as is seen from 11 'Ai', for example, where he is said to be "மனை நடுவயலை வேழஞ் சுற்றும் துறை கேழ் ஊரன்".

He is a warrior holding the white Vēl (வெள் வேல்விடலை) (7 'A' 12) in one hand, and the swift arrow in the other (38

'A' 3). He sports a tuft (குடுமி) (202 'Ai') and wears the "kazhal" (கழல்) (389 'Ai'). His chest bears the sign of wounds suffered in warfare (354-9), and He is often in battlefield camp (384 'A'). He destroyed forts, has the four kinds of forces (நால்வகைப் படை) and fast chariots (474 'Ai'). His horses fly faster than the clouds (கார்) (429 'Ai') He goes on hunt often with His hunting dogs (118 'A' 5).

He wears the vēṅgai (வேங்கை) flower in the head and a garland of kuṇḍalāi (குவளை) on the chest (38 'A' 1-2) which is smeared with sandal paste (48 'A' 11). He sleeps on the tiger's skin (58 'A' 4). He is often associated with the bees which swarm over the kuṇḍalāi and vēṅgai flowers worn by Him, and He is Himself compared to the bee where the flowers represent Her (132 'A' 10-14). He returns in the spring from war, like the bees which swarm and hum over the fragrant flowers and creepers (முல்லைக்கொடி) (204 'A' 4-7) and here the imagery is thin enough to admit the identification of Him with the bee and Her with the creepers. In 226 "Ai" He is a bee which is attracted by the honey in the kanthal flower (காந்தள் பூ).

He is a god who inflicts pain on Her (23 'Ai'), and even the sight of the waterfalls on His hills is sufficient to cause Her pain (251 'Ai'), or to ease it (378 'Ai'). It is at Her mother's behest to god that She was born, and He can part from Her only when god Muruga leaves His hill, which is full of flowery plants (308 'Ai'). She is the victim of a disease caused by Muruga (சேய்மலை நாடன் செய்த நோய்) (242 'Ai'). A most interesting poem is No. 272 'A' which has been not merely translated but rendered in the form of a dramatic dialogue in his preface by the editor (Pulavar Somasundaranar). It describes the features and aspects of the hero which are shown to be so similar to Muruga as to be even mistaken for him by the heroine's mother. The metaphorical references and phraseology are so thin as to appear that the poet's intention is to make us to think that the hero is Muruga, even though he does not want to say it in so many specific terms, apparently for the dramatic purpose which have already been discussed earlier.

He took his fidelity oath to Her on the Tirupparaṅkunṇam hill (திருப்பரங்குன்றம்) (59 'A' 10-14), and is married to Her, and has a son by Her (406 'Ai'). The marriage ceremony is recalled in poem No. 86 'A'. But He often proves unfaithful, and carries on an irregular affair with a 'parattai' (பரத்தை) with whom he frequently plays in the water (நீராடல்) (76 'Ai') and who even claims He had married Her (166 'A' 11-15). A fierce jealousy exists between the two ladies (76 'A'). The 'Parattai' (பரத்தை) is described as a divine goddess (அந்தரமகளிர்க்கும் தெய்வம் போன்று) (76 'Ai').

There are very frequent references to the worship of Muruga, and to the appeasement rituals known as "வெறியாடல்" (literally "the frenzied dance") in which the god speaks through the performer, வேலன், and makes known his wishes. This is specially resorted to, it appears, when seeking to divine the cause of any one's illness, especially of young girls, who are often the subject of His torments, and who can be cured only by appeasing the god by means of sacrifice of animals etc. Thus we find preparations being made for வெறியாடல் on Her behalf in poems No. 22 'A', '98 'A', 138 'A', 158 'A', 232 'A', 382 'A', 388 'A', 210 'Ai', 242 'Ai' etc. Her attitude - and that of her companion, தோழி to the ritual and its outcome is dubious and uncertain. On the one hand the faith entertained in its curative value by the parents is scoffed at, and on the other the fear is expressed that it may be valid, and that in that case Her lover may suspect the strength of Her love for Him. A sense of dramatic irony pervades these passages, and if the audience should be well aware that while the cause of the disease is indeed Muruga himself, the effectiveness of the ritual itself remains doubtful in this instance, as the victim is the Lover of Muruga Himself, though for that very reason, it may also be successful. There is a very interesting piece (No. 247 'Ai') in which while discussing the utility of வெறியாடல், She puts forward the suggestion that the performer, வேலன், might be right in diagnosing Her to be the victim of Muruga, and the view that, that indeed might be the name of Her Lover. (The poem is quoted below). That is, She lets us know that Muruga Himself might be Her

Beloved. Thus, subtly, through all these poetic devices of dramatic irony is revealed the secret of the names.

Poem No. 247 of Ainkurunooru :

அன்னைதந்த தாகு வதறிவன்
பொன்னகர் வரைப்பிற்கன்னந்தூக்கி
முருகென மொழியு மாயி
ளருவரை நாடன் பெயர் கொலோவதுவே

By now, we are entitled, I think, to entertain a deep suspicion, if not a certainty, that we are dealing here with the story in which the main theme is Muruga's love for and marriage with Vaḷḷi, in which His relationship with His other consort, Dēvasēna, is treated as irregular and plays the minor, contrasting part.

The suspicion becomes a certainty when Poem No. 9 of Paripāḍal (பரிபாடல்) is considered. This poem is to God Muruga, and describes His love for, and marriage with, His two consorts, Vaḷḷi and Dēvasēna, and their jealousies and quarrels. The identification of this story with the theme in the agam sections lies in the various details enumerated in the poem. These are :—

(1) Before marrying Vaḷḷi, God Muruga had a clandestine affair with Her (verse 8) (நீமை இருநூற்று இமை உண் கண்மான் மறிதோள் மணந்த) (The terms, dark eyes, bent shoulders (மறிதோள்) etc. in describing Vaḷḷi (வள்ளி) may be noted and compared with the description in agam);

(2) His second consort is the daughter of Indra, i.e. she is Dēvasēna (ஐ இருநூற்று மெய்ந்நயனத்தவன் மகள் மலர் உண் கண் (verse 9) ;

(3) The marriage took place in the rainy season (மாவேனில் கார் ஏற்று மணி மழை தலை இ என (verse 10) ;

(4) There is no more noble love than that which develops when people meet for the first time, and are drawn together by mutual attraction (காமத்துச்.....புணர்ச்சி (10, 15); (it is obvious that the secret love in agam is here considered not only as the

paradigm of all such events, but also by implications as the love affair of Muruga);

(5) There is infinite joy in the sufferings and pangs which lovers suffer by separation, and reunion, especially after the temporary infatuations of the man with the பரத்தை (96-22) (I am not quoting the lengthy verses which bring this out, but the close similarity between the scenes, concepts, imagery, phrases and words here and those of the corresponding sections in agam ought to be noted, e.g. ஊடல், பரத்தை, தோள் etc.);

(6) This paradigmatic love is a special characteristic of the Tamil culture, which others cannot know (an interesting piece of polemics); (22-26) (here again the typical concepts of agam re-appear, e.g. அகறல், துனிக்கும் தவறு, குன்றுப் பயன் etc.);

(7) His chest is smeared with sandal paste and covered with garlands (26); (காழ் ஆரத்து அம்புகை சுற்றியதார் மார்பின்);

(8) They whom he has deserted develop a paleness of colour (கேழ் இலார்) (31) and are like parched groves awaiting rains (மழை பெய்ய உழக்கும்கா) (34);

(9) He is caught between the loves of His two consorts (36-44); (phrases and concepts, வேன் (Muruga), மார்பு அளிப் பாளை etc.) and their forces, namely, peacocks, parrots, and bees fight with one another (36-44); (one of them Valli, is referred to as “ வெறி கொண்டான் குறைத்து and the other, Dēvasēna as கொண்டை செறி”).

(10) The sweet-voiced companions of Dēvasēna (வானவன் மகள்) whose eyes are like lotus (எழில் மலர் உண்கண்) surround Muruga (வரை அகலத்தவன்), and play with Him in mountain pools (கடிசுனையுள் குளித்து ஆடு); they turn themselves into bees, peacocks and Koels to play and sing before Him (57-66);

(11) The victory of the companions of Valli of Tiruparaṅkunṇam in the Kuriṇji Hills (தண் பரங்குன்று குறிஞ்சிக்

குன்றவர் மறம்கெழு வள்ளிதமர்) are pleasing (வித்தகத்தும்பை விளைத்தலால்) to Muruga (வென் வேலாற்கு ஒத்தன்று) (97-99); and

(12) This paradigmatic Love was often re-enacted on the Tirupparaṅkunṇam Hills, as poems Nos. 8, 18 and 21 of Paripādal show.

I think these passages should suffice to support the conclusion that the central theme of the agam story is Muruga's love for Vaḷḷi. It would be merely repetitious to reproduce in evidence all the other passages in the literature—which are numerous. (In the detailed handling of the theme itself certain variations are noticeable which require to be dealt with separately).

BUDDHIST SYSTEM OF EDUCATION IN SOUTH INDIA

BY

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The history of Buddhism in the South is as old as that of Jainism. The introduction of Buddhism into the South influenced the progress of education and culture, as also the morality and discipline of the people. The intellectual life of the society received fillip by the tremendous preachings and teachings of the monks of the creed. Numerous *Vihāras* or monasteries were established throughout the country, wherein were settled learned Buddhist scholars of that time, who tirelessly laboured in the fields of cultural and social activities. The monks wandered throughout the land, preaching the doctrines of the Buddha and held religious and philosophical discussions and disputations at various centres which attested to the intellectual life of the age.

Both literary and epigraphical sources point to the flourishing condition of Buddhism in the South even before the Christian era. In the first few centuries of the Christian era, Buddhism had taken deep root in the Deccan. During the days of the Ikṣvāku kings, Nāgārjunakoṇḍa was a Buddhist stronghold, by which time, the Chinese Traveller, Fa-Hiuen visited India. In the Śāṅgam literature, we find frequent references to the existence of flourishing centres of Buddhism in the Tamiḷ country and the establishment of monasteries at various centres. For instance, the *Maṇimēkalai* speaks of Vañci, Kōvalam and Kāñci as great centres of Buddhism during the time. The epigraphical records belonging to the most renowned dynasties of South India, like the Coḷas, the Pāṇḍyas, the Gangas, the Rāṣṭrakūṭas and the Hoysalas refer to grants and endowments made for the establishment of numerous Buddhist monasteries and *vihāras* throughout the country, right from the beginning of 4th century A.D. down

to the end of 16th century A. D. which serve as a yard-stick to measure the amount of patronage and encouragement shown towards the progress of Buddhist culture in the South. But, on the whole, Jainism had more influence than Buddhism on the life of the people, particularly in the Karnāṭaka and Tamiḷ countries, owing to the striking contributions made by the Jaina authors to the literature of Kannaḍa and Tamiḷ.¹ In fact, in Buddhism also, the monks, who were the residents of the monasteries were the torch-bearers of the Buddhist culture in whose hands lay the promotion of education and learning. R. K. Mookerji points out that "all education sacred as well as secular, was in the hands of the monks. They were the only custodians and bearers of Buddhist culture."² In other words, it may be said, that Buddhist education centred round the monasteries, established at various centres of the country.

Buddhist system of education : Sources :

The main sources for tracing the history of Buddhism and its contribution to South India are certain literary works, chronicles (accounts of Chinese travellers) and epigraphical records. But, to write on the organisation of the monastic life and the system of Buddhist education, we mainly have to depend upon the Buddhist texts, like the *Vinaya*. As for the epigraphical evidences, there is not much to rely upon and HieunTsang who visited South India and its important centres of Buddhism, has not given any descriptive account of any of the Buddhist universities in the South, though, he spent a considerable amount of time in studying the *Yōga* texts in the monastery at Kāñci. On the other hand, he gives a vivid account of Buddhist universities that existed at Nālandā etc. This is an unfortunate thing that strikes our mind, when we start writing on the Buddhist way of learning and the educational activities that went on in the monasteries of South India during the time of the travellers' visit. Similarly, he does not mention anything about the non-Buddhist

1. K. A. Nilakanta Sastri, *A History of South India*, p. 419.

2. R. K. Mookerji, *Ancient Indian Education*, p. 394.

system of learning, though he speaks about its marvellous progress in the North.

We may now discuss some of the salient features of Buddhist system of education and of centres of learning with reference to some of the Buddhist texts and few inscriptions. Buddhist system of education can broadly be divided into two stages — (1) Primary or Elementary education and (2) Higher Education.

Primary Education :

“The History of Buddhist system of education is practically that of the Buddhist Order or Saṃgha.”³ Admission to the Order was thrown open to all castes unlike in the Brāhminical system. The first step in Buddhist initiation is called *Pabbajjā* or “going-forth”, which means, a person offers himself for admission into the Order. He should not be below the age of 8 years and the minimum period of studentship was 12 years which was akin to the Brāhminical system. He was placed under the discipline of a teacher who was to control his conduct. After he became a *Pabbajita*, the Buddhist epithet *Sāmanera* was conferred on him which was akin to the Brahmanical epithet *Brahmacāri*.⁴

Regarding the education of children who got admitted into the Order, Hieun-Tsang⁵ gives a splendid account, according to which, the child was first introduced to a *Siddha*, or a premier of 12 chapters giving the Sanskrit alphabet and the combination between vowels and consonants, after which, he was to study the great Śāstras of Five Sciences — *Vyākaraṇa*, *Śilpasthānavidyā* (Arts and Crafts), *Cikitsāvidyā* (Medical science), *Hetuvidyā* (*Nyāya*, logic, science of Reasoning) and *Adhyātmavidyā* (Inner science). It is thus clear that Buddhist education not only comprises the study of Buddhist texts, but also grammar and other secular and practical subjects. Thus, the Buddhist education was not merely religious but also secular and practical in its composition. The

3. *Ibid.*

4. *Ibid.*, p. 396.

5. Watters, *Travels of Hieun-Tsang*, II, pp. 154–55.

primary education was of such a type that it would enable the child to have necessary basis and knowledge upon which specialisation could be done effectively at the later age.

Higher Education :

Higher studies and teachings went within the limits of the Buddhist canon, whether *Vinaya*, *Abhidharma* or *Sutta*. But, this rule was not strictly followed in all cases.⁶ Generally speaking, the scope and nature of higher education in the monasteries were determined by the particular Buddhist schools to which they belonged. The higher studies consisted of not only studying the advanced texts of religious and philosophical importance, but also conducting debates and discussions on various doctrines of different creeds. Before going into the discussion of the merits and demerits of the Buddhist higher education, let us now go into the aspect of considering the Buddhist *vihāras* and monasteries as great seats of higher learning and advanced studies.

Vihāras or Saṅghārāmas :

The Vihāras were the chief seats of education and centres of culture of the time. They were all residential colleges consisting of numerous students and teachers (even 10,000 as at Nālandā) who partook and promoted a wide, collective academic life in them. They were the educational agencies of the time, through which, education and culture were spread intensively and extensively throughout the land. They were sometimes called *Saṅghārāmas*, to which, temples, libraries and schools were attached, and in which dwelt wealthy communities of monks, who were allowed to hold property in land.⁷ We have both literary as well as epigraphical evidences for the existence of these monasteries at various places and at different times. Vañci, Pukār, Kāñci, Uragapuram, Bhuttamaṅgalam, Nāgapattinam were some of the important centres of Buddhism in South India, which produced outstanding scholars and debators, who were victorious in many of the philosophical disputations and debates held in different parts

6. R. K. Mookerji, *op. cit.*, p. 529.

7. *Ibid.*, p. 428.

of the country and brought name to their motherland. Of all the centres, Kāñci deserves special mention in this connection. Kāñci was as old as Buddha himself which was the birth place of Dharmapala.⁸ The *Mañimēkalai* refers many times to Kāñci as a famous centre of Buddhist culture in the early centuries of the Christian era.⁹ Buddhism at Kāñci had a continuous history from the very beginning down to the end of the 14th century A.D. It is believed that there existed a Buddhist College at Pontagai (near Kāñci), in which many disputations were held between scholars of Buddhism and Jainism. This place may be identified with *Alipadaitangi* (a seven-walled fort of Kāñci), a Buddhist settlement between Jina Kāñci and Arcot.¹⁰ One of the manuscripts in the Mackenzie collection also refers to this place.¹¹ During the days of Mahēndravarman, it seems that there was a *Vihāra* at Kāñci which served as the head of several monasteries in the neighbourhood.¹² The city gave birth to many scholars of different creeds of which Dharmapāla (6th-7th century A.D.), Dinnaga (5th century A.D.) and Buddha Datta (5th century A.D.), are the crest jewels of South Indian Buddhism. It may also be noted that there existed different schools of Buddhism, of which, *Yoga* school of philosophy deserves attention. Dinnaga was the chief exponent of the *Yoga* school of philosophy and logic, which was as old as Aravanaḍigaḷ. It is also interesting to note that Hieun-Tsang has spent three years in studying philosophy in the Buddhist University at Kāñci. Besides this school, the Buddhist scholars also studied the teaching of the *Sthavira* (Chang-tsopu) school belonging to the Great Vehicle. There was also another school called *Dhyana* School. This was introduced into China by Bodhi-dharma who visited Kāñci in 527 A.D. He was the 28th patriarch who visited China from South India (520 A.D.). Hieun-Tsang

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8. A Aiyappan and others, *Story of Buddhism with special reference to South India*, p. 55.
 9. *Mañimekalai*, *Kaccimānagar pukka kāthai*, vv. 69-73.
 10. R. Champakalakshmi, *Jainism in South India*, p. 134 (M. Litt. thesis unpublished).
 11. T. N. Ramachandran, *Tirupparuttikkunṇam and its Temples*, pp. 215-16.
 12. C. Minakshi, *Administration and Social Life under the Pallavas*, p. 224.

gives a graphic account of Buddhism at Kāñci during the 7th century A.D. According to him, in the Pallava country, there were 100 monasteries and 10,000 brethern.¹³ The most important fact is that Dharmapala of Kāñci went to Nālandā University and becoming victorious in this disputations, he rose to the position of the Head of the University. He was also one of the foremost *adhyakṣas* of it.¹⁴ Thus, its influence was felt not only in many parts of our country, but also in countries outside India. A band of three hundred Buddhist scholars are said to have visited Kāñci during the visit of Hieun-Tsang. It is further said that he discussed some *Yoga* texts with them and found that their explanations could not excel those given to him by Śīlabhadra of Nālandā. Thus, the traveller speaks of the conditions of Buddhism and its contributions to South Indian education from his personal experience, and first-hand study. He also visited the Telugu Cōḍa country, *Chu-li-ya*.^{14a} The Buddhist monasteries were in ruins and only some of them had brethern; there were several tents of Deva temples and the Digambaras were numerous. To the South-east of the capital and its neighbourhood was an Asoka tope, where the Buddha had preached, wrought miracles, overcame Tirthikas and received men and dēvas into his mission. According to the traveller, Dhanakaṭaka (Amaravati) and Konkana were the great centres of Buddhist culture.¹⁵ There were also noted centres of Buddhist culture in the Karnāṭaka, which in their own way contributed to the progress of South Indian education during the period.

Subjects of study :

As a general rule, along with Sanskrit, other subjects of Buddhist philosophy were taught to the students. As we have already discussed, the education was also secular in certain respects. The inscriptions do not come to our help in assessing the

13. A. Ayyappan and others, *op. cit.*, p. 55; See also Watters, *op. cit.*, II, p. 226.

14. Aiyappan and others, *op. cit.*, p. 29. See also P. V. Bapal, 2500 years of Buddhism, p. 337, Watters, *op. cit.*, II, p. 109 and 165.

14a. Watters, *op. cit.*, II, p. 224.

15. Watters, *op. cit.*, II, pp. 214-224.

subjects of secular study in the *Vihāras*, but the old Buddhist works like *Vinaya* texts, *Jātakas*, etc. throw a volume of light on this aspect of Buddhist system of education. The Chinese traveller Hieun-Tsang and I-Tsing refer to the study of secular subjects in the monasteries. According to the *Vinaya* texts, subjects like, medicine and surgery were also taught to the students.¹⁶ Hieun-Tsang refers to the study of the "Five great Sciences" in the primary education of a child. But I-Tsing's remarks on this matter deserve our attention. Though he does not make any particular reference to the South Indian monasteries, his observations of the educational activities of monasteries in India, on the whole, may also hold good in the case of our South Indian monasteries during the time of his visit. According to him, in the monasteries of India, there were many 'students' (*Brahmacārins*) who are entrusted to the *Bhikṣus* and instructed by them in secular literature.¹⁷ Thus, it seems that the Buddhist monastery had a secular section, wherein, the students had no intention of becoming Buddhist monks or renouncing the world. But, we do not know what were the subjects taught in the secular section. They would probably consist of subjects like medicine, astrology, arts and crafts and other useful arts.

Besides regular students, there were unordained students called *Māṇavas*. They were given instruction in the Buddhist scriptures. Both the *Māṇavas* and *Brahmacārins* were permitted to be in residence in the monasteries or could attend the classes as day-scholars.¹⁸ Thus, the remarks of the traveller throw some welcome light on the catholic and generous attitude of the monks towards the progress of education in the country. They imparted education not only to persons belonging to their way of life, but also to one and all who came from various walks of life with a longing to learn something the Buddhist monks.

16. R. K. Mookerji, *op. cit.*, pp. 468-72.

17. *Ibid.*, pp. 545-46.

18. *Ibid.*, See also P. V. Bapal, *op. cit.*, p. 183.

Teaching :

As in the case of Jaina and Brahminical systems, the instruction consisted mainly of "giving recitation, holding recitation, making exhortation and explaining Dharma".¹⁹ There were special teachers appointed to deliver special lecture on specific topics.²⁰

Relations between the teacher and the taught :

The relations were cordial and affectionate. The teacher and the taught moved so affectionately that they looked like father and son. As in the Brahminical and Jaina systems, the student was expected to do service to his teacher. The students in the *Vihāras* were also in charge of keeping their residential places very clean.²¹

Discussions and Debates :

Discussions and debates are also methods of education. In fact, Buddhism, being more proselytizing than other religions, was keen on the cultivation by its leaders and votaries, of the powers of debate by which, it could spread and win converts from other rival sects. Buddhist education made dialectic skill and ability in argumentation, a most important part of intellectual equipment, essential to leadership. But these intellectual debates were practised not only by the Buddhists but also by scholars belonging to different creeds from the days of the Upanishads. Even the Tamil literary works like the *Maṇimēkalai*, *Ṣilappadikāram*, *Rāmāyaṇam*, *Tiruvācakam* and *Periapurāṇam* contain references to such debates.

Paṭṭimaṇḍapam :

In ancient times, the religious and intellectual disputations were held in a *maṇḍapa* called *Paṭṭimaṇḍapam* or *Vidyāmaṇḍapam* which was probably situated in the heart of the village. Researches in various subjects were also conducted in the *Paṭṭimaṇḍapam*. This is not quite new to us, because we do find such educational

19. R. K. Mookerji, *op. cit.*, p. 451.

20. *Ibid.*, p. 403.

21. *Ibid.*, p. 404.

activities being conducted in our own times. The important role played by the *Paṭṭimaṇḍapam* in society, in promoting the intellectual life of the people, is cited in the Tamil works like the *Śilappadikāram*,²² *Kambarāmāyaṇam*²³ etc. besides *Maṇimēkalai*. According to the *Maṇimēkalai*, the phrases which refer to the activities of the *Paṭṭimaṇḍapam* run as follows:

*Oṭṭiya Samayatu-ru poru! vāthika! paṭṭimaṇḍapattu paṅkarintu ērumin*²⁴

These phrases are more than enough to prove the value of such *Paṭṭimaṇḍapam* in holding debates and discussions. Instances are not wanting, in which we find reference to such disputations held between men of the Buddhist Order and their Śaiva rivals during the days of *Periyapurāṇam*. The *Periyapurāṇam* refers to a particular Buddhist monk called Buddhanandi challenging his rivals of Śaiva religion about his capacity and ability in the art of debate and discussion:

*Buddhanandi ceyiṟtteluntu terarkuḷaṅcuḷch ceṇṇu veṟṟipuṇai ciṇṇaṅka! vādilemmai veṇṇaṅro piḍippa tena vekundu coṇṇāṇ.*²⁵

There is also further information regarding the discussions and debates held by Śāriputtirar with his rival Sambandar. The discussions referred to were held at Podi (Tanjāvur), which seems to have been a great centre of Buddhist learning.²⁶ As for the inscriptional evidences, fortunately, there is one inscription which refers to the religious disputations held in public places. The inscription belonging to the Ganga dynasty dated in Saka 169 (247-48 A.D.)²⁷ records that the king Arivarma bestowed a title of honour "a lion to the elephants, which are disputants", on

22. *Śilappadikāram*, *Indraviḷā-vureḍutta kāthai*, v. 103.

23. *Paṇṇaruṅ kalāiteri Paṭṭimaṇḍapam - Kambarāmāyaṇam*, *Nagarkkāṇḍam*, v. 92.

24. *Maṇimēkalai*, *Viḷāvarai kāthai*, vv. 60-61.

25. *Sambandar purāṇam*, v. 906.

26. *Ibid.*, vv. 911-926.

27. *Indian Antiquary*, VIII, p. 212.

Madhaya bhaṭṭa who defeated his rival Buddha monk called Vādi Madagajēndre, who stood for the non-existence of soul. The discussion was held in a public assembly. The victorious debator was also given a village as a gift and a reward for his mastery and scholarship in the art of debating. Though the inscription is considered to be faked, it gives us some idea as to the conducting of public debates and disputations which corroborates the literary evidences. The palaeography of the inscription suggests that it is a forgery of not earlier than tenth century A.D.

Academic debates brought together, scholars from distant and different parts of India and even from outside India and paved the way for the promotion of active intercourse between monasteries representing different schools of thought.

South Indian Buddhist Scholars and their debating influences :

These are instances which proved the scholarship and debating power of certain great Buddhist scholars of South India, who went all the way to North Indian monasteries and gained victories and likewise many scholars from North India came to the South. To mention a few of the scholars, Nāgārjuna and Dinnāga deserve mention. According to Hieun-Tsang, Nāgārjuna with the permission of his master went to a monastery called Kukkuṭārāma in Pāṭaliputra, where, in a twelve-day discussion, he defeated the Tīrthikas of that place.²⁸ Another victory achieved by South Indian monks was that of Dinnāga at the Nālanda University.²⁹ We have already discussed that there was a discussion between Buddhist Scholars of the Kāñci University and Hieun-Tsang on the merits of *yoga* School of Philosophy.³⁰ Commenting on the Buddhist system of education, Mookerji writes : 'not confining their sympathies and valued services within the limited boundaries of their own church and faith, they (the monks) thus became the Directors of Public Instruction in the country'.³¹

28. Watters, *op. cit.*, II, p. 100.

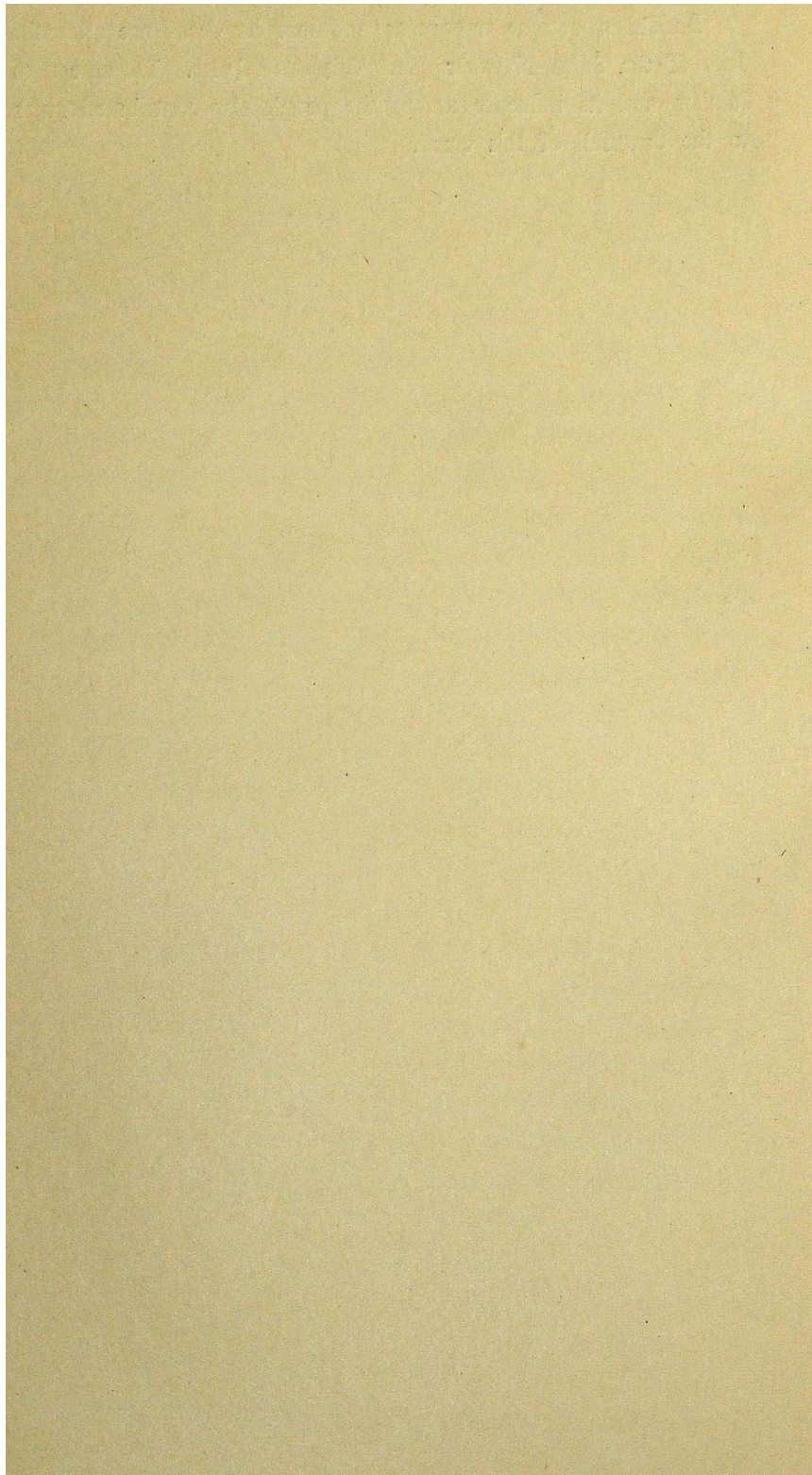
29. *Ibid.*, pp. 212-14.

30. *Ibid.*, p. 227.

31. R. K. Mookerji, *op. cit.*, p. 546.

Decline of Buddhism :

Buddhism became unpopular and met its decadence after the days of the Śaiva Nāyanārs and Vaiṣṇava Ālvārs. The spread of Jainism and its influence among the people also contributed much to the downfall of this creed.



ISLAM IN NEGAPATAM

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Negapatam region is a stronghold of the Tamil-speaking Muslims. Their concentration along the Coromandel coast is due to historical reasons and their traditional occupation of trade with the South-East Asian countries. It is an established fact that long before the Muslims settled down in northern India there were Muslim colonies in Southern India and the history of the colonies goes back to the era of commercial relations.¹ Islam had come to this region without any political help whatsoever and remained rooted in the soil for centuries before the political advances of Islam to South India, beginning with the time of Allauddin Khilji and Malikafur. Friar Bartholomeo says that the first batch of Muslims came to Malabar during the time of Caliph Walid in Hijira 90 (710 A.D.)² which accords with the date given in Mackenzie Manuscripts.³ An inscription at Patalayini Kollam in North Malabar records the death of one Abba Ibn Udthoman in Hijira 166.⁴ There is a well known tradition in Malabar contained in the *Keralorpati*, a comparatively recent work that the last Çeraman Perumāl turned a Muslim and left for Mecca after partitioning his kingdom among his friends and relatives.⁵ At best this tradition suggests an early contact of west coast with Arabia.

1. *Islamic culture*, Vol. viii, 1934, p. 176.

2. *Voyages to the East Indies*, p. 106.

3. M.J.L.S., Vol. viii, p. 339.

4. Logan, *Malabar*, I, p. 195.

5. *Ibid.* p. 192. It is confirmed by another Malayalam manuscript of doubtful date and authorship called '*Parama Pada Prakasavali*' (Oriental Manuscript Library, D. No. 61).

The question is when did the Muslims come to the Coromandel coast? As there had been direct Arab contact with the Coromandel coast also and as there had been overland communication and trade between the western and eastern coasts⁶ the spread of Islam to the western and eastern coasts must have been a contemporaneous phenomenon. The Muslims of the region go by many names: The Sonagas, Marakkayars, Rowthers, Cholias, etc. These names cannot be called caste names nor are they classes but names assumed by accident. It is extremely difficult to distinguish one from the other as they merge with one another.

There is no doubt the Arab traders were to be found all over Tamiḷnāḍ even during the time of Saṅgam and later.⁷ Though the Greeks and Arabs are referred to as Yavanas in Tamiḷ literature, the term Sonagar was chiefly applied to the Arab traders.⁸ Sonagam stands for Arabia among the seventeen countries⁹ considered to be on the western side of Tamiḷnāḍ and one of the fifty six countries¹⁰ of the world, by the Tamils. It is interesting to note that the commentator of *Pattuppattu*, Naccinārkkiniyar uses the word Sonagar wherever the word Yavana occurs.¹¹ As all the Sonagas are Muslims¹² Adiyārkunallār

6. Annual Reports on Epigraphy, 1956-57, p. 15.

7. *Tamiḷian Antiquary*, Part I, 1910, p. 86.

8. கரந்தைக் கட்டுரை வெள்ளி விழா நினைவு மலர் 1938 p. 257

Karanthaikkatturai Vellivizha Ninaivumalar. 1938 p. 257

Sometimes the word Songar is also used in the sense of a foreigner in general.

Compare சோணகர் மனையிற்றூய கம்பரர்—ஊர்தேடு. 112.

(Kambarāmayanam - Uṟṟēḍumpāḍalam. 112.

9. சிங்களஞ் சோகைஞ் சாவகஞ் சீனந்துளுக்குடகங்
கொங்கணங் கன்னடங் கொல்லந் தெலுங்கங் கலிங்கம்
வங்கம் கங்க மகதங் கவிடங் கடாரங் கடுங்குசலந்
தங்கும் புகழ்த்தமிழ்துழ் பதினேழ் புவிதாமிவையே.

10. திருவேங்கட சதகம் 98. (*Thiruvēṅgaḍaḥagam* 98)

11. *Pattuppattu*-Swaminathayyar edition, p. 337. In the *Payyanūrpāt*, perhaps the earliest Malayālam poem extant, some of the sailors are called Chonavars.

12. By the time of the period of Orthodox Caliphs i.e. the first half of the seventh century, the whole of Arabia was converted to Islam.

calls them Yavanathurukkar.¹³ These Arab Muslims were influential in Kaverippoompattinam and later moved to Pandinād.¹⁴ There is no doubt that, by eleventh century, their influence in the Tanjore coast was felt. They influenced the prevailing culture and in turn were influenced by it. One of the donors of Rājārājeswara temple at Tanjore was one Sonagan Savur Parañjodi.¹⁵ It is worthy of note that he had assumed the purely Hindu name Parañjodi.¹⁶ Another inscription on the south wall of the Rājārājeswara temple enumerates the jewels in the treasuries of Rājārāja. One of the interesting ornaments is known as Sonagachhidukkinkudu. It is not clear what a Chidukku was and where it was worn. But that the ornament was made after the fashion of the jōnakas is very interesting.

Coromandel coast was known to the Arabs as 'Mabar', the key of India. The word Mabar was used for the first time by Yaqūt (1179-1229)¹⁷ in his geographical dictionary to denote the east coast of the Indian peninsula. It is not possible from the accounts of Yaqūt and other geographers to locate exactly where and at what point the east coast begins and the exact area it comprises along that coast. Abul Faida says that Mabar begins

13. Turukkan=Muslim (யாழ்பாணத்து மாணிப்பயாகராதி). See Chandrasekharapuiavar, *Yālpāṇattu Māṇippayagaradi*, Vol. IV, American Mission Press, Jaffna, 1842.
14. *Tamiḷian Antiquary* Part I, p. 86; *The Madras Christian College Magazine*, Vol. iv. No. 1, 1924, p. 40. It is to be noted that Kāyalpattinam in Pandyanādu where the Arabs came and settled is also known as Sonagapattinam (சோமலே, திருநெல்வேலி) Somalē, *Thirunelvēli māyattam*, p. 290. Not far from Kāyalpattinam is a place called Sonaganvilai (சோணகன்விளை). There is a street in Cuddalore, substantially populated by Muslims called Sonaga street (W. Francis, *Gazetteer of South Arcot District*, p. 299). The close association of the Sonakas with sea and sea-faring trade is suggested by the names of fish like Sonagathirukai, Sonagavālai, Songakelutti (சோணகத்திருகை, சோணகவாளை, சோணகக்கெழுத்தி) etc.
15. *South Indian Inscriptions*, Vol. II, No. 28, pp. 460, 489, 495, 496.
16. Even now the Tamil Muslims have the names like Muthu, Seeni, Sarkarai, Raja, etc.
17. Nainar, S.M.H., *Thufatul Majahidin*, 1942, p. 6.

at about three or four days journey to the east of Kaulam (Quilon) and the first locality from the side of Manibar (Mabar) is Rāskumburi (Cape Comorin). In the middle ages the term was used by the Arabs to that coast of India which we call Coromandel. In Arabic, 'Mabar' means the ferry or 'crossing place'. It is not clear how the name came to be applied to the part or whole of Coromandel coast, whether because the Arab vessels habitually touched at its ports or because it was the place of crossing to Ceylon. Malabar and Kulahbar in Southern India, Zanzibar in Africa all point to the same meaning. When compared to some of the names like Kathiawar and Karwar, one suspects a possible Arabised form of the Sanskrit word 'var'.¹⁸

Even before the invasion of Malikkafur, Rashiduddin (1310) and Wassaf (1310-28) speak of a trade agreement between the princes of Persian Gulf countries and Sundar Pāndya Thēvar, the ruler of Mabar.¹⁹ So great was the influence of Arab merchants on the coast that one of them Taquidduin-Abdur-Rahman-bin-Mohamad-al-Thaibi had become the Thēvar's deputy minister and adviser and his brother Shaikh Jamaluddin was sent on an embassy to Chinese court.²⁰ After the death of Sundar Pāndya Thēvar in 1293 Jamaluddin succeeded to the Pandyan kingdom with Taqui-ud-din as his lieutenant. A Muslim kingdom was thus established²¹ in Southern India long before the time when standard histories recognise any Muslim rule in those parts. When, not long afterwards Malikkafur invaded South he found there Muslim settlers 'half Hindus'.²² It is possible, we have here the origin

18. वर Vār (Sanskrit), water, ocean, a mass of water or tank of a river. See Aptei *Sanskrit-English Dictionary*, p. 844.

