

# Manicka Vizhumiyangal

SPEECH & WRITINGS OF  
*Dr. V. SP. Manickam*

17

THE TAMIL CONCEPT OF LOVE

17

## A Study of Tamil Verbs

Ancient Tamil grammarians have regarded only Noun and Verb as the two component parts of speech in Tamil. They do not recognise 'Itaiccol' and 'Uriccol' as parts of speech. Since Uriccol is not the basic part of noun or verb but the defective nature of it and it is quite contrary to the opinions of many renowned traditional grammarians.

## Collected Paper

Seventeen research papers in varied aspects of Tamil Language, literature, history and culture delivered in seminars and conferences about Tamil Movement, Tholkappiyam, Tirukkural. Dravidian literature is compared with world culture, Tamil-the first Indian language to bring out an Encyclopaedia-with Malayalam, Kannada, Telugu.

V.Sp. Manickam



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# MANICKKA VIZHUMIYANGAL- 17

(A commemorative publication of  
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- 1972

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Author

Mootharinjar Chemmal

**V.SP. Manickanar**

Publisher

**G. Elavazhagan**

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‘Mootharinjar Chemmal’  
**V.SP. Manickanar**

(A commemorative publication  
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**Born 17.04.1917 – Death : 24.04.1989**



## **FOREWORD**

Amidst all sections of different Tamil societies, Nattukootai Nagarathar Community is the leading one which protect and keep the traditional style of Tamil culture even to day. Dr. V.SP.Manickam, who did lifetime researches and put forth several valuable and clear thoughts about the welfare of the nation, language, society, education and mainly Tamil literature, is the greatest son given as gift to the world by Nagarathar Community.

As a mark of respect and with a view to honour the great Tamil scholar Dr.V.SP. Manickam at the time of his Centenary Celebrations, our Tamil Man Pathippagam took initiative in publishing all his famous writings for the benefit of the entire Tamil world. Accordingly all the renowned writings of Dr.V.SP.Manickam have been properly collected and grouped together into 18 books and published with the name titled as '**MANICKA VIZHUMIYANGAL**'. It is essential to mention here that all the writings and research works of **Dr.V.SP.Manickam** are purely in relation with Tamil concept. He only brought to the lime light the new concept in Tholkappiam as well as the different old concepts in the writings of Bharathiar. He, being the best commentator, did several researches on commentators of Tamil literature. He did meaningful explanations for Tholkappiam and Thirukkural.

Praising the efficient literary works of Dr.V.SP Manickam, Thiru.S.Meyyappanar of Manivasagar Pathippagam says as follows:-

“Out of the writings of Dr.V.SP.Manickam, ‘Tamil kathal’ speaks about his research efficiency, ‘Valluvam’ reveals about his knowledgeable thoughts and ‘Kambar’ stands for his poetic genius. These books are always taken as guide for many of the Tamil researchers”.

For the existing Tamil Research Field, to grow further in the right direction, the writings of Dr.V.SP.Manickam prove to be an exclusive area of study and operation for the researchers. The strength of belief in principles followed by Maraimalai Adigal and the writing style with social cause established by Thiru.Vi.Ka, the combination of both have been very much seen in the writings of Dr.V.SP.Manickam, which the people who study the books of Dr.V.SP.Manickam will come to realise easily.

Our Tamil Man Pathippagam, with an aim of promoting Tamil culture in all possible ways, is in the process of publishing Tamil books of great authors then and there for the benefit of Tamil readers and set an example in the history of publication as one of the pioneers in publishing quality books of writers. Accordingly, we, Tamil Man Pathippagam, also feel proud for getting an opportunity towards publishing all the books of Dr.V.SP.Manickam during the period of his Centenary Celebrations, grouped together under a single name “Manicka Vizhumiyangal”. Really by publishing the great works of Dr.V.SP.Manickam to the entire Tamil world, we get fresh energy and new air of spirit and on this occasion we take an undertaking that we will commit to maintain Tamil ethics in all our incoming book publications by keeping due standard for the benefit of Tamil readers.

**Our gratitude goes to:**

1. The founder of Manivasagar Pathippagam Late. Thiru.S.Meyyappanar, who did so many services for Tamil language and who took initiative in publishing many of the writings of

Dr.V.SP.Manickam initially. We convey our gratitude to him in the fond remembrance of Dr. V.SP.Manickam.

2. Pari Nilayam , Chennai and Selvi Puthaga Nilaiyam, Karaikkudi , both did the publishing works of certain writings of Dr.V.SP.Manickam and submitted to the Tamil world. The same we recollect and convey our gratitude to them at this juncture.