19. Elliotts, *History of India as told by her own historians*, Vol. I, p. 70.

20. *Ibid.* Vol. I; p. 70, Vol. III, p. 34-35.

21. Caldwell, *History of Tinnevely*, p. 41.

22. Amirkushrau has recorded the invasion of Malikkafur in *Khazainul Futuh* (*Khazainul Futuh*, edited by the Jamiah Milliyah Islamiyah (Aligarh), 1927, pp. 157, 162). Malikkafur wanted to chastise the Muslims who fought against him, but declared their faith by shouting Kalimah and reciting extracts from Koran. In the second volume of his book Elliot has given a summary of *Khazainul Futuh* under the title of

of the Tamil speaking community we know now in many names in the Coromandel coast. Krishnaswamy Ayyangar²³ says that Malikkafur found a Muslim settlement at Kandur - Kannanur near Srirangam, who were not of northern origin. So much were those people foreigners to the followers of Malikkafur and the life from the north that there was not much to choose between the sufferings inflicted on them and those that the infidel Hindus themselves had to endure.

The Marakkayars are the dominant group in Negapatam and Nagore. They are a mixed class of people.²⁴ Many derivations of the term Marakkayar are given. It is difficult to distinguish the Jonakans from Marakkayars as most of the Jonakas bear the title Marakkayars.²⁵ Thurston says: "There is some confusion concerning the exact application of the name Jonakam but I gather that it is applied to sea fisherman and boatmen while prosperous traders are called Marakkayars."²⁶ Some ingenious Marakkayars trace the term to Egyptian Quahira or Cairo and the Tamil word 'marai' and attribute it to their knowledge of Koran and Egyptian origin (Maṛaikkāhiriyōr மறைக்காஹிரியோர்). "Plausible as both these derivations are, they only indicate the

Tarikh-i-Alai. In connection with this incident he has translated a sentence of Khushrau thus "These Muslims were half Hindus and quite ignorant of the principles of their religion" (Khazainul Futuh, pp. 161, 162). But this interpretation is entirely erroneous. The real fact is that with poetical fancies and rhetorical flourishes, Amirkhushrau has represented the Muslims as siding with the Hindu Rajahs. In no way does this condemnation mean that they were half Hindus.

23. Ayyangar, Krishnaswamy, *South India and her Mohammadan Invaders*.

24. *Imperial Gazetteer of India*, Vol. xix, 1908, pp. 2, 3.

25. *Tamilian Antiquary*, Part I, p. 86.

26. Thurston, *Castes and Tribes of India*, Vol. v, p. 4. Marakkayar is now generally taken to mean boatmen, being derived from the Arabic 'Markab' or more probably the Tamil 'Marakkalam' both standing for 'boat' and 'kar' or 'karar' plural termination showing possession. It is interesting to know that the Singhalese called the Arab traders "Marak-kala-Minisu" meaning mariners or boatmen. This term throws some light on the origin of the word Marakkayar (See *Islamic Culture*, Vol. 19, 1945, p. 223).

desire of the Marakkayars to raise themselves in popular estimation. Their ancestors did not come from Cairo nor could their learning have been so well known among the Tamils as to win for them the name with this significance".²⁷ A strange and funny derivation of the term from the shape of the cap of Muslims like *marakkal* (மரக்கால்), a device to measure grain and from the assumption that they were so rich that they measured their wealth in *marakkal* is also given. In Kerala, the Christian converts (from lower classes such as Mukkuwas or Paravas) are generally called Margakkar or those who had been converted. One can easily detect the identical intonation of Margakkar and Marakkayar. Marakkayars are after all, converts to Islam.²⁸

For the term 'rowthen' also various derivations are given. According to Saletore the term 'Ravuta' stood for Maratha horseman.²⁹ These horsemen were employed during the time of the the Hoysalas.³⁰ Ferishta also comments on a ravut horseman.³¹ The Vijayanagar rulers also employed the ravutas in large numbers in military and civil administration.³² A flourishing horse trade between Arabia and South India is referred to by Marco Polo. Probably the word was later applied to the Muslim horse traders from Arabia and to some of the Muslims in general.³³ It is also possible that these horsemen after the fall of Vijayanagar migrated to the South and intermarried with the Muslims. Even now the

27. Qudir Hussain Khan, *South Indian Musalmans*, p. 23.

28. It is to be noted that the Marakkayars call the circumcision ceremony as markakkalyānam (மார்க்கக்கல்யாணம்).

29. Indian Historical Records Commission, Vol. xv. 1938. :p. 85; *Indian Antiquary*, Vol. LII, 1924, p. 75.

30. *Epigraphia Carnatica*, vii, p. 141; *Epigraphia Indica*, iv, p. 66.

31. Briggs, *op cit.* Vol. iii, p. 35.

32. *Epigraphia Carnatica*, iv, p. 124, xi, p. 119, x, p. 182.

33. Yet another interpretation is that the word 'rowth' is probably derived from the words 'ரவா' 'துதா'; 'ரவா' - king துதா-messenger. The word might have been used for the horsemen who carried the news from or to the King. In due course the word was used for Arab traders who carried horses with them from Arabia. For further details (*Tiruk-koyil*), திருக்கோயில், (August) ஆகஸ்ட், 1968, p. 512.

Telugu speaking Nāyakkans of South and the Muslims address each other in endearing terms. In praising Muruga, Arunagirinathar uses the term to mean a great warrior.⁸⁴ It is to be noted that when Lord Śiva came to the rescue of Mānikkavāsagar in the prison of the Pāṇḍya King, he came with horses in guise of a Muslim and even today to commemorate the occasion, a Muslim is employed in Meenākshisundarēswarar temple at Madurai.

The term *Coḷiya* was originally a territorial name, meaning an inhabitant of the *Coḷa* country.⁸⁵ It applied to people of all castes and religions,⁸⁶ But in due course Muslims alone were called by this term by the people of Ceylon and South-East Asia, the reason being that mostly Muslims went to these places for trade. Almost all the travellers in the medieval and modern periods refer to the Muslim traders as *Choolias*.⁸⁷ English records of the eighteenth century also call the Muslim traders from Coromandel coast as *Chulias*.⁸⁸

The term *Lebbai* is used as a general term for all the Tamil-speaking Muslims. But the Marakkayars seem to think that the *Lebbais* are inferior to them. The *Nawayats* (Muslims of the *Koṅkan* coast) consider the *Lebbais*, their inferiors and aver that they are the descendants of their domestic slaves and attribute their dark colour to their inter-marriage with the natives.⁸⁹ Probably the name is given to them by the natives from the Arabic particle (a modification of *Lubbeik*) corresponding with the English

34. 'மயிலேரும் ராவுத்தனே வெம்தூர் கொன்ற ராவுத்தனே.'

35. தொல்-சொல் 167, சோழிச்சி (F) women of *Coḷa* Country, நன். 276, மயிலைநாதர் உரை.

Nannūl, Mayilainathar Urai, 276.

It is to be noted that the Tamil-speaking people are called in Kerala and Mysore as *Koṅkans* (கொங்கன்) or people from *Koṅgunāḍu*. *Koṅkunāḍu* is co-terminous with *Kēraḷa* and *Mysore*.

36. 'சுருக்கவிழ்ந்த முன்குடுமிச் சோழியா'

—காளமேகம்.

Kālamēgam [*Kālamēgappulavar*].

37. *Hobson and Jobson*, p. 159.

38. *Diary and Consultation book*, 1734, p. 3.

39. Wilks, *Historical Sketches*, Vol. I, p. 243.

'here I am' indicating attention on being spoken to. One can agree with Mr. Casie Chetty when he says in his article that Lebbai is only the term used for the priest who officiates. In fact only in this sense the term is used by the Muslims.⁴⁰ and it accords with the Hebrew word 'levai' meaning priest.⁴¹ C. P. Brown says the word is merely a Tamil mispronunciation of Arabi.⁴²

In some of the inscriptions the word Anjuvannam occurs.⁴³ There are different views about the derivation Anjuvannathar. Some are of opinion that they are Jews.⁴⁴ Others think that it was a team of independent businessmen.⁴⁵ A Tamil work of the fourteenth century called Palasanthamālai (பலசந்தமாலை), refers to Anjuvannathar and some of the lines in it prove that they were none but Muslim traders.⁴⁶ The word Anjuvannam might have been derived from the Anjuman⁴⁷ (an association) in Arabic though Pandārattār thinks that it might indicate the five religious tenets of Islam.⁴⁸ Some scholars think it to be the name of a

40. *J.R.A.S.*, III, p. 338.

41. It may be of Hebrew origin. See *Tamil Lexicon*, Vol. VI, part i, 1934, p. 3441. It is used in the same sense (theologian) in Indonesia (*Encyclopaedia of Islam*, Vol. iv, p. 551).

42. *Hobson and Jobson*, p. 399.

43. *Travancore Archaeological Series*, Vol. ii, p. 67; *Ep. Ind.* Vol. iii, p. 62.

44. *Illustrated Weekly of India*, Sunday, March 2nd 1969.

45. *Travancore Archl. Series*, Vol. ii, p. 24,

46. வையாபுரி பிள்ளை, களவியற்காரிகை, 1931, pp. 17, 86, 132, 136, 169. Vaiyapuri Pillai, *Kalaviyar Kārikai*.

“இயவனராசன்கலுபதி தாமுதலெண்ணவந்தோர்

அயன்மிகுதாயைர் அஞ்சுவண்ணத்தவர்”

“ஏழ்பெருந்தேரங்கத்தியவனர்கள்-அல்லாவெனவந்து”

“கலைமதிவாய்மைக் கலுழ்பாவழிவருங் கற்பமைந்த தலைமையர் ஏழ்பெருந்தேரங்கமும் பெற்றவர்”

47. *Journal of the University of Bombay*, Arts, October, 1968, No. 76, Vol. xxxvii, p. 341.

48. சதாசிவப் பண்டாரத்தார், கல்வெட்டுக்களால் அறியப்படும் உண்மைகள் p. 23. (*Sadāsiva Pandārathār, Kalvettukkalāl Ariyappadum Unmaikal*, p. 23).

place.⁴⁹ It is important to note that the word occurs in several inscriptions of the Vijayanagar kings where some Muslim traders are stated to have belonged to the Hanjumana.⁵⁰ The term Hanjuman is used in the sense of a trade guild. That the Anjuvannathar were trading in the Cola port of Negapatam is clear from an old Tamil verse.⁵¹

The Muslim traders of Negapatam as successors of the Buddhist traders from Srivijaya who played an important role in the cultural contact between South India and their country played no less a role in the propagation of Islam in the Far East. Though tradition represents Islam as having been introduced into Sumatra from Arabia there is no historical basis for such a belief. All the pieces of evidence go to show that only from the South Indian Muslim traders the people of Sumatra derived their knowledge of the new faith.⁵² Most of the Muslims of Sumatra and other islands belong to the Shafia sect which is predominant

49. I.A., Vol. XLI, 1912, p. 174.

50. Panchamukhi R. S., *Kaikini inscription, Karnatak Inscriptions*, Vol. I, pp. 101, 102.

51. குடக்கினில் துரங்கமும் வடக்கினில் கலிங்கமும்
குணக்கினில் பசும்பொன்னும் குளித்ததெற்கிலாரமும்
அடிப்பரப்புடைக்கலந்தனே கவண்ணமாக வந்த
தஞ்சவண்ணமுந்தமைத்தறத்தின் வண்ணமானவூர்
கடற்கரைக்குவித்திடு சந்தனத்தை இந்துடன்
கலந்திரைக்கும் மந்தியைக்கனன்று முதவன்குலம்
புடைத்தற்கெழுந்துகை முறுக்கலும் இழக்கிவாய்
புக்கமுத்தை விட்டெறிந்து பூகமேறு நாகையே ”.

52. Arnold, *Preaching of Islam*, p. 366. “The provenance of Malaysian Islam is in fact South Indian J.R.A.S., *Malaysian branch*, Vol. xxiv, 1951, Part I, Article ‘The coming of Islam to the East’. It has been established that an old type of South Indian water vessel known in Tamil as Kendi (with spout) is in use by the Malays and called by the Tamil name. “I would even hazard the suggestion that it is largely owing to the commercial activities of the Lebbaies and their ancestors that the Malays of the mainland were first converted from Shamanism to Hindnism and then from Hinduism to what they call in the phraseology of curiously mingled derivation to Agama Island (*Tamil Culture*, Vol. IV, No. 4, October, 1957, p. 333),

on the Coromandel coast. The Muslims of Coromandel coast were trading successfully in almost all the South-East Asian countries. The close association with these countries is reflected in their dress, habits and other things. The lungis worn by the males and the chequered clothing of the females and the manner of their wearing them are instances. The linguistic evidence of the South Indian origin of Indonesian form of Islam is the name for theologian, Lebbai. It is used in the same sense in Sumatra.

There is a view strongly supported by Dutch scholars that Gujarat was the provenance of Malayasian Islam.⁵³ This theory can be set aside easily. It should be noted that it was not until 1298 that Cambay fell into Muslim hands. If we are to believe that Gujarat was the centre from which the first Muslim missionaries made their way to the Indies we would have in fact to establish that Islam was flourishing there before 1298. We know that Gujarat had been invaded by Muslim armies in 1024, 1178, 1197 A. D. but these had been grandiose raids for plunder after which the marauders had withdrawn and the Hindu kings of Gujarat continued in power until 1297 when they were finally defeated by Alauddin Khilji and replaced by a line of Muslim governors. Of course the Dutch theory attributes the mission to Sumatra, to traders and it is not impossible that there were Muslim merchants in Gujarat before 1297. Marco Polo's observations of Cambay in 1293 however do not support such an assumption. "This also is an extensive kingdom situated towards the West, governed by its own king who pays no tribute to any other, and having its proper language. The people are idolators (Hindus).....the trade carried on, is very considerable".⁵⁴ From 1297 to 1401 Gujarat was ruled by lieutenants of the Sultan of Delhi. Ibn Battuta's accounts of Cambay indicate a considerable change from what Marco Polo had seen 32 years before. At the time of Ibn Battuta's visit in 1326 the city of Cambay was "one of the finest there is, in regard to the excellence of its construction and the architecture of its mosques.

53. *Journal of Malayan Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society*, Vol. xxiv, 1951, p. 128.

54. Book III, Chapter III.

The reason is that the majority of its inhabitants are foreign merchants who are always building fine mansions and magnificent mosques and vie with one another in doing so.”⁵⁵ The most significant characteristic of Islam in both Indonesia and South India as pointed out by Arnold is a common adherence to the Shafi school of the Sunni sect. When Ibn Battuta visited Sumatra in 1345 he describes the reigning Sultan Malik-al-Zahir as following the Shafi school, taking a lively interest in the legal discussion of his theologians which suggests that this Shafi affiliation is primitive. On the other hand the Muslims of Gujarat are not characteristically Shafiiyah, but Sunnis of the Hanafiah sect or else Shiah.

According to two Malayan traditions embodied in *Hikayat Raja Raja Pasai*,⁵⁶ and *Sejarah Melayu*⁵⁷ the Prophet gave instructions to his companions to go to “Maabri” and meet an ascetic and go to Samudra (Sumatra) to convert the people. They set sail under the captaincy of Sheikh Ismail and met the king of Maabri Sultan Mohamed. The Sultan abdicated the throne and went with the companions of the Prophet to Sumatra. He was the ascetic meant by the Prophet. At Samudra the party met Merah Silu who was the chief. The ascetic converted him to Islam.

What is noted as ‘Maabri’ is nothing but Maabar. The Malay story of the Sultan of Maabri who left the kingdom to preach Islam in Sumatra looks very much like an adaptation of the tradition of the immortal Perumal of Cranganore related in the *Tuhfat-ul-Mujahiddin*. The whole of the *Hikayat Raja Raja Pasai* is coloured by a South Indian background. Tamil Muslim merchants, Jugglers and Pujalists feature in the tradition. So the South Indian and particularly the Coromandel provenance of Indonesian and Malaysian Islam is unquestionable.

55. Ibn Battuta - *Travels in Asia and Africa*, 1325-1354, Translated and selected by H.A.R. Gibb, London, 1929, Vol. II, p. 229.

56. *Hikavat Raja Raja Pasai* - edited by I. P. Meed. *J.R.A.S. Singapore Branch*, No. 66, 1914.

57. *Sejarah Melayu* - edited by Richard Winstedt, *J.R.A.S. Malayan Branch*, Vol. 16, pt. III, 1938.

The advent of the Europeans in India was the beginning of the fall of the Arab trade. The discovery of the sea route to India dealt a severe blow to the Arab monopoly of the Eastern trade. The Europeans, particularly the Portuguese called the Muslims, moors.⁵⁸ The word moor as used by them referred to religion only and implied no nationality. When Lodovico Varthema visited Negapatam in the early sixteenth century he found many busy Muslim merchants,⁵⁹ but a few Christians—the thin end of a big wedge.⁶⁰ As we come to the later half of the sixteenth century we find the Portuguese well established in Negapatam and the Muslims reduced to second class traders. The fall of the Arab trade in Coromandel coast and the rise of the Portuguese is beautifully portrayed by Zynuddhin's *Tuhfat-ul-Mujahiddin*, a sixteenth century work. "The Muslim merchants were humbled and not permitted to trade in all merchandise except in goods for which the Portuguese had a little interest..... The Muslims were forbidden to do business in these articles (cinnamon, clove and other spices which yielded high profit) and to undertake sea voyages for trade purposes to the Arabian coast, Malagna, Ashi, Danāsri and other places".⁶¹ Though the Muslims stood diminished in glory

58. The Portuguese called them Moors perhaps because of the similarity of religion and some racial traits with those of their old enemies in the Iberian Peninsula.

59. Varthema, *op. cit.*, p. 72.

60. The statement of Varthema is attested by Barbosa and Correa. See Barbosa II, pp. 125, 129; Correa as quoted in *Hobson and Jobson*, 1968, New Edition. It is to be noted that Barbosa called the moors or Muslims of Negapatam, the 'natives of the land', Barbosa, II, p. 124.

61. Nainar, S.M.H., *Tuhfat-al-Mujahiddin*, p. 81. The Portuguese came as the deadliest enemies of Islam and the Arab and, it is a fact of history that the Ceylon Muslims were forbidden by the Portuguese to hold lands and attempts were made suppress public exercise of their religion. The fate of the Muslims of Negapatam was no better (See Arnold, T. W., *Encyclopaedia of Islam* Vol. I, p. 839). The British who occupied the island of Ceylon in 1796 were slow to abandon this policy. It was only in 1832 that the moors of Ceylon were allowed to hold lands in Colombo (See *Islamic Culture*, Vol. 19, 1945, p. 237). The prosperity of the Muslims of Negapatam was intimately connected with their prosperity

they were carrying on trade in certain articles not monopolised by the Portuguese. Even when Nieuhoff visited Negapatam in 1660 the Muslims were busy and important traders.⁶² But the defeated and disgruntled Muslims became ubiquitous in South-East Asian countries and carried on trade clandestinely and scuttling the trade of the Europeans in whatever way they could. Their ubiquity and business acumen draws out the angry words of Bowry, a traveller of the seventeenth century. "The Choliyars are a people that range into all kingdoms and countries in Asia and are a subtle and roguish people of Mohamedan sect, but no very great observers of many of his laws. Their native land is upon the southernmost part of the Coromandel coast viz. Portonovo, Pullicherrie, Negapatam etc. They do learn to write and speak of the Eastern languages whereby they very much delude the people and not a little cheat them. They are likewise a very great hindrance to us, for wherever these rascals be, we cannot sell any goods to a native of the country, but they creep in along with them and tell them in private what our goods cost upon the coast or in Surat or Bengala or elsewhere which doth many Christians a great prejudice..... Batavia, Achin, Queda Jahore, Syan and many other places they crept into".⁶³ Because of the concentration of Muslims at Negapatam and Nagore and other places nearby the eighteen century English records call these ports the Moor ports,⁶⁴ and speak of the Muslims as Choulia merchants.⁶⁵ During the period of the British, the Muslims of Negapatam and Nagore retrieved their positions, because, unlike the Portuguese and the Dutch the English company was seriously engaged in acquiring territories in India and establishing an empire. They did not bother about the small trade, by their

in Ceylon and other places in South-East Asia. Naturally when they languished in Ceylon, those in Negapatam languished with them.

62. Nieuhoff, *A Collection of Voyages and Travels*, Vol. II, p. 210.

63. Thomas Bowry, (*A Geographical account of countries round the Bay of Bengal* (1669-1679) Second Series, pp. 257, 258, Vol. xii.

64. *Diary and Consultation*, 1753, p. 154.

65. *Diary and Consultation*, 1734, p. 3.

Standards carried on by the Muslims. A letter from Richardson to the Board of Trade dated 25th June 1813 says "The trade with the east is conducted chiefly by the Chouliar merchants residing at the port of Nagore and on vessels built there of the burden from one hundred to four hundred tons."⁶⁶

Till recently the Marakkayars were very rich, trading with almost all South-East Asian countries especially Malaysia.⁶⁷ There has been a steady fall in their trading activities with the appearance of national consciousness of the people of South-East Asia and their slow expulsion from these countries.⁶⁸ Most of them went to the South-East Asian countries as labourers, but because of their enterprising nature many of them turned businessmen and amassed wealth. Even now in Malaysia the most prominent Negapatam Marakkayar is Dato Haji Ali. The title Dato is a rare distinction conferred on a foreigner. But gone are those days. Traditionally some of the Markkayars were smugglers.⁶⁹ Though the rich Muslims of Negapatam lived comfortably, the poor Muslims lived in squalor and the town was overcrowded with them. The British records attribute the cholera that was prevailing there in 1818 to their filthiness of habit.⁷⁰ A detailed account of Marakkayar marriage custom is given in Thurston's *Castes and Tribes of South India* Vol. V. But the most prominent among them and the one that reminds us their contact with West coast is the custom of the bridegroom going and living with the bride in her house. This custom prevails among the Muslims of the West coast. Trade contact between the East and West coast from early times is a recorded fact. In

66. T.D.R. Vol. 3337, p. 45.

67. In Tanjore District, the percentage of people (30.19%) mostly Muslims who know Malay language is more than in any other district.—*Census of India*, 1961, - Thanjavur, Vol. I, p. 11.

68. The increase of the Muslim population in Tanjore District in recent years can be attributed to their coming home from the South-East Asian countries. See *District Census Handbook*. Thanjavur, Vol. I, p. 9.

69. T.D.R. Vol. 3336, p. 38.

70. T.D.R. Vol. 3283, p. 85.

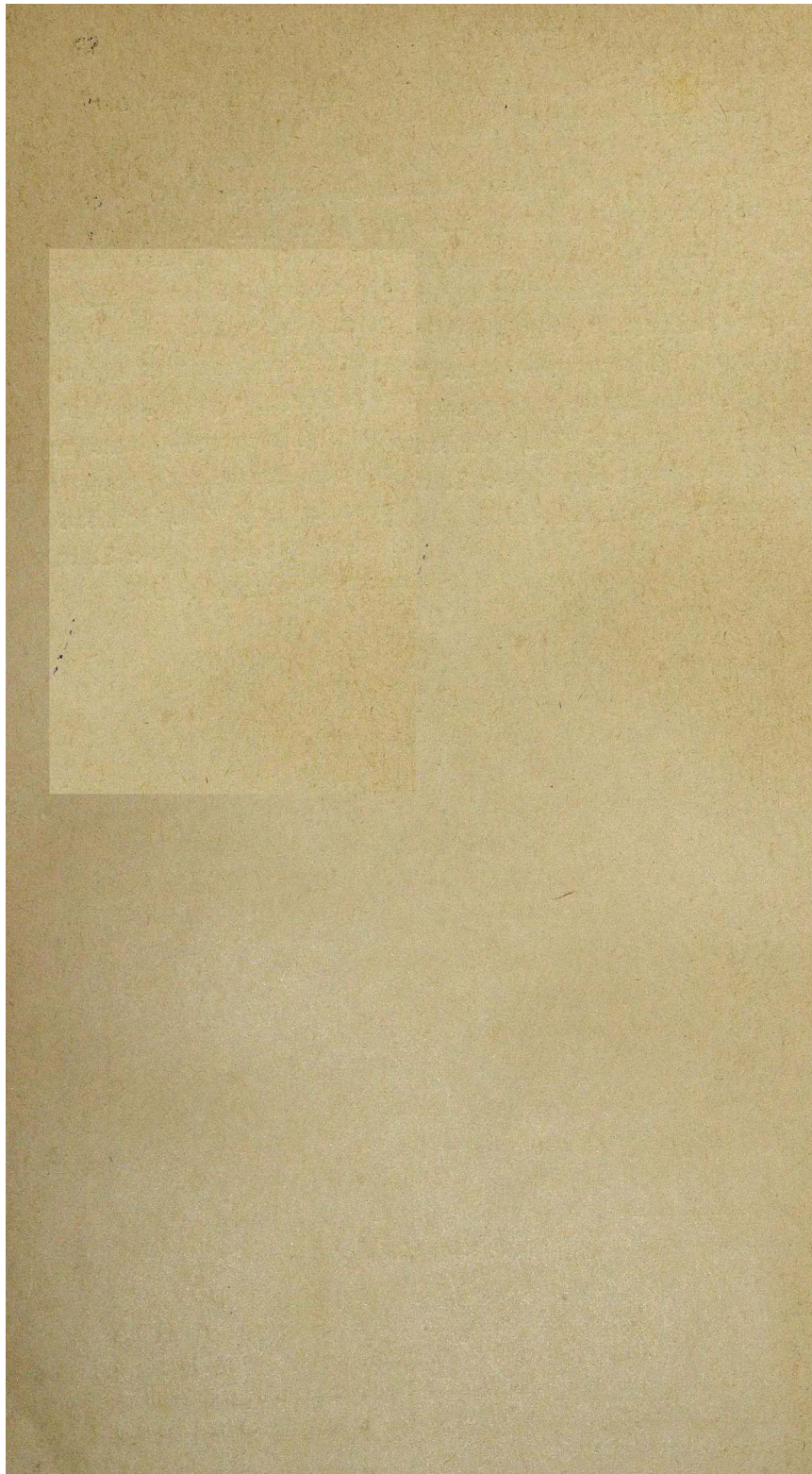
fact according to Moplah tradition the Marakkayars were originally marine merchants of Cochin.⁷¹

The Rowthers of Negapatam are still prosperous. Many of them are butchers. Some of them have been betel growers for a few generations.⁷² They are sometimes called Therkathiars because of a tradition that most of them migrated from the South⁷³ and are considered slightly lower in social stratification than the Marakkayars. There are separate mosques for Rowthers. There was a rift between the two groups over the appointment of a *hathib* in a mosque. The Rowthers were led by Sheik Dawood and that was the origin of the Rowther palli or mosque called Kamalia Jamia Maszid in 1936.

71. Nambiar O.K., *The Kunjalis, admirals of Calicut*, p. 59.

72. T.D.R. Vol. 3264, p. 127.

73. The tradition is that there was a great famine in Tinnevely and the people migrated to Tanjore District, the Muslims subsequently to Negapatam and Nagore. It was during this famine that the great philanthropist Seethakkathi gave away his wealth in charity to assuage the distress of the people.



ENDOWMENTS IN EARLY TAMIL NĀDU

BY

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This paper seeks to portray the nature and other broad aspects of religious and charitable endowments in the Tamil Nādu of early times, as gleaned from the inscriptions. It attempts, especially, to bring into sharp focus the nature and aspects of land endowments.

The inscriptions contribute a good deal of data for unravelling our ancient past and glorious traditions. It is no exaggeration to say that but for epigraphy our knowledge of the ancient history of our country would have been very poor. Tamil Nādu has a very valuable wealth of epigraphical material. It is estimated that there are over 25,000 inscriptions and new finds add on to this big number. Besides their inestimable value for the portrayal of the general history of the region, their value for the portrayal of the social and economic life of ancient times is also very great.

It is true that most of the inscriptions are generally speaking, records of gifts of lands, lamps, sheep, gold, etc., to temples. This was so because in ancient times the life of the people mostly centred round the temples. However there are also records of larger gifts and especially when they are made by the ruling monarchs of the times, they are of special interest for social and economic studies. They throw valuable light on economic and social data like taxes remitted in favour of donees and privileges conferred on them and other administrative details. With the knowledge they contribute and with the aid of other materials socio-economic pictures of early times may well be painted.

This paper aims to portray broadly the solicitude of individuals and the State in Tamil Nādu of early times for the

welfare of temples, institutions and individuals. Most of the inscriptions record endowments (donations) made by kings or their officers or by private individuals to temples, *mutts*, religious communities, educational institutions, etc. A study of them reveals that of all kinds of endowments, *land* was apparently the most favoured kind. The reason for this is not far to seek. Land is a very potential economic entity. It provides money, corn, water and cow-pens and therefore a donor who makes a land endowment automatically becomes a donor of all those things.

Before proceeding to analyse the various kinds of endowments, it will be useful to see briefly the prime factors that had motivated people to make many and varied religious and charitable endowments. It is no exaggeration to say that the great bulk of the epigraphic materials that have come down to us was not prompted by any desire to record the past history, but by the religious side of the character of our fore-fathers. It is embodied in the *dharmasāstras* that in the *kaliyuga*, *dāna* (gift) should be preferred to *yajña* (sacrifice for merit). This *dharmasāstric* injunction had been the prime factor that motivated people to make endowment on every possible occasion. This also goes to explain the existence of a very large number of inscriptions which record endowments of various kinds. Apart from endowments made voluntarily or in fulfilment of vows, there were also endowments which were forced by the authorities to be made by individuals in expiation of the sins committed by them. An epigraph¹ from Siyamaṅgalam in the North Arcot District enumerates an interesting account of such an endowment. A certain individual by mistake had shot with an arrow another man of his own village. The *Nattavar* and the *Sambuvaroyar*, who assembled together to hear the case, decided that the culprit need not die for an offence committed through inadvertence but should provide for the burning of a lamp in the temple of Tunandar. The man accordingly endowed to the temple 16 cows for burning a lamp.

1. See *South Indian Inscriptions*, Volume VII, inscription number 68.

For purposes of this paper, we may broadly classify the various endowments into four categories, viz., (i) *endowments made for temples and matters connected with them*, (ii) *endowments made for religious institutions*, (iii) *endowments made for charitable purposes* and (iv) *endowments made for educational institutions*.

Endowments made for temples and matters connected with them :

Generally, endowments made to temples were in the form of lands, money or cattle. They were made for various purposes like burning lamps, conducting worship (including specified services and festivals), feeding of ascetics and others and, keeping the temple premises in good repair.

Epigraphs record that sheep, cows and bulls were endowed to temples. It is interesting to note that for furnishing the ghee necessary for burning a perpetual lamp, (*nundhā viḷakku*), a unit of 96 sheep was considered necessary. In the case of cows, a unit consisted of 32 numbers and occasionally a bull was also added on to the unit. The cattle so endowed was known by the special appellation - *Sāva-mūva-p-pēr-ādu*. The term meant that the cattle had neither death nor senility. This implied that the special number was regularly maintained by the replacement of the dead and old ones with the young. Some of the inscriptions from Madurāntakam in the Chingleput District provide good illustrations of records of gifts of cattle for lamps. An inscription relating to the period of Kulottuṅga I (1070-1120 A.D.) records a gift of 32 cows and one bull for a lamp in the temple at *Madurāntaka - Chaturvēdimaṅgalam*. Another inscription belonging to the period of Vikrāma Choḷa (1118-1135 A.D.) refers to a gift of 96 sheep for a lamp by *Sambuvaroyar*.

Gifts of gold were also made to temples. For instance, an inscription² in the Tiruvālaṅgādu temple (Chingleput District) relating to the period of the Pallava King Nripatungadēva records

2. No. 460 of 1905 The number denotes the number of the inscription copied in the particular year and published in the *Annual Report on South-Indian Epigraphy* (A.R.E.).

that Queen Kāḍavan-Māḍeviyār made a gift of 108 *kaḷaṇjus* of gold to the temple. Endowments were also made for the conduct of special services in temples by kings on the days which had their natal stars and of their spouses. In the name of the sovereigns, sometimes even their subordinates made such endowments.

The chanting of *Tiruppadiḡams* (sacred hymns) before deities was a regular and important feature of worship in temples and therefore endowments were made for this specific purpose also. The references to such endowments date back to the days of Parāntaka I (907-955 A.D.).³ Epigraphs record that endowments were also made for the recitation of *Vēdas* and other sacred works in the temple during worship.⁴ There are also records which show that specific endowments were made for the feeding of pilgrims and *tapasvins*, who frequented temples. This practice of feeding appears to be one of the regular features of temple management in those days and for the purpose, mostly lands were endowed.

The inscriptions of Tamil Nādu reveal that *land endowments* constituted the most substantial part of all the varied types of endowments made to temples. Small and large units of agricultural lands were endowed to temples for various purposes. The endowment sometimes consisted of a whole village or a number of villages. For instance, the famous Tiruvālaṅḡadu Copper Plate Grant of Rājēndrachōḷa I (1012 - 1044 A.D.), registers the grant of the village Paḷaiyanūr to the Śiva temple at Tiruvālaṅḡadu in the Chingleput District. Generally, the families who lived on such *Dēvadāna* lands and held house-sites and house-gardens were in some way or other connected with the services of the temple. The grant of the Kuram village in the Chingleput District which acquired the name *Paramēsvaraṁḡalam* may be cited as an illustration in point.⁵ Generally, when endowments of lands or villages were made, the donors got them exempted from taxes also. When endowments were made by the State, they were made as tax-free

3. See for instance, No. 176 of 1923 and No. 349 of 1918.

4. No. 123 of 1926.

5. See S.I.I., Vol. I.

gifts. An inscription⁶ from Tiruttani belonging to the period of Aparājītavarman (879-897 A.D.) relates how Nambi Appi, the builder of the Tiruttani Śiva temple, while endowing the God therein with 1,000 *kuḷis* of land, also freed it perpetually from land-tax by paying the *Sabha* in gold.

A study of land endowments in early times also shows that even among them there were a considerable number of varieties. Each particular variety of land endowment was for a specific purpose and it carried a special appellation. The various kinds of land endowments, their brief description and the reference number to the inscriptions wherein an illustration of the particular type of land endowment may be seen are summarized below.⁷

Serial No.	The particular type of Land Endowment	Brief description	Reference ⁸
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
1.	<i>Adukkalai-p-puṇam</i> (அடுக்கலைப்புறம்)	Land endowed for the kitchen expenses of the temple.	S.I.I., V. 435.
2.	<i>Amāvāsai-p-puṇam</i> (அமாவாசைப்புறம்)	Land endowed for conducting festival on new moon days.	S.I.I., III, 31.
3.	<i>Ambala-p-puṇam</i> (அம்பலப்புறம்)	Land endowed to meet the expenses of the temple hall.	S.I.I., III, 150.

6. No. 435 of 1905.

7. The account given is adequately representative. It however does not purport to be exhaustive.

8. The references are to the *Volumes of the South Indian Inscriptions* (S.I.I.), published by the *Archaeological Survey of India*. The references relate to the inscriptions wherein illustrations of the particular types of land endowment may be found.

9. The term 'puṇam' is of special interest here. It may be taken to be more or less the same as *pangu*, *kani*, *patti*, or *vritti*.

(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
4.	<i>Aval-amudu-p-puram</i> (அவலமுதுப்புறம்)	Land endowed to the temple for the offering of <i>aval</i> (rice flakes) to the deity.	S.I.I., IV, 51.
5.	<i>Avi-p-puram</i> (அவிப்புறம்)	Land endowed for performing sacrifices (<i>homa-avi</i>) in the temple.	S.I.I., VI, 356.
6.	<i>Karrai-p-puram</i> (கற்றளிப்புறம்)	Land endowed to the temple for converting it into a stone temple.	(No. 45 of 1928/29).
7.	<i>Melukku-p-puram</i> (மெழுக்குப்புறம்)	Land endowed for smearing and cleaning the temple with cow dung.	S.I.I., V, 572.
or	<i>Molukku-p-puram</i> (மொழுக்குப்புறம்)		S.I.I., XIII, 225.
8.	<i>Nattuva-p-puram</i> (நட்டுவப்புறம்)	Land endowed for the maintenance of dance masters in the temple.	S.I.I., V, 278.
9.	<i>Nimanda-p-puram</i> (நிமந்தப்புறம்)	Land endowed for a specific service in the temple.	S.I.I., V, 240.
10.	<i>Olukku-p-puram</i> (ஒழுக்கவிப்புறம்)	Land endowed for meeting the expenses for the usual daily offering of food in a temple.	S.I.I., V, 572.
11.	<i>Pudukku-p-puram</i> (புதுக்குப்புறம்)	Land assigned for renovation of the temple.	S.I.I., III, 4; S.I.I., XIII, 170.

(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
12.	<i>Pūntotta-p-puṛam</i> (பூந்தோட்டப்புறம்)	(same as <i>Tirunanda- vana-p-puṛam</i>).	S.I.I., V, 435.
13.	<i>Sandiviḷakku-p-puṛam</i> (சந்திவிளக்குப்புறம்)	Land endowed for burning evening lights in the temple.	S.I.I., VIII, 886.
14.	<i>Sānti-p-puṛam</i> (சாந்திப்புறம்)	Land endowed for performing temple rituals.	S.I.I., VIII, 600.
15.	<i>Satti-p-puṛam</i> (சத்திப்புறம்)	Land endowed for <i>Sakthi</i> or <i>Durga</i> temple.	
16.	<i>Sivigai-p-puṛam</i> (சிவிகைப்புறம்)	Land endowed for the maintenance of the palanquin service in the temple.	
17.	<i>Srikoil-puṛam</i> (ஸ்ரீகோயில்புறம்)	Land endowed for a temple.	S.I.I., V, 855.
18.	<i>Tattaḷi-puṛam</i> (தட்டழிபுறம்)	Land endowed for playing a musical instrument so called at the time of <i>Sri- bali</i> .	S.I.I., VIII, 629.
19.	<i>Tēvar-puṛam</i> (தேவர்புறம்)	Land endowed to a temple.	S.I.I., VIII, 616.
20.	<i>Tiri-p-puṛam</i> (திரிப்புறம்)	Land endowed ex- clusively for the supply of <i>tiri</i> (wick) for the lamps in the temple.	
21.	<i>Tiru- amudu-p-puṛam</i> (திருஅமுதுப்புறம்)	Land assigned for food offerings to the	S.I.I., VI, 19.

(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
	so also <i>Amudupaḍi-p-puṛam</i> (அமுதுபடிப்புறம்)	deity in the temple.	
22.	<i>Tiru-arttasāma-p-puṛam</i> (திருஅர்த்தசாமப்புறம்)	Land set apart for conducting the mid-night worship in the temple.	S.I.I., VIII, 304.
23.	<i>Tiruchchengaḷunir-p-puṛam</i> (திருச்செங்குநீர்ப்புறம்)	Land endowed for flower offerings to the deity in the temple.	S.I.I., VIII, 93.
24.	<i>Tiruchchennaḍai-p-puṛam</i> (திருச்சென்னடைப்புறம்)	Land endowed for provision of food offerings to the deity in the temple.	S.I.I., VIII, 692.
25.	<i>Tirukkaikotti-p-puṛam</i> (திருக்கைகொட்டிப்புறம்)	Land endowed for the service of singing groups such as <i>Tiruppadigam-pāduvar</i> who recited the <i>Thēvaram</i> hymns in groups and clapped their hands during the process.	
26.	<i>Tirumaḍaippaḷḷi-p-puṛam</i> (same as <i>Adukkaḷai-p-puṛam</i>) (திருமடைப்பள்ளிப்புறம்)		S.I.I., VII, 760.
27.	<i>Tirumañjana-p-puṛam</i> (திருமஞ்சனப்புறம்)	Land endowed for the sacred bath of the deity in the temple.	S.I.I., V., 649.
28.	<i>Tirumālai-p-puṛam</i> (திருமலைப்புறம்)	Land endowed for provision of garlands for the temple.	S.I.I., VII, 761.

(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
29.	<i>Tirumandirappōnaga-p-puṛam</i> (திருமந்திரப்போனகப்புறம்)	Land endowed for making daily food offering in the temple.	S.I.I., VIII, 130.
30.	<i>Tirunandavana-p-puṛam</i> (திருந்தவனப்புறம்)	Land endowed for the maintenance of a flower garden for the temple.	S.I.I., IV, 222
31.	<i>Tirunandāvilakku-p-puṛam</i> (திருந்தாவிளக்குப்புறம்)	Land assigned for maintaining ever-burning lamps in the temple.	S.I.I., VIII, 124.
32.	<i>Tiruñāyirṟukkiḷamai-p-puṛam</i> திருஞாயிற்றுக்கிழமைப்புறம்)	Land endowed for Sunday services in the temple.	S.I.I., VII, 919.
33.	<i>Tirūdai-p-puṛam</i> (திருஓடைப்புறம்)	Land endowed for maintaining ōdai, for supplying temple requirements.	S.I.I., VIII, 44.
34.	<i>Tirubali-p-puṛam</i> (திருபலிப்புறம்)	Land endowed to meet the expenses of <i>Sri-bali</i> ceremony in the temple.	S.I.I., V, 860.
35.	<i>Tiruppāvā dai-p-puṛam</i> (திருப்பாவாடைப்புறம்)	Land endowed for providing a heap of boiled rice spread on a cloth as an offering to the deity.	S.I.I., XII, 172.
36.	<i>Tiruppanikāra-p-puṛam</i> (திருப்பணிகாரப்புறம்)	Land endowed for providing cakes in the temple.	S.I.I., XII, 160.

(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
37.	<i>Tiruppōnaga-p-puram</i> (திருப்போனகப்புறம்)	Land endowed for providing food offerings in the temple.	S.I.I., VII.
38.	<i>Tiru-unnāḷikai-p-puram</i> (திருஉண்ணாழிகைப்புறம்)	Land endowed for the maintenance of the sanctum sanctorium of a temple.	S.I.I., III.
39.	<i>Tiruvilā-p-puram</i> (திருவிழாப்புறம்)	Land set apart for meeting the expenses of celebrating festivals in temples.	S.I.I., VI, 31.
40.	<i>Tiruvilakku-p-puram</i> (திருவிளக்குப்புறம்)	(same as <i>Tirunandavilakku-p-puram</i> .)	S.I.I., V, 650 ; S.I.I., VII, 761.
41.	<i>Urūṇi-p-puram</i> (ஊருணிப்புறம்)	Land endowed for the purposes of watertanks and wells.	
42.	<i>Valipāttu-p-puram</i> (வழிபாட்டுப்புறம்)	Land assigned for the daily worship and services in the temple.	

Generally, endowments were under the control of temple authorities. Sometimes, *mutts* attached to the temples were also made to look after endowments. An inscription from Kāvēripakkam (North Arcot District) relating to the period of the Pallava King Nripatūṅgavarman (855-896 A. D.) records that the gift of gold for lamps in the temple was placed in the charge of the *madathu-satta-p-perumakkal*.¹⁰ Occasionally, private persons who were connected with or were under the control of

10. See S.I.I., Vol. xii, 79.

temple authorities were also placed in charge of endowments. For instance, a very late Pallava inscription¹¹ records that the cloth merchants of Srikanthapuram were held responsible for looking after a *Dēvadāna*. Most probably it was their keen interest in the temple relating to the *Dēvadāna* that had prompted their being placed in charge of the *Dēvadāna* instead of the usual Village Assembly.

Endowments made for religious institutions:

Though religious institutions like *mutts* (monasteries) were generally attached to temples and shared their property, they also did receive separate endowments. Epigraphs reveal that considerable endowments were made to *mutts* and other religious institutions in early Tamil Nādu. The earliest inscriptions in Tamil Nādu are those which are found incised in *Brahmi* characters on the caves or caverns in hills. These have been deciphered as registering the endowment of such caves to some religious recluses of either the Jaina or the Buddhist faith. Epigraphs show that most of the important *mutts* of those days have been recipients of donations and endowments. The *Saivaite Mutt* of Tirumēṇṇālī at Kāñchipuram and the *Mutt* for the *Kalamukha* sect at Kodumbāḷur may be cited as illustrations of a Pallava and a Chola *Mutt* in Tamil Nādu, which had received endowments. The Tirumēṇṇālī inscription¹² of Dantivarman (795 - 845 A. D.) is the earliest Pallava inscription in which there is a record about a *mutt* attached to a temple. Under the Pallava reign, *mutts* received considerable encouragement. During the days of the Cholas and the Pāndyas, a number of new *mutts* were established. The Chola inscriptions of the tenth century reveal that *Mutts* played a very important role in the cultural life of the people. Besides controlling temple affairs and providing facilities to devotees, they served as great centres of learning. There are inscriptional references which show that the Vijayanagar rulers also patronised *mutts*; for instance, they had made grants to the *Kāmakōti*

11. No. 303 of 1901.

12. No. 89 of 1921.

Peeḍam Saṅkarachārya Mutt at Kāñcheepuram. Thus, epigraphs show that *mutts* had been the recipients of endowments from most of the important dynasties that had ruled over Tamil Nādu.

The following table¹³ gives the nomenclature of land endowments specially made for religious institutions :

Serial No. (1)	The particular type of Land Endowment (2)	Brief description (3)	Reference (4)
1.	<i>Kanimada-p-puṛam</i> (கனிமடப்புறம்)	Land endowed for the expenses of <i>mutts</i> .	S.I.I., VII, 109.
2.	<i>Tirumada-p-puṛam</i> (திருமடப்புறம்)	Land set apart for the maintenance of a <i>mutt</i> .	S.I.I., VII, 319.
3.	<i>Tiruvidimada-p-puṛam</i> (திருவிதிமடப்புறம்)	Land endowed for the maintenance of <i>mutts</i> .	S.I.I., VII, 97 and 761.

Endowments made for charitable purposes :

There are a number of references in epigraphs about endowments made for charitable purposes. The charitable endowments made specifically for reducing poverty or alleviating distress may be divided into two broad groups - *unorganised charity* and *organised charity*. Gifts made to individuals on their asking for them or on the initiative of the donors themselves may be placed in the first group, and gifts made to institutions which are wholly or partly for helping the poor may be brought under the second group. As an illustration of unorganised charity may be mentioned the gifts made to Brahmins about which there are a number of inscriptional references. It is interesting to note that both in the granting and receiving of gifts certain standards had been prescribed. For instance, it was enjoined that the Brahmin

13. The list is illustrative but not exhaustive.

who received a gift was to be one who to keep up his spiritual purity confined himself to alms alone. "The Brahmaṇa who forsakes rules for receiving gifts becomes a monkey and the giver becomes a foul-scented jackal in the burning ground". There were a number of forms of gift like the *gō-dāna* and *hēmagarbha*. Epigraphs show that it was the rulers in particular, who took much delight in granting gifts.

Organised charity, consisted of provisions made for the lodging, feeding, clothing or nursing of the needy through institutions such as temples, mutts, *chatirams* (rest-houses), etc. The gifts made mainly consisted of lands, money and remission of taxes in favour of the charity. The *modus operandi* by which some gifts were made is interesting. For instance, one method was "to set apart the grain consumed by each family in one day in the year" for charitable institutions.

Among institutions which performed considerable charitable functions, the temple was the foremost. The distribution of food in the temple for the ascetics, the devotees and the poor was considered as one of its normal functions. There are a number of epigraphic references about gifts made to temples for the feeding of the ascetics and others. The charitable services rendered by temples were not just these alone; the temples sometimes functioned in a big way. There were even hospitals attached to temples as for instance at Tirumukkūḍal in the Chingleput District. The epigraphic reference¹⁴ about this hospital tells us that it had provision for fifteen beds.

Of all kinds of gifts made for charitable purposes, the kind most favoured was, as may be expected, *land*. The following table summarises the type of land endowments made for charitable purposes.

14. No. 182 of 1915,
B-15

Serial No.	The particular type of land endowment	Brief description
(1)	(2)	(3)
1.	<i>Akkirasalai-p-puṛam</i> (அக்கிரசாலப்புறம்)	Land endowed for providing a feeding house for Brahmins.
2.	<i>Sattira-p-puṛam</i> (சத்திரப்புறம்)	Land endowed for maintaining a choultry.
3.	<i>Dāna-p-puṛam</i> (தானப்புறம்)	Land endowed for the maintenance of charity.
4.	<i>Tannirppandal-puṛam</i> (தண்ணீர்ப்பந்தல்புறம்)	Land assigned for the provision of drinking water to pilgrims and others.

Endowments made for educational institutions :

Many are the epigraphs which speak about endowments made for the promotion of learning. In olden times, in temples and *mutts*, besides the provision for regular instruction for Brahmins in some of the institutions, generally there was scope for popular education in a limited way in most of the institutions. In many temples recitations and expositions of the epics and the *purāṇas* were regularly held. The inscriptions from Tiruvorriyur (Chingleput District), for instance, record about the recital and teaching of *Bharata*, *Prabhakara* (*Mimāṃsa*), *Purāṇa*, etc. It is interesting to note that apart from sacred literature, the subjects taught sometimes, also included astrology and *Vyākaraṇa*. Popular religious instruction was also sought to be given through the recitation of Tamil hymns before deities at stated times. There are a number of epigraphs dating back to the days of Parāntaka Choḷa I (907-955 A.D.), which record about endowments made for the recitation of *Tiruppadiḡams* and *Tiruvāymoḷi*. Rājārāja I (985-1016 A.D.) appears to have systematised this practice. There is a reference to a *Dēvāranāyakam* (apparently, a Superintendent of *Dēvāram*) in an epigraph of Rājendra 1 (1012-1044 A.D.) which goes to indicate that a separate Department existed for the supervision and control of this service in temples.

The following are some of the types of endowments made for the recitation of sacred Tamil hymns and the *vedas* in the temples :

Serial No. (1)	The particular type of Land Endowment (2)	Brief description (3)	Reference (4)
1.	<i>Sri-rudrāyaṇa-puṇam</i> (ஸ்ரீருத்ராயண புறம்)	Land granted for reciting <i>Sri-rudra</i> in the temple.	S.I.I., V, 432.
2.	<i>Tirujñāna-p-puṇam</i> (திருஞ்ஞானப்புறம்)	Land endowed for meeting the expenses of singing sacred hymns in the temple.	S.I.I., V, 421.
3.	<i>Tiruvōtusāma-puṇam</i> (திருவோதுசாமப்புறம்)	Land endowed for reciting <i>sāma-vēda</i> in the temple.	S.I.I., V, 271.
4.	<i>Tiruppaḷḷiyēḷuchchi-p-puṇam</i> (திருப்பள்ளியெழுச்சிப்புறம்)	Land granted for singing <i>Tiruppaḷḷiyēḷuchchi</i> in the temple.	S.I.I., XII, 132.
5.	<i>Tiruvāymoḷi-p-puṇam</i> (திருவாய்மொழிப்புறம்)	Land endowed for recital of <i>Tiruvāymoḷi</i> in the temple.	S.I.I., VII, 497.
6.	<i>Uḍukkai-p-puṇam</i> (உடுக்கைப்புறம்)	Land granted for the musical performance of <i>Uḍukkai</i> in the temple.	S.I.I., V, 411.

Besides, the promotion of religious learning, the learning of fine arts like music and dance was also greatly fostered. For instance, an inscription^{14a} from Pattamaḍai in the Tirunelvēli District registers

a grant to a dancing girl for enacting a drama on certain festival days. In the employment of big temples there were *Naṭṭuvanārs* (masters of music and dance) who taught the fine arts. The best exponents of music and dance were mostly in the devoted service of temples, which in turn duly maintained them.

Of special importance to this section on endowments made for educational institutions, are the epigraphs which reveal about endowments made for the maintenance of big educational institutions like colleges. For instance, the celebrated inscription¹⁵ of Rājendra Choḷa I (1012-1044 A.D.) at Ennāiram (South Arcot District) records an endowment for the maintenance of a College for Vēdic Studies. The epigraph tells us that provision was made in this College for 270 junior and 70 senior students and 14 teachers. The equally famous epigraph¹⁶ of Vīrarājendra Choḷa (1063-1069 A. D.) at Tirumukkuḍal near Kāñchipuram throws light on a college which functioned in the temple and propagated the study of the *vēdas*, *sāstras*, etc.

Epigraphs reveal the interesting information that there were *Ghatikas* (or *Ghatikasthānas*) in Tamil Nādu and elsewhere in South India. Those were important institutions of learning, where instruction was given in the *vēdas*, and *sāstras* on a very impressive scale. The most outstanding *Ghatika* in South India was perhaps the one that was at Kāñchipuram. An inscription¹⁷ from Vēlur-pālayam in the North Arcot District reveals that Narasimhavarman II (680-720 A.D.) established a *Ghatika* at Kāñchipuram, besides constructing the Kailāśanātha Temple. The inscriptions¹⁸ in the Sri Vaikuntha Perumal Temple at Kāñchipuram reveal that those belonging to the *Ghatika* at Kāñchipuram took part in a deputation of the elders of Kāñchipuram to the court of Hiranyavarman of the Pallava dynasty and also later participated in the coronation of Nandivarman II (731-

15. No. 333 of 1917.

16. See E I., Vol. xxi.

17. See S.I.I., Vol. II, Part V, p. 508.

18. See S.I.I., Vol. IV, p. 10, Section A.

795 A.D.). An epigraphical reference¹⁹ from the Kailasanātha temple at Kāñchipuram goes to strengthen the fact that the *Ghatikas* were treated with great regard and reverence. The epigraphical reference proclaims that the inmates of the *Ghatika* at Kāñchipuram were designated very respectfully as *Mahājanas*. It also proclaims that the sin of killing them would attach to those that destroyed the charity. Another inscription²⁰ of the 8th century A.D., from the Guḍiyāttam Taluk of the North Arcot District also proclaims that "he who destroys this charity will suffer the sin of killing all the 7,000 in the *Ghatika*."

Besides the *Ghatikas*, there were other educational institutions known as *Sālais*. These were in fact residential halls of learning or hostels for scholars. The *Srivallabhapperumchāla* of Kanyākumari may be cited in illustration. Kings and other philanthropists made provisions for a regular income of the *salais* from time to time.

As regards the kinds of land endowments made for the promotion of learning, the following types are found.²¹

Serial No.	The particular type of Land Endowment	Brief description	Reference
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
1.	<i>Bhaṭṭavritti-kīḍai-puṇam</i> or <i>Bhaṭṭavritti</i> (பட்டவிருத்திகிடைப் புறம் or பட்டவிருத்தி)	Land granted for study and learning.	S.I.I., V, 708 and VI, 49.
2.	<i>Kīḍai-p-puṇam</i> or <i>Kīḍaivriṭṭi</i> கிடைப்புறம் or கிடை விருத்தி)	Land assigned for the teaching of Vēdas.	

19. See E.I., Vol. III, p. 360.

20. See S.I.I., Vol. I, Part I, p. 91.

21. The list is representative but not exhaustive.

(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
3.	<i>Paviliyakkiḍai-p-puṟam</i> or <i>Bhavishyakkiḍai-p-puṟam</i> (பவியக்கிடைப்புறம்)	Tax-free land set apart to enable a person to reside permanently in a village and teach Rigveda.	S.I.I., VI, 312.
4.	<i>Taittiriyakkiḍai-p-puṟam</i> (தைத்திரியக்கிடைப்புறம்)	Land endowed for scholars in the <i>Taittiriya-sakha</i> of the <i>Yajurvēda</i> .	S.I.I., VI, 316.

In conclusion, it may be observed that a study of the endowments in early Tamil Nādu, as gleaned from the inscriptions, reveals the very high solicitude of individuals and the State in Tamil Nadu of early times for the welfare of temples, institutions and individuals. It is also seen that most of the inscriptions record endowments (donations) made by kings or their officers or private individuals to temples, *mutts*, educational institutions, etc. The study also reveals that of all kinds of endowments, land endowments were the most favoured and that among them there were a considerable number of varieties.

It may also be mentioned here that there is a mine of information in the inscriptions with which very good socio-economic pictures of early times can well be painted. However, 'much work still remains to be done in the study and interpretation of the social and economic information contained in the inscriptions'. It is time that scholars turn their attention to such studies. This paper is an humble attempt in that welcome direction.

ORIGIN AND DEVELOPMENT OF TAMIL PROSE

BY

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Introduction :

Prose and verse are the two main branches of literature ; but from the early age of literature, the prestige of poetry acts as a discouragement to prose. In the history of literature, the development of prose is always slower, later and more uncertain than that of poetry. This is because, for a normal mind, it is much easier to recall an extended piece of verse than a corresponding passage of prose. In an age when the transmission of literature depended upon memory, it is not surprising that the great amount of literature should have been in verse ; on the other hand, nobody took the trouble of writing down prose—namely, the speech of daily use, until such time as it became an organised form of oratory. If we go back even to the obscure beginning of any national literature, we come across some kind of poetry and not of prose ; but we have to wait for several centuries before we come across prose.

Broadly speaking, ordinary utterances of mankind may also constitute what we mean 'Prose'. But the connotation of 'Prose' does not refer to dialogues of ordinary conversation for daily communication either between individuals or groups of people. Only those which include literary expression are accepted as prose. Thus, though oral speech itself is a kind of prose, it is nebulous but when the same is written it gains continuity, clarity and coherence ; and hence such written literary form is recognised as prose. Between spoken prose and written prose, the latter is universally accepted as prose ; because it has more retentive and refined capabilities than the former. So, speaking also forms part of literature.

The Latin word 'Prosus' from which the word 'Prose' originated means "straightforward and matter of fact". Hence the primary aim of the prose writers is to write their ideas as clearly as possible, in a lively and vivid style, in order to enable its readers to understand the aim and object of their main purpose. The essential characteristics that constitute the correct way of prose writing are: (1) seriousness without being ponderous, (2) informative without being dull and (3) discursive without being casual. Careful attention to details of style and construction is no bar either to fluency or originality. Prose includes all such kinds of writings as novels, short-stories, plays, essays and articles on topical interest of everyday conversation etc. In classical times the art of prose was closely allied to rhetoric. Generally it may be divided under the following heads according to function: Narrative, Descriptive, Argumentative, Dramatic, Informative and Contemplative. However, there can be no strict barrier between the above divisions, for instance a narrative may primarily be descriptive and *vice versa*. In any prose work almost all the divisions above mentioned may be found.

Origin and Development :

Historically speaking, during the early centuries of the Christian Era, poetry dominated the entire field of Tamil literature and prose held a subordinate status, for we find the colophons or the introductory passages written to the poems of Saṅgam literature are in prose. In Tamil, Grammars, Dictionaries, Biographies, Prefaces, Inscriptions, Treatises on Medicine, Building Construction, Astrology and Astronomy are all invariably in verse, and incidentally it may be stated here that Māyūram Vēdanāyagam Piḷḷai pertinently points out that this was the main cause for the lack of adequate development of these sciences in our Tamiḷnadu.

Tolkāppiyam, the earliest extant Tamil Grammar, reveals that prose was in existence prior to that work itself. It speaks about 'Thonmai', a kind of Epic Literature interspersed with prose:

“Thonmai tñēy

Uraiyoḍu puṇarnta pazhamai mēṇṇē”.¹

“தொன்மை தானே

உரையொடு புணர்ந்த பழமை மேற்றே”

The above Sūtram (grammatical rule) defines the characteristics of ‘Thonmai’ (தொன்மை). Thonmai is a type of Epic Literature on some ancient stories, composed in verse intermixed with prose. *Silappadikāram* (சிலப்பதிகாரம்) of Iḷaṅgo Aḍikaḷ (இளங்கோ அடிகள்) may be cited as the best example of this kind. Iḷaṅgo Aḍikaḷ himself says that his work is an epic where the verses are interspersed with prose:

“Uraiyiḍai yiṭṭa pāṭṭuḍaic ceyyuḷ”²

“உரையிடை யிட்ட பாட்டுடைச் செய்யுள்”

The prose style of Iḷaṅgo Aḍikaḷ is grand and picturesque and the expression is remarkably outstanding; the passages appear in a poetic flow with alliterations and rhyme.

Iṇaiyanār Kaḷaviyal Urai (இறையனார் களவியல் உரை) or the commentary on *Iṇaiyanār Akapporuḷ* (இறையனார் அகப் பொருள்) marks the second stage in the development of Tamil prose. *Iṇaiyanār Kaḷaviyal* is a grammatical treatise on *Akapporuḷ* (அகப் பொருள்) and it is supposed that Lord Siva Himself is the author of the text. Nakkeerar of the third Saṅgam is supposed to have been the commentator of this work; and the commentary, it is said, was transmitted orally for nine generations until it was put into writing by one Neelakaṇḍanār. The salutary part of the work is, its commentary which is in prose, not as isolated pieces but running to many pages. Further the commentary has many descriptive passages of high literary value which are very much entertaining. Simile and metaphor illuminate the style; but simplicity and vividness, the two essential features of a good prose are totally absent. It has to be

1. Thol. Ceyyuḷ Iyal. 237. (தொல். செய்யுளியல்—237).

2. *Silappadikāram*. Padikam. line 87. (சிலப்பதிகாரம். பதிகம், வரி 87).

remembered however that it was the nature of the early Tamil prose.

Maṇipravāla Style :

In the early centuries of the Christian Era, the Jain ascendancy in Tamilnadu was great and its influence on Tamil language and literature also was equally great. Jain contributions to Tamil language and literature were substantial, but their writings were interspersed with many Sanskrit words. It was the Jains who first began to use the bilingual or Maṇipravāla style in writing their religious works. Sri Purāṇam (ஸ்ரீ புராணம்) and Gadhya Chintamaṇi (கத்ய சிந்தாமணி) were written in this style in which the purity of Tamil diction was completely sacrificed.

This bilingual or Maṇipravāla style consists of an admixture of Tamil and Sanskrit words and phrases. Actually Maṇipravāla connotes a neck-lace of diamonds intermixed with corals. This was also used as a vehicle of Vaishnavite philosophical thought. 'Īdu' (ஈடு) the exhaustive commentary on Nāḷayira Divya Prabandha Poems (நாலாயிர திவ்யப் பிரபந்தப் பாசுரங்கள்) by Periyavācāṇ Piḷḷai and others, was written in this style. Vēdānta Dēśikar, a great Sanskrit scholar, poet and philosopher tried his hand freely in this style. This style clearly marks an important mile-stone in the evolution of Tamil Prose. *Veera Cōḷiyam* (வீர சோழியம்) an eleventh century Tamil Grammar speaks at some length about this kind of style.³ From the inscription of Raja Raja the Great, written in this style at Sembian Mādēvi (செம்பியன் மாதேவி)⁴ temple (A.D. 988) it is reasonable to suppose that this style might have appeared during the beginning of the tenth century A.D. The direct result was two-fold; one was the enrichment of Tamil vocabulary, especially in regard to its religious and philosophical terms; another was a conception of style, perhaps carried to a morbid extent.

3. “இடையே வடவெழுத்து எய்தில் விரவியல், ஈண்டு—எதுகை நடையேது மில்லா மணிப்பிர வாளம்” (வீரசோழியம். 180).

4. Sembian Mādēvi is a village, situated at 10 Km. South West of Nāga-pattinam, the sea port.

Age of The Commentaries :

The age of the commentaries indicates the inauguration of the next stage in the history of Tamil Prose. Iḷampūraṇar (இளம்பூரணர்) is considered to be the first commentator of *Tolkāppiyam*, the earliest extant Tamil Grammar, and his commentary takes us a step forward from the commentary on *Iṟaiyanār Kaḷaviyal* in the development of Tamil Prose. It is a well-known fact that in the history of Tamil literature, due to the absence of Prose work, commentaries had been occupying a prominent place. The only complete commentary on *Tholkāppiyam* by Iḷampūraṇar is fortunately available; and hence he is credited with the unique title of 'Uraiyāsiriyaṛ' (உரையாசிரியர்) that is commentator par excellence. His style is simple, clear and generally very precise. He uses simile rarely and that too, only when he feels such an usage is essential to make his points clear.

Pērāsiriyaṛ, Sēnāvaraiyaṛ, Nachinārkkiniyaṛ, Deivacchilaiyār and Kallādar are the other commentators of *Tholkāppiyam*. But none of their commentaries is complete. Pērāsiriyaṛ's (பேராசிரியர்) style is graphic, grammatical and dignified; and the style of Sēnāvaraiyaṛ (சேனாவரையர்) is more elegant and descriptive. Of all these commentators the commentary of Nachinārkkiniyaṛ (நச்சினர்க்கினியர்) is considered to be the best, for in it he explains only those that require explanation and he never passes over any difficult ideas without explaining their purport. Wherever necessary he gives apt quotations and freely uses Tamil idioms and proverbs to make his ideas understood. His style is simple and occasionally has a poetic flow. He is one of the renowned commentators of Tamil works of *Pattup Pāṭṭu* (பத்துப் பாட்டு), *Kalit togai* (கலித்தொகை) and *Jeevaka Chinthāmaṇi* (சிவக சிந்தாமணி).

Parimēlaḷakar (பரிமேலழகர்) who is considered to be the foremost among the ten commentators of *Thirukhural* (திருக்குறள்) is also the commentator of *Paripādal* (பரிபாடல்). His style is clear and concise and he gives apt quotations from select works. Adiyārkku Nallār (அடியார்க்கு நல்லார்) is the celebrated commentator of the *Silappadhikāram* (சிலப்பதிகாரம்), which is the earliest epic containing all the three branches of Tamil language, namely Iyal

(இயல் : இலக்கிய இலக்கணம் : literature and grammar), Isai (இசை : Music) and Nāṭakam (நாடகம் : Both Nāṭṭiyam and Drama); Adiyārkkū Nallār seems to have mastered almost all the books on these subjects, for he gives many and apt quotations from 39 works on Iyal, 7 works on Isai and 10 works on Nāṭakam. His commentary on Vanchi-k-Kāṇḍam (வஞ்சிக் காண்டம்), the third part of *Silappadhikāram* (சிலப்பதிகாரம்) is lost beyond recovery. This is, indeed, an irreparable loss to scholars of Tamil literature.

When we think of the ancient commentaries the first that comes to our mind is the commentary on *Nannool* (நன்னூல்) by Mayilaināthar (மயிலை நாதர் : 12th century A.D.) and Perundēvanār's (பெருந்தேவனார் : 12th century A.D.) on *Veeracōḷiyam* (வீரசோழியம்). Sankara Namachivāyar (சங்கர நமச்சிவாயர்) of later times (17th century) wrote an elaborate commentary on *Nannool*, which surpasses the earlier commentary of Mayilaināthar. The Kāṇḍigai Urai (காண்டிகை உரை ; commentary in brief with examples) on *Nannool* by Rāmanuja Kavirāyar and Ārumuga Nāvalar are worth mentioning [in this connection. But the exhaustive commentary on *Nannool* called '*Nannool Viruthi* (நன்னூல் விருத்தி), by Sivañāna Munivar (சிவஞான முனிவர்) excels all other commentaries on *Nannool*.

Christian Missionaries :

The absence of writing materials was the main reason for the dearth of Tamil Prose from the very early times to the medieval period. To write long prose works on palm leaves with stylus would be very tedious and much time would be needed. The same difficulty accounts for the abbreviation and terseness of the commentaries on the poetical works also. If our ancestors had writing appliances or facilities as we have now, surely we would be in possession of elaborate commentaries and a good number of Prose works.

We have not enough evidence to prove that there were independent prose works before the beginning of the 17th century A.D. Though the European contact with Tamilnādu began about the 16th century A.D., it was only in the 18th century that the Western

influence was felt particularly on the mode of writing. The Christian Missionaries played a conspicuous role in this matter. The introduction of Printing Press by Ziegenbalg, the Protestant Missionary was mainly instrumental for the development of Tamil Prose. The invention of the Printing Press in England made the Education and Theology, which were in the hands of Priests, available to masses; so also in Tamilnādu it helped the common people towards the enlightenment. Most of the prominent Missionaries like Robert-De-Nobili, Beschi, Caldwell and Pope, devoted themselves first to the study of Tamil and then produced many Tamil works, especially Prose works.

Christian Missionaries showed a keen interest in the study of Tamil classics primarily in order to win the esteem of the Tamils. But incidentally it enabled them to master the Tamil literature and to make valuable contributions to the development of Tamil literature especially Tamil Prose. Robert-De-Nobili who was called as Thathuva Pōdhaka Swāmi (தத்துவ போதக சுவாமி) and whose writings were interspersed with far too many Sanskrit words and idioms wrote about 18 prose books like the *Āthma Nirṇayam* (ஆத்ம நிர்ணயம்), *Kadavu! Nirṇayam* (கடவுள் நிர்ணயம்), *Anitya Nitya Vithiyāsam* (அனித்திய நித்திய வித்தியாசம்), *Thathuvak Kaṇṇādy* (தத்துவக் கண்ணாடி), *Manthira Mālai* (மந்திர மாலை), *Life of Jesus* (ஏசுநாதர் சரித்திரம்) etc. and compiled a Tamil-Portuguese Dictionary.

Father Beschi was a Jesuit Missionary from Italy, who had been affectionately recognised by Tamils as Veeramā Munivar (வீரமா முனிவர்). Besides his unparalleled work of *Thēmpāvaṇi* (தேம்பாவணி) as well as grammatical treatises and Dictionary he wrote *Vēda Vilakkam* (வேத விளக்கம்), *Vēdhiyar Oḷukkam* (வேதியர் ஒழுக்கம்), *Pēdhakamaṟuthal* (பேதக மறுத்தல்) etc. He enriched almost all branches of Tamil literature and particularly paid a special attention and made a substantial contribution to the development of Tamil Prose. The most popular of his prose-works is the unique *Paramārtha Guru Kathai* (பரமார்த்த குரு கதை), which amuses the reader most elegantly. It seems to be a humorous satire on the pretensions of a certain contemporary of

his. It is just like a farce with fun and frolic, about a silly hermit and his foolish disciples; and at the same time it is a great addition to Tamil literature, especially the province of Tamil Prose.

Modern Period :

Even though the Christian Missionaries contributed their best to the growth of Tamil Prose, their writings were confined only to the domain of Religion and Theology. But that lead was taken up by the Tamil scholars who began to write on varied aspects of life. This can be considered as the transitional period of Tamil literature, clearly breaking away from that of the medieval world with its Mythological and Theological domination to the modern period with its emphasis on mundane things. To illustrate the modern trend of Tamil prose, the reference to a few authors such as Āṟumuga Nāvalar, Rāmaliṅga Adikaḷār, Vēdanāyagam Piḷḷai, Thiru. Vi. Kalyāṇasundara Mudaliār and Maraimalai Adikaḷ in particular will suffice to serve the purpose.

Āṟumuga Nāvalar of Nallūr in Jaffna is considered to be the father of modern literary prose. His style was simple and elegant, grammatical without any poetic flow. This method probably induced others to imitate him. His well-graded *Bāla Pāḍam* (பால பாடம்) series and *Ilakkaṇa Vinā Viḍai* (இலக்கண வினாவிடை) were used as Text books all over Tamilnādu and Ceylon; his other work *Saiva Vinā Viḍai* (சைவ வினாவிடை) became very popular among the Tamils.

The prose style of Rāmaliṅga Adikaḷ, though simple and clear, is characterised by vigour and emotion. His essay on *Human Compassion* (சீவகாருண்ய ஒழுக்கம்) is a master-piece indeed. His *Manumuraikaṇḍa Vāchakam* (மனுமுறை கண்டவாசகம்), the story of Manuneethikaṇḍa Chōḷan (மனுநீதி கண்டசோழன்) is an elaborate development of an episode in *Periya Purāṇam* (பெரிய புராணம்).

Among the earliest Tamil writers of fiction Māyūram Vēdhanāyakam Piḷḷai stands first and foremost. He was the author of the celebrated novel *Prathāpa Mudaliār charithiram* (பிரதாப முதலி

யார் சரித்திரம்). This novel portrays the life of an imaginary rich young man who met with varied and strange circumstances in life. The main characteristics of this novel are its rollicking wit and its realistic pen pictures. His style is simple and direct; and the narration is lucid and vivacious. He has employed appropriately many proverbs and old saws. Due to these things, the novel has enjoyed a great popularity and this contribution to the development of Tamil prose is indeed very substantial.

The services of Thiru. Vi. Kalyānasundara Mudaliār, scholar, author, journalist, patriot and labour leader, in the realm of Tamil prose are superb. His style consisting of forceful short sentences, is simple, clear and elegant and avoids monotony by creating new rhythm; and his writings made Tamil language a powerful vehicle of modern thoughts.

Thiru. Vi. Ka's editorials of *Dēsa Bhaktan* (தேச பக்தன்) and *Nava Sakti* (நவ சக்தி) as well as his platform orations, not only roused the people from their age long political slumber and prepared the ground for the freedom struggle, but also shortened the gap between the spoken and written Tamil to a considerable extent. He portrays his 'Ideal Man', in his *Manitha Vāḷḷkaiyum Gāndhi Adikaḷum* (மனித வாழ்க்கையும் காந்தியடிகளும்) and puts a fervent plea for the 'Ideal Modern Women' in his *Peṇṇin Perumai* (பெண்ணின் பெருமை). He tries to describe God, the Almighty through Nature in his *Murugan Allathu Aḷaku* (முருகன் அல்லது அழகு) and gives his advice to the young in his *Iḷamai Virundu* (இளமை விருந்து). Neither the authors, nor the compilers of Tamil Text-Books of High Schools and Colleges will fail to include his valuable and thought-provoking essays as they constitute specimens of the best style of Tamil Prose writing.

Since the beginning of this century, Maraimalai Aḍikaḷ, scholar, author, journalist and professor, wrote his works in simple and clear style; as he grew older and gained much experience his style became more and more chaste and elegant. In addition, being the founder patron of the "Pure Tamil" movement (தனித் தமிழ் இயக்கம்) he spared no pains to bring out almost all his works

in 'Pure Tamil' divesting words from other languages. Hence, Aḍikaḷ, was the pioneer of the Tamil revivalist movement and left his indelible stamp on the Renaissance literature of Tamil Nation.