3. On the other hand all the family members of Dr.V.SP.Manickam supported us in all possible ways in releasing the books. To specify in particular, our thanks goes to Mrs.Thenral Alagappan and Dr. Mathari Vellayappan, daughters of Dr.V.SP.Manickam, who were the main cause for the publication of Manicka Vizhumiyangal to the Tamil world and we extend our gratitude to them for their support in fulfilling the above task.

4. Further, we also convey our regards to the Tamil Dept and the Management of M/s Ganesar Arts and Science College, Melaisivapuri, for having established the greatness of Dr.V.SP.Manickam.

**G. Elavazhagan**  
Tamillmann Pathippagam

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In general, we hereby convey our regards for the Tamil scholars who had given us various information then and there and for those who supported wholeheartedly towards publication of the group of books under the banner Manicka Vizumiyangal



# Collected Papers

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## PREFACE

The research papers presented and key-note addresses delivered in seminars and conferences and articles contributed to journals and souvenirs by me on different occasions are now being collected and published in the form of a book entitled *collected papers*. It is natural for any author to enjoy a delightful feeling when the stray flowers of his papers are strung together into a garland of book.

These seventeen papers are related to the varied aspects of Tamil Language, literature, history and culture. It is gratifying to note that Tolkappiyam, the earliest Tamil work finds a place in many papers.

The author will feel rewarded if the discerning readers find that his views regarding the orderly and continued growth of Tamil are worthy of consideration and discussion.

My thanks are due to Thiru. C. Kathirvelu, Research Scholar, Annamalai University for going through the proof and M/s. Sivakami Printers for the neat printing and execution.

T.D.A.R. Centre  
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**V. Sp. MANICKAM**



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# 1. HISTORY OF THE PURE TAMIL MOVEMENT

*“Tamil can readily dispense with the greater part  
or the whole of its Sanskrit and by dispensing with  
it rises to a purer and more refined style”*

*- Dr. CALDWELL*

Every movement has its own protagonists and antagonists. No movement in the world has been rightly interpreted by all. In the courses of the rise and growth of a movement, unconnected and irrelevant motives are imputed to it and the true objective of the movement is buried deep. There will be always scholars who view a movement objectively or subjectively. The pure Tamil movement is not exceptional.

*Wrong Nation About the Movement* : At the outset I wish to clear off some misconceptions about this popular movement. The pure Tamil movement is not certainly against our Sanskrit language. It is not its intention to decry the greatness of Sanskrit and its influences on Indian languages. It is not also against the study of this great language by the

Tamils. It is not against the Brahmin community. It is not against the unity of India. It is not against theism.

The forerunner of this movement was Professor Vi-Ko-Suriyanarayana Sastri, a Brahmin Tamil scholar who lived in the beginning of the 20th century. He was well-versed in Sanskrit and English. In his mounumental work in Tamil, "Nataka Ilakkanam" he has explicitly accepted the contribution of Sanskrit to his composition. His accidental conversation with a Sanskrit Pandit who belittled the copiousness of Tamil vocabulary stirred him up to establish the purity of Tamil. His Tamil book "A History of Tamil Language" advocated strongly the independence of Tamil. In his zeal for pure Tamil, in his last days, the Professor himself changed his Sanskrit name Suriyanarayana Sastri into a Tamil name Parithimar Kalaignan. Therefore, to say that this movement is against Sanskrit and the Brahmins is incorrect.

The father of the pure Tamil movement as Maraimalar Atikal. Like his predecessor, he also changed his Sanskrit name Vedachalam into Tamil as Maraimalai. It was this great scholar who gave a concrete form to the nebulous thoughts about pure Tamil and raised it to an agitational movement. He wrote all his books including drama and novel in pure Tamil. But it is to be well understood that Atikal was not against the study of Sanskrit and its contribution to Tamil development. He was an erudite Sanskrit scholar. He was a lover of dramas in Sanskrit. The Sakuntalam of Kalidasa has been translated in Tamil by Atikal in prose and verse. You will be glad to know that His Holiness Kanchi Sankarachariya Swamigal has selected his book as the best translation in Tamil

and instituted an award for the study of this Tamil work. Atikal, besides this translation, has written a critical work on this drama on modern lines. In his comparative study between Shakespeare and Kalidasa, Atikal remarks: "In the art of delineating the main and the subordinate characters that appear in this drama, Kalidasa is not in any way inferior to Shakespeare but to a remarkable degree is his equal". The reason that forced him to make a comparative study of the dramatic art of these two poets is, Atikal recalls. the sweeping remark of a Brahmin English Lecturer that "Kalidasa was sadly wanting in his delineation of a character and is therefore no peer of Shakespeare, the prince of the dramatists". Atikal has quoted a number of references from Vedas, Upanishads and other Sanskrit works. He has unambiguously stated in his articles on this movement that this agitation is neither against Sanskrit nor against the Brahmins.