Modern Commentators :

Among the modern commentators, Sivañāna Munivar (சிவஞான முனிவர்) of the 18th century A.D. should be mentioned first. Besides his controversial writings on grammar and literature, his monumental work is the exhaustive commentary on '*Sivañāna Bōdam*' (சிவஞான போதம்); it contains many long prose passages describing the Philosophy of Saiva Siddanta. No one can fail to note his admirable humour and the use of many a proverb in his writings.

Maraimalai Aḍikaḷ occupies the foremost place among the commentators of modern times. He earned celebrity in the annals of Tamil literature by his varied contributions, and did not fail to make his magical spell felt in the sphere of commentary on Tamil Classics.

When the Aḍikaḷ was engaged in teaching *Mullai-p-pāttu* (முல்லைப் பாட்டு) to the Senior B.A. Class students of Madras Christian College, they were astonished by the penetrating interpretation given by Aḍikaḷ. It is very interesting to note that his critical commentary with historical notes on *Mullai-p-pāttu* was brought out on account of the desire of his students who subscribed in advance to defray the cost of its printing.

Mullai-p-pāttu with 103 lines, is the shortest of all the ten idylls of *Pattu-p-pāttu*. Aḍikaḷ, in preparing his commentary to this idyll, had followed the main lines of literary-criticism inculcated by Prof. William Minto and availed himself of the views expressed on poetry by great men like Milton and Ruskin. He is of the opinion that the old commentary had miserably failed to bring out clearly the pure simplicity of thought, the close and minute observation of Nature, vivid portrait of the social, moral, religious and intellectual conditions of the hoary Tamilians presented in that idyll. The old commentator, in his commentary on Saṅgam works, falls into the unnecessary and a bit confusing habit

of giving meanings of passages with words which occur at a remote distance in the text of the work from the passage commented upon by him. This, in Aḍikaḷ's view, is quite unnecessary and spoils the natural beauty of the poem. The striking feature of his commentary is that he had adhered closely to the original idea conceived and expressed by the poet himself, and completely ignored the old commentary.

In the same manner Maṟaimalai Aḍikaḷ had written a critical commentary on *Paṭṭina-p-pālai* (பட்டினப் பாலை) with 301 lines, another idyll in *Pattu-p-pāttu*. We understand from his preface to the second edition of *Paṭṭina-p-pālai* that the Aḍikaḷ had also written critical commentaries on *Kurinchi-p-pāṭṭu* (குறிஞ்சிப் பாட்டு) and *Malaipaḍu Kaḍām* (மலைபடு கடாம்) of the same group of *Pattu-p-pāttu*. The commentary on the four 'Akavals' (அகவல்) of *Thiruvāchakam* (திருவாசகம்) by Aḍikaḷ, known as *Thiruvāchaka Virivurai* (திருவாசக விரிவுரை: Commentary on *Tiruvāchakam*) stands foremost. A paraphrasing of the whole of *Thiruvāchakam* done by Prof. K. Subramaniya Pillai is of great use even for a man of average education.

The services of Nāvalar Venkatasāmy Nāṭṭār in this field is commendable. Besides his commentaries on *Silappadikāram* and *Manimēkalai* (மணிமேகலை) his detailed commentary on Parañjōthi Munivar's *Thiruvīḷaiyāḍal Purāṇam* (திருவிளையாடற் புராணம்) is equal to none. Any one who is desirous of having a thorough knowledge of Saiva Siddhantha philosophy, may certainly have it by studying the above mentioned commentary. Among other commentators, Avvai Doraisāmy Pillai and Perumalai-p-Pulavar are worth mentioning for their commentaries on Saṅgam classics. Meanings of difficult words (குறிப்புரை) with critical and grammatical explanations by unknown scholars whose identity has not been established, of ancient Tamil classics such as *Purāṇānooru* (புறநானூறு) *Ainkuṟunooṟu* (ஐங்குறு நூறு) etc. are very valuable.

Prose version and Translation :

Prose version of poetical works also played a prominent part in the development of Tamil prose. Ārumuga Nāvalar, the pioneer in this art, rendered *Periya Purāṇam* (பெரிய புராணம்)

and *Thiruvilaiyāḍal Purāṇam* (திருவிளையாடற் புராணம்) into Prose. The Prose version of the *Meikāṇḍa Noolka!* (மெய் கண்ட நூல்கள்) known as the Fourteen works on Saiva Siddhantha Philosophy (சித்தாந்த நூல்கள் பதினான்கு) by Prof. K. Subramania Pillai is very much useful for a beginner in that line. *Kamba Rāmāyaṇa Vachanam* (கம்ப ராமாயண வசனம்) by Thiruchiṇṇambala Deśikar of the 19th century and the *Nallāp Piḷḷai - Bhāratha Vachanam* (நல்லாப் பின்னை பாரத வசனம்) by Tharaṅgāpuram Shanmugak Kavirāyar of the same century were the main cause for the popularity of those stories among the Tamils. Prof. K. Veḷḷai-varananar's prose version of *Tholkāppiyam* (தொல்காப்பியம்) with critical notes is the first of its kind and serves as the gate way to the treasure of *Tholkāppiyam*. His *Panniru Tirumuṟai Varalāru* (பன்னிரு திருமுறை வரலாறு) in two volumes is a very valuable addition to the Tamil prose as well as the history of Saiva Religion in Tamilnādu.

The Tamil translations of *Vālmeeiki Rāmāyaṇam* and *Vyāsa Bhāratam* as *Vālmeeiki Rāmāyaṇa Vachanam* (வால்மீகி ராமாயண வசனம்) and *Mahā Bhārata Vachanam* (மகா பாரத வசனம்) by C. R. Srinivāsa Iyengār and M. V. Rāmānujāchāriyār respectively, met with warm reception and were read with religious rites and reverence.

Maṛaimalai Aḍikaḷ succeeded to a great extent in translating Kālidāsa's *Sākuntalam* (சாகுந்தலம்) the well renowned Sanskrit Drama into Tamil. This work ensures that any translation work can be as good as its original, if the translator is faithful and master of both languages. Many Tamil novels are either translated or adopted from English novels. In recent days the Bengālī, Marāthi and Gujarāthi novels have been translated and have gained wide circulation. *Kalaimaga!* (கலைமகள்) may be mentioned as the pioneer of this project for it began the publication of such translated novels. Padmasri Thiru V. Subbaiah Piḷḷai of Saiva Siddhānthā Works, Publishing Society is to be congratulated for the publication of translations of works of famous authors like Goldsmith, Scott, Dickens, Thackeray etc. - amounting to more than forty novels, into Tamil.

Biographies and Autobiographies :

During the Saṅgam period and in the early centuries of Christian Era, the art of writing biography was totally absent in Tamiḷnādu. However, since the beginning of this century, biographies began to appear and slowly became popular. Prof. K. Subramania Pillai wrote the biographies of the four Saiva Saints, Paṭṭinatār, Tāyumānavar etc.. Dr. Swaminatha Iyer's biography of his Guru, Mahāvidvān Meenākshisundaram Pillai, interspersed with Pillai's stray verses (தனிச் செய்யுட்கள்) is very interesting to read and is highly informative and his autobiography, known as 'En Charitiram (என் சரித்திரம்) portrays an innocent picture of the literary world in which he moved. 'En Kathai' (என் கதை) the autobiography of Nāmakkal Rāmaliṅgam Pillai, depicts his life story and his exploring experiences with the learned Engineer Mānickavēlu Nāicker, the author of the *Philosophy of Tamil Alphabets*. Thiru Vi. Ka's autobiography, without any reservation, gives us an impartial pen pictures of the scholars and statesmen, saints and philosophers with whom he came into contact. Sivañāna Grāmaṇiyar presents a clear and vivid picture of his participation in the freedom struggle and other activities and achievements in his autobiogrāphy, *Enathu Pōrāṭṭam* (எனது போராட்டம்).

Short Story :

Since the beginning of this century, the authors and writers, turned their attention to short-story writing, which proved fruitful and had a rapid development, due to the encouragement it received from all quarters. Now no Weekly or Monthly is published without a short-story, and this helps the Magazines very much to continue survival or growth and it has become a known fact, that almost all Weeklies and Monthlies are progressing well with short-stories.

The basis of a short-story may be either an unforgettable incident or personal character of an individual or any suitable experience etc. Though there is a host of successful short-story writers in our midst, it is very rare to find a writer who can build the Nation and National thoughts by his inspiration.

Mangaiyarkkarasiyin Kādal (மங்கையர்க்க கரசியின் காதல்) written by the Nationalist V. V. Subramaniya Iyer is considered to be the first short-story with all its perfection. But the stories which are full of humour and pathos and occasionally with biting satire written by Puthumai-p-Pithan (புதுமைப் பிங்கன்) achieved a decided status in Tamil literature; and Ragunāthan's stories, which have gained wide circulation, are said to have been translated into the Czech language. Of late, the art of short-story writing has given place to party politics and propaganda work. Anyhow, this has not affected the development of Tamil prose. The stories written by Kōvai Ayyāmuthu and Rajāji, Ariñār Anṇādurai and Kalaiñār Karuṇānidhi and others illustrate this.

Novel :

Vēdanāyakam Piḷḷai, the author of *Pratāpa Mudaliār Charithiram* (பிரதாப முதலியார் சரித்திரம்) was the innovator of Tamil fiction and it was called by him as Vachana Kāviam (வசன காவியம்: Prose Epic). His main aim, in writing this novel, seems to eradicate the social evils prevalent among the Tamils. Hence, this work may be considered as the 'Social History' of Tamilnādu during those days. His views are very modern and the ethical note is predominant throughout the book. The novel, with many improbabilities, is crammed with anecdotes and jokes. The construction of the plot is loose but the prose style is natural and readable.

Tāṇḍavarāya Mudaliār's *Pañcha Tantiram* (பஞ்ச தந்திரம்) has an important place in the history of Tamil prose. Its style at the beginning is simple and clear, but gradually it becomes more and more literary and difficult. *Vinōdarasa Mañjari* (வினோதரச மஞ்சரி) by Veerāsāmy Chettiār is to be mentioned next, and it is a narration of anecdotes concerning poets and social events of his days.

Kamalāmbāl Charittiram (கமலாம்பாள் சரித்திரம்) by Rājam Iyer, which was first published as a serial story (தொடர் கதை) in *Vivēka Chinthāmaṇi* (விவேக சிந்தாமணி) between 1893-1895, is the next landmark in the history of Tamil novels. It presents a beautiful picture of the village life in Southern districts with

vivid description of the Brahmin family life. The characterisation is so perfect that no reader can forget even the minor personalities. The style is pliable which can express, in the living rhythm, all movement's of the mind: and on the whole, it served as a model to be followed by other novelists. Next comes Mādavaiah's *Padmāvati Charittiram* (பத்மாவதி சரித்திரம்) which is still read with interest. The author conveys a message of social reform which gives strength to the story. He resents things from personal experience and with fervour and to that extent the novel is forceful and interesting. There is a definite attempt at characterisation and the prose is exceedingly readable.

Sūriya Nārāyaṇa Sāstry (சூரிய நாராயண சாஸ்திரி) was a great enthusiast of Tamil, who even changed his Sanskrit name into Tamil, as Paridhi-mār-Kalaiñan (பரிதி மார்கலைஞன்) and love of Tamil was his religion. He felt the needs of Tamil language then, and tried his best to cover them. He will be ever remembered by the Tamils with affection more for his personality and service than for his literary merit. He went to that extent of condemning the arrogance of Sanskritists. *The History of Tamil* (தமிழ் மொழி வரலாறு) written by him is the first of its kind and it stands as a monument for his sincere heart, clear thinking, deep study and wide knowledge and above all his real enthusiasm and magnificent services to Tamil. In short, by his writings he has enriched all branches of Tamil language and literature.

Every one of us will agree with the fact that letter writing is an art by itself; in the same way creating a literature by letters is an admirable art. Maṛaimalai Aḍikaḷ conceived the idea of creating such a literature and has written the novel *Kōkilāmbaḷ Kaḍithaṅgaḷ* (கோகிலாம்பாள் கடிதங்கள்) in the form of letter writing. Aḍikaḷ was courageous enough to introduce through this novel, the social revolutions such as widow and intercaste marriage, when the society was under the grim grip of orthodoxy. The style is simple, clear and elegant without sacrificing the purity of the language. The theme of the plot is constructive and coherent and the presentation of characters is unique. Prof. Gnānasambandam, gifted with admirable oratory and commendable penmanship, has

rendered yeoman service by his thought provoking articles and excellent critical works on *Kambarāmayāṇam* (கம்பராமாயணம்) etc.

Abraham Paṇḍithar, working as a teacher, showed a keen interest in Siddha medicine, which made him a well-known Doctor and also in Tamiḷ music, which enabled him to bring out the famous *Karṇāmirta Sākaram* (கர்ணமீர்த சாகரம்) in two volumes. This work describes the various ways and means of creating new tunes (Rāgās) and one symbol of beating time in music (Tālam : தாளம்) contains as many as 24 tunes (Srutis=சுருதிகள்), and serves as a source-book for the later authors on Tamiḷ music. Vipulānanda Aḍikaḷ, though a Science Graduate of London, distinguished himself as a successful Professor of Tamiḷ. His keen interest in music and training at Veenai (விணை) enabled him to bring out the immortal *Yāzh Nool* (யாழ் நூல்) as a result of his research for 14 years. This treatise provides every detail about the Vil Yāzh (வில் யாழ்) Pēriyāzh (பேரியாழ்) Makara Yāzh (மகர யாழ்) Sengōṭṭu Yāzh (செங்கோட்டு யாழ்) in general and Sakōta Yāzh (சகோட யாழ்) in particular, which were the forgotten Tamiḷ musical instruments for over a period of thousand years.

T. K. Chidambaranātha (T.K.C.) Mudaliār's prose is simple, direct and in the conversational style. His *Kambar Tarum Rāmāyaṇam* (கம்பர் தரும் ராமாயணம்) was once very popular, and his explanatory notes on *Muttoli!āyiram* (முத்தொள்ளாயிரம்) won the appreciation of all scholars alike. Vaiyāpuri Piḷḷai was an excellent editor and diligent research scholar. He has enriched Tamiḷ prose, by his valuable and substantial contribution of many prose works. But his views were mainly influenced by Sanskrit, English and other European languages. Dr. R. P. Sethu Pillai, well-known for his excellent oration, as Sollin Selvar (சொல்லின் செல்வர்) has contributed richly to the development of Tamil Prose. He used the best words in the best place in the best order, so as to form a lively, elegant and rhythmic style. Very often he would thrill his audience and readers by employing apt quotations and phrases from the ancient and modern classics as well. His prominent work *Ūrum Pērum* (ஊரும் பேரும்) will certainly serve as a guiding factor for the future authors of History of Tamiḷnādu.

Dr. M. Varadarājanār, the former Vice Chancellor of Madurai University, gave dignity and respectability to novel writing. His style is simple and elegant, but differs very much from that of other novelists. By setting up his own way of writing, intermingling with the ideal thoughts of ancient classics, he has gained popularity and has become a successful novel-writer. However, it appears that he is the only author who indulges in the colloquial form of words such as *Ēnmā* (ஏன்மர்) instead of the correct form *Ēnammā* (ஏனம்மா). Perhaps it might be the outcome of the imitation of English novelists of recent days.

Kalki (R. Krishnamurti) who was trained in journalism under Thiru. Vi. Ka. served the *Ānanda Vikatan* (ஆனந்த விகடன்) as Sub-Editor and became the Editor of *Kalki* (கல்கி). He developed an elegant style and wrote short-stories and voluminous novels, especially historical novels. In short, anything which came out of his pen is interesting, impressive, constructive and enjoyable.

Mayilai Seeni Venkatasamy, an ardent research scholar, has contributed about 20 valuable treatises on Tamilian Art, Culture, Philosophy and History. Kalaimagal Jagannathan, has done his best by his cultured articles, interesting short-stories and biographical sketches. Akilan began his story-writing even from his boyhood and his first novel *Peṇ* (பெண்) brought him the Nārāyaṇa-swāmy Iyer's Novel Prize. His style is simple and lucid; characterisation is real and perfect; construction of the plot is well conceived and complete; descriptions at times are lengthy but interesting. In short, whatever he writes, is more than readable and enjoyable. Deepam Parthasarathy is an amicable speaker and prolific writer. His novels are based on social back-ground with literary taste, but he seems, of late, to be yielding slowly to party politics (which may spoil his chaste writing).

Being a patron of school children and University students, Vice-Chancellor, Padmasri Thiru N. D. Sundaravadivelu has produced as many as twenty five graded children's literature in prose, besides his other works like *Ulaka-t-tamiḷ* (உலகத் தமிழ்). His style is simple and elegant, and at time, turns into direct and conversational forms. His presentation is picturesque and the descriptions

are apt and his writings are fully enjoyable to children and adults alike. Amidst his heavy official routine, he finds time for contributing articles and writing books, which shows his love for Tamil. Dr. N. Sanjeevi has enriched Tamil prose by his contributions of about twenty books, such as *Marutiruvār* (மருதிருவர்), *Silampuṭṭēn* (சிலம்புத்தேன்) etc. His recent work, *Ilakkiya Iyal* (இலக்கிய இயல்) is a scientific approach to the art of literary creation and appreciation. The theories are well explained with suitable diagrams and this is really a new venture.

Drama :

Silappdikāram (சிலப்பதிகாரம்), the earliest Tamil Epic extant, represent all the three branches of Tamil language that is, Iyal (இயல் : Literature), Isai (இசை : Music), as in the *Kānal Vari* (கானல் வரி) etc. and *Koottu* or *Nāṭakam* (கூத்து அல்லது நாடகம்) as in the *Araṅgēṟu Kātai* (அரங்கேற்று காதை). Hence this is called as the *Muttamiḷ-k-Kāppiyam* (முத்தமிழ்க் காப்பியம்). More than that *Aḍiyārkkunallār*, the celebrated commentator of *Silappdikāram*, refers about ten works on *Koottu* or Drama which were available in his days. But alas! all of them are lost beyond all hopes of recovery.

The *Kuṟam* (குறம்), *Kuṟavañchi* (குறவஞ்சி) and *Paḷḷu* (பள்ளு), may be mentioned as an introduction to Drama. Though these are all in verse form, the dialogues are in the direct speech form. At first these were found as parts of *Prabandās* or minor literature (பிரபந்தம் அல்லது சிற்றிலக்கியம்) and then they were written as separate works, such as *Meenakshiammai Kuṟam* (மீனாட்சியம்மை குறம்), *Kuṟṟālakkuṟavañchi* (குற்றாலக் குறவஞ்சி), *Mukkoodaṟ Paḷḷu* (முக்கூடற் பள்ளு) etc. However all these are of later origin.

Rāma Nāṭakam (இராம நாடகம்) by *Arunāchalak-kavirāyar* of 18th century is the next stage in Tamil Drama, but the whole of it including dialogues, was in verse and dominated by music and prose was very scanty. The *Sathiya Bāshā Arichandra Vilāsam* (சத்திய பாஷா அரிச்சந்திர விலாசம்) by *Thirumalai Appāvu Piḷḷai*, *Manmatha Nāṭakam* (மன்மத நாடகம்) by *Thirumalai Dāssar*, *Valḷiyammai Nāṭakam* (வள்ளியம்மை நாடகம்) by *Muṭhu Veeriyak*

Kavi etc., belonging to the 19th century, were all in complete songs.

In the beginning of this century, plays were written in verse form in imitation of Shakespeare and Sheridan and were not of much use for the stage. *Manōnmaṇēeyam* (மனோன்மனியம்) by Prof. Sundaram Piḷḷai is the best example. The art of writing drama is a difficult one, for the author needs the talent of story writing and at the same time he should be capable of making the characters to speak themselves with real feeling.

Sankara Dāsa Swāmigal (1867—1912) may be mentioned as the early writer of Dramas in the modern form and he has written more than twenty plays, all suitable for the stage. Pammal Sambanda Mudaliār, who is well-known as the “Father of Tamil Drama” (தமிழ் நாடகத் தந்தை) has written about one hundred plays. Maṛaimalai Aḍikaḷ in the midst of his Research and literary works, has also written the *Ambikāpathy Amarāvathy* (அம்பிகாபதி அமராவதி) a historical tragedy. Viswanāthan of Tanjāvūr, a play-wright and actor, wrote many religious and social plays all for the stage. Taking advantage of the freedom struggle, *Katharin Verry* (கதரின் வெற்றி), *Dēseeyakkoḍi* (தேசியக்கொடி) etc., were written by Krishnasāmy Pāvalar. In course of time the Drama has become a vehicle for propaganda in all fields such as Co-operation, Education, Health and Party-politics. Since 1950 A.D. the Drama and Cinema are gradually getting free from the domination of music, and the dialogues, that is the Prose-portions, have been improved very much both in rhythmic style and diction.

Journalism :

As we have seen earlier, the efforts of the Christian Missionaries were mainly responsible for the growth of Tamil prose and it is remarkable to note that they themselves started Tamil Journals like *Thamizh Ithazh* (தமிழ் இதழ்) etc. during the last quarter of the 19th century. There were Monthlies, and Weeklies of Religious and literary merit.

The Freedom struggle gave further impetus to the improvement of the Regional languages and made the local news of great

importance, and the habit of reading Newspapers gained popularity. In the early part of this century, the Monthlies and Weeklies were the vehicles of modern thought and encouraged literary criticism, short-stories, serial-novels and popular science. As politics attained great importance among the people the news-papers rose in popularity and power.

During the First World War, the public felt the need for foreign news also. Hence the Tamil Dailies had a rapid growth. The Government, in that period, published a propaganda weekly, both in Tamil as *Caṇḍaic-ceythikaḷ* (சண்டைச் செய்திகள்) and in English, *The War News*; and they were freely distributed to all Government Offices and educational Institutions.

Maṟaimalai Aḍikaḷ, who was the editor of '*Siddhāntha Deepikai*' (சித்தாந்த தீபிகை) for one year wanted to make the Westerners familiar with Saiva Siddhantha Philosophy and started an English Journal named '*The Oriental Mystic Myna*'. It found its circulation in Austria, Germany, France, England and America; but it ceased publication after one year. Then he founded the Tamil Journal, *Gñāna Sākaram* (ஞான சாகரம்) which was later changed as *Aṟivuk Kaḍal* (அறிவுக் கடல்) and through this, most of his literary works saw the light of the world.

Senthamizh (செந்தமிழ்) published by Madurai Tamil Saṅgam, *Thamizh-p-Pozhil* (தமிழ்ப் பொழில்) a publication of Karanthai Tamil Saṅgam, Tanjāvūr; and *Senthamizh-c-Chelvi* (செந்தமிழ்ச் செல்வி) of Saiva Siddhantha Works Publishing Society, Madras, all these three monthlies, are doing marvelous service to the cause of Tamil language, literature, criticism and epigraphy. In spite of the excellent services of these journals, their sale is not encouraging, for they do not adopt any modern business technique. *Kalaimagaḷ* (கலைமகள்) is serving the Tamil prose by publishing short-stories, translated novels and literary articles; and *Mañjari* (மஞ்சரி) published by the same management, may be said as "*Tamil Readers' Digest*". *Kalaik-kathir* (கலைக்கதிர்) is worth mentioning for its articles on popular science. *Dhinamaṇi Kadhir* (தினமணி கதிர்) a weekly of Indian Express group and *Kalkaṇḍu* (கல்கண்டு) a children's magazine have a fair circulation. *Swadēsa-*

mitran (சுதேசமித்திரன்), *Dhinamani* (தினமணி) *Dina Tanthi* (தினத்தந்தி), *Alai O'sai* (அலை ஓசை) and *Dina Malar* (தினமலர்) are some of the popular dailies of to-day.

Although the Saṅgam classics give evidence that there were many poetesses in those days, we hear nothing about the women authors up to the end of the last century; but from the beginning of this century many educated women had come forward to serve for the development of Tamil prose by writing short-stories, novels etc. and it will suffice to mention a few of them. Prof. E. T. Rājēswari may be mentioned at first. Her Tamil articles on science subjects and the treatise on Sun named *Sūriyan* (சூரியன்) were very much appreciated both by the young students of science and ripe scholars as well. Her style is very simple and the approach to the subject is impressive. Really she has tried to prove that essays on science subjects can be written without sacrificing the purity of Tamil. Swarṇāmbāl alias "Guhapriyai" was one of the earliest women writers who had written essays, short-stories and novels. She has also translated stories from Kannaḍa (கன்னடம்) and Hindi (இந்தி) into Tamil. Her style is simple and lucid with numerous quotations from old classics and Bhārathiya. *Maṅgai* (மங்கை) a monthly entirely devoted for women, edited and published by her had a warm reception, but it ceased publication after a few issues. Vai-Mu. Kōthainayaki, the dutiful disciple of Vaḍuvor Doraiswāmy Iyengār, a well-known Tamil novelist of this century, is considered to be the earliest woman novel writer. She closely followed the footsteps of her Guru, in all respects regarding novel writing. A novel-monthly called *Jagan Mōhini* (ஜகன் மோகினி) was successfully published by her to the very end of her life and it published serially all her novels. Her style is simple and elegant; the rhyme and alliteration are two of her best accomplishments; but this she gained at the cost of the purity of language which was not her concern.

Conclusion :

Srinivasa Piḷḷai of Tañjāvūr will ever be cherished in the memory of Tamil students by his *Tamil Varalāru* (தமிழ் வரலாறு). Thiru M. Arunachalam's *Inṟaiya Tamil Vacana Naḍai*

(இன்றைய தமிழ் வசனநடை) is a critical study of the prose style adopted by various scholars of the forties of this century. *Vaḷarum Tamil* (வளரும் தமிழ்) by Soma Ilakkumanañ Chettiyār presents a complete picture of the Tamil prose current in Tamilnādu with specimens of them employed by the people in all walks of life during this mid-century. *Tamil Urinaḍai* (தமிழ் உரை நடை) written by Prof. Paramasivanandam is a treatise which sketches the origin and development of Tamil prose on the historical basis. Dr. K. K. Pillay has written *The History of Tamilnad - Her People and Culture* (தமிழக வரலாறு : மக்களும் பண்பாடும்) and it traces the Cultural History of the Tamils from the Saṅgam Age down to the present. The author has utilised Tamil literature and epigraphy in writing this work. This work differs from other routine historical works, for the author has brought out his experience as a teacher of history for the past four decades in writing a work of this kind as simple as possible, but at the same time without losing the trend or effect of so complicated a subject. It is an admitted fact that a book on Cultural History of the Tamils from the Saṅgam age to the present is not an easy task to accomplish. But Dr. Pillay has ably handled the subject in a masterly way and this book will serve as a feeder to many of its kind by the future younger generations of historians. Dr. N. Subbu Reddiār has given us many valuable works on Science subjects whereas P. N. Appusamy has written a number of books on popular science. Namachivāya Mudaliār has enriched Tamil prose by his well graded Text books from infant to the Degree class which were model for others to follow; even those works are now forbidden fruits to them for the Text-books are nationalised.

As this essay is intended for the general readers to have a bird's eye-view on the development of Tamil prose over a period of about two thousand years, the author craves the indulgence of the readers for not including all the authors and authoresses and their valuable contributions towards the development of Tamil Prose. Yet it can be justified that the essay gives a succinct account of the subject, though on a very small scale, without losing the main trend of the subject.

REPORTS OF SEMINARS

A Seminar was held under the auspices of the Institute at 4 P.M. on Wednesday the 10th October 1973 at Room No. 48 of the University Departmental Buildings on 'HUMANISM OF THE SAIVAITE SAINTS'. The following is a report of the proceedings.

Chairmen :

Dr. K. K. Pillay, M.A., D.Litt., D.(Phil.) (Oxon), Director, Institute of Traditional Cultures and Dr. N. Sanjivi, M.A., Ph.D., after 5 P.M.

Leader :

Thiru A. S. Gnanasambandam, M.A., formerly Professor and Head of the Department of Tamil in the Madurai University.

Others present :

1. Dr. G. Appa Rao, M.A., Ph.D., Dept. of Telugu, University of Madras, Madras-5.
2. Thiru M. Arunachalam, M.A., No. 3, Sambasivan Street, Madras-17.
3. Thiru Pulavar A. Chitravadivelu, Tamil Pandit, Government High School, Govindavadi (Via) Arkonam.
4. Selvi V. Gandhimathi, P. G. Women's Hostel, Madras-5.
5. Thiru S. Gangadharan, Asst. Professor in Philosophy, Vivekananda College, Madras-4.
6. Arulmigu Gnanadesika Paramacharya Swamigal, Deivika Pēravai 8, Maharaja Surya Rao Road, Madras-18.
7. Thiru V. Kamalayya.
8. Dr. M. S. Gopalakrishnan, M.A., Ph.D., Head of the Dept. of Anthropology, University of Madras, Madras-5.
9. Thiru R. Gopalan, M.A., Research Assistant, Institute of Traditional Cultures, Madras-5.

10. Thiru R. Ilanthenral, 131, TH. Road, Madras-21.
11. Selvi G. Meera, 11, I Trust Link Street, Mandaveli, Madras.
12. Thiru S. Mohanasundaram, Nakkeerar Kazhagam, Madras.
13. Thiru K. Mohanraj, Research Assistant, Tirukkural Research Centre, Dept. of Tamil, University of Madras.
14. Thiru R. Ponnusamy, Dept. of Archaeology, University of Madras.
15. Selvi N. Premavathi, M.A., Research Student, Dept. of History, University of Madras.
16. Thiru C. E. Ramachandran, M.A., M.Litt., Head of the Dept. of History, University of Madras.
17. Thiru R. Ramasamy, Dept. of Ancient History & Archaeology University of Madras.
18. Thiru D. Sadasivam, M.A., M.Litt., Lecturer in History, University of Madras.
19. Thiru V. Ramasubramaniam (Aundy), No. 95, Venkata-raṅgam Pillai Street, Madras-5.
20. Dr. Shanker Kedilaya, M.A., Ph.D., Head of the Dept. of Kannada, University of Madras.
21. Dr. S. Shankar Raju Naidu, M.A., Ph.D., Head of the Dept. of Hindi, University of Madras.
22. Thiru M. Shanmugam Pillai, Tirukkural Research Centre, University of Madras.
23. Thiru C. N. Singaravelu, M.A., 28, II Cross Street, West C.I.T. Nagar, Madras-35.
24. Thiru K. Sittampalam, 'Thirukkural', Maruthady Karainagar, Ceylon.

25. Thiru K. Somasundara Desikar, M.A., Deputy Commissioner, Hindu Religious and Charitable Endowments Dept. (Retd.), No. 48, Padmanābha Nagar, Madras-20.
26. Thiru S. Subramaniam, M.A., Research Student, Dept. of Ancient History & Archaeology, University of Madras.
27. Selvi G. Sumathi, 17A, Unnāmalai Ammāl St., T.Nagar, Madras-17.
28. Thiru A. Swamy, M.A., B.L., Dept. of Ancient History & Archaeology, University of Madras.
29. Thiru S. Valavan, M.A., (Tamil Litt.), Tutor, Dept. of Tamil, Pachaiyappa's College, Madras-30.
30. Thiru Vaḷḷinayagam, M.A., Dept. of Economics, University of Madras.

The Chairman in a brief speech introduced the Leader and called upon him to speak.

Leader: Thiru A. S. Gnanasambandam: Before entering into this discussion on Humanism of Saivite Saints one must be sure of its concept. The word humanism has come to denote various things in modern days. Actually it is a philosophic mode of thought devoted to human interests and activities. From time immemorial man evinced the greatest interest only in knowing about another man. If so it would be quite normal for one to take interest in people around him. In that case one would be tempted to ask the difference between a humanist taking interest in humanity and an ordinary man's interest in his surroundings. Whereas the interest evinced by ordinary people is born out of curiosity and other considerations, the interest shown by a humanist is deep-rooted and has no selfish motives or considerations. It is philosophic in the sense that the humanist tries to discern the relationship between himself and others as emanating from a common source, which is God.

The moment he realises that the relationship between himself and others is something sacred, he is automatically attracted

towards the activities of others. His knowledge informs him that he and others are the children of one God and hence he strives to serve others. He feels that service to humanity is his duty, assigned by God. Slowly the humanist realises that service to man is service to God. The knowledge that God resides in every human being helps him in this thought. It is appropriate to note at this juncture what St. Tirumūlar of 3rd Century had to say regarding service to fellow humans. He is very particular that only service to humanity will be accepted as service to Him, by God Himself, and goes on to add that service done directly to God will not be useful to humanity. He is of opinion that any service done to humanity is service to God himself.

“Padamāḍakkoiḷ Paramarkku Onru Ieḷ,

படமாடக்கோயில் பரமர்க்கு ஒன்று ஈயில்,

Nadamāḍakkoiḷ Nambarkku Aṅgu Āka

நடமாடக்கோயில் நம்பர்க்கு அங்கு ஆகா

Nadamāḍakkoiḷ Nambarkku Onru Ieḷ,

நடமாடக்கோயில் நம்பர்க்கு ஒன்று ஈயில்,

Padamāḍakkoiḷ Paramarkku Adu Āme”.

படமாடக்கோயில் பரமர்க்கு அது ஆமே.

This idea seems to have had continuous validity in this part of the country. St. Manickavāsakar coming in the end of 8th century echoes this idea: ‘We will obey and serve those who are your Adiyārs’.

“Avar Ukandu Conna Parisē Tolumbāippani Seivōm”.

அவர் உகந்து சொன்ன பரிசே தொழும்பாய்ப்பணி செய்வோம்.

Periyapurāṇam which appeared in 12th century, of which we will refer shortly, speaks of the services rendered by Nāyanmārs. St. Tāyumānavar who lived in the end of 16th century speaks very clearly of this when he says thus: ‘If I could be given opportunity to serve those who love you Redemption will automatically come to me’.

Anbar Paṇi Ceiya Enai Ālakkivittuvittal.

அன்பர் பணி செய்ய எனே ஆளாக்கிவிட்டுவித்தால்

It is to be noted that many of these saints including the Nāyanmārs were married people with children. Their family life did not stand in the way of their total service to others. Yet many of them were people, who renounced the world and yet they did not believe in running away from society to look after their own redemption. As a matter of fact the idea of building temples and organising pūjas and festivals were in the nature of helping people. Epigraphic indications like the one in Tiruvorriyūr temple will go to show that temples were used as record offices, schools, hospitals and courts.

Most of these saints never considered anyone as their enemy. Even when some one did them physical harm either with or without cause, these saints did not consider them as their enemies. They never entertained any malice even towards those who directly harmed them. They always felt that harm was done either out of ignorance or they were destined to suffer. This is a very ancient idea of the Tamils which is given expression to in Puṛaṇānūru. That oft-quoted stanza 'All the places are our own and all the people are our relatives' goes on to add that none can do one any harm.

“Yātum Ūrē Yāvarum Kēlir, Tītum Nanṭum Piṇar Tara Vāra
யாதும் ஊரே யாவரும் கேளிர், தீதும் நன்றும் பிறர் தர வாரா
Nōtalum Taṇitalum Avaṇṇor Anna”.

நோதலும் தணிதலும் அவற்றோர் அன்ன.

Since this idea was ingrained in them it is no wonder the saints of Tamiḷnādu were free from malice and hatred. When one is aware of the grace of god, and is also aware of the inborn ignorance of people, one does not bear any malice to anybody, and on the contrary, bears only love even to those who do harm to one.

I can cite various examples to substantiate this statement of mine but I will be satisfied with citing only one example from the life of St. Tirunāvukkarasar. This saint as many of you may be aware was born as a Saivaite but went over to Jainism, for, he was not satisfied with the philosophy of Saivism. Having been

there for a long time he was disillusioned with that religion, for the simple reason that those who practised that religion were mere politicians, in the garb of religionists. There was no connection between their precept and practice. They who said that they would not harm even unseen creatures, were ready to physically harm the saint who came away from their religion. The saint reconverted himself to Saivism by the grace of God. The Jains who were having a political sway over the whole of Tamiḷnādu then were terrified that his returning to the old religion was not only a blow to their prestige but also a gate opener for others to follow suit. Hence with the connivance of the ruler, a Pallava king, they sought to destroy the saint by all means. Two of the tricks which they perpetrated on the saint were to administer poison to him in milk and rice, and to throw him into the ocean tied to a rock.

If the saint had expressed his resentment for this inhuman treatment we will not find fault with him. On the contrary he does not even mention the incidents when they happened, but refers to them long time afterwards. During his visit to Nanipaḷḷi and Neelakkudi he remembers these incidents by chance and refers to them in passing :

“Vaṇṇanai pārcōru Ākki Vaḷakkilā Amaṇar Tanda
வஞ்சனை பாற்சோறு ஆக்கி, வழக்கிலா அமணர் தந்த
Nanju Amudu Ākkuvittār Nanipaḷḷi Adikaḷarē”
நஞ்சு அமுது ஆக்குவித்தார், நனிபள்ளி அடிகளாரே

“Kallinōdu Enai Pūtti Amankaiar
கல்லினோடு எனைப்பூட்டி அமண்கையர்
Ollai Nīr Puka Nūkka En Vākkinaḷ
ஓல்லை நீர் புக நூக்க என் வாக்கினால்
Nellu Nil Vayal Nilakkudi Aran
நெல்லு நில வயல் நிலக்குடி அரண்
Nalla Nāmam Navirri Uindanē”
நல்ல நாமம் நவிற்றி உய்ந்தனே

In the first stanza the Jains are referred to as Vaḷakkilā Amaṇar which simply means UNCONVENTIONAL Jains. When

someone offers milk and rice, the offered person will consume it under the impression that what is offered is genuine milk and rice. As against this convention if some one offers poison in the name of milk and rice, what else can one call them than as unconventional people? In the second stanza referred to there is not even this epithet for the Jains. *This is a singular example of a great man without any malice.* A perusal of the stanzas will indicate an undercurrent of love for those who committed these deeds. To completely eschew malice and hold love for those who did these acts to one, for no reason, is indicative of the fact that the sufferer was a saint full of human kindness and love for all.