Mahamahopadhaya Pandithamani Kathiresan Chettiar a reputed scholar both in Tamil and Sanskrit has translated Sukraniti, Kautilyam, Mrichakatikam, Utayanacaritam and sulochanai in chaste Tamil. Tiru Vi-Ka, a great Tamil Scholar and a notable leader of Indian labour movement has many works to his credit and all of them are in pure and elegant Tamil. The above facts will certainly impress upon the readers that the allegation that the lovers of pure Tamil movement are the enemies of Sanskrit and the Brahmins is baseless and that such unfounded propaganda should not be encouraged.

*Domination and Safeguard* : Nobody will find fault with a man who tries to become pure in his heart. His endeavour to attain purity will not be misconstrued as directed

against anybody's progress. Do we not impose heavy custom duties on foreign products and ban import of foreign goods for the sake of developments of our industry and trade? This safeguard does not mean that we are at enmity with other nations. Likewise languages should be allowed to grow on their own distinct lines. Foreign linguistic elements should not be allowed to dominate in a language disproportionately. The endeavour of a language to adopt its natural path is in no way blameable. Therefore I always welcome the movement of purity for any language. This kind of movement will put an end to the artificial growth of a language and give protection to its natural beauty and basic linguistic materials. The more a language is pure and simple, the better will it be understood by the people of the soil. Artificiality in a developing language is the result of the impact of the urban civilisation. Its unwarranted predominance, if not checked, will strike at the nourishing roots of the languages.

*Historical Background* : You have now understood that the pure Tamil movement is a movement with noble objectives and that it is not in any way inimical to other languages including Sanskrit. Impressed by the good intentions of the sponsors of this language movement, You may be anxious to know the background and the period of gestation. It is a long, long history, traceable from the age of Tolkappiyam, ie. before the 3rd century, B.C.

I presume that Sanskrit was the only language which at first came into close contact with Tamil in the pre-historic times. Tolkappiyam has significant references to this relationship. It enunciates the phonemic principles for

Tamilisation of Sanskrit works, even though their use was little in his time. I have reason to think. Sanskrit words were employed only in poetical compositions, This means that he is for the use of Sanskrit words, but at the same time he is not for adoption of them as such. Here we find the beginning of the preservation of Tamil with purity. Notwithstanding these principles in Tolkappiyam, Cankam poets have rarely used Sanskrit words. While referring to the proper names in Sanskrit, their mention was only descriptive.

*The Growing Influence of Sanskrit* : Because of the impact of religions and sects the Middle Ages witnessed continuous inflow of Sanskrit words in all Tamil works - devotional hymns, Kavyas, Puranas and Prabandas. But one feature of this period is worth mentioning. In spite of liberal borrowings, the phonetic structure of Tamil was scrupulously preserved as in the Cankam age. Pavananti, the author of Nannul of the 13th century has elaborately given the rules for the employ of Sanskrit words in Tamil. This somewhat arrested the terrible onset of Sanskrit on Tamil language. In the later period we have to admit plainly that in the musical work like Tiruppukal Sanskrit words freely borrowed in violation of the Tamil language structure, In the so called Tamil commentaries on Divya Prabhandam of Vaishnavite Alwars, sounds peculiar to Sanskrit were written in Granta scripts. This style was called manipravalam. Yet in the great epics like Ramayanam of Kampan, Paratham of Villi and Periyapuram of Sekkilar, in the puranas like Kantapuram, Kanchipuram and Tiru-vilaiyatarpuram and in the popular devotional songs, Tevaram and Divya Prabhadam, In spite of



admixture of plenty of Sanskrit words, rules of phonetic changes were strictly followed.

Tamil Scholars of Middle ages who studied Sanskrit in large number did not confine themselves to borrow Sanskrit words. They were attracted by the Sanskrit forms and norms of literature and grammar. Puttamitiranar, the author of viracoliium belonging to the 11th century has openly stated that his grammar would include Sanskrit norms also. Some of the chapters in his work bear Sanskrit terminologies, like Sandhippatalam, Tattitappatalam, Taduppatalam, Kiriyapata ppaalam. Such came to be the attraction and influence of Sanskrit in a wider field.

*Independent Status of Tamil* : The admixture of Sanskrit vocabulary and terminologies and the adoption of literary and grammatical conventions of Sanskrit were the outcome of orderly and gradual development spread over above three thousand years. It is to be remembered that in this long period, the Tamil Pandits were conscious of the fact that Tamil and Sanskrit were two independent languages and that their phonological, morphological and syntactical aspects were different and distinct. In spite of inroad and inrush of Sanskrit idioms, this fundamental aspect and the independent status of Tamil were never forgotten. In the fourfold classification of words Sanskrit or Vatacol has a separate category. Deivaccilaiyar, one of the commentators of Tolkappiyam has pointed out in several places the syntactical differences between these two ancient languages. Pandits and commentators of Middle ages have referred to Sanskrit ideas only for comparison and exposition. They never dreamt of

reducing or effacing the independent linguistic status of Tamil language and literature. Even Puttamitiranar a grammarian of revolutionary type has not said anything against the independent position of Tamil.