St. Gñānasambandar, a junior contemporary of Nāvarasar was second to none in doing service to the needy. Both these saints were at Tiruvizimīlai once, when terrible famine was raging there. If they had been like later day religionists, they would have satisfied themselves by saying that the people there have invited the wrath of god by committing sins and hence they deserved the suffering which is an indication of God's anger. On the contrary, they stayed at Tiruvizimīlai and started feeding the hungry till the famine was over. You would be surprised to note that both had separate feeding centres. It was because of the topography of the village. It was situated lengthwise and in the hot sun if one were to come all the way to the feeding centre situated at one end of the city then, by the time they returned to their homes they would feel hungry. In order to obviate this eventuality the saints with considerable forethought established separate feeding centres. The younger of the two had the kindness to see that the hungry were fed in time and when, once, it was delayed he rectified the time schedule.

Gñānasambandar could not brook the sufferings of even an unknown woman who had lost her *fiancee* by snake bite at Tirumarukal. If he had satisfied himself by saying that death is natural for all human beings be they young or old, none would have thought otherwise. But once he comes face to face with suffering, this kind of explanations will not suffice. One has to

remember the famous Kuṛaḷ here which enjoins that unless one takes all remedial measures to alleviate the sufferings of others, one cannot be said to have culture.

“Arivināl Ākuvatu Uṇḍo Piṇṇin Noy
Tannoy Pol Porra-k-Kadai”

அறிவினால் ஆகுவது உண்டோ பிற்றின் நோய்
தன்னோய் போல் போற்றுக் கடை

Vallāṇār goes one step further and says that he cannot brook the sight of scorched fields.

“Vādiya Pairai-k-Kaṇḍa Potellam
Eṇṇuḷam Varundiya Varuttam.

வாடிய பயிரைக் கண்ட போதெல்லாம்
எண்ணுளம் வருந்திய வருத்தம்.

St. Gñānasambandar in his infinite mercy resurrected the dead fiancée of the woman [to alleviate her sufferings. When all his entourage were suffering from fever at Tiruneḍuṅkuḷam and Tirucheṇḍode they pacified themselves by the thought that all human beings had to suffer for having been born as humans. But the saint would not accept that and took steps to cure them of their sufferings. The song which he sung in order to cure them is worth noting. He pleads to the Lord that it was His duty to alleviate the sufferings of people once they come to Him pleading :—

“Tuyar Udayār Idar Kaḷaiya Neduṅkāla Mēyavane”

துயர் உடையார் இடர் களைய நெடுங்கால மேயவனே

This line stands in eloquent testimony to the humanistic attitude of these saints. If these saints had led a secluded life “far from the madding crowd’s ignoble strife” none would find fault with them, and still would call them saints. Alleviation of sufferings, be it hunger of body or soul was their primary duty. Nothing was too small for them when the sufferer is another human being.

St. Sundarar’s resurrecting the dead boy at Avanāsi is another example. Even if you dispense these acts as miracles you cannot

dispense another action of Sundarar. He tom-tommed to people of Tiruvārur to collect all the paddy heaped before their houses without paying anything to anyone.

At this juncture we must understand one thing clearly. The love and kindness which these saints extended to the people was not discriminatory in any sense of the word. It flowed to all both deserving and undeserving irrespective of caste or creed. To judge whether one deserved or not was not their duty as all belonged to God. As far as they were concerned every individual was the child of god and it was for the Lord to decide who deserved what.

Amongst the 63 saints mentioned in Periyapurānam more than a dozen did physical service like donating clothes, pots, and even washing clothes. Many had the vow of feeding any number of people. A genuine doubt may occur to a few at least who are familiar with Periyapurānam, that I am stretching a point too far. Periyapurānam says that the saints gave away these things to Sivaṇḍiyārs. If so, would it not become discriminatory? In situations like this we must be extra careful in making out the meaning of these words. One must take pains to know the exact sense in which common words were used, especially in poetry by great poets. The word Aḍiyār is used to denote any human being. In the Ilayaṅkudimārar purānam a stanza occurs where this meaning is clearly expressed.

“Aṟam Enbu Punainda Iyartam Anbar Enbatōr Tanmaiyaḷ
அறம் என்பு புணந்த ஐயர்தம் அன்பர் என்பதோர் தன்மையால்

Nērā Vandavar Yāvarāyinum Nittamākkiya Pattimun
நேரே வந்தவர் யாவராயினும் நித்தமாக்கிய பத்திமுன்

Kūra Vandetir Kondu Kaikal

Kuvittu Niru Cevi-p-Pulattu

கூற வந்தெதிர் கொண்டு கைகள்

குவித்துன் இரு செவிப்புலத்து

Īra Mena Matura-p-Patam Parivaita Munnurai Ceitapin ”

ஈர மென மதுரப்பதம் பரிவெய்த முன்னுரை செய்தபின்

The sentence Nērā .Vandavar Yāvarāyinum நேரே வந்தவர் யாவராயினும் leaves no ambiguity regarding the interpretation of the word Adiyār. It simply means that these saints considered all human beings as Adiyārs. This is very important because as the Mahatma has rightly pointed out, whoever wants to serve others cannot afford to discriminate anyone as Adiyār and others as ordinary beings. There are no low-born or high-born neither good or bad, for them. The moment such a thought enters one's mind discrimination, likes and dislikes will set in, which will spoil their humanistic tendencies. To avoid this pitfall our forefathers have said that one should always think that all are born equal. Kuṛaḷ says this in its famous passage :—

“Pirappu Okkum Ella Uyirkkum”

பிறப்பு ஒக்கும் எல்லா உயிர்க்கும்

It is very difficult to feel this in spite of tall talks. Hence the dictum that all are children of god.

Our saints were realised souls and hence it was easy for them to feel that all living beings were equal and hence service to others came naturally to them. Without love and compassion for others, if one were to say that he possesses Bakthi to the Lord it is really hollow. If this is the case then one may be tempted to ask why later-day stories did not speak of this trait of saints. The fact is the later-day stories did not speak of this, because they did not believe that Bakthi had anything to do with service to humanity. They were under the impression that a true Baktha should renounce the world to be accepted by the Lord. They made much of external renunciation but never bothered about mental renunciation and selfless love. Wholehearted service also demands renunciation of *ahankāra* (pride) and *mamakāra*. (Selfishness) Why this fact was forgotten by later-day writers passes one's imagination.

The Saivaite saints were full of human kindness, love for others, sympathy for those who suffered and all these characterised their Bakthi. They were sure their service to humanity, who are the walking temples of God, would be taken as service done

directly to the Lord, and this service will directly lead them to salvation. Hence St. Tayumānavar said :—

Anbar Paṇi Ceyya Enai Āḷakki Vittuvittal,

அன்பர் பணி செய்ய எனை ஆளாக்கி விட்டுவித்தால்

Inba Nilai Tāne Vaṇdu Eitum Parāparamē

இன்ப நிலை தானே வந்து எய்தும் பராபரமே.

Thiru M. Arunachalam : Humanism means devotion to human interests. Human interests change through the years. As human society undergoes changes politically, socially and economically, it's interests also vary. Love of mankind and service to mankind is the same through the years, but expression of that love and service varies with this change in interests. What could have been considered as humanism two thousand years ago may not be the same a thousand years later and certainly is not the same today. We shall explain this here. The basis for tackling the social problems in the twentieth century is indeed humanism. Education, health, housing and employment are some of the problems which confront an administrator today, and all of them can easily be seen to be related to the concept of humanism; only, its manifestation is modern.

If we go back a few centuries earlier in point of time we find that humanism takes the shape of feeding the hungry. Philanthropists and lovers of mankind then littered the Tamil country and the whole of India, with countless centres for poor feeding—anna chatrams and dharma śālās providing relief from the pangs of hunger, was then considered to be the supreme goal of all humanitarian activity. Times were then unsettled, political turmoil disrupted the land, there were incessant wars; so cultivation of the land was not continuous; people had to go hungry for shortage of food. Hence feeding of the poor was considered a sacred duty.

When we go back a further thousand years in time, the concept is slightly different; it was then not mere poor feeding but the feeding of the men of God, and the doing of all manual service to them. Religion governed all human activity then and

humanism also was religion-oriented. That was the age of the Ālvārs and the Nāyanmārs and the wave of religious revival, which came to sweep the land, continued to ebb and flow for several centuries. During that period service to man meant always, service to the man of god; because all men were expected to be men of god. This concept is immortalised in the famous verse of Śaṅkīār where he says that Sambandha called upon the ashes to come back to life in flesh and blood as Pūmpāvai: 'Rise up before the eyes of the world, and prove that the real goal of all human life is the feeding of the men of God and the rejoicing in the celebration of the festivities connected with them'.¹

Very rarely do we find the extolling of Man, without reference to religion, as we find in a solitary verse of Avvai: 'Let the vast earth be an expanse of rich fields let the human habitations reach up to the heavens; one may give me millions upon millions in gold and pearl and gems; yet my heart cannot bear the sight of a single person going without one meal for one day'.² Hence we need not feel apologetic over the mention of God in humanistic thoughts in the religious works and in the songs of the saints.

Chivalry in the West may be viewed as a parallel to this concept of service to godly men. Chivalry in the broader sense embraced not only the cause of women, but also stood for the championing of the cause of all, the suffering and the meek.

If we approach the sayings of the Saiva saints and the Saiva hagiology, Periyapurāṇam, with an understanding of this background, we shall find that most of the lives only exemplify this humanism. We shall begin with Sambandha, the greatest of all the Saints. He was also the greatest humanist in all Saivism. If by humanism we understand love of man and service to man, we shall see that all the acts of Sambandha were calculated to serve man; man here meant of course the godly man.

We know Śiva gave Sambandha many things in life—a pair of golden cymbals for marking time, a pearl palanquin on which

1. Periyapurāṇam, verse 2930, Samājam edition 1950.

2. M. Raghava Ayyangār, Perumtokai 1935-36, verse 417.

to ride so that he might be free from the trouble of walking on foot from shrine to shrine child that he was, a pearl canopy to ward off the hot sun's rays, and many other gifts. All these we should remember were not asked for by Sambandha, but were graciously given to Sambandha, the child. Critics would say that he asked for gold to be given to his father. True. If we look at the songs of Sambandha and the words of Sekkiḷār, we may not say so. Sekkiḷār explains what he besought from Śiva. Sambandha does not simply go to Śiva's presence and ask for gold to be given to his father. He said, according to Sekkiḷār: "When others go to me for help, I have nothing to give them. I know of no succour but Thy feet".³ This is an elaboration of Sambandha's own words: 'If I have nothing to give to others—is this Thy dispensation to me?'.⁴ He does not ask for gold for his father; he merely states that he is not in a position to give.

Now coming to the instances of miracles actually invoked by him, we find that all of them were in the service of man. He took the outcaste Pāṇa, Nilakantha into his fold of intimate devotees. We should remember it was a time when caste differences reigned supreme. When Nilakantha sought to smash his musical instrument, the *yaḷ*, because it fed his ego, which passively made him assent to the general feeling among his clan that his *yaḷ* was also helpful in bringing glory to Sambandha's songs, Sambandha stopped him and told him in an artful but yet, convincing, manner, that the music emanating from man, a god-made instrument, could not be contained in the *yaḷ*, a man-made instrument.⁵ When he saw Appar, he felt that "this was his" good fortune."⁶ Let it be remembered that Appar was a *Vēlālar*, a lower caste than Sambandha, a Brahmin. When next, Sambandha cures the dire disease, *muyalakan*, affecting the daughter of the *malava* chief, he just sings: 'Is it to the glory of my Lord,

3. *Periya Puranam*, verse 2327.

4. *Tēvāram* Adanganmurai; Balasubrahmaniya Mudaliyar, edition 1953, verse 2834-43.

5. *Periya Puranam*, verses 2353-4.

6. *Ibid.* 2172.

to cause suffering to this girl?'⁷ Similar is his song sung in order to bring back to life the lover of the *vaṇiga* girl, who died at Tirumarugal. He sings: 'My Lord, this girl has surrendered herself to you entirely. Is it right that she should suffer like this?'⁸ In both the instances, he does not ask God to intervene and relieve the suffering or bring back the dead; he merely voices the suffering of the girls concerned. Both reflect not only the humility of Sambandha, but also lend a human touch to the incidents.

Sambandha goes to the western Koṅgu country, with his band of devotees. They were all unused to the intense cold there at that part of the year and so had to suffer. Sambandha sang a song beseeching God to alleviate their suffering:⁹ the cold no longer afflicted them. Not only his followers, but the entire country was saved from the intensity of the cold.¹⁰ His guiding the unmanned boat by his song at Kollambudur across river¹¹ was also to help men who wished worship in the temple.

In the story of Tiruṇīlanakka we see the concern of Sambandha for the comfortable accommodation of Tiruṇīlakantha Yālppāna and his wife, for the night, in the residence of Nilakantha.¹² Being in the middle of an *agraharam* or Brahmin quarters, he is worried that Nilakantha, who was an outcaste, should not be neglected but should be properly treated.

The song sung at Tiruviṇimīlai, in order to remove the discount on the gold coin received by him at the time of a famine there, is also in the same spirit. He received the coin in order to relieve the hunger of his followers; and also prayed for the removal of the discount at their request.¹³ Physical

7. *Tēvāram* Adanganmurai, verses 470-80.

8. *Ibid.* 1655.

9. *Ibid.* 1249-58.

10. *Periya Puranam*, 2239.

11. *Ibid.* 2802-3, and *Thēvāram* Adanganmurai 2856-66.

12. *Periya Puranam*, 1862.

13. *Tēvāram* Adanganmurai, 992.

exhaustion and hunger indeed afflict all persons; the saints themselves are no exception. Śiva himself opens up a temporary rest-house with a water-spring and relieves the exhaustion of Appar at Tirup-Paiññili and of Sundarar at Tirukkurugāṇur.¹⁴

Sambandha is quick to recognise the devotion and greatness of others and to pay homage to them. The songs which praise the services of queen Mangaiyarkkarasi and Minister Kulaccīrai deserve special mention. The saint who does not sing on any deity other than Śiva, now devotes a whole poem to these two; the affection of the queen even moves him to sing a song on herself alone,¹⁵ He does not walk to the shrine at Tiruvāṇkādu because the soil there was trodden by Kāraikkāl Ammai and thus rendered sacred.¹⁶ So also Sundara would not set foot in the sacred cities of Tiru-adikai and Sirkālī made holy by the services of Appar and Sambandha.

Bowing before the Lord at Kālahasti and rising up, Sambandha saw Kannappa the hunter, as though he was seeing before his eyes the very fruit of his salutation to Śiva there.¹⁷

Even on the occasion of his final beatitude, Sambandha appears to care for the welfare of the people around. A huge effulgence lit up the earth and the sky, on that occasion, obviously to grant him final release, as prayed for by him. Sekkiḷar here very vividly describes how he made all the others present—such as the few other Nāyanmārs present at his wedding, the parents of himself and of his bride, the palanquin bearers, the other servants and the many others who came there to witness, the marriage,¹⁸ enter the *jyōti* and attain *mōksha*.

The famous Pūmpāvai incident, the last miracle performed at his intercession, just before his final beatitude, is a very interesting one demonstrative of his felicitous enjoyment of this life.

14. *Periya Puranam*, 1575, 3314–5.

15. *Tēvāram* Adanganmurai verses 3211, 4030–1.

16. *Periya Puranam*, 2911.

17. *Ibid.* 2925.

18. *Periya Puranam*, 3151–6.

In all the verse which he sings in order to bring Pūmpāvai back to life out of her ashes, he says: 'O Pūmpāvai, will you go away without witnessing this festival in the Mylāpore temple?'¹⁹ The poem points out in bold relief a love of life and enjoyment of its many pleasures, in the name of God, which is supremely human. The monthly festivals which Sambandha has mentioned in the ten verses of the song are all social festivals where the entire community participates and whose main function besides worship, is the feeding of the people.

All these sentences in the life of this one saint go to demonstrate what a depth of feeling he had for the welfare of all mankind, and how he always strove to relieve the suffering of fellow human beings. A special feature in the case of Sambandha may be remembered here: he was a child (according to legends he attained final beatitude at the early age of sixteen); and so his heart always goes out to fellow beings and seeks divine intervention in relieving their suffering.

The galaxy of all the other saints in Śaivism also points to this general trend of humanism. Many had given up their kith and kin, wife and child, their very lives, in the service of the men of God. Idankaḷi, finding that the thief who stole his paddy stocks is a servant of Śiva, gives him more gold.²⁰ Kāraikkāl Ammai, the dutiful young wife, deems it proper to give away to a servant of God one of the mango fruits given to her by her husband,²¹ with what results, we all know. Śiva Himself, directs the ruling monarch to postpone the consecration of a temple newly built by him, as He was going for the same ceremony for the temple built, only mentally, by Pūsalār, an unknown devotee in a village.²² The Brahmin Appūdi does all his acts of charity and service to society in the name of Tirunāvukkarasu,²³ whom he had not seen, but only heard of. The chief Meypporuḷ willingly lays

19. *Tēvāram* Adanganmurai, 1971-80.

20. *Periya Puranam*, 4720-2.

21. *Ibid.* 1741-2.

22. *Ibid.* 4185.

23. *Ibid.* 1789, 1793.

down his own life when stabbed by his adversary and calls him "my kin," just because of his dress and, takes care to see that he comes to no harm.²⁴ What shall we say of Saint Ēnādinātha who allowed himself to be slain in combat by his adversary (an ex-student of his), because he saw the sacred ash (Śiva's emblem) on his forehead, but feigned a fight, holding in his hands the sword and shield, so that the sin of slaying an unarmed man might not attach to that adversary. Saint Appar, who had never prayed for divine intercession for his own sake, now prays for it in order to revive Appūdi's son who had succumbed to poison from a serpent.²⁵ Naminandi sees all beings in the city of Tiruvārur as members of the retinue of Śiva.²⁶

In the service of the Lord, caste has no consideration. Kulaçai, says Sambandha, worshipped men of caste and outcastes.²⁷ 'He made us give unto the needy and bestowed His Grace on those that freely gave'²⁸ sings Appar 'and He has set apart the dreadfulest of hells to those who do not give', and again: 'Oh ye wicked people, that swear by your scriptures: of what avail are your clan and caste? Worship Śiva and He will bestow His Grace on you in a trice'.²⁹ Appar spurns all the treasures of the heavens and the earth, when the givers thereof have no love for Śiva; but will worship that person as his very God who worships Śiva even if that one is a leper and is of the lowest caste, living on the meat of cows.³⁰

Saint Appar likens God to a fruit and says that it is sweet to those who are faultless. He is not content with merely enjoying it himself; he calls upon all to come and partake of the sweet fruit: 'Oh ye men, come here and hearken unto me. Can you

24. *Ibid.* 482-3.

25. *Tēvāram* Adanganmurai 4335. *Periya Puranam*, 1478.

26. *Periya Puranam*, 1897, 1899.

27. *Tēvāram* Adanganmurai, 4095.

28. *Ibid.* 4541.

29. *Ibid.* 5832.

30. *Ibid.* 7182.

enjoy a fruit, if I give you one? The fruit namely the holy God, is sweet to those who are faultless'.³¹

We shall mention here certain unique features in the lives of the Saints as told in the *Periya Puṟaṇam*. In modern terms, technical training is deemed necessary for easy job procurement. Saint Gaṇanātha ran a training school for *bhaktas* who wished to do manual service in temples.³² His school is perhaps a forerunner of this modern concept.

There is a proverb in Tamil that if you begin finding lapses in the others, you will be left with no one to call your kith or kin. Sēkkiḷar recognizes the relevancy of this dictum and says in several places that those that seek to blame the men of God for their faults will end up in hell.³³ Kalikkambar severs the hand of his wife for her failure to pour water for him for washing the feet of a *bhakta*, because she recognised in him a former servant of theirs, who had run away from their services.³⁴

Devotion to Śiva did really mean absolute surrender to God and men of God. But yet we find there were men who thought fit even to question the action of such men of God. We find two devotees, themselves reckoned as saints, questioning the action of no less a person than Sundara, known as the Comrade of the Lord. Sundara went to the Ārur temple one day, and hastened to the inner sanctum, without doing obeisance to the devotees of God gathered in the Devāśiriya maṇḍapam (hall). This enraged Viṇamīṇḍa, one of the devotees in the gathering; he thereupon cried, 'Fie upon Sundara, and fie upon the Lord who would be the master of such a devotee'.³⁵ In the opinion of this lone critic, a real devotee should bow to God's men even before he bows before God. The story goes that Sundara turned back, bowed to the assembly of devotees; this was the occasion for his singing

31. *Ibid.* 6128.

32. *Periya Puṛaṇam*, 3929-31.

33. *Ibid.* 3994.

34. *Ibid.* 4024.

35. *Ibid.* 4989.

the song *Tiru Tondattogai* enumerating the names of Śiva's devotees, which was the genesis the Sekkiḷar's *Periya Purānam*. The other *bhakta* was Ēyarkōne Kalikkāma, who would rather give up his own life than have anything to do with a man like Sundara, who dared to send Śiva as a love-messenger at the dead of night to the house of Pāravai.³⁶ These are two unique instances in the Śaiva hagiology, where two Śaiva saints dared to raise man above God.

A last word about 'the devotees from beyond'. Sundara in his nine groups of saints, speaks of the 'devotees from beyond'.³⁷ Beyond what? Beyond the barriers of time and space; beyond the barriers of caste and creed. He bows to all the lovers of God who existed earlier than he, and are likely to live in the future; who lived not only in the Tamil-speaking countries, but in all the lands beyond; who belong to any caste and who belong to any creed. There are no caste barriers in the love of God; we know there have been princes and peasants-like Pugal Chōla and Kochengat Chōla, Sēraman Perumāl, Kaḷal Siṅga the Pallava, Nedumāra, the Pāndya, among the princes, and Nandanār among the peasants; high caste Brahmins like Sambandha and Nīlanakka, and out-castes like Nilakantha Yaḷppāna and Kaṇṇappa, There are not only men, but also women and children.

When Appar says that even all the various religions, which may be founded by narrow-minded people out of spite, are acceptable to Śiva, how can the Śaiva saints harbour any ill will to any one in God's creation?³⁸ Even Sambandha says that it is He that caused the Jain and the Buddhist religions, that He is in the false tenets of those aliens, and that it is He who sports in this manner, making them give forth false words.³⁹ Sākkiya is a Buddhist and he is also classed as a Śiva *bhakta*. The larger heart of Sundara and Sēkkiḷar, we may boldly say, will embrace not only Rāmakrishna Paramahansa as a Śaiva saint,

36. *Ibid.* 3542-56.

37. *Tēvāram* Adanganmurai 7617-28 and *Periya Puranam* 4174-5.

38. *Tēvāram* Adanganmurai 4744.

39. *Ibid.* 1860, 2024, 2375.

but also Mahātma Gandhi, Jesus Christ and St. Francis of Assisi, as Saints. Such is the largeness of their concept of humanism, love of God manifesting itself as the love of all god's creation.

The story of Mānikkavāṇaka is not included in the *Periya Purānam*. It also contains a well-known anecdote about the broader concept of humanism. The river Vaigai is in floods, a miracle is wrought by Śiva to show to the Pāndiyan ruler, the *bhakti* of the Saint. Śiva Himself appears in the story, as a common labourer and goes to the old woman Vandī on the pretext of patching up her share of the broken bund of the river. We know that Vandī is raised to the heavens immediately,⁴⁰ but Manikkavāṇaka has to go through life for some more time before attaining final beatitude. This incident also reveals the solicitous care of God Himself in singling out an old and destitute woman, for the bestowal of His Grace, in the presence of the King and his minister.

Queen Mangaiyarkkarasi is the most human of all the saints. She was so worried at the young age of Sambandha who was pitted against the eight thousand Jain elders, singly, that Sambandha himself was moved into singing a separate song addressing her and assuring her of his final victorious emergence from the contest.

Yet there are instances to show that the Saints extended their love and service not only to men of God but also to all humanity and to all life. When Tilakavati desired to give up her life on hearing of the death of her betrothed in the battlefield, her brother, who was later to become Saint Appar, beseeched her to live for his sake, taking the place of both the parents for him. So she gave up her decision and lived on, wearing no ornaments but wearing the jewel of love to all living beings;⁴¹ the term used here is '*aru!*' which means unbounded grace; it is not mere love.

40. Parañjōti: *Tiruvilaiyāḍal*: 61 : 58-59.

41. *Periya Puranam*, 1304.

We mentioned Saint Appūdi. If his purpose was only to glorify Appar as a man of God, he could easily have built a temple for him and worshipped him. But he did not do so. Instead, he built a rest house on the main road to enable wayfarers to rest awhile from the hot sun and, a tank having cool refreshing water; he had provided such rest houses, tanks and shady bowers in the entire area around.⁴² These were useful not only to the Saivas, but for all mankind, irrespective of caste or creed. Appūdi is not a solitary instance. Appar himself, in his early years, had provided many such dharmasālās, rest houses, water tanks and bowers; he had fed many and given freely to the needy. This wider humanism was indeed part of the Saiva way of life.

The incident of Appar's journey to Kailās is very revealing. When all his limbs were worn out through his walking and travel, Śiva bade him rise up at Tiru Aiyaru and there witness His form. Doing so, Appar beheld the vision of Kailās here; all sentient and insentient beings appeared before him as Sakti and Siva. In this vision also, we perceive the extension of the concept of humanism far beyond the limits of the human kingdom. He sees the animals such as the elephant, the bear and the deer, and the birds such as the cock, the kuyil, the parrot and the peacock, all going in pairs, male and female, presenting to him a universal vision of Siva and Sakti. There is no sweeter poem in the language than the one sung by Appar on this occasion to describe the oneness of all creation.⁴³

When the saints have had this vision, it is no wonder service to God's creatures also comes to signify service to God.

The greatest exponent of this, shall we say, transcendent humanism, is Tirumūlar. His saying 'Love is God'⁴⁴ is deservedly famous. No greater exposition of the philosophy of humanism is possible than these three words. His dictum is an earlier edition

42. *ibid.* 1792, 1794. *ibid.* 1305-6.

43. *Thēvāram Adaṅganmurai* 4179-88.

44. *Tiru Mandiram* 270.

of the twentieth century Gandhi's philosophy, 'Truth is God'; this is pure jñāna, an abstract enunciation. So Gandhi himself qualified his enunciation and said 'Truth and Non-violence'. Non-violence is a negative term; put positively, it is Love; this is unqualified Love and embraces all life. Tirumūlar voices this positive aspect.

That Tirumūlar intended his Love to include in its fold all life, that he intended it to signify not only the spiritual plane, but also the humanistic plane, is evident from his other utterances. We shall translate here two of his mystic songs:

"Give unto every one. Do not discriminate as this or that. Do not hoard. Wait for others before you yourselves enjoy. You that are hungry, do not be hasty in going to your meals. Look at the crow; it caws and calls the others to share its food".

"Every one can offer at least a green leaf to God (if a flower could not be had). Every one can give a handful of grass to the cow. Every one can give a morsel of food to the hungry. And, every one can utter a kind word to another".⁴⁵

We see these two verses of a mystic, unqualifyingly emphasizing word and deed—as kindness and as food.

The humanism of the Saiva Saints extends even far beyond the human kingdom it reaches upto the animal and the vegetable kingdoms. 'The Sivayōgi, who is later to become Tirumūlar, the Śaiva saint, sees at Tiru-Avaṭuturai, on the banks of the Kāvēri, cows crying in sorrow; A cowherd by name Mūlan, who was grazing his cows there, met with his end and fell down dead. The cows went round his body, smelling him and crying. The Śivayōgi felt that he should, with Śiva's Grace, remove their distress. He saw that their distress could not be dispelled unless the dead man came alive. So he left his own body in a safe place and infused his own soul into the dead body and rose up as Tiru-

45. *ibid.* 250, 252.

mūlar. The cows were happy and lifting up their tails they now ran about in joy and went about grazing in their usual way.⁴⁶

This is not a solitary instance. An young Brahmin boy by name, Vicāra Śarma one day saw a herd of cows driven by a cowherd. A cow which had newly calved, just shook its horns at him; without the least hesitation, he took a stick and thrashed it severely. The young boy was much grieved and also enraged at this. He went to the cowherd told him about the sanctity of cows in general, and from that day onwards began to tend the cows himself.⁴⁷ He is one of the canonised saints, known in the Śaiva hagiology as Candesa, to whom the last worship is offered today in all the Śaiva temples. Images in stone and bronze are installed in all temples and worship in the temple is considered not complete, unless his worship is performed as the last item.

The biographer, Sēkkiḷar, goes even further. Jñāna Sambandha goes to Tiru Ōttūr and there converts all the male palmyrah trees into female trees, at the request of a devotee and makes them yield fruit. Concluding the story of the palms, Sekkiḷar sings: 'Since the palms were sung by Sambandha, they were able to get rid of the pāśa (bonds) attached to them; they got over the cycle of their births and in due time, were united with Śiva.'⁴⁸ The Śaiva concept of the unity of all life is exemplified here; the man, the animal and the plant are all different stages in the evolution of the soul, along the pathway to God. Love of animals is displayed in the stories of Tirumūlar and Candesar and final release is also conferred on the trees here. Centuries later we find a similar occurrence in the days of Umāpati Śivācharya: He focusses his spiritual vision on a *mulli* plant, whose earthly frame burns up by the Grace of God, and the soul inhabiting it goes up to the heavens.

All the saints are not only content to get immersed in the ocean of Śiva's grace and delight in it, but also always seek to

46. *Periya Purāṇam* 3578-82.

47. *ibid.* 1227-34.

48. *ibid.* 2886.

convert it into an ocean of the milk of human kindness and distribute it to the needy and the suffering.

Thiru C. N. Singaravelu: The learned initiator of the discussion has given various incidents from the lives of our great saints to show that the Śaivaite saints were merciful and kind to their fellow beings and were keen to relieve the sufferings of the people with whom they came in contact. He has also quoted stanzas from *Tēvāram*, *Periapurānam* and *Tirumāntiram* in support of his views.

There can be no doubt that the Śaivite saints were interested in the well being of their fellow beings and were full of the milk of human kindness. I would like to draw the attention of this learned assembly to only two stanzas, one from *Periapurānam* and another from the Śaiva Siddhānta Philosophic work *Sivagñāna Siddhiār*, in support of this statement.

Sekkizhar in his *Periapurānam* recorded the lives of the sixty three Saivite saints mentioned by Saint Sundarar in his 'Thiruthondath thogai'. In this book, in one of his introductory chapters, entitled 'Thirukkooṭa chirappu', Sēkkizhār has given the general characteristics of these Śaivaite saints. In the stanza beginning with 'Arang Kandigai, Ādaiyum Kanthiah' he says that these saints were 'ஈர அன்பினர் யாதுங் குறை விலார்' (Ēra Anbinar Yathum Kuṣaivilār). 'Anbu' by itself may mean love of God or love of fellow beings. But 'Ēra anbu' definitely means mercy and kindness to fellow beings. Sekkizhār says in that line that these saints were full of mercy and kindness and that therefore they had no wants.

In *Sivagñāna Siddhiār*, Aruṇandi Śivāchāriar says:—

“ஈசனுக்கு அன்பில்லார் அடியவர்க்கு அன்பில்லார்
எவ்வுயிர்க்கும் அன்பில்லார் தமக்கும் அன்பில்லார்”

Sivagñāna Siddhiār - 323.

Here, Aruṇandhi Śivāchāryar says that those who have no love of God have no love for His devotees and no love for any human being and not even for themselves.

I may incidentally point out that in above lines of Aruḷnandhi Sivāchaāryar a distinction is made between ‘அடியார்’ (i.e.) Śiva’s devotees and the rest of the human beings, which does not bear out the contention of the initiator of the discussion that ‘அடியார்’ may be taken to mean any human being and not necessarily ‘Śiva’s devotee’.

But one point has to be made. It will not be correct to say that the Śaiva Samayāchāryas (viz.) Thirugñānasambandhar, Thiru Nāvukkarasar, Sundarar and Manikkavāsagar were humanists. They were more than humanists. Their mission in life was spiritual and *not* social reform or social service. Their mission was to bring about a spiritual regeneration and God consciousness among the people. With this end in view they went from temple to temple, sang songs in praise of God, increased the number of their devotees and re-inforced their faith in God. Incidentally they brought succour to the needy with the help of God.

In order to relieve the woes of a Chettiar girl, Saint Gñana-sambandar pleaded with God and brought to life her lover. In order to relieve the sufferings of another Chettiar, the Saint brought to life his daughter, Poompāvai. When there was famine in Thiruveezhimizhalai, Saints Gñanasambandar and Thirunāvukkarasar rushed to the place, got gold coins by the intervention of God and fed the people there. But these were incidental in their lives. Their main task was to purify the minds of men and make them the abode of God. Their task was to bring about Supreme happiness, in the minds of men by reconditioning the minds and turning them Godward—please see for example the following stanza from Thirunāvukkarasar in which he says that you will get penance, dispel ignorance, straighten the crookedness in your heart and drink deep in the fountain of Supreme divine happiness by worshipping the Feet of the Lord in Thirmarukal temple :

“பெருக லாந்தவம் பேதைமை தீரலாம்

திருக லாகிய சிந்தை திருத்தலாம்

பருக லாம்பர மாயதோ ரானந்தம்

மருக லாண்டி வாழ்த்தி வணங்கவே”

The material wants of the people can be taken care of even by ordinary people with certain human sympathy. But the spiritual wants can be satisfied only by saints and sages.

There can be no doubt that these Śaivite āchāryas were aware of their fellow beings and were anxious to see that they enjoy the Supreme Divine happiness which the Āchāryas themselves were enjoying. That is why they were moving from temple to temple addressing the people to partake of the feast that they were enjoying. In one of the verses Nāvukkarasar calls the entire humanity to partake of the fruit of God.

“மனிதர் காளிங்கே வம்மொன்று சொல்லு கேன்
கனிதம் தாற்கனி யுண்ணவும் வல்லிரே
புனிதன் பொற்கழல் ஈசனே னுங்களி
இனிது சாலவும் ஏசற் றவர்கட்கே”

5-ம் திருமுறை (91-7)

If the āchāryas did not care for humanity they would have spent their time in meditation only. Hence we may conclude that if humanism includes caring for the spiritual well being of our fellowmen, the Śaivaite saints were certainly humanistic.

I would like to refer to one other point. The Śaiva Siddhānta philosophy talks of ‘Paśu Punniyam’ and ‘Paṭi Punniyam’, ‘Paśu Punniyam’ refers to service to fellow beings. ‘Paṭi Punniyam’ refers to service to God. Mere ‘Paśu Punniyam’ which is ethical conformity, leads to births and deaths. ‘Paṭi Punniyam’ leads to the ultimate goal (viz.) Mukti or Liberation. ‘Paśu Punniyam’ is a stepping stone to ‘Paṭi Punniyam’. If however the fellow beings are treated as God Himself, then service to fellow beings becomes service to God or ‘Paṭi Punniyam’.

Incidentally I may say that it will a travesty of truth to say that one who seeks salvation is selfish. For, according to Śaiva Siddhānta, the condition precedent to salvation is annihilation of the ego (i.e.) the sense of ‘I’ and ‘mine’.

Dr. A. Shanker Kedilaya: A devotee of God is a humanist as he has no selfishness but love for all the creation of God.

This humanism can be understood more by the teachings of the saints than by their biographies with reference to the Tamil Śaiva saints featuring in *Periya Purānam*.

This humanism is more prominent in the Veera Śaiva devotees of Karnāṭaka. They have taught humanism not only through their songs but also through their lives. The history of Basavēshwara, Allama Prabhu, Siddharāma, Akkamāchadēvi and others are such examples.

The slogan that they have given 'Kayakave Kailasa' means 'Work is Liberation'. This work is service to humanity and done without attachment. When work is not for selfish motives but to please God, it ends in serving humanity. Love for humanity is more marked in Veera Śaivism.

We see the caste distinctions maintained in Saivism but in Veera Shaivism all distinctions are removed and consequently barriers to serve humanity are not there.

Thiru V. Ramasubramaniam (Aundy): I am thankful to Sri Gñānasambandam, the leader of today's seminar, for his kindness to let us know, through his synopsis supplied to us in advance what he meant by the term 'Humanism'. 'Humanism', 'Humane-ness' and 'Humanitarianism' are three distinct technical terms carrying different meanings; but very often used by layman, and sometimes by students of philosophy also, as synonymous. During the renaissance epoch of European cultural history, the intelligentsia of Europe awoke to the possibilities latent in the natural man, and that the individual became acutely self-conscious and engrossed with his own particular temperament and capacities and with the problem and the means of expressing them to the utmost. For this reason the epoch is known as "The Renaissance", or period of Rebirth, and its pre-occupation with the development of human self-realisation there and now, in this world, within the limits set by birth and death, has given to its spirit the name of 'Humanism'. This is the definition given by Professor B. A. G. Fuller of the South California University in his book '*History of Philosophy*'.

'Humane-ness' has been defined by Webster's Dictionary as compassion, tenderness, mercifulness etc. This term occurs mostly in ethics. Let me illustrate - There was a time when stray and mad dogs were clubbed to death. Capital punishments on criminals were carried out by stoning, beheading, drowning guillotining, crucifying, burning, spearing through the anus and shooting. The horrors of the above said methods of execution did not prompt civilized man to abolish capital punishment altogether, but made him adopt the least tortuous means of hanging by the neck and electrocution. Humane-ness often by-passes the tragic *end* of victim, but emphasises the duty of minimising the *physical pain* involved in the means. Webster clarifies by using the term 'Barbarous' as its opposite or antonym. This ethical principle is called 'humane-ness'.

And the third term, Humanitarianism, means philanthropy, charity, helping the poor, the weak, the sick and the distressed. Analogously we can approximate humanism to the Sanskrit term 'Mānushyam', humane-ness to 'Ahimsa' and Humanitarianism to 'Daana'. Even though there are bound to be spheres of activity in which the three meanings overlap, they can never be synonymous on that account.

The leader has distinctly stated in the second para of the synopsis as follows — "The saints were extra-ordinarily humane towards their outlook to society, never condemning anyone for his lapses." This makes us think that, by humanism he means humane-ness, and not the other two connotations. The *Thirumantiram* testimony too confirms the humane outlook of the saints.

On the other hand, when Valmeeki makes his hero Rāma declare un-equivocally "Atmaanam mānushaam manyē". (I consider myself human.) He definitely suggests the doctrine of humanism in contra-distinction to supernaturalism. The biography of Sirutthondar, however, illustrates the ridiculousness of the literal interpretation of the humanitarian ideal of feeding a devotee of Śiva. It is neither humane—ness nor humanism. Here the happy

ending cannot justify the barbarous means condoned by the saintly Sirutthondar.

We know that the historical Siruttondar had been a general of the army of the Pallavas which won a victory over the Chālukyas of Badami. And we also know that the Pallavas did not legalise human sacrifice nor condone it even if practised by a gallant ex-army chief of his. What strikes me as un-natural and improbable is the characterisation of Saint Sirutondar as a barbarous ritualist. Mr. Gnanasambandam too seems to have noticed this incongruity. That is why he has stated in his synopsis 'as against most of the biographies, a few like Periyapurānam speak of this trait (of humanism) of the saints. Later-day biographers had lost sight of this noble quality of the saints, because they thought religion was only rituals.'

The leader says in his third para — '*Tēvaram*' and '*Periyapurānam*' extol this trait of the saints and explain their activities in alleviating the sufferings of humanity.' — I too endorse this view generally, but sometimes I had felt that '*Periyapurānam*' too must share the same flaw as that of the other biographies.

The well-known story of the massacre of 8000 Jains at Madurai finds a place in it. We know the tenets of Śaiva Siddhānta and its emphasis on Ahimsa and non-killing. How could Saint Gñānasambandha ignore them when the impalement of 8000 human beings was going on before his eyes. This episode is historically unbelievable. We have literary and even epigraphical evidence about the existence of a Jaina Tamiḷ Saṅgha at Madurai even after the departure of Saint Gñānasambandha from Madurai. We have many Jaina Tamiḷ Grammars, Lexicons, poems, and epics composed by Jaina authors in that self-same period. If all the good Jains had been massacred at the end of the seventh century after Christ, how could Jaina Tamiḷ Saṅgha flourish there to produce such a wealth of literary masterpieces?

This is but one of the many arguments against the historicity of the massacre episode. As this seminar is not directly concerned with that subject of Śaiva-Jaina conflict I deliberately eschew

further elaboration of the point. Even if we, for argument's sake, concede that the ex-Jaina monarch Arikēsari Māra Varman, had fanatically ordered the genocide how can we concede that the non-violent Jains too had agreed to be led at all which involved the certain massacre of one party or the other? The whole story bristles with improbabilities. It militates against the humane-ness of not only the greatest Saint of the Śaivas, but also of Śaivism itself.

With one more point, I shall conclude. In hymns 43 and 55 of 'Tiru-k-Koottaaru-p-Padikam' of Gñānasambandha, he refers to the raked Jaina monks of Kootaaru (the older name of the town of Nagercoil) as follows — “உடையிலா துழங்குகின்ற குண்டர்கள்”. This is certainly harsh language for a saint to utter. When Mahātma Gandhi was using the adjective 'Satanic' whenever he was referring to the then Government of India, a sensitive logician pointed out to him that the word 'Satanic' was un-becoming for the pen of an apostle of non-violence, even though it might have suited the character of the then Government. He immediately apologised for his past indiscretion and swore not to use it thereafter. But the first impulse after reading this Tēvaram was to condemn the saint. On second thoughts, I was tempted to declare that the word must have been interpolated by some later-day fanatic as a substitute for some other milder one. Thereafter, I referred to some Tamil Nighantus to know the etymology of the word Gundar. They gave the term the meaning 'Arukarkaḷ'. Without any etymology, obviously this connotation must have been derived from the usage by Śambandhar himself. It did not therefore, improve my knowledge. Nevertheless, it suggested that it must have been in use even before Gñānasambandha. After several sleepless nights, I recollected the names of two well-known Jaina personalities - Kaunti Adigaḷ and Kundavai - the former being the Jaina Nun—friend of Kōvalan and Kannaki and the latter, the philanthropic sister of the great Rāja Rāja Cholan. Within an hour, I remembered the name of one of the pioneers of South Indian Jaina Evangelism - viz. Acharya Kuṇa-Kunḍa of the 1st century B.C. It dawned upon me at once that the term 'Kundargal' must have connoted

the followers of Kuṇakunḍācharya and carried no stigma about it. Kaunti and Kundavai too might be Tamil feminine variants of the name 'Kuṇḍa'.

Ladies and Gentlemen, I think I have given enough provocative material for you to chew upon. Thank you.

Thiru A. Uttandaraman: All Hindu saints Śaivite and Vaishnavite were humanists who considered all living beings as abodes of God. Saint Tiruḡṇānasambandar in his *Tēvaram* song relating to Tiruveezhimilalai in Tanjāvur district has said:

'God represented by the idol in
Tiruveezhimilalai temple is the
life of the lives of all the mighty
four hundred thousands of types
of living beings created by Him'

This in effect means that he held every living being as the abode of God. It is in this village that both Sambandar and Tirunāvukkarasu (Appar) happened to camp together at a time when the people there were suffering from acute famine and economic difficulties involving soaring prices. Sambandar and Appar extended their stay in the village solely for the purpose of alleviating the sufferings of the people. They appealed to God for help and secured gold coins every day and arranged for feeding the people (which saint Tirumoolar describes as Mahēswara Pūja). Even here the gold coin intended for Appar was pure while that obtained by Sambandar was accepted at a discount. The reason for this differentiation is explained by Sekkiḷar as due to the fact that while Sambandar worshipped God both in mind and the songs, Appar had the additional merit of bodily labour as, with his Uḷavarappaḍai he removed all the thorns and bushes to enable devotees to go about without difficulty. Sambandar however pleaded for pure gold coins in order that he might also feed the people approaching him, better and more quickly and his prayer was granted.

Tirumoolar's *Tirumanthiram* is, according to Saivaites the most ancient spiritual literature. His own life bears ample testi-

mony to his compassion to animals. When he found a herd of cattle crowding round the dead body of the person who was tending them, he gave up his body and went into the body of the dead person and took all the cattle to the village but unfortunately his own body was inadvertently burnt by the time he returned and he had to live in the body of the cowherd during the rest of his life and it was with great difficulty he could convince the wife of the cowherd and the villagers about his identity as a sage who merely entered the dead body of the cowherd purely out of compassion towards the cattle.

In several songs Tirumoolar has expressed his devotion to human interests. "Anybody can worship God with green leaves. Anybody can give a mouthful of hay to a cow. Anybody can give a handful of food while eating. Anybody can speak kindly to others. (252) Love and Śiva are not different. Love is God. (270) Let me share my pleasure with the whole world. (85) Give whatever you can to others without going into their merit or demerit. (250). There is only one race (human race) and there is but one God. If offerings are made to God they may not benefit living beings in whom God has his abode. But if anything is offered to living beings, it will reach God has His abode in every living being."

In the life of Manickavāsagar there is the episode of God appearing in the form of an employee of a poor old woman Vandi and getting beaten with a cane by the Pāṇḍya king and the blow being received by all living beings including the King himself and thereby making all people understand that every living being is the abode of God.

In the very first song Śivapurāṇam of *Tiruvāchagam* Manickavāsagar has said:

"As grass and herb, worm and the diverse beasts, birds and snakes, stone and man, the ghoul and ganas, the mighty demons, sages and devas, all things static and mobile, have I been born and wearied" indicating thereby that all living beings have souls and are therefore entitled to equal worth and love.

The essence of Śaiva Siddhānta is that God is both the Mother and Father of the entire world of living beings. Appar spent all his wealth in humanitarian activities. Appoodhi Adigaḷ an ardent devotee of Appar used his wealth for provision of drinking water and other charitable purposes. Kalikambar fed a large number of devotees every day after washing their feet. He made no distinction between ardent devotees and his own servant who after being dismissed for misconduct became a devotee. Narasiṅgamunayarayar who was a king, fed all devotees irrespective of their status and bodily purity. When he saw among his guests one who was afflicted with venereal diseases, he gave him much more than what he gave to others. Some Nāyanārs gave what they had. Tiruneelakaṇḍar gave begging bowls as he was a potter by profession. Nēsa Nāyanar gave loin cloths as he was weaver. Tirukkurippuṇḍar washed the clothes of devotees as he was a washerman. Daṇḍi who was born blind utilised ropes, sticks and other aids and renovated the huge temple tank of Tiruvārur for the benefit of all people of the village and pilgrims. Kochengatchōḷan built over seventy huge temples for the benefit of his subjects.

Sundarar and Paravai Nāṭchiar fed numerous devotees and in Avināshi where he found a couple mourning over the death of their son and he prayed to God and got back the boy's life.

Saint Chēraman Perumān learnt the language of every living being in order to help each one of them.

Chandi a Brahmin boy found the village cowherd beating the cattle without reason and took upon himself the task of tending the cattle.

Saint Arunagirinātar prayed to God to drown him in the sea of happiness arising out of great compassion for other living beings and to bless him with love born out of knowledge of God having His abode in himself. (Tiruchendūr *Tiruppugaḷ*).

Saint Tayumānavar has in numerous songs stressed the immanence of God in every thing. He restrained himself even from offering flowers to God as he saw Him dwelling even in flowers.

His prayers to God were invariably for enabling him to be good and to do good to all living beings. An episode in his life illustrates vividly this trait in him. When the king honoured him with a costly shawl he gave it to a poor old woman on the road-side shivering with cold. Evil-minded persons complained to the king that the saint had given the shawl to a woman. When the king asked the saint about it he calmly replied that he gave it to Devi. When the king realised that the saint could see only the Goddess in every woman including the poor old woman, the king prostrated before the saint and sought his forgiveness.

On the same lines was Rāmaliṅga Swāmigal popularly known as Tiru Arutprakāsa Vallalār. He was grieved even at the sight of crops and plants which were fading. His constant prayer was also for blessing him with the ability to serve all living beings. He arranged for poor feeding irrespective of caste or creed and the service is being continued by his devotees. He wrote a treatise on compassion.

The word Śaivism has become synonymous with pure vegetarianism. Though Śaivites know that even paddy, pulses and vegetables also have lives, they try to feed themselves as far as practicable with ripe fruits and vegetables and sedulously avoid a meat and all kinds of non-vegetarian diet.

Among the Vaishnavite saint Rāmānuja is acknowledged as a great Ācharya. When Tirukōttiyur Nambi was contacted by him several times for learning from him the Ashtāchara Mantra, his prayer was granted with a stringent warning that if he divulged the sacred Mantra to others he would go to hell. But Rāmānuja straight-away went to the top of the temple and proclaimed to the entire village the sacred Mantra and when his Guru protested, he calmly replied that he was prepared to go to hell if by his action all those who received the Mantra could attain salvation.

G. M. Muthuswamy Pillai: The word "Human" is derived from the Latin word "Homo" meaning man and the word "Humane" is applicable to the feelings of kindness and tenderness proper to man. Saints in the form of men are naturally endowed

with abundance of kindness and tenderness and they are concerned, apart from their intense devotion to God Supreme, with "what is of paramount importance to man". This is called humanism. The nature of humanism resorted to by different saints depends upon the principles of different religions to which they belonged. Thus Buddha, the founder of Buddhism declared that he knew nothing of the "mystery" of God but knew some thing of the "misery" of man. He felt that it was his duty to relieve the misery of man on graduated system of piety and pity based on moral triangle of moderation, patience and love. "Do good for its own sake. Get rid of the egoistical quest for a blissful life after death" was his cardinal principle. Jesus preached and practised that there is one thing in Heaven and on earth, that is gentle heart. "Love ye one another: cease to oppress one another in your scramble for the so-called goods on the earth". While the earlier prophets like Zoraster and Confucius taught "Do not wish what others should not do unto you". Jesus converted this passive justice into active love by teaching. He wanted to establish the Kingdom of Heaven on earth. While Buddhism does not accept the existence of God, Christianity does not believe in the theory of Karma or its effect or the rebirth theory. According to Śaivism, on the basis of past actions known as "Karma" good or evil, God clothes the souls as it were, with suitable bodies for their sojourn in this world so as to enable them to experience life for the eventual redemption. But life is full of miseries and hence the aim should be release from rebirth and, for a release from rebirth, there should be no effect of past actions good or bad. For this achievement, one has to worship God and at the same time respect and love all the living beings which are also His manifestations. Hence, one worshipping God has to be necessarily humane and do service to humanity. But if such a service is rendered with a feeling that it is rendered by the individual concerned without the least thought of God, there will be good effects on account of such a service which will have to be experienced by the individual by being born again. For avoiding this unenviable situation devotees resort to rendering service to humanity in the name of God dedicating it to God Himself. While

the service rendered to living beings without dedicating it to God is called "Páśu Punniyam" that which is done in dedication to God is called "Śiva Punniyam". This aspect has to be kept in view when we consider the kindness or sympathy shown by Śaiva saints to human beings. Every deed resorted to by them in this direction is Śiva Punniyam.

Let us examine the humanism preached and practised by Śaiva saints from the earliest times. That there were saints of high order even at the time and prior to Tolkāppiam i.e. about 2500 B.C. is discernible from Tolkāppiam else. They are called Marai Mozhi Mānthar. During the Śaṅgam period there were saint-scholars. Even Ilangō Adigal, the ascetic of Jainism in his Silapatikāram and Sāthanār of Buddhism in his Madurai Kāñchi have given priority to Lord Śiva. One group of devotees is dealt with under "Poyyadimai Illātha Pulavar" in Sekkiḷar's *Periya Purānam*. His predecessor Nambiyāndar Nambi had already indicated this group as Kapilar, Bharanar, Nakkīrar and other scholars of Śaṅgam age. Kapilar was an intimate friend, philosopher and guide of King Pāri, known for his unbounded charities. Sundaramūrthi Swāmigal has greatly praised King Pāri. It can be safely assumed that these poets of Śaṅgam were ardent devotees of Lord Śiva and had cultivated a spirit of humanism as seen also from their poems included in *Puranānuṟu*. It is only from Sekkiḷar's *Periya Purānam* we get a settled view of humanism. Let us examine this aspect beginning with the four great Śaiva Saints:—

Tirugñānasambandar: Tirugñānasambandar is the first of the four great saints of the Śaiva religion, hailed as "Draviḍa Śiśu" by Saṅkarāchariar who flourished subsequently. In all his invocations to Lord Śiva whom he considered both as father and mother Tirugñānasambandar did not ask for anything for his own sake but yet Lord Śiva conferred on him what all was needed appropriate to the time and place. On the human side, he was very sympathetic. He could not bear the pitiable sight of the daughter of a chieftain suffering from a terrible malady. He pleaded in a hymn addressed to the Lord for her relief which was readily granted. At Tirumarugal, Tirugñānasambandar

happened to see a young woman crying for the Lord's mercy over the sudden death of her uncle's son due to snake bite. Her grief was all the more intense because she had already decided to marry him to set right the injustice meted out to him by her father in getting all his elder daughters married to wealthy individuals to the disappointment of this young man. Tirugñānasambandar sang a hymn in a wailing tone appealing to the Lord's tender mercy. This had the desired effect. The lad got up as though from slumber. At another time, there was a famine at Tiruvizhimilalai. Tirugñānasambandar and Tirunāvukkarasu Nāyanār prayed to God for bringing succour to the suffering masses. Their request was amply rewarded. They got gold coins for relieving the famine stricken people till the famine conditions abated. At no time Tirugñānasambandar diffused any pessimism in his teaching. On the other hand he pointed out that though human life is a short-lived one and one has to quit one's mortal garb at any time, one can live admirably well in this world, only if his worship of the Lord is in the proper perspective. One example will be sufficient in this direction. At Tiruchengode in Salem district there was a terrific influenza taking a heavy toll of human lives at the time when Tirugñānasambandar happened to visit this place. Pitying the agony of the people in this locality, he addressed a set of hymns to the Lord seeking relief to the population as a whole. At the same time, he also pointed out in these hymns that the people should not meekly succumb to disasters on the ground they have to suffer in the present life as a result of their past actions including those in the previous lives but should sincerely worship the Lord to get out of the difficulties. The result was that the disease disappeared from the locality to the immense relief and the satisfaction of the people.

Tirunāvukkarasu Nāyanār: Tirunāvukkarasu Nāyanār lived right up to 81 years. — In the early part of his life he realised that having regard to the short span of life one should do charities for the relief of the suffering and the needy. He dug tanks and wells for the benefit of not only human beings but also for the less unfortunate beings like the animals and

birds. He planted avenue trees so that they can give shelter to all. A lot of his resources was spent on other charitable purposes. After his conversion to Jainism and subsequent return from it to Śaivism at the instance of his pious sister, he devoted his service in wedding out the scrub jungle plants in temples by using his own weeding hoe and he was also very active in worshipping the Lord by singing hymns in His praise. He advocated love of mankind as worship of God Himself.¹ In one of his songs he says that God has arranged that the rich should help the poor and that such rich people should be rewarded with God's Grace and that at the same time God has arranged the worst of hells for those who do not help others. Here help does not mean monetary help alone. It includes every help which one can render to one's fellow beings. At another time, he goes further. He puts forth a pertinent question "What is the use of taking bath in such holy rivers like Ganges, Cauvēry, Kanyākumari and the famous oceans, if one does not feel the presence of Lord as an embodiment of love in every living being."² He transcended the barriers of caste and creed. Tirunāvukkarasu Nāyanar declares that though afflicted with deadly diseases though of a low caste, a person is a deity to me if he be a devotee of Lord Śiva.³

Sundarar: Sundarar led a family life but his devotion to Lord Siva knew no bounds. He asked from him even material goods like paddy, clothes, money etc. After accepting a limited

1. இரப்பவர்க்கீய வைத்தார் ஈவருக்கருளும் வைத்தார்
கரப்பவர் தங்கட் கெல்லாம் கடுநரகங்கள் வைத்தார்
பரப்பு நீர்க்கங்கை படர்தன்னை சடைபாகம் வைத்தார்
அரக்கனுக்கு அருளும் வைத்தார் ஐயன் ஐயாருளரே.
2. கங்கை யாடினென் காவிரி யாடினென்
கோங்குதண் குமரித்துறை யாடினென்
கங்கு மாகடல் ஓத நீராடினென்
எங்கும் ஈசன் என்னுதவர்க்கு இல்லையே.
3. அங்கமேலாம் குறைந்தழகு தொழு நோயராய்
ஆவுரித்துத் தின்று மூலும் புலையரேனும்
கங்கைவார் சடைக்கரந்தார்க் கன்பர் ஆகில்
அவர் கண்டிர் நாம் வணங்கும் கடவுளாரே.

quantity of paddy at Kundayur for his use he left a lot of it in the street so that needy people could make the best use of it. During one of his visits in the south, at Avanāshi in Coimbatore District, he was pained to hear the cries of parents of a boy whom they had lost a few years ago. Sundarar learnt that this boy had met a tragic end having been swallowed by a crocodile. Moved deeply by the sufferings of the parents, he addressed a hymn to the Lord to the following effect.

“Yama (the deity of Death) had taken away the life of the boy. Oh Lord! Please ask Yama to issue directions to the crocodile so that it can produce the boy forthwith.” Instantly to the great relief of the parents and to the astonishment of people on the spot, the tank which was dry then, got flooded and from it a crocodile raised his open mouth from which the boy jumped out to the shore.

Manickavāsagar: The life history of Saint Manickavāsagar is dealt with in the first instance by Perumpatrapuliyūr Nambi and subsequently by Paranjōthi Munivar and Kadavul Māmunivar and lastly by Mahā Vidwan Minākshisundaram Pillai. Perumpatra Puliyur Nambi's *Tiruvilayaḍar Puranam* refers to the several charities rendered by Manickavāsagar to Śaivaa devotees and others while Mānickavāsagar was functioning as the Chief Minister to the Pāndya king. In *Tirukōvayar*,⁴ there is a poem extolling the greatness of the hero. It compares the hero to cloud. The cloud showers rains for the benefit of the world without expecting anything in return; So also the hero does not seek anything in return for the benevolence he confers on the needy. The Karpaka tree in the Heavens grants everything asked for. Likewise the hero is very liberal in satisfying the needs of the poor. Like their own kinsman, the hero supports the bards. Like the Chintāmani in Heavens, which grants everything thought

4. காரணி கற்பகம், கற்றவ றுற்றுணை, பாணர் ஓக்கல்
சீரணி சிந்தாமணி யணிதில்லைச் சிவனடி க்குத்
தாரணி கொன்றையன், தக்கோர்தம் சங்ககிதி, விதிசேர்
ஊருணி யுற்றவர்க்கு ஊரன் மற்றியாவர்க்கும் ஊதியமே

of, the hero is munificent in granting the wishes of the poor even before they express their requests. Like the Śāṅga Nithi the wealth in the heavens which has the capacity to confer on the beneficiaries, the benefits of this world and those for the next life, the hero serves his fellow men so as to enable them to acquire the benefits of this life and also those which will accrue in the next life. Unless Manickavāsagar had cultivated a high sense of sympathy towards the meek and the poor and exercised it in a practical manner, such a thought-provoking sympathetic attitude would not have been given expression to in his *Tiruchitrambala Kōvaiyar*.

Peria Purānam: The 63 Saints dealt with in *Peria Purānam* by Sekkiḷar, the humanism of three Saints Tirugāṇasambandar, Tirunāvukkarasu Nainār and Sundaramūrthi Swamigal has been dealt with already. Of the remaining saints, ten saints attained salvation rendering service to Śaiva devotees. Elayānkudi Māra-nayanār, even in extreme poverty, did not spare the paddy seeds sown in his land or even the rafters of his residence for the purpose of performing a well merited charity. He collected the paddy seeds already sown in the field and arranged to cook it by using the rafters as fire-wood. Nēsa Nayanār wove clothes and supplied them to devotees for them to wear. Tirukuṟippu Toṇḍar washed the clothes of devotees willingly expecting nothing in return. Tiruneelakaṇṭa Nāyanār used to supply begging bowls to the devotees. In short, it should be taken that the Śaiva saints dealt with in *Peria Purānam* lived in accordance with the moral code prescribed by Tiruvaḷḷuvar in his immortal *Tirukkural* for rendering service to the meek and down-trodden. One instance will illustrate this point. Stanza No. 5 of Chapter 32 of *Tirukkural* points out that however intelligent an individual might be, if he does not feel as his very own, the pain suffered by other beings, his intelligence will be of no avail. The usual interpretation of this stanza is that one should feel as his own, the pain of others and ensure that pain is relieved. But there may be occasions when it will be beyond the capacity of the individual to relieve the pain of others. Then what should be his attitude? Great men in such circumstances subjected them-

selves to the same pain from which the victim was suffering. This attitude may look strange to one steeped in modern ideas. But those who imbibed a true sense of service to humanity in the course of their dedication to the service to the will of the Almighty came out successful in their attempts to suffer such similar pains themselves. The life of Tirumūlar is a typical example to show how a rare kindness to cows was amply rewarded. He was distressed to see a number of cows feeling unhpapy over the sudden death of the cowherd. To secure a remedy for the distress of the cows, Tirumūlar cast off his body and entered into the corpse of the cow-herd. Thereupon the cow-herd believed till then to have been dead got up as if from sleep to the extreme happiness of the cows. The Chōla king Manu Neethi Kanda Chōlan did not spare his only son whom the king held responsible for having caused the death of a calf while steering his chariot through a street in Tiruvārur. The king drove his chariot over his son with the intention that he himself should suffer the pain the cow had, over the death of its calf.

Tirumūlar's *Tirumantram* deals with humanism in its true perspective. Tirumūlar cannot differentiate Love from Lord Śiva.⁵ In one poem Tirumūlar depicts how this Love can be translated into action.⁶ He points⁷ out that one can easily secure a petty green leaf and offer it to God Supreme Likewise one can offer a mouthful of fooder to a cow. It is also easy for every-

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5. சிவ சிவ என்கிலார் தீவினையாளர்
சிவ சிவ என்றிடத் தீவினை யாரும்
சிவ சிவ என்றிடத் தேவரும் ஆவர்
சிவ சிவ என்னச் சிவகதி தானே.
 6. அன்பும் சிவம் இரண்டென்பர் அறிவிலர்
அன்பே சிவமாவதாகும் அறிவிலார்
அன்பே சிவமாவதாகும் அறிந்தபின்
அன்பே சிவமாய் அமர்ந்திருந்தாரே.
 7. யாவர்க்குமாம் இறைவற் கொரு பச்சிலை
யாவர்க்குமாம் பசுவுக்கொரு வாயுறை
யாவர்க்குமாம் உண்ணும்போதொரு கைப்பிடி
யாவர்க்குமாம் பிறர்க்கின் னுரை தானே.

one to offer a handful of food to the hunger-stricken. Above all it is very easy to speak kind words to others especially to those who are afflicted due to some reason or other. In another poem⁸ he condemns those who hoard wealth without tasting the joy and bliss of spending it by helping others in their adversity. This view is reflected in the observation of later writer Gay who says: "The luxury of doing good surpasses every other personal enjoyment". In another oft quoted poem⁹ Tirumūlar exclaims that what is offered to the Lord in the temple does not reach him but on the other hand if anything is offered to man who is in the form of God it will reach the Lord who presides in the Temple.

In spite of the fact that India had passed through several stages of spiritualism from the earliest times, spread by the well intentioned sages and saints, it continues to be the land of poverty, ignorance and disease. There are many who attack spiritualism on the ground that it is selfishness aimed at personal salvation and that there is no difference between such attempts and the struggle for existence in this material world. The other reason put forth in this context against spiritualism is that it has tended towards mere rituals or customs. In this view people want that spiritualists should identify themselves with the joys and sorrows of their fellow beings. In this context the view of the All India Inter-Religious Dialogue on "Eradication of Under Development" held at Bangalore from February 29th to March 3rd, 1972 may be taken into account. It pointed out that in spite of national endeavour to liberate all men from poverty and social inequality we have to recognise the fact that poverty and exploitation of

8. இன்பம் இடலின் நிரண்டுற வைத்தது
முன்பவர் செய்கை யினாலே முடிந்தது
இன்பம் அது கண்டும் ஈகிலாப் பேதைகள்
அன்பிலார் சிந்தை அறம் அறியாரே.

9. படமாடக் கோயிற் பகவற் கொன்றியில்
நடமாடக் கோயில் நம்பர்க்கங் காகா
நடமாடக் கோயில் நம்பர்க்கொன்றியில்
படமாடக் கோயிற் பகவற்கதாமே.

the poor has not found any real remedy. It stressed the fact that Established Religions with their firm loyalty to traditions, holy scriptures and institutions are at present an obstacle to development. As it is expected that Religions should provide a total vision for man's liberation and as there is need for planned organisation of man's potentialities it can be a positive force for accelerating development; there was an appeal to Temples, Mosques, Churches, Gurdwaras, Maths and Vihars to shed their present static outlook. Religious groups were also advised to become aware of their social responsibilities and get actively involved in the task of bettering the socio-economic plight of peoples.

Though it is not long since Swami Vivākananda uttered his weighty words that "our great national sin is the neglect of the masses and that is the cause of our downfall and that no amount of politics would be of any avail until the masses in India are once more well educated well fed and well cared for" there is no perceptible progress in the emancipation of the poor. The fullness of human fellowship will rise to the ideal of Divine love only when humanism reigns supreme.

Already great leaders like M. Robert McNamara, President of the World Bank has pointed out that there is an urgent need for an all out assault on rural poverty and that the Governments of the developing world had to measure the risk of reform against risk of revolution. Our country is now experimenting on democratic socialism with a view to reduce the gap between the rich and the poor. In its endeavours to achieve this result, it is facing ever so many difficulties. In this context our country wedded to Religion and Spiritualism can as well be trained to conduct its humanistic activities from a purely religious point of view. There will then be no discord nor discontentment. It will be worthwhile to embark on a Socialism which may be called Religious Socialism or Spiritual Socialism. In this Socialism there will be equal opportunities to even the lowest classes for learning and practising the salient principles of humanism and also the sublime theories of divinity. There will be solidarity and integration not only on the spiritual side but also from the national

point of view. Civilisation and culture are not static but are moving forward from the individual to the universal, deriving the pattern of development of universal love from the brotherhood of man and fatherhood of God.

The Chairman thanked the participants in the seminar for the illuminating discussion on the subject.

REPORTS OF SEMINARS—II

A Seminar on "Temples and Āgamas" was held under the auspices of the Institute at 4 P.M. in Room No. 48 of the Madras University Departmental Buildings on Wednesday the 19th December 1973. The following is a report on the proceedings of the Seminar.

Chairman :

Dr. K. K. Pillay, M.A., D.Litt., D.(Phil.) (Oxon).

Leaders :

Thiru T. S. Sambamurthy Sivachariyar of Arulmigu Thiru Kalikāmbal Temple, Madras-1.

Thiru K. A. Sabharatna Sivachariyar of Arulmigu Thiru Sivasubramanya Swāmi Temple, Mint Street, Madras-1.

Present :

Thiru R. Aiyaswami, 113-D, Vellala Street, Purasawalkam, Madras-84.

Thiru U. Aiyasami, Economics Department, Madras University.

Dr. G. Appa Rao, M.A., Ph.D., Dept. of Telugu, University of Madras.

Thiru G. N. Arulswamy, Assistant, P. W. D. Secretariat, Madras-9.

Thiru M. Arunachalam, Tiruchitrambalam, (Via) Tirumeniyarkoil, Kumbakonam.

Thiru Balasubramaniam, Registrar's Office, University of Madras, Madras-5.

Thiru C. Bojappan, Research Scholar, History Department, University of Madras.

Thiru K. A. Chellappan, "Paari Nilayam" No. 59, Broadway, Madras-1.

Thiru Devi Karumari Dasar, 21, Sunkurama Chetty Street, Madras-1.

Thiru A. Ekambaranathan, Dept. of Ancient History & Archaeology, University of Madras.

Dr. M. S. Gopalakrishnan, Reader & Head of the Dept. of Anthropology, University of Madras, Madras-5.

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Thiru D. Krishnamurthy, Editor, 'Free India Weekly', 77, General Patters Road, Madras-2.

Thiru R. Krishna Rao, Retd. Principal, College of Arts & Crafts, Trustpuram, Madras-28.

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Thiru A. K. Manavalan, Superintendent, Agro-Economics Research Centre, University of Madras.

Thiru V. Mani Vannan, 110, Avadhanam Papier Road, Madras-7.

Thiru C. Mohanasundaram, General Secretary, Nakkeerar Kazhagam, Madras-1.

Thiru G. M. Muthusami Pillai, I.A.S., Retired Collector, Plot No. 17, Kalakshetra Road, Tiruvanmiyur, Madras-40.

Thiru T. M. Narayanaswami Pillai, B.A., B.L., Commissioner for H.R.E. Board (Retd.) Tiruchirapalli.

Thiru D. Natarajan, M.A., Gazetted Assistant to Member, Planning Commission (Economics), University Buildings, Madras-5.

Thiru K. Natarajan, Verification Officer (Assistant Commissioner), H.R & C.E. (Admn.) Dept., Madras-34.

Thiru Natesanar, Lecturer in Tamil, St. Joseph's Anglo-Indian Boy's High School, Vepery, Madras-7.

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Thiru S. P. Palaniswamy, Assistant Professor of Economics, Presidency College, Madras-5.

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Thiru C. E. Ramachandran, M.A., M.Litt., Reader & Head of the Dept. of History, University of Madras.

- Thiru K. Ramalingam, M.A., Municipal Commissioner (Retd.), 'Tamil Manam' 21, Park East St., Shenoy-nagar, Madras.
- Thiru S. Ramanathan, Assistant Electrical Foreman, Electric Tracks, S. Railway, Tambaram.
- Thiru V. Ramasubramaniam, (Aundy), No. 95, Venkatarangam Pillai Street, Triplicane, Madras-5.
- Thiru A. Ramaswami Mudaliar, 'Gñana Oli', 42, Adanja Mudali St., Madras-28.
- Thiru R. Ramaswamy, Student, Room No. 33, P. G. Hostel, Marina, Madras-5.
- Thiru B. Ranganathan, Student, No. 37, Dharmaraja Koil St., Alandur, Madras-16.
- Thiru A. Rangaswamy, Student, No. 3, P.G.S. Hostel, Marina, Madras-5.
- Thiru K. N. Rangaswamy, Journalist, No. 2, Sripuram, 2nd St., Royapettah, Madras-14.
- Thiru T. S. Satchitanandam Gurukkal, Sri Othandeswarar Koil, No. 126, Main Road, Tirumazhisai, *Via* Poonamalle, Madras-56.
- Thiru R. T. Sambandam, No. 4, North Eswaran Koil Mada Street, Thirumazhisai, Madras-56.
- Thiru Vidwan V. R. R. Sama, Retd. Head Tamil Pandit, No. 9, U. P. Koil Street, Vadapalani, Madras-26.
- Dr. N. Sanjivi, M.A., Ph.D., Professor and Head of the Dept. of Tamil, University of Madras, Madras-5.
- Thiru Mylai Seeni Venkataswami, No. 74, Karaneswarar Koil St., Mylapore, Madras-4.
- Thiru R. Shanmugam, No. 13, Appa Kannu Mudali St.

Thiru Vidwan M. Shanmugam Pillai, Tirukkural Research Centre, University of Madras.

Thiru C. N. Singaravelu, Retd. Assistant Secretary to Govt., No. 28, II Cross St., West C. I. T. Nagar, Madras-35.

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Thiru A. Subramanian, Dept. of Ancient History & Archaeology, University of Madras.

Thiru A. Subramanian, Retd. Chief Engineer for Electricity, 103, Eleventh Cross St., Indranagar, Madras-20.

Thiru C. Sundaram, Dept. of Ancient History and Archaeology, Madras-5.

Thiru M. Sundara Raj, Financial Adviser & Chief Accounts Officer, (Construction), Southern Railway, Madras-8.

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Thiru T. N. Vasudeva Rao, Professor of History Presidency College, Madras-5.

Thiru T. P. Venkatachalam, Executive Officer, Arul Migu Devi Karumariamman Tirukkoil, Tiruverkadu P. O., Madras-77.

Thiru Vedam Venkataraya Sastry, No. 4, Mallikeswarar Koil South Lane, Madras-1.

Thiru M. Vivekananda, B.Sc., L.T., M.Ed., 16, Salai Street, Madras-4.

The Chairman welcomed the audience stating that the two distinguished Sivacharyas were well known for their scholarship of the Agamas and were actually serving as the Chief Priests of the two well known temples in Madras. He hoped that the papers to be read by them would be illuminating and of great benefit to all Hindus and other religionists interested in Temple Worship.

Leader :

Sivāchārya Kula Bhūshanam Thiru T. S. Sambamurthi Sivacharyar : By the grace of my Guru and with my humble salutation to the Devotees, I venture to speak on the Āgamas which explain the significance of the temples. I thank the organisers and elders and salute the scholars and savants among the audience for giving me an opportunity to speak here. Ā (அ) and Layam (லயம்) are two words. Ā (அ) signifying Ātmas (souls) or pasu. Laya means the place of refuge. The words 'Koil' and 'Devasthānam' are considered to have similar meanings.

Is there any place where there is no God? But just as cow's milk can be had not from all parts of its body except from her udder, similarly for the vision of God and His Grace, the temple serves as an important place for realising Him. The Vēdāgamas declare that, to follow the charya, kriya and yoga, attain knowledge

of the attributes of Pathi, Paśu and Pāsa and perceive God through Gñāna or through the Vēda-Vēdānta which explains the relationship between Jīvātma and Paramātma, the temple is essential.

Tirumūlar's *Tirumantiram* which is the essence of Vēdāgama says :

Pattan Kiriyaī chariyaī Payilvuṛ.uch

பத்தன் கிரியை சரியை பயில்வுற்றுச்

Cutta Varulār ṛuricāṛra yogattil

சுத்த வருளாற் றுறிசற்ற யோகத்தில்

Uytta Neṛiyuṛṛunarginra Gñānattār

உய்த்த நெறியிற்றுணர்கின்ற ஞானத்தாற்

Cittan guruvarulār Cīvamāgumē.

சித்தன் குருவருளாற் சிவமாகுமே.

So worship is essential for salvation of souls. So, for the Ātma to get detached from Pāsa, see Paśu and get merged with it and thus obtain the Supreme Bliss of *Brahmānandam* and *Sivānandam* through worship of God, the temple is the best means.

Sekkiḷar's *Periyapurānam* says :

Enṇilāgama miyambiya ṛiṛaivanārtām virumbum

எண்ணிலாகம மியம்பிய றிறைவனார்தம் விரும்பும்

Uṇmaiṇāvatu Pūsanai yena vuraittarula

உண்மையாவது பூசனை யென வுரைத்தருள

Aṇṇalār tamī yaruṇṇai puriya vavatarittāḷ

அண்ணலார்தமை யருச்சனை புரிய வவதரித்தாள்

Peppinallavalaḷayinap peruntavak kolundu.

பெண்ணினல்லவளாயினப் பெருந்தவக் கொழுந்து.

So worship is the act of seeking Pati. Among such acts worship of God (Pūja) is the best. This is of two kinds, viz., Atmārtha and Parārtha. The Saivāgamas declare: "Atmārtam cha, Parārtam cha, Pujāth vividamuchyate".

The doing of Archana (praise of God) according to the Vēdāgama through the Mantra spelt out by one's guru after getting initiated and, obtaining a liṅga or other idol through the grace of the Guru, is Atmārtha Pūja.—That is, attaining one's own salvation

by the worship of God, in one's own mind through Yoga knowledge and attaining the state of Paṭi (Godhead).

This is done by each in his own house or by doing charya (good deeds) like cleaning temples, singing songs, praising and dancing, to get the knowledge of Godhead.

Parārtha is the method to attain Godhead which is variously called Brahmānanda, Sivānanda (Bliss on attaining Brahman or Siva-hood) Kaivalya (Highest State), Moksha (Salvation) Pērinbam (Supreme Bliss) for all animals, birds, sentient and insentient beings, through the aid of Siva Dvija (twice-born) and Ādi-Saivas performing religious rites like installation, with the celebrations therefor, according to the Vedic edicts laid down in the form of Āgama Siddhānta to idols of Gods which were made by All knowing Saints and Seers or, which appeared of their own accord, and building for such idols the *sanctum sanctorum* (Karuvaṛai) the mid-room (Anthrālam), the lobby (Ardha mandapam) the big front Hall (Mahāmandapam), open space (kōshtam), ambulating passages (prakāram), Tower (vimānam), Flag-staff (Kodimaram), sacrificial altar (Balipectam), providing carriers (vāhanas) of the deities which represent the human soul (jivātma) like the Bull etc., constructing sacrificial Halls (Yāga sālai), kitchen (Pāga salai), ramparts (Tirumadil), water tank (Tirukkulam), Flower gardens (Udyānam), cowshed (Pasu-madam), preceptor's room (Guru-madam) etc. This alone is Parārtham or that which is made for the sake of others. Mahadāgama says: "Siddhanto Vēdacharath-vath Anyat Vēdabashakṛtham Siddhānta Vihithācharaha". So the Puja performed by construction of temples according to the rules of Āgama Siddhānta and performing Mantra and Tantra rituals with the help of an Ādi Saiva, is Parārtha Pūja. The place where this is done is denoted by the terms Ālaya, Devasthāna and Koil.

The books which lay down the rules to be followed in construction of temples, installation of deities and the rituals and festivals connected with them are called Āgama. Among the many Āgamas, only the six Āgamas enunciated by Paramēśa as essence of Ṛg., Yajur, Sāma and Atharva Vēdas, viz. Gānapatyam, Kau-māram, Sowram, Vainavam, Sāktham and Saivam, pertain to the six Vaidik religions. The word 'Āgama' in Sanskrit means "that

which came" i.e. That which came from the All-knowing Śiva. These include authoritative works on construction of temples, houses, palaces, etc. fine arts like dances by men and women (Thāndava and Lāsya) Music, vocal and instrumental, basis for astronomy, astrology, explanations and basis for Mantras and rituals difficult of performance mentioned in the Karma and Upāsana Kāndas of the Vēdas, of the Siddhānta Sāstra, which is the head of the Upanishads in Jñānakāṇḍam.

From Tirumular's words:

Vedamo ṭagama meyya miṭaivanu

வேதமோ டாகம மெய்யாமிற்றைவனூ

loḍuñ chirappum poḍuvu menruḷḷana

லோதுஞ் சிறப்பும் பொதுவு மென்றுள்ளன

nada nurayavi naḍi liraṇḍantham

நாத னுரையவை நாடி லிரண்டந்தம்

Pēdama tenbar periyorkkabēṭame

பேதம தென்பர் பெரியோர்க்கபேதமே,

it may be derived that the Pure one gave only the two works of Vēda and Saiva. Also, it is learnt from Aruḷnandi Sivam that Āgamas are the essence of Vēdas and that they derive their name because of their origin from God. Among the Āgamas, Sivāgamas are 28 beginning with Kāmika and ending with Vādulam. The Upāgamās are 207; but only 28 are the root ones. The Saivaite code states that 66 eternal savants received clear expositions of 207 Āgamas. These 66 Dēvas were Pranavas and Trikālas who heard these Āgamas direct from the Lord of Heavens. They are divided into four quarters (charya, kriya, gñāna and yōga). Charya comprises of meritorious deeds for the Lord like cleaning the temple, lighting lamps, gathering flowers, stringing garlands etc. Kriya comprises of Siva puja etc., after receiving initiation which are Samaya, Visēsha & Nirvana (Ordinary, Special and Emancipatory). Yoga is Yama, Niyama (Discipline and Observance of divine codes) and pranāyāma (control of vital Breath) by practising control of inhalation and exhalation and doing Antaryōga (internal practice). Gñāna is the attainment of Divine feeling, in aiming at Salvation after knowing the attributes of each of the three padār-

thas (states of existence) viz. Pasu, Pati and Pāsa. For all souls to attain salvation, rituals for erection of temples, installation of deities according to mantras, modes of performance of worship in three degrees, Nitya, Naimittika and Kāmya (Basic, Special and motivated) performance of Deeksha (initiation), Kumbābi-shēkam (ablution of the sacred pots at the top of the Temple Towers for purification), Mahotsavam (the Supreme festival), prāyaschitta (penance for any faults that occurred in acts of kriya) have all been prescribed for worship in the temples as parārtha (external) form of worship. That is why moral codes lay down the dictum 'Do not dwell in towns which have no temples' and 'it is highly meritorious to worship in temples' ["கோயிலில்லா ஊரில் குடியிருக்க வேண்டாம்" : "ஆலயம் தொழுவது சாலவும் நன்று"].

Aruṇandi says that if there is a set-back in the worship of God in temples, Kings will come to grief, and diminution of prosperity, increase of deceit, theft in the world will occur. The six states of advancement of the Ātma will be symbolised thus :

1. Rājagopuram Main Tower – Sthūlaliṅgam, Bhuthātma, Gross state of the Soul.
2. Mahābalipectam – Supreme sacrificial alter – Bhadrāliṅgam – Antarātma – Subtle state of Soul.
3. Koḍimaram – Flag staff – Dvajaliṅgam – Tatwātma – Soul in its elemental state.
4. Mūlavar – Presiding diety – Sadaśivaliṅgam – Jivātma – Soul of the being in its pure state.
5. Ācārya – Preceptor – Ānmaliṅgam Mantrānma – Soul in mystic state.
6. Paraveḷi – Open space – Akhandaliṅgam – Paramātma – Divine Soul.

Taittriya Upanishad also mentions Annamaya Ātma, Pranamaya Ātma, Manōmaya Ātma, Ānandamaya Ātma, Pratyag Ātma.

The different states of Ātma (Soul) and the reasons for their states are mentioned in stanza 59 of Sarva Gñānēndram (Agama) as under :

பூத பரிணாமத்தால் பூதான்மா ஆவன்

(on account of manifestation he becomes living soul)

புகல் சத்தம் பொருந்தலின் அந்தரான்மா ஆவன்

(on account of inner voice, he becomes Inner soul)

பேதமிகு தத்துவத்தால் தத்துவான்மா ஆவன்

(on account of various elemental attributes he becomes an elemental soul)

விளம்பு பிரகிருதி குணந்தழி இச்சுக துக்கங்கள்

தீதறவே புசித்தலினால் சீவான்மா ஆவன்

(Following its inherent quality and enjoying pleasures and undergoing suffering he becomes the soul of beings ; jīvātma))

திகழ்தரு மந்திரப் புணர்வார் மந்திரான்மா ஆவன்

(connected with holy mantras he becomes Mystic soul, mantratma)

யாதுமற விட்ட அவன் பரமான்மா ஆவன்

(Renouncing everything he comes the Divine Soul)

ஏகான்மாவே ஆறு திறனுமா யிருப்பான்

A single soul thus manifests as six.

[Sarvajñanāṇḍram, verse 59]

Wishes of the people in life here and hereafter, are the four Purushārthās (objects in life). Sivajñāna is the revelation by God at the time of creation for attaining these objects in life (Purushārtha)

To attain salvation through Sivajñāna, God revealed the four Vedas, Ṛg., Yajur, Sāma and Atharva Vēdas and 28 Āgamas through the five faces of His.

Āgamas beginning with Kāmika are 28. Of these ten belong to the Siva class, Sivabhēda and eighteen to Rudra (Rudrabhēda) The Sivabhēda comprise of 1. Kāmikam, 2. Yōgajam, 3. Sindh-yam, 4. Kārnām, 5. Ajitam, 6. Deeptam, 7. Sukṣhmam, 8. Sahasram, 9. Amsumān and 10. Suprabhēda. These ten āgamas of the Sivabhēda were each heard by 3 persons, in all by 30 persons, beginning with Praṇava, and ending with Śaśi.

Rudrabhēda consisting of eighteen Āgamas were each heard by two, in all 36, beginning with Anādirudra and ending with Mahakāḷa. These Āgamas are 1. Vijaya, 2. Nīśvāśam, 3. Svāyambhūvam, 4. Agnēyam, 5. Veeram, 6. Rauravam, 7. Makutam, 8. Vimalam, 9. Chandragñānam, 10. Mukhabhimbam, 11. Prōtgeetham, 12. Lalitam, 13. Siddam, 14. Santānam, 15. Sarvoktham, 16. Pāramēswaram, 17. Kiranam, 18. Vādhulam.

The Upāgamas following these are 207 in number beginning with Mrigēndram and ending with Viswātmagam. It is stated that for Saivism “20 are the core, the subdivisions are 207 as heard by sixty six persons beginning with Pranava”.

Tirumular, at the rate of one mantra per year, has enunciated 3000 mantras in 3000 years depicting Vēda Āgamas as the supreme authority. All these point out to the code of Vēda-Sivāgama. Panchāksharam is the essence of Vēda Āgama :

ஐம்பது எழுத்தே அனைத்து வேதங்களும்

All Vedas comprise of fifty letters

ஐம்பது எழுத்தே அனைத்து ஆகமங்களும்

All Āgamas comprise of fifty letters

ஐம்பத்தையு மாவது அறிந்தபின்

After learning these fifty

ஐம்பதெழுத்தும் போய் அஞ்செழுத்தாகுமே

these fifty letters will vanish and become five letters.

All are contained in Vēda āgamas. But Vēda Āgama is not contained by any other—

யாது சமயம் பொருணூல்

யாது எங்கெனில் இதுவாகும்

which is religion and which the scripture

The answer to which is this

அதுவல்ல வெனும் பிணக்கு

அதின்றி நீதியினால் இவையெல்லாம் காண நிற்பது

ஒரிடத்தே யாதொரு சமயம்

For the riddle this is not that, but by reason of not being that, there stands for clear perception, that one single religion :

அதுசமயம் பொருணூல் ஆதலின் இவை எல்லாம்

அரு மறையாகமத்தே யடங்கும்

அவையிரண்டும் அரனடிக்கீழடங்கும்

that religion is also the scripture and all this are contained in the sacred Vēdas and Āgamas which two are at the feet of Haran.

So the Lord sought to fulfil the four Purushārthas (objects in life) through Charya, Kriya, Yōga and Jñāna and through the 28 Āgamas and 207 Upāgamas. The Āgamas proclaim that these Purushārthas can be obtained by Pūja; that of the two kinds of Pūja, Parārtha Pūja is obtained for all souls; that to do this Parārtha Pūja, temples are established through various rituals beginning with Karshana and ending with Pratishta, again from Pratishta to Utsava and from Utsava to Prāyaschitta. Both experience of the majority and the authority of religious texts like Āgamas and Tirumantiram point out, that, to do Parārtha Pūja only Ādi Saivaites who are Sivadvijas are competent.

With this I conclude my speech.

Sivagama Ratna Thiru K. A. Sabharatna Sivacharya :

The word 'Thrukkoil' evokes the taught in everybody's mind that it is the residence of God. The word கடவுள் (Kadavul) is generally taken to indicate that which is beyond human abilities, having powers beyond comprehension, eternal omnipresent, omnipotent and all pervading being. The question then arises why there should be a temple for God who is omnipresent. Just as we draw out the underground water existing everywhere through ponds, wells or store them from rivers and lakes for our use; just as we harness electrical energy in power-houses for our use, so we require temples to worship the all-pervading God. So a temple is essential for worshipping the omnipresent God.

Believers in the worship of a God without form, doubt whether it is necessary to worship images made of copper, stone or mud. Once the need for a temple for worship is conceded, in as much as a temple or Darga or Church has to be erected

with stone, mud and metal, so worship of God with form as well as without form is conceded.

கோ (ko) means God இல (Il) is its residential place. In the word Tirukkoil "Tiru" means Lakshmi-like, Śiva-like and auspicious. 'Ko' means God and, 'Il' dwelling place. Thiru is taken to mean Lakshmi; the word Lakshmi is a Sanskrit word derived from Lakshma meaning aim, attributes. Vēdas give the meaning of Lakshmi as with attributes, with aim, auspicious. Similarly the word Śiva is derived from the Dhatu, (Root) Vasikaranē in which Vasi became Śiva, which means auspicious, that which attracts. So if the word Tirukkoil is separated as Tiru and Koil it means the dwelling place of God which is Śivam, auspicious, which has attributes and is attractive.

The word Ālaya also means the place to which Ātmas are attracted by God, when Ānava (Ego) is suppressed, giving place to bliss. So the distinctive treasure-house of Bhārat viz. the God's scriptures, the Vēdāgamas have, within them, the idea of God, common to all religions and also special to each religion and are encyclopaedic, showing the ways to salvation and worship of God. The place where this true knowledge is manifest is the temple.

The Vēdāgamas and Śilpa Śāstras teach the ways of worshipping the omnipresent God who manifests himself as Preceptor, with gross form, in holy places, water sources and in one place namely, the temple.

Temples built in accordance with rules of Śilpa Śāstra consist of:—Rājagōpuram (Entrance), 7, 5, 3 or 2 passages, inside the ramparts called prahāras (i.e. passages for circumambulation clockwise meditating on God), Vāhanas or conveyances, which Gods ride, at the top of the ramparts, flag staff, sacrificial altar, the Naṇḍi (Bull), Mandapam (Hall), Āsthāna mandapam (the front Big Hall), Nritta Mandapam (the Dance Hall), Snapana Mandapam, Ardha Mandapam (lobby) Garbhagraham (*Sanctum Sanctorum*) and Vimānam (Canopy).

The question arises on the authority of the scriptures which mention all these. Without any (pramāṇa) criterion or standard

for authority, there can be no Premāya (standardised things). These standards are perception and inference. Those which cannot be perceived or inferred, are explained by Authority. Vedāgamas are śabda pramāṇa i.e. those heard from Authority. It is stated that Vēdas are without beginning and emanated from God. The Vēdas consist of 3 parts of Karma, Gñāna and Upāsana (work, knowledge and worship). The meaning of Karma Kānda is classified as Tantra, that of Gñāna as Upadēsa and that of Upāsana as Mantra. Upāsana Kānda teaches methods of worship by concentration and meditation on the Deity. Jñāna Kānda teaches that God is without beginning or end, is in all, contains all and, nothing exists without him. The Mantras denote the deities, all birds, animals, plants, men, dēvas. There is no being which is without a prescribed Mantra. The Vedāgamas prescribe Mantras for chanting and worshipping God, to attain worldly desires, as well as for salvation, for all sentient and non-sentient beings. The Vedāgamas are the authority for the design and erection of Temples through Śilpa Śāstras relative to the, Mantra, Tantra, Kriya and Bhāvana methods. The authority for Śilpa (Architecture), Bharata (dance), Gīta (Music) Vādyā (Instruments) are all found in Āgamas. Not only that; the Visible temple represents the subtle and very subtle, as well as the gross. A keen examination of general, special and very special aspects of the scriptures also shows the unity of all faiths, of Vēdas, Vēdānta, Siddhānta and the essential basis of all.

According to Upanisads “Himsāyam Duyatē Yasaha; Hindurithyabhideeyatē”—that person who suffers at the sight of others’ suffering alone, is a Hindu. The Vedāgamas are the authority for the aim of Hinduism namely, to remove the sufferings of sentient and non-sentient beings. It is only there, that methods for search of the Ātman and for eradicating suffering are adumbrated.

Thirumūlar, Manickavāsagar, Thirunāvukkarasar, Sundaramūrthi Swāmigal, Arulnandi Sivācharya have all in their works proclaimed that Vedāgamas are the chief and primary works of God. In those Āgamas all the mantras are in Sanskrit and are not susceptible of alteration. So in order that all sentient and non-

sentient beings may attain salvation, through Parārtha Pūja the temple is essential and, for this, the temple has to be erected under the authority of Śilpa Śāstra.

It may be stated that the God's Grace will come like the Cow feeding its calf, spontaneously and without any external incentive and the place of such spontaneous Grace is the temple. Saints like Pūsalār Nayanār and Vāyilār Nayanār worshipped God in the temple of their hearts and, hence the body itself is a temple.

Pūja is of two kinds—Atmārtha and Parārtha. Even in Atmārtha pūja there are four stages of charya, kriya, yoga and Jñāna. Before the open ritual, kriya pūja, Antar yoga (mental yoga) according to Yoga mārga is an essentiality. Also the Jñāna pūja, after charya, kriya and yoga, is also a mental pūja. Saints like Pūsalār followed the fourth Jñāna path (mental pūja).

Thayumanavar's poem exemplifies this :—

விரும்பு சரியை முதல் மெய்ஞ்ஞான நான்கும்

அரும்பு, மலர், காய், கனிபோலன்றோ பராபரமே

Virumbu chariyaimudan meigñāna nangum

Arumbu malar kái kani polāmē Parāparamē

(Charya, Kriya, Yoga and Gñāna these four are comparable to Bud, flower, unripe fruit and the fruit).

The Pūja (worship) done by the ant, fly, bee, elephant, peacock, Kalpa tree, Kamadhēnu, serpent, tiger and spider were all Jñāna mārga pūja only. Āgamas declare that even in kriya mārga, everyone who does the pūja in isolation, separately with a Kshanika liṅga is performing only Atmārtha pūja. Temple is the place for the performance of the four charya etc. ways of worship, by those who cannot perform Atmārtha pūja.

Outer structure of the temples: By study and close examination of Āgama Sāstras, it will be noticed that in order to symbolise the soul, Ātma, obtaining salvation of the type of Sālōka, Samīpya, Sārūpa and Sāyujya (being in God's world, being near God, attaining identity with God's form and getting entirely absorbed in God) various portions of temples have been designed. *Vimāna* (Temple with

its towers) have been sought to be created and not for the sake of God. The place where the chief deity is installed in the *sanctum* is called Garbagraha and the tower over it is called Vimāna Gopura and is the Sthūla liṅgam (Gross liṅga). 'Vi' means without, Mānam means measure, degree. The gross Vimāna for God indicates that, His immeasurable form pervades all (Virātsvarūpa) and is everywhere (Viswarūpi) and hence this indicates his immeasurability. He is the greatest of the great and the atom of atoms, according to Vēdas அநோரணியான் மஹாதேதாமஹியான் (Aṇoranīyān Mahatōmaiyan) and hence it is not possible to describe his bodily form. The gross tower which is visible denotes not only the visible sthūla but also the invisible Sūkshma and Karana bodies which are immeasurable and hence it indicates the invisible aspect of God.

Gopura: This word is made up of two words; *Go* meaning Pasu (soul) and *puram* indicating Sūkshma Sarīra. The Āgama says:

“Śabdas cha sparśas cha Rūpas cha

Raso Gandhas tu Pancha matra Mano Buddhistu

Ahankāraha

Puryashtaka mudāhrutam”.

Puryashtakam is the Sūkshma Sarīra, (subtle body). Without God's grace it is difficult for Souls (Ātma) to understand Sūkshma Sarīra. Hence it is that Poetess Avvaiyar prays in her “Vināyagar Agaval” for making her understand புரியஷ்ட காயம் புலப்பட எனக்கு ‘Puryashta kāyam pulappaḍa Enakku’. Hence to indicate souls (Ātma = Go = Pasu) i.e. the Sūkshma Sarīra, are contained in the Almighty God, Gopurams have been devised.

Vimāna is installed by Āgamas with mantras to denote the various aspects like Pada (word), Varṇa (colour), Bhuvan (creation) and Tattva (essential nature of things) as the Divinity cannot be defined or measured by gross standards. The Āgamas declare the Vimāna as the Body (Dēha) and God as the Soul inhabiting this body as the Dēhi. The Gopuram is the Sthūlaliṅgam (Gross

liṅga) with the Sukshmalīṅgam embodied in it and it should be worshipped as such as according to Tirumūlar :

தூய விமானமுந் தூலமதாசு மால்
ஆய சதாசிவ மாகுநற் தூக்கும்மம்
பாய பலிபீடம் பத்ரலிங்கங்கமா
மாயவரனிலையாய்ந்து கொள்வார்கட்கே.

What we should understand of the Vimāna, an important part of the Temple, is the Divinity existing in the lotus of the heart made of Thirty-six Tatvas. Similarly the Rājagōpuram is for worship, as the feet of the Lord. Its various tiers indicate the various regions of the human body. It has been erected to denote the twelve stages which have to be traversed before reaching and becoming one with Godhead and attaining eternal Bliss at the 12th stage of Divine Space (பரவெளி). In the word Rāja Gōpuram, Go, signifies the Pasu or human soul which starts from *Mulādhāra* climbs up the various regions and mingles with Divine Space (பரவெளி) at the 12th (Dvādasāntham) and enjoys Śivānānda (Divine Bliss), the Word Rāja meaning Shine. So the tall Raja Gopuram signifies this inner meaning.

Going into the inner meaning more deeply the Āgamas declare, Rājagopuram as Prasādam and, according to Saivaite literature, Prasāda mantram which is the Mahāmantra is as under :

Akaras ṇa Ukaras ṇa Makaro Bindurēva ṇa
Ardha Candro Nirodhi ṇa Nādo Nādanta ēva ṇa
Sakthis ṇa Vyāpini ṇa ēva Samana ṇa Unmanā tathā
Samanāntam Pasa Jālam Unmanyantē Paraśivaha.

The first eleven viz. Akara, Ukara, Makara, Bindu, Ardhaachandra, Nirodhi, Nāda, Nādanta, Śakti, Vyāpini, Saman are fettered by attachments. But Śiva is in the Unmanīya stage where, without attachments, the soul merges with Śiva. So the worship of Rājagopura has the benefit envisaged by the Prasādamantra.

The flag mast stands out in similar way. At the top of the flagmast the flag depicting the sacred carrier of the Lord of a particular creed, like the Bull or the Eagle or Pea-cock etc., flies

and this represents, the human soul, Pasu which seeks to attain Godhead and peace, at the middle Sushumna of the Yoga without any movement, with the reinforcement of the Prāna.

Naṇḍi, Baliṭeeta and the Liṅga in the *Sanctum Sanctorum* indicate respectively the Pasu, Pāsam and Pati of the Saivaite creed. Before birth of all living beings, they were in the *Karu* (கரு) embryo. The soul which has to be embodied in the life according to its Karma is embedded in this *Karu* (கரு) embryo. The *sanctum sanctorum* (Garbha Graha கருவகம்) is called embryo room as the God installed therein is the point of creation of the manifested creation. The word *Mūlasthāna* (மூலஸ்தானம்) is derived from the word 'Mū'am' meaning மேர் (Root). The place is so called because the Root from which the Tree of creation viz. the World, is stationed there and that is the place where God is. Just as the root is not visible but only the tree, leaves, flowers, fruits, branches etc. are visible, similarly God, the root cause of creation is invisible, but his creation is visible.

In the ante-room, next to the *sanctum sanctorum* (called *Antarāḷa*) Goddess *Manōnmani* and a screen are placed. The screen depicts the *Māya* which hides the God and that only through the Grace of Goddess *Manōnmani*, the screen or *Māya* will be removed and the God seen. The *Prakāras* indicate that only after piercing through the *Pancha Kōśa* (Five sheaths) Godhead could be realised.

Analogous to the sense of sight and the Light of the Sun, the soul, the body, wisdom and brilliance God, is one with the world and at the same time separate from it. The God is both with and without form. God in his formless state is differentiated in four ways, as Śiva, Śakthi, Nāda and Bīṇḍu. With form, He is Mahēsa, Rudra, Māl (Thirumāl), Ayan (Brahma) and, in this state with, as well as without form appears as, *Sadāsiva* and *Manōmani* in the Liṅgam. *Li* in the word liṅgam indicates *Layam* (getting into Union) and *Gam* in that word means 'comes out, manifests'. The word liṅgam denotes குறி Kuri (symbol) derived from the Sanskrit derivative root *Linga Chitreekaranē* i.e. that which

performs wonderful acts, as, God's act of being with all living beings and at the same time apart from them, is wonderful.

Liṅga symbolises the union of the formless and form, Śiva and Śakti and is termed, Karma Sadākyam, which is derived from *Sadā* meaning Always, *Ākyam* meaning worship of the spaceless indefinable one with name and shape given to it. Worship of Liṅga through rituals laid down by Vedas and Āgamas, were prescribed for this purpose.

What are benefits of worship in temples? By worship of Liṅga through Mantra, Kriya and Bhāvana, the sufferings of all sentient and non-sentient beings are alleviated and salvation from being born again and again is attained, apart from fulfilment of all other prayers. If on account of worship at temples philosophical enquiry results, then there is scope for attaining Godhead. Also, one can accomplish the *Dasa Kāryas* Ten Tasks viz. Tatva rūpa, Tatva Darśana, Tatva suddhi, Ānma rūpa, Ātma Darśana, Atma Suddhi, Śiva rūpa, Śiva Darśana, Śiva yōga and Śiva bhōga through the six ways of Mantra, Pada, Varna, Bhāvana, Tatva and Kala each one of which is contained by the next, thus finally making the soul merge with Siva [called Sivayoga]. Sivabhoga the highest is the experiencing Siva in all forms. All these are signified by the worship in temples and, the authority for these viz. the Vedas Āgamas are contained by the Grace of Lord's Feet.

The number of Śiva temples called Śivālayas are 1008 and that of Vishnu temples called Tirupatis are 108. Among the Śiva temples the most celebrated from Himalayas to the South is Chidambaram and that among the Vaishnavite temples is Śrīraṅgam. The word 'Kovil' usually signifies only these two.

The word Chidambaram is derived from Chit meaning, Ātma and Ambaram meaning Ākasa (space) and Chidambaram is called Chitrambalam where God Natarāja is resplendently dancing. The deity of the *Sanctum Sanctorum* is Śrī Mūlanāthan. Similarly the word Śrīraṅgam is derived from Śrī meaning Auspicious. Araṅgam means stage for dancing. The Lord here is Śrī Rāṅganātha Perumā in the lying pose and according to Puranas He is in

Yoga Nidra (Yoga sleep) with all beings in the Universe waiting near Him. It may be stated in this connection that each Ātma of each being, is sleeping in a Sukshma Sareera (subtle body) called Puram and hence all Atmas are called Purushas according to "Purau Sēthē ithi Purushah Purau" (Purusha is one in whose Puryashtaka, the Atma, is asleep). So God represents this sleep by his lying as if in sleep, to indicate that if all Atmas forget everything and meditate on God, Salvation could be obtained. Similarly Lord Natarāja at Chidambaram depicts His manifestation in the space of the heart (Ambaram meaning space and chit indicating Atma).

In the Saivaite religion which includes all faiths, three forms of the Almighty are mentioned, according to the Śiva-āgamas. They are (1) Dakshināmūrthy, (2) Bikshādanāmūrth, and (3) Natarājamūrthy. The attributes of these three forms are manifested through the three Mudras (Mystic symbols) the Chin Mudra, San Mudra and Ānanda Mudra. In the Bhikshādana form with San Mudra, the Lord indicates that He alone is capable of conferring all earthly benefits. In the Dakshināmūrthy form with Chin Mudra, He teaches that Ātmas can get united to Him only after eliminating Āṇava (Ego), Karma (action) and Māyā (Attachment). In the Natarāja Pose with Ānanda Mudra, He indicates that, for all Ātmas united with Him, He confers Ānanda or Bliss. Thus the Lord being in the Heart indicates all this in Chidambaram through these poses and Mudras. The Mūla Nātha at Chidambaram is Śivaliṅga indicating Karma Sādakyam. The formless Śivaliṅga is Sadāsiva. If it is realised that this symbolises Śiva and Śakthi, Nāda and Bindu, then by the movement of Bindu, Nāda (Sound) comes in and, at the midst of Nāda there is Mūrtham (form) and in the Midst of the form are 36 Tatvas. At the midst of the Tatvas is Śiva in whose midst there is Nrītta (Dance) and in its midst in Sān্থi (Peace) i.e. Ātma's rest and in the midst of Sān্থi is, what is beyond Sān্থi, the Divine Ānanda or Bliss which is Śivānanda.

It will thus be seen that temples according to the Vēda āgamas are intended for achievements beginning with the removal of suffering of all sentient and non-sentient beings through Charya.

Kriya, Gñāna and Yoga, to the attainment of Śivagñānabotha or Śivānanda.

Mahāvidwan Pandit Natēsanār: Āgamas are the pronouncements made to Rishis by Lords Śiva and Vishnu. ஆ (Ā) means Ātma or *Pasu*; கம் (Gamam) means fills. Āgama is one of the six pramānas (authorities). Āgamam is ripe wisdom. Ālayam (temple) is the place where Ātma finally merges. Even from ancient times, even though knowledge was derived from Vēdas, Sāstras etc. the knowledge of methods of worship was derived only from Āgamas. Āgamas are sacred writings, Divine Sciences and Sastras, prescribed by the Deity and emanating from His words. Āgamas are the Tantras of Śaiva, Vaishnava, Śaktha and Jainas. Sivāgamas are a set of sacred works connected with the Siva Sect, twenty-eight in number, containing directions for the various rites of the system and much other abstruse matter.

The special kinds of worship are four viz. Rahasyam (Esoteric), Mantram (Formula), Mūrthi (Form) Ālayam (temple). Āgamas indicates all these four ways. Archana is the term applied to Abhishēka (ablution), Alankāra (Decoration), Neivēdya (offerings), Arādhana (Worship), chanting of Nāmāvaḷi (Nāmas) etc. In ancient Buddhist literature the word Āgamas was used only to indicate ancient habits. This usage can be seen in Milinda and Mahavastu. In the 5th century A.D. the word Āgama indicated the Suddha Pīṭaka Division. There are a number of Āgamas having the names of particular Gods worshipped like Śaivāgama, Vaishnavāgama, Śakthāgama, Buddhāgama, Jaināgama etc. The Saivaites say, that Śaivāgamas were made by God Himself to show the path of removing the impurities of the Ātma and the path to salvation. Only some worship God who is beyond the mind, words and body. Of these, only some worship according to Vēdic rituals. So, Āgamas were created for people to worship according to Vēdic rituals. Saints perform worship regarding "the body as a temple and the mind as the līṅga". These belong to those defined by Tirumūlar as (உடலார் அழியின், உயிரார் அழிவர்) Udalār Aliyin, Uyirār Aḷivar. But all cannot worship in this manner. Hence Āgamas were created only for

those others, to worship through the methods prescribed for construction of temples and to indicate and clarify the installation of images of stones, Gold etc.

Āgamas can also be regarded as describing the significance of and rituals in the worship of deities in private homes and in temples. They describe the rules for performance of rituals, for installation of images, worship, daily, weekly, monthly and Annual festivals, construction of temples, Ablution of the vessal capping temple towers (Kumbābhishēkam) apart from the attributes of devotees, benefits achieved by them etc. Some divide the 108 Āgamas into Samhita (group) and Tantra (rituals). Āgamas also deal with five seasons, Grand festivals, carriers of deities, temple architecture, temple cars, [bowl shaped with Śrī Chakra as in the Kaliamman temple at Madras]. The 28 Āgamas emanated from the five faces of Śiva (Panchānana). These are differentiated into two as of Siva and Rudra. Just as in each religion there is a higher and lower order, so also in worship there are two kinds, 'Ātmārtha' and 'Parārtha'. Pūja removes Pāpa (sins) and earns Puṇya (virtue). A Pūja done for one's own benefit is Ātmārtha and that performed by priests in temples for the benefit of the world in Parārtha. Yōgasa, Sindhya, Karana, Achita, Deepta, Sukshma, Sahasra, Amsumān, Suprabhēda etc. belong to the Śivabheda division among the Āgamas while Vijaya, Nīśvāsa, Swayambhū, Agnēya, Veera, Raurava, Makuta, Vimala, Chandragāṇa etc. belong to the Rudrabhēda division. Vaikhasana and Pancharatra are Vaishnava Āgamas. The Vēdas describe God and Āgamas describe the methods and rituals for attaining God.

The ancient Āgamas and Silpa Sāstras contain elaborate rules and rituals. They describe what type of temple should be built in a particular type of soil, what material should be used for temples of stones or mud, what are the measurements of images for worship, the stones to be used for such images etc. Temples erected, images installed in violation of these rules will result in untold sufferings to the architect as well as the devotees according to the Āgamas.

Āgamas are denoted as the scriptures describing ancient religious practices according to "Śivadītha Vēdāgama Tatva Vēdam". Āgamas are also called Tantras. Āgamas contain ancient practices and meanings of Vēdas. Monier Williams defined Āgama as "Traditional truths heard, unwritten descriptions, practised by ancients for worship". Bhadrāgiri in the chapter on "Āgama Pramāna" in his utterances states that Āgamas are only rendering of meanings of Vēdas. But it may be stated that Āgamas and Vēdas are different. Āgamas are separate works describing how to worship Śakthi and Śiva which can be termed Tantra. The corresponding Vāishnava Āgama is 'Samhita'. Tantra are rules and imagery. Āgamas contain ancient rituals. Samhita is a compilation of various scripture. Tantra is the authority for Śakthas, Āgamas for Śaivaites and Samhita for Vāishnavaites. There are people who say that Tantras were written for the Kali age. Śaivaites say that 28 Āgamas were propounded by Śiva after creation.

A student who wants to study iconography and temple architecture cannot ignore the Āgamas. The Āgamas are encyclopaediac in nature. It deals with worship by crores of people in India. Each Āgama has an Upāgama. Even though they teach the significance of acts of worship, they deal with worship and rituals unconnected with sacrifices. The Vēdas do not deal with worship in temples and of idols and, hence it may be concluded that Āgamas came after the Vēdas. So Vēdic methods of worship are quite different from those of Āgamas. The two methods always existed and exist even now and it is not correct to differentiate them as Āryan or Dravidian or North and South Indian.

During the Vēdic period people lived with Nature and worshipped God as Five Elements and invited God to their sacrificial place through songs. The Yāgasālas were in open spaces and no buildings were erected for them. So, there is no mention of erection of temples and installation of images in the Vēdas. They believed that the Gods descended from the Heaven to the places where they were invoked. Only by pouring Havirbhāga (oblation) into the sacrificial fire Gods were satisfied. They believed that Agni was the mouth of Gods. But during the Āgamic

period people had their individual worship as well as community worship for the welfare of society through temples where they offered sandalwood, flowers, silk, incense, food, lights etc. It is clear, that these rituals had as their basis, the images and temples erected for the purpose.

Temples are places where souls rest in God. The term சிவ 'Śiva' and (இறை) 'Irai' indicate that God dwells in everybody. If the alphabets in the word சிவ Śiva are reversed, the word வசி Vasi is obtained. Irai means dweller. Ālayam is the feet of the Lord where Ātmas can dwell. ஆ Ā signifies Ātma and Layam, place of refuge. It is also stated to be the place where Ānava Mala is suppressed. கோ 'Ko' plus இல் 'Il' is Kovil i.e. dwelling place of World's Lord and, just as Milk of the cow comes out at the udder, so also God's Grace is given to Ātmas at the Temple. Just as all pervading subterranean water is obtained from wells dug for the purpose, the all pervading electrical energy is generated and delivered from the power house, temples are the reservoirs of God's Grace. Only through proper wiring can we get lights through electricity; otherwise darkness would result. Hindu temples, only when erected according to Āgamic principles, will confer spiritual knowledge. The Tower, Flagstaff, the Prakāras, Halls etc. were all intended to teach esoteric meanings. The temple is a college for adult education. There is very great significance attached to rituals (Pūjas) like Pancha-Śuddhi (five-fold cleansing) Neivēdyam (Offerings), waving of lights, festivals etc. It is stated that seeing of temples removes sins and confers sight of Lord's feet.

Gopura Darśanam Pāpu Vimōchanam

Gopura Darśanam Pada Darśanam.

Bhaktas on seeing a Gopura salute it as Gross or Earthy Liṅga. The temple signifies a Yogi's body. Its various parts signify feet, head, body and the heart wherein God dwells. In our countries temples are intended to make Yogis of even lay people. It should be realised that Gods in our temples have no birth, growth or death. The images in the temples of other religions are those of leaders who, were born, grew up and died. The English call

these as statues. But our images are idols and a statue is different from an idol. The images in the temples define God and seek to explain the inner ideas of God. Those who have, seen, erected and realised these images in temples, are Gñānis.

The Westerners call our places of worship as Temples, a derivative of Latin word Templum, which means square or rectangle. Prognosticators of the future always do so after drawing a square or a rectangle. The drawings made by the priest of Lord Muruga's temple at the time of Veriyāḍal belongs to this class. The rectangular, circular, square and triangular forms drawn at sacrificial places all indicate the temple as "God's dwelling place."

Dēvasthānas or temples consist of Garbhagraha where the image is installed, Ardha mantapa (Lobby) and the Mahāmantapa or hall. In Greece and Rome, people worshipped their Gods, in open space and at sanctified places inscribed with a square or rectangle. It is such sacred open space which we now call "Chidambara Rahasyam". As knowledge improved the people built protected temples and gave silk ornaments and gold jewels to the deity. The sthala Vrikshas (tree sacred to the temple) signify, open worship in parks and groves. If there are no Āgamas, there will be no temples and if there are no temples, Āgamas have no use. Only at the time of Āgama worship, God without form changed to one with form. Temple may be defined as worship of God without an image in a rectangular or square space - See p. 236 of "*Encyclopaedia of Religious and Sculptures*" by James Hastings, part 12. The Mūlasthāna (*Sanctum Sanctorum*) is called கருவறை Karuvaṛai. In all Śiva temples the Śivaliṅga is the chief image and this indicates worship of Śiva both with and without form. The flame of camphor indicates this formless state, the Naṭaraja, the state with form and Liṅga, His state with form and without form. The sages installed these three in the temples for the benefit of all types of worshippers according to their mental development. The Liṅga in the Mūlasthāna indicates that he is the God of Gods, if according to Saivāgama "Śiva alone is entitled to be represented by Liṅga; He alone is the Paramāṭma."

The *sanctum sanctorum* when compared to other parts of the temple should be the smallest and be dark. The Āgama lays down that the deity should be seen only with aid of a lamp. Only people unaware of Āgamas build the *sanctum* with ventilation, and windows. The *sanctum* where the chief deity is installed may be compared to the Womb or the heart, the smallest puncture in which will entail loss of life be it of man or animal. This is the idea conveyed in the Āgamas. The *sanctum* should have just space enough for the Śivāchārya alone to enter. There should be space for circumambulation by the priest, after ablution, decoration and offerings to the deity in the *sanctum*. In short the *sanctum* should be a small and narrow place. Ardhamanṭapam (lobby) in front of the *sanctum* should be a bit broad for the assistant to stand, light the lamps and offer it to the priest for worship. Mahāmanṭapam where all people congregate to worship the idol, is in front of the Ardhamanṭapam.

The carrier of the deity, altar and the flagstaff should be directly opposite the idol and no one should cross the space between them. Two entrance guards (Dvārapālakās) should stand at the Ardhamanṭapam. In Śiva temples figures of Dakshināmūṛthy, Lingōdpavamūṛthy and Durga should be installed on southern, western and northern walls of the *sanctum* and in front of the Durga, Chandikēswarar or, Chandiswarar should be installed, in a small temple according to Āgama specification.

The place built for worship should aid concentration of mind and pūjas should be done well and the place should be kept clean. The archakas who worship should be orthodox. Even today we can see all these observed in old temples. The worship of God beneath trees, at riverside and banks, at ponds have now been transferred to temples erected in stone or cave temples. This period of transformation is the one in which the Āgamas came into force. The temple constructed according to Āgama specifications, represent the structure of the human body and the worship of God in our minds have been translated into worship in temples. It should be noted that the body itself is a temple and its outward manifestation are the temples erected. Āgamas

declare that the temple should reflect the nature of the human body. The Rājagōpura is called the Sthūlaliṅga or Prithviliṅga. The tower over the Mūlavar, (chief idol) should not be like the Rājagōpuram but should be a triangle based cone with a single kalasam (pot) at the top like a figure pointing upwards which is intended to exhort devotees to look up to God and not to lowly things.

The Rājagōpuram contains representation of all beings in the world. According to Āgamic dictum, it indicates the need to conquer enjoyment through senses and, think of God. The three tiers represent the three stages of mind in the waking, dreaming, and dreamless states and five tiers indicate the need to control the five organs of senses and seven tiers to get beyond the mind and knowledge in addition to the five senses according to Āgamic rules. Āgama states that though there are various paths followed by devotees, only the Mūlaliṅgam (the chief deity) in the temples perform the five divine deeds.

It is impossible to clearly indicate the period at which worship according to Āgamas began. They were eternal because they were enunciated by one who is beyond time. They appear to have been the religious rituals of the majority. Generally we can infer that there was idol worship and that therefore, the art of sculpture developed. The Mohenja Daro excavations of gold and silver images indicate that these were worshipped 3 crores of years back and worship of Śiva and Śakthi were in vogue then.

Temple worship is in the blood of Indians and is innate in Hinduism. Idol worship is not mentioned till 4th century B.C. It is only after that period mention is made in Kriya Sūtras and Brāhmanas. Āgamas were written after the mixture of Aryan and Dravidians after 4th century B.C. Only after the 5th or 6th century A.D. people like Tirumālar wrote their works in conformity with the Āgamas. Vision, Inspiration, Purity and Experience form religion but these qualities are not common. Even an uneducated man wants to see God and be religious. It is only for this purpose Āgamic methods were made. Niyamas (Vēdas and Upanishads)

and Āgamas speak the truth relating to God and if there are no temples, Āgamas are useless.

Thiru P. Alalasundaram: It is really praiseworthy that Śivāchāryas who perform worship in temples are participating in the seminar. I am participating in this seminar with that little experience I gained in 35 years in connection with religious rites in Sri Mallikēswarar temple in Muthiālpēt, Madras and 25 years as trustee of Sri Karpaga Vināyaga and Sri Kandarperumānar temples at Tāmbaram.

Our religious rituals are of two kinds, Vaidika and Āgamic, the former following the Vēdas generally followed by Brahmins who had Upanayanam, initiation and the pūja performed by whom is called Vaidik pūja. In some villages such pūjas are being done. The right of performing Pūja according to Āgamas in temples belongs only to Adi Śaivaites who are also termed as Śivāchāryas, Gurukkals and Bhattars. Even among these, only tho who have been administered Samaya Diksha, Visēsha Diksha, Nirvāna Diksha, and Ācharya Abhishēkam have the right to perform special pūjas. But now we find young boys who have not been initiated performing pūjas in temples. In some temples the stipulations of Āgamas are not observed.

The basic Śaiva Āgamas are 28 in number starting with Kāmika and there are 207 sub-āgamas which are variations of these. Vaishnava Āgamas are of two kinds, Vaikhānasa and Pancharātra. The basic 28 Śaiva Āgamas contain 99,33,44,000 (Ninety nine crores, thirty three lakhs and forty four thousands) of slokas. Learned men have abridged these into small texts called Paddhatis. 18 such persons have written such Paddhatis. At present the Paddhatis of Ēsāna Śivāchārya and Agōra Śivāchārya are in common use and the Śivāgama Siddhānta Paripālana Sangam of Dēvakkottai have translated and published at a small price Agōra Sivācārya's "Parārtha Pūja Vidhi", which every temple and trustee should possess. Those who want to learn about structure of the temples and rituals will benefit by reading this book.

There are two kinds of Pūjas, Atmārtha and Parārtha. Atmārtha is done by one-self for his own benefit and Parārtha is done in temples for the benefit of the world. The Gurukkals and Bhattars should perform Atmārtha puja everyday and commence doing the Parārtha Pūja only afterwards. Śivapūja is Atmārtha pūja and Atmārtha pūja shows the way to Parārtha pūja.

There are two kinds of Pūjas in temples, one done daily (Nitya) and the other on special occasions (Naimittika). These can be compared to the daily meals at a students hostel and the terminal dinner given at the end of a term. The terminal Dinner compensates for the shortcomings of the daily meals. Similarly Naimittika Puja compensates for defects in Nitya pūja. The Nitya pūja is of Bhakthi and Gñāna paths while the Naimittika and festivals are of Karma path. All the related rituals from the opening of the rest chamber (Paḷli Arai) to the Pūja at midnight, depict the Panchakriya (Five Acts) of God viz., Creation, Protection, Destruction, Concealment and Grace.

After the Paḷli Arai Pūja (when God is invoked to rest) Bhairava should, according to the Āgama, be worshipped by offering Rice Pāyasam (Rice-Milk gruel) to protect the village and combat all diseases and evil. Then the seal of the temple should be entrusted to Bhairava. Some regard Bhairava as watching the temple against theft.

Early in the morning the temple premises should be swept, all dirt removed and sprinkled with water—deeds which Saint Tirunāvukkarasar did, setting an example to us. The first Puja in the morning is to Bhairava called Balanugñai (பாலாநுக்நை) by bathing, clothing, offering of Neivēdyam, waving of lights etc. and then obtain the Seal of the temple for performing Śiva Pūja. Then the Rest chamber (பள்ளியறை) should be opened and Milk offered in Pūja to the Sun is also one ordained by the Āgamas. Next, Ganapāthi Pūja and Sivaliṅga Pūja follow.

The rituals for worship of each deity is as under:—

- (1) Vyāpaka Pūja or Ātma-mūrthi Bhāvana
- (2) Dvāra Pūja
- (3) Garbhāvarana Pūja
- (4) Bimba Śuddhi
- (5) Ādhara Śakthi Pūja
- (6) Āsana Pūja
- (7) Avatānam
- (8) Doopa, Deepa, Argya Upacāram
- (9) Abhishēkam
- (10) Decorations
- (11) Āvarana Pūja
- (12) Doopa, Deepa Argya
- (13) Neivēdyam
- (14) Deepa Āradhana
- (15) Stōtras, Archanas
- (16) Pūja Samarpanam and Nirodhargyam.

An elaborate pūja is called Bhogānga pūja. According to the Āgamas this should be done three times a day at the dawn, noon and at dusk. In big temples as at Chidambaram, Madurai and Tiruvārur, this pūja is done six times a day.

(1) *Vyāpaka Nyāsam*: Vyāpaka Nyāsam is important in idol worship and is an invitation to the deity in one's heart to establish itself in the idol mentally. It is also called Ātma-murthi Bhāvana. The right of inviting such deity, is only for those who have received initiation to perform Ātmārtha Pūja or Parārtha Pūja.

(2) *Dvāra Pūja*: The number of Gods and Goddesses invited to the Pūja are twenty and they protect devotees.

(3) *Garbhāvarana Pūja*: This takes place in our temples separately for each of Bhairava, Sūrya, Pillayār etc. By this we secure the Grace of many Gods.

(4) *Bimba Śuddhi*: This is removal of old flowers etc. on the deity and is a subtle way of cleansing the idol.

(5) *Ādhara Śakthi Pūja*: This is for various Dēva Ganas Bhūta Ganas i.e. Retinue of Dēvas and Bhūtas (Demons).

(6) *Āsana Puja*: This is worship after invoking them.

(7) *Mūrthy Āvāhanam*: This consists of three rituals viz., Mantra, Mudra and Bhāvan. At the time of this Āvāhana (invocation) the Priest will chant the Mūla Mantra of the deity. The Deity will then appear. Then meditative verses on the deity should be sung and the verses should clearly describe the form, colour, clothes, ornaments etc. of the deity. Then Prāna Pradhista and Gāyatri Japa will take place. The Āgamas warningly declare that after this the priests and Devotees should forget the existence of the idol and feel the actual presence of the deity.

(8) *Deepa, Doopa, Argyas*: There a number of ceremonies performed by the Archaka to the deity. Argya will take place after Doopa (incense smoke) and Deepa (display of light). Argya is of three kinds, Pādya, Āchamaniya and Argya. Pādya is washing the feet by sprinkling water at the idols feet, pronouncing the word *Namaha*. Āchamaniyam is offering water to drink and is done by sprinkling it on the hand exclaiming *Svāha*. Argyam is giving to eat and is done by sprinkling water on the head of the deity exclaiming *Swadha*. *Namaha* means "I salute"; *Swadha* means "I offer myself" and *Svaha* means "May You accept me."

(9) *Abhishēka*: (Ablution of Deity): It is better that Abhishēka is done according to Āgamic rules. In Chidambaram six Abhishēkas are performed excellently. The Abhishēkas take place in the months of Chitrai, Āni, Mārgazhi on the Star days of Tiruvōnam, Uttaram and Tiruvādirai respectively and in the months of Āvani, Purattāsi and Māsi on the 14th day of the moon.

(10) *Alankāras* (ornamentation): This is done to capture the devotion. The decorations at the "63 saints festival" at Mylapore and to the five principal deities and those at festival time to Natarāja at Chidambaram are noteworthy. It is regrettable that ornamentations are sometimes done against Āgamic rules just to please the people. Each deity should be decorated with the flowers permissible and, flowers not permitted should not be used.

Deity	Flowers permitted	Flowers prohibited
Pārvathi		(அறுகு) Blade grass, Nelli (நெல்லி) <i>Phyllanthus emblica</i> .
Vināyaga	(அறுகு) Blade grass	(துளசி) Thulasi Basil.
Tirumāl	(துளசி) Thulasi Basil	(அக்ஷதை) Rice mixed with Turmeric or sandal powder.
Siva	(வில்வம்) <i>Crataeva</i> <i>Religiosa</i> .	(தாழம்பூ) Thāḷambu.
Sun		(வில்வம்) <i>Crataeva Religiosa</i> .
Bhairava		(நந்தியாவர்த்தம்) <i>Nerium</i> <i>Coronarum</i> .

Details of these can be gathered further from Arumuga Nāvalar's 'Pushpa Vidhi'. The deities should be adorned with pure cloth and not dirty or torn ones. Among the ornaments, those made of gold and precious stones help in the flow of Grace. The deities should not be decorated with ornaments worn by us.

(11) *Āvaraṇa Pūjas*: Each deity has its own subsidiary surrounding deities. Siva has five deities immediately surrounding him. Ashta Vidyēswarar in the second circle, Ashta Gaṇa Nādhās in the 3rd and the Ashta Digpālas and their consorts in the 4th and 5th circles according to the Āgama sāstras.

(12) *Deepa, Doopa, Argyas*: These are ceremonies done when invoking the Āvarana Devatas and the Mūrthas.

(13) *Neivēdyam*: Offerings are made not to appease God's hunger but to seek his Grace. At present this is not done properly and with fervour.

(14) *Deepārādhana*: (Worship with lights): Each Deepārādhana is related to the deity concerned. Pushpa Deepam (Rathārthi) the light with 5 or 7 tiers has 51 wicks related to the 51 Akshara Devatas. According to Śaiva Āgamas when Śiva and Śakthi manifested themselves as Nāda and Bindu, 51 sounds with corresponding symbols or Aksharas (Alphabets) emanated therefrom apart from various Mahāmantras. Thus all the Deepas are divinely related.

(15) *Stōtras*: After Deepārādhana (waving of lights) there will be recitation of Ārya and Drāvida Vēdas. This is termed as Mantra Pushpa. I have heard in one temple a priest chanting in Sanskrit thus “Lord, I am chanting mantras lest I do not do pūja punctually nor with patience. I request you to overcome my shortcomings and accept my virtues. I pray to you to protect the world”. After this is done, in Sanskrit, Pancha puranas in Tamil will be chanted. Strictly speaking, only after chanting the Pancha Puranas, Sanskrit Mantras should be chanted. But in a number of temples, Pancha Purānas in Tamil are chanted after Sanskrit Mantras are chanted. Pancha Purānas are 1. Tēvāram, 2. Tiruvāsagam, 3. Tiruvisaippā, 4. Tiruppallāndu and 5. Periyapurānam. It is praiseworthy that in certain temples the Priest himself chants the Pancha Purāna.

(16) *Pūja Samarpanam*: Parārtha Pūja is for the world's welfare. God has no wants and all that is offered to Him will devolve to the world. Pūja Samarpana is a “Shodasa kriya” (sixteen rites) at the end of the Pūja for each deity. In some temples Pūjas are done six times. Each time it will end with Pūja to Chandēswara. The Pūjas end with expression of gratitude to the deities invoked during the Pūja.

Aruṇandi Sivācārya in his Sivagñāna Siddhiyār says:

புத்திர மார்க்கம் புகலிற் புதிய விரைப்போது
புகைஒளி மஞ்சனம் அமுதுமுதல் கொண்டு, ஐந்து
சுத்திசெய்து ஆசனம் மூர்த்தி மூர்த்திமானம்
சோதியையும் பாவித்து ஆவாகித்துச் சுத்த
பக்தியினர் அர் சித்துப் பரவிப் போற்றிப்
பரிவினெடும் எரியில் வருகாரியமும் பண்ணி
ரித்தலும் இக்கிரியைதனை இயற்றுவோர்கள்
நின்மலன் தன் அருகிருப்பர் நீனையுங்காலே,

We should not ignore Tirumūlar's warning that if Pūjas are not performed in temples in accordance with Āgamas, the country and its people will suffer.

Thiru M. Arunachalam: Śiva, the Absolute of Metaphysics in Saivism has no form and no attributes. He is the *Nirguna*. How-

ever, for the comprehension of the mortals who are limited to sensory perception, Śiva who is beyond comprehension is conceived of in Śiva religion in three aspects—the *Arūpa*, the *Rūpa* and the *Rūpārūpa*. *Arūpa* is the Absolute, the Formless one. The *Rūpa* is the image in the temple, the *Saguna*, that which has form, such as the Chandrasēkhara, Dakshināmurti and the other 25 mūrti-bhēdas. The *Rūpārūpa* is the Formless form, a concept peculiar to Śaivism; it is the *Śivaliṅga*, *Sadāśiva*, a form which is quite formless. All worship in Śiva *pūja*—be it personal or congregational - *atmārtha*, or *parārtha*—is only to this aspect. The Śiva *liṅga* is one of the three objects of ritualistic worship named in an assonant language as the *sthamba*, the *bimba* and the *kumbha*. The *sthamba* is the Śiva *liṅga*; the *bimba* is the image (what is called the *Archāvatāra* in Vaishnava parlance); and the *kumbha* is the pot of water where the Supreme Śiva is invoked temporarily and then after *Pūja* is transferred to the permanent image or *liṅga*. Other objects like the *chakra*, which is outside of these three, have no place in Śiva *pūja*.

Śiva *pūja*, be it in the temple or in the home, seeks to integrate the thought, word and deed of man. It consists always of three components; contemplation, performance of various ritualistic acts and utterance of the mantra. Contemplation is the invoking of the omnipresent Being to abide in the Śivaliṅga for the duration of the *pūja* and receive the devotee's worship; this is a thought process. The various acts such as *abhishēka*, *alankāra*, floral *archana*, *dūpa*, *dīpa*, *neivēdya* and ringing of the bell are all parts of *kriya*, actions of deed. For every little act, the appropriate *mantras* are required to be said; this is word. No *pūja* is considered right without these three processes of thought, deed and word. Hence even in a limited sense, we may say that the *pūja kriya* as laid down by the *āgamas* effects an integration in the personality of the worshipper. This, as educators well know, is a rare and unique educative force.

When the deity is invoked through the chanting of the appropriate *mantra*, the *āgama* ritual clearly lays down three steps; the *āsanam*, the *Mūrti* and the *mūrtimān*. *Āsana* is the seat

offered to the deity. Even as a visitor is offered a respectable seat, so is the invoked deity first given a proper seat or place on which he is to arrive and abide. There is no *pūja* without the offering of an *āsana* to the deity. The second step is the *mūrti*: this is the object on which the deity is requested to abide. As already pointed out, this is the image, or the *kalasa*, or even the shapeless handful of sand and the like. It is here clearly understood and defined, that the image is the *mūrti*, the possessed and not the 'possessor'. It is not God but God is requested to appear and abide temporarily in this object. (The nature of the object—bronze or stone or sand or *kalasa* water—is immaterial). The third invocation is to the deity or the particular God-*mūrtimān*: this is not the image, but is God whom we pray to appear before us and to condescend to accept the form which we have now given to Him. Thus the three *mantras* for the invocation make it unmistakably clear that it is not the image that is worshipped, but some other force to which the image serves as a temporary residence. Śaivism has idols in its worship but it does not imply idol worship. Idols serve only as symbols, sometimes as simple ones, sometimes as very complex indeed, but always only as symbols and nothing more, nor less. The idol is just a visual symbol which helps to lead the mind of the worshipper to That, which cannot be grasped through the senses, the incomprehensible. The *Upanishads* in theory and *Āgamas* in practice, make this concept very clear.

Mantras are mystic syllables. They should not be interpreted as mere words or word-meanings derived. They are potent syllable or syllables; may be a word or a combination of words; the combination is done with the aim of helping in the realisation of the Truth for which the *mantra* stands as just a symbol. In the *mantra* it is the sound that is important, and not the word. *Praṇava* is prefixed to all *mantras*; next comes the *bija mantra*, appropriate to the deity; then the deity is invoked by name; and lastly comes the reference to the act which is performed along with the utterance of the *mantra*, for example, *namaha*, salutation. The whole is one single unit. The utterance of the whole, is the *mantra* which has the potency to invoke the deity and make it show er

its grace on the devotee. In this sense, the *mantra* is beyond language. The *mantra* is not translatable. Sages in the past had been guided by the *mantra* towards realisation of God. It had been handed down through generations by word of mouth and had continued to have the same potency. Hence we shall also continue to utter it in the form it has come down to us. We may certainly offer our prayers in our own language; this is quite right and proper and there is considerable force in the statement that prayers should be uttered in one's own mother tongue. But *mantras*, which transcend language, should continue to be uttered in the form in which they have been done so long. It is the form and the sound that have the potency.

The whole temple is conceived of as a *Śivaliṅga*. The temple is the place where the Supreme Śiva manifested Himself in times of yore to some devotees and graciously continues to show His mercy on persons who offer their prayers there. The temple or the *Śivālaya* embodies five forms or *liṅgas*; the *vimāna* is the *sthūla liṅga*; the *pīṭha* is the *sūkshma liṅga*; the *bindhu* and *nāda* symbolised therein, the *prāṇa liṅga*; the *balipīṭha* is the *badra liṅga*; and the form worshipped in the *sanctum* is the *mūrti liṅgam*.

The Śivācārya is the person set apart from time immemorial for the due performance of the *parārtha pūja*; he is not a Brahmin, as the Brahmin is conceived today. By family tradition, training, and imparting of knowledge from father to son, he is considered to be the best fitted to perform this *pūja*. He is the Śivācārya to whom Sundara pays a special homage in his song listing the servants of God, as those privileged to touch the form of God in the morning, noon and evening. Āgamas lay down that the Śivācārya performing *pūja* in the temple should have had all the *dikshas*—*samaya*, *viśeṣa*, *nirvāṇa* and *āchārya abhishēka*; it is regrettable that many performing the duty of worship today have not had these *dikshas*. Further, he should perform his own personal worship (*atmārtha pūja*) in his home, before entering the temple and starting the *parārtha pūja*.

The *Śivapūja* of the individual, the *atmārtha pūja*, is always for *moksha*; it is never for *bhoga*. The four objectives of all

human pursuits have been specified as *aṛam*, *porul*, *inbam* and *vidu* : virtue, wealth, happiness and ultimate liberation. Hence it is in the fitness of things that the goal of all *Śiva pūja* is *moksha*, release from the cycle of births and deaths ; the *parārtha pūja* in the temple is for the welfare of all. This is the greatest contribution of the Śaiva concepts to the modern socialistic thought. *Pūja* in the temple is not done for any individual. The *āgamas* lay down that the *pūja* is for the welfare of the ruler. In a democratic set up, there is no ruler and the ruled. People govern themselves ; and so *pūja* is for the welfare of all the people. Not only that. The scriptures definitely specify that the *pūja* is not only for the welfare of all mankind, but also for the welfare of all creation—birds, animals, the plant world, the animate and the inanimate beings. Śaivism had always considered all creation to be one and it had always sought to serve God through service to all creation. A verse from Tirumūlar is very significant in this context. Says he : “Every one can offer at least a green leaf to God (if a flower could not be had). Every one can give a handful of grass to the cow. Every one can give a morsel of food to the hungry. And, every one can utter a kind word to another” .

Thiru A. Uttandaraman :

1. *Structure of temples :*

Temples are constructed on the model of the body of a human being in a lying posture or in a sitting posture. Man is not merely the physical or the subtle body but also the soul which gives him life. ‘I’ in man includes both the destructible and indestructible parts of a living human being. The living human being has six different states which are denoted by the various parts of a temple :

1. Gopuram, Sthoolaliṅgam, Būthānma, Annamaya, Ātma
2. Balipectam, Badraliṅgam, Antharānma, Prānamaya Ātma
3. Flagstaff, Dwajaliṅgam, Tatvānma, Manōmaya Ātma
4. Moolamūrthi, Sadāśivaliṅgam, Jeevānma, Vigñānamaya Ātma
5. Archaka, Ānmaliṅgam, Mantrānma, Ānandamaya Ātma
6. Vimānam, Akandaliṅgam, Paramānma, Prāthyak Ātma (paraveḷi)

The presiding deity (Śivaliṅgam) in the *sanctum sanctorum* (garbagraham) is the centre of life for the temple. 'Ullam perumalkoil, oon, udambu, ālayam' is Tirumoolar's *Tirumandiram*. The heart is the abode of God. The Temple is the human body of flesh and blood. Without the deity installed in accordance with the rules and regulations in the Āgamas, the temple will be like a human body without the soul. Tirumūlar's reference is to sitting posture where mouth is *gōpura vāsai* (entrance).

There are normally one, three, five or seven prakārams (āvaranās) in a temple depending on its size and importance. The āvaranās denote the various states of a human body which act as impediments or concealment to our realisation of divine bliss.

No. of āvaranās (States of the body)

1. Combined whole, of the state of the body.
3. Sthūla, sūkshma and kārana states of the body (physical) (subtle), (real).
5. Annamayakōsam, Prānamayakōsam, Manōmayakōsam, Vigñānamayakōsam, Ānandamayakōsam.
7. Annam, Prānam, Ichā, Rūpam, Arūpam, Vigñānam and Ānandam states of the body.

The following parts of the temple denote the various parts of the human body:

1. (a) Head - Garbagraham.
(b) Vimānam - Brahmarandram on the top of the head (like a lotus bud).
2. Neck - Arthamanḍapam.
3. Shoulders - Dwārapālakas.
4. Body (chest, abdomen) - Mahāmanḍapam.
5. Heart - Natarāja.
6. Spinal chord - Flagstaff.
7. Gōpuram - Feet.

The seven adhārasthānam in the human body are denoted by different parts of the temple as follows :

1. Mooladhāram - Base of the spinal chord (Flagstaff & peetam).
2. Swādishtānam - (a) Rectum - Balipeedam.
(b) Spleen - Dēvi
3. Manipūrakam - Navel - Nandi.
4. Anāhaṭam - Chest (heart) - Naṭarāja.
5. Vishuddi - Neck - Nandi.
6. Agñai - Forehead (middle of the space between eyebrows) - Śivaliṅgam.
7. Sahasrāram - Top of the head - Vimānam.

The temple tank will generally be in front of the temple or on one of its sides. The nandavanam (flower garden) will be on the north and the Gosala (cow-shed) on the south of the temple. Around the Garbagraham the following Kōshtavigrahams are installed. Nritha Ganapathi and Dakshināmūrthi on the south, Lingōtbavar or Vishnu on the backside, Brahma and Durga on the north, Chandiswara shrine will be near the Niche of Durga. In the prakāra around the gārbagraham on the backside there will be Vināyaka shrine on the south-west, Muruga in the middle of the backside and Lakshmi on the north-west. Nava-grahas are installed in the north-east corner of the outer prakāram.

There are various other shrines for Bairavar etc.

2. *Vēdas and Āgamas are Sabdapramānam :*

It is said that the Vēdas emerged from the four faces of Lord Śiva facing the four directions (Tatpurusham, East, Agōram, North, Satyojadam, West Vāmanam south) and that the 28 Āgamas from Ēsanya mukam (North East). There is also another version that from each of the four faces came five āgamas and that the remaining eight emerged from Ēsanya mukam. Both Vēdas and Āgamas were handed down from generation to generation by word of mouth. "Sruthi" means that which was heard.

Attempts have however been made to reduce them to writing but they have not been available in complete form.

3. *Significance of Vimānam, Gopuram, flagstaff, Balipectam, Nandi, Garbagraham, Antharazhi etc.*

Gopuram denotes the *sthūla sareeram*, also called *Dehānma* or *Boothānma*. While entering the *Gopuram* we should remind ourselves that we are not the physical bodies and that in each one of us there is the self (ātman) which is immortal.

Balipectam denotes the *Antarātma* in which state the devotee realizes the evil effect of *sensuous pleasures* and the mind should sacrifice them and divert its desires towards the attainment of the Feet of the Lord. This place between the *Balipectam* and *flagstaff* is where he has to prostrate and invoke the grace of the Lord.

Flagstaff denotes the *Tatwānma*. By exercising his mind and his knowledge the devotee realises the futility of wordly pleasure, the existence of suffering, disease, decay and death and gradually discovers that he is neither the body nor the senses nor the mind but something transcending all these and that the real self can control and direct the *tatwas* with the grace of God. *Balipectam*, *Nandi* and *Sivaliṅgam* are invariably in a straight line. They denote respectively *Pāsam*, *Pasu* (soul) and *Pathi*. In the *Antharāzhi*, next to the *Garbagraham* there will be no *Balipectam* between *Nandhi* and the *liṅgam*. If there are three *nandhis*, there will be two *Balipectams* denoting *Māya* and *Kanmam* in front of the *Nandhi*. In the next place there will be only one *pectam* (*Kanmam*) and in the third place adjoining the *Garbagraham* there will be no *pectam*. The devotees's endeavour should thus be to discard his *pāsas* or *malas* (attachments) and to attain the Feet of the Lord.

4. *God is our birth and apart from the Universe :*

The *Sivaliṅgam* in the *sanctum-sanctorum* denotes the aspect of God apart from the universe. God is also omnipresent—in land, water, fire, wind and air and in the sun including all stars, moon (including all planets and satellites) and in each soul—

Ashtamūrthi - He is smaller than the smallest atom and larger than all the Universe and beyond. He transcends all space and time- (infinite and eternal). The word 'Kadavul' brings out the immanent and transcendental aspects of God.

5. *Liṅgam*: For purposes of conferring grace on devotees God assumes different Tatvas - Śiva Tatva, Sādākya Tatva and Mahēswara Tatva. Sivam is formless. Sādākyam (Sivaliṅgam) is formless form. It has no distinct form; yet it has an indistinct form of Liṅgam. Sādākyam is of five kinds - (1) Śiva Sādākya, (2) Amurthi Sādākya, (3) Murthi Sādākya, (4) Karthiru Sādākya and (5) Kanma Sādākya. Mahēswara Tatva is of 25 kinds of form in which Śiva is worshipped. These include Chandrasēkara, Umāmahēśwara, Natarāja, Ardhanārī, Somāskanda, Dakshināmurthi, Bikshāndar etc. 'Liṅgam' means that which creates and dissolves in itself all that is created and from which creation starts again. Liṅgam also implies adornment or decoration denoted by the fivefold actions - creation, protection, destruction, concealment and grace. Sādākyam is that which is ever adored. God who is beyond thought, word and deed and is formless and nameless is given a form and name to enable devotees to worship and to meditate. Śiva Sādākyam is Jyodirmayam. Amūrthi Sādākyam is also Jyodirmayam but in the form of Divya Liṅgam. Mūrthi Sādākyam is Liṅgamūrthi with one face, three eyes and four hands with - deer, fire, abhayam and varadam. Karthiru Sādākyam is Gñāṇa Liṅgam with four faces, twelve eyes and eight hands. Kanma Sādākyam is Liṅgam with five faces including Ēsanyam and ten hands. Śivaliṅgam has three parts—one part underground, four sides representing Brahma the Creator, the middle part is eightsided representing Vishnu the protector and the upper part (liṅgam) is Rudra and the circular part with Gomuki (āvudaiyār) represents Parāsakthi. The three parts also denote Pranavam OM = A + U + M Liṅgam denotes 'Nadham' and Āvudayār 'Bindu' Tatva.

6. *Dasakāryam*: (1) Tatva roopam (2) Tatva Darshanam (3) Tatva Suddhi (4) Ātmaroopam (5) Ātma darśan (6) Ātma Suddhi (7) Śivaroopam (8) Śiva Darshan (9) Śiva Yogam (10) Śivabogam.

The Gopuram, Nandhi and Liṅgam represent Tatvam, Ātman and Śivam (Prakṛuṭhi, Soul and God) (Pāsam, Paśu, Pathi).

7. Tiruṇṭrambalam (Natarāja shrine) and Tiruvaraṅgam (Raṅganātha Shrine) are the principal Śiva and Vishnu temples in Tamiḷ Nādu. When a Saivaite refers to temple without specifying the place, it will refer only to *Tiruṇṭrambalam*. Similarly Vaishnavites refer to Srīrangam as Koil or temple. The sanctity of every Śiva temple is supposed to be absorbed in Thillai Natarāja shrine after artha jāma pūja every night. The existence of shrines for Natarāja and Govindarāja in the same temple in proximity enabling devotees to worship both simultaneously is a unique feature explaining the basic concept of one God—the reclining posture of one and the dancing pose of the other denoting the static and dynamic aspects.

Temples and Āgamas

1. *Temple (Ālayam)* is Aaa + layam = the place where souls stay. When a devotee enters the temple all his senses should be controlled and his mind should contemplate only the mūrthi for whom the temple has been built. There should be no distractions.

2. *Abodes of God*: Everybody knows that God is omnipresent but as the mind cannot contemplate on void and God, like milk in the udder of a cow and electricity in the Power House is manifest in the following places:

(1) *Guru*—Deekshāguru Vidyāguru and Bōdagaguru etc. are ācharyās in whom the disciples should see Śiva who is the soul of all souls, life of all lives.

(2) *Liṅgam*—Śivaliṅgam which is formless form of God.

(3) *Sangamam*—Devotees who have had ordinary, special and Nirvāna Deekshas and ācharya abhishegam. The 12th sutra of Śivagāṇā Botham specifically refers to devotees and temples as worthy of worship.

(4) *Mūrthi*—God is worshipped not only as liṅgam but also in various forms each of which emphasis particular aspects of

God—Natarāja, Umāmahēswara, Somāskanda, Bikshāndar etc. The presiding deity in each kshētram also bears a distinct name and saints like Sambandar, Appar, Sundarar and Mānickavāsagar have sung in praise of each mūrthi separately.

(5) *Sthalam*—The places (villages and towns) where temples have been built in strict accordance with the directions in Āgamas are sacred and worthy of worship.

(6) *Teertham*—There are sacred rivers and tanks in the vicinity of temples which are also worthy of worship as they represent the overflowing grace of God. Saints Appar and Mānickavāsagar describe God as represented by Teertham which cleanses the body in the same manner as the souls are cleaned of their impurities by God's grace.

3. *Liṅgam*: Śiva (God) assumes three forms for conferring grace on souls—the omnipresent, omnipotent, omniscient—Almighty transcending time and, space is described by Āgamas as (1) Formless Śivam (Nishkalam). (2) In form (Sakalam) He assumes various names Chandrasēkarar, Somāskandar, Ardhanāri, Dakshināmūrthi etc. In formless form (3) (Sakala-nishkala) He is Śivaliṅga which has no definite form and is yet perceptible as liṅgam for purposes of worship and dhyāna by devotees. Liṅgam represents pranavam (Om, A U M). The base is Akāram, the Gōmuham is Ukāram and the circular part is Makāram.

4. *Āgamas*: are twenty-eight beginning with Kāmikam and ending with Vādulam. Kāmikam is common. Karmam and Mahudam are in force in some temples. Other Āgamas are not generally followed. Many of these are not available. It is necessary to collect and publish them. Mathas can very well take up this task as a labour of love, service and duty:

5. *Anmārtha and Parārtha*: Anmārtha pūja is what an individual does for his own salvation. Every devotee is required to perform anmārtha pūja. But, for parārtha pūja in temples intended for the benefit of all souls, only Ādisaiva ācharyas who have had Sādarana, Visēsha and Nirvāna Deekshas and Ācharya Abishēgam are entitled to perform the pūjas in accordance with the

Āgamas. Ānmārtha pūja is essential for those performing Parārtha pūja.

6. *Āgamas came from Śiva's faces*: It is said that the Āgamas came from the five faces of Śiva – five from each of the four faces facing east, north west and south and eight from Ēsānyamukam. It is also said that the four vēdas came from the four faces and all the Āgamas from Ēsānyamukam. In any case it is common ground that the Āgamas came from Siva (God). Vēdas are general and Āgamas special religious scriptures. Āgamas deal with charya, kriya, yogam and gñānam but emphasis is mainly on kriya and gñānam.

7. Those for whom Śiva gave the Āgamas are ten Śivars and 18 Rudras. Each of the first ten Āgamas was heard by three and each of the other eighteen were heard by two. Thus thirty Sivars and thirty-six Rudras heard the Āgamas. From these, Dēvas and Rishis heard the Āgamas and from the Rishis other human beings heard the Āgamas.

The Chairman thanked the participants in the Seminar for their learned exposition of a subject in which all Hindus were deeply interested especially the significance of each act of worship at the Temples and of the Temples themselves.

OBITUARY NOTICE

We deeply regret to record the death of Professor K. A. Nilakanta Sastri at the age of 83, on 15th June, 1975 at Madras.

He was the Director of this Institute since its inception in 1957 till 1971 and, if today the Institute and the Bulletin enjoy the regard of all cultural Institutions in the world it is in no small measure due to his pioneering and untiring efforts.

A recipient of the *Padma Bhushan* award for his works in Indology and Indian History which were his first love ever since he started teaching History in the Hindu College in Tirunelveli in 1913 after a brilliant academic career, he held high academic positions in the Institutions of higher education in Benaras, Chidambaram, Mysore and Madras and also organised a department of Indian Studies in the Malaya University.

He was a visiting Professor of Chicago University in 1959, General President of the Indian History Congress, Patna, in 1946 and of the All India Oriental Conference in Lucknow in 1951. He was an Honorary Fellow of the Royal Asiatic Society, Great Britain and Ireland and had travelled widely in the Continent and participated in International Seminars. He has several publications in History and Indology to his credit well-known among which are *The Pandyan Kingdom*, *Studies in Çola History and Administration*, *The Çolas*, *Foreign Notices of South India*; *South Indian Influences in the Far East*, *History of India*, *History of South India*, *Sources of Indian History*, *Age of Nandas and Mauryas*, *Culture and History of the Tamils*, and *Essentials of World History*.

In his death the Institute has lost its first Director and, South India, one of its versatile historians.