Borrowing among languages is natural and to some extent inevitable. Speaking analogically, independent nation are getting loans and financial assistance with or without interest from richer countries. We know this does not affect the sovereignty of the borrowing countries. The Governments have the power and authority to develop their nations according to their laws and the will of the people. Till the 17th century nothing was said and written to impair the separate entity of the Tamil language. Borrowing of Sanskrit words and norms was on intellectual background.

*Sanskrit Origin for Tamil-Two Schools* : This salient and healthy background in relation to Tamil and Sanskrit was unfortunately marred by some thoughtless and haughty grammarians of the 18th century. Subramaniya Diksitar, the author of *pirayokavivekam* made a radical change in the pattern of Tamil grammar and thoroughly made use of Sanskrit terminologies for all grammatical aspects of Tamil to establish his new and cherished theory that Tamil is not different from Sanskrit. The purpose of his work, he claims, is to prove the sameness of grammar for these two languages. He derives "Tamil" the name of the language from "Tiramilam". He has given Sanskrit terms *Karakappatalam*, *Samasappatalam*, *Tattitappatalam* and *Tigngnuppatalam* for all the chapters in his work.

Following Subramaniya Diksitar, Swaminatha Desikar, the author of *Illakanakkottu* has gone to the extent of saying that Tamil is not at all a language and that the wise, like him, will be ashamed of recognising Tamil as a language since it has only five sounds of its own. Like Diksitar, he has also propagated the erroneous theory that the grammar is one and the same for Sanskrit and Tamil, thereby meaning that Tamil has no independent grammatical theories. Regarding this kind of development, M. Srinivasa Aiyangar in his "Tamil Studies" remarks: "When Sanskrit puranas and other Sanskrit religious literature were introduced, the views of Tamil Scholars began to change. Most of them were acquainted with both Tamil and Sanskrit: yet they had greater love for the latter, as their Vedas and Puranas and Agamas were written in that language and this partiality or rather a sentiment verging on odium theologicum induced them to trace Tamil from Sanskrit."

I should like to point out that the twin grammarians Diksitar and Desikar who composed their works on pet and fancied theories and started a movement to extinguish the separate entity of Tamil language were responsible for the birth of the pure Tamil movement, the subject of my paper. Of these two grammarians, Swaminatha Desikar not only undermined the traditional reputations of Tamil language in unpolished words but also questioned the purity of Tamil literature vehemently. It was he who pronounced that Tamil did not exist and cannot exist independently. This derision naturally wounded many scholars who, in their turn vigorously attempted to establish the independent nature of Tamil and its equal rank with Sanskrit.

Sivagnana Munivar, a versatile genius and a peerless savant in Tamil and Sanskrit emphatically brought out the special grammatical features of Tamil as distinct from Sanskrit in his prose work “Suttira virutti”. He stressed that Tamil is no less divine than Sanskrit since both have their origin from the Supreme Being, Siva. Thus in the 18th century we come across two schools of thought, one publicly advocating the supremacy of Sanskrit at the expense of the independence of Tamil and the other openly repudiating the view of that school and raising the status of Tamil on a par with Sanskrit. It may be rightly said that this century sowed the seed for the pure Tamil movement. As a result, emotion, prejudice and bitterness crept into the relationship between Tamil and Sanskrit. Intellectual outlook which prevailed for a long time was superseded by cultural, social and sometimes political motives.

*The birth of pure Tamil movement:* The school which sought the origin of Tamil from Sanskrit became weak in the later part of the 19th century when Dr. Caldwell and other Western philologists, on comparative study, set aside the theory of Sanskrit origin not only for Tamil but for Telugu, Kannada and Malayalam as well and put forth a laudable theory that these Southern languages are entitled to be called as Dravidian tongues. In a pointed reference to Tamil, Dr. Caldwell supports the independent nature of Tamil in clear terms. “Tamil, the most highly cultivated ab infra of all Dravidian idioms can dispense with its Sanskrit altogether, if need be, and not only stand alone but flourish without its aid”. He does not confine himself to this pronouncement. In the midst of several views

regarding the close relationship between Sanskrit and Dravidian languages he has expressed a new thought that a large number of words of Dravidian origin have found their way into Sanskrit vocabularies. This and the like statements by the greatest of the Dravidian philologists encouraged the lovers of pure Tamil to start a new movement to achieve their harmless and faultless but rightful claim.

*Principles of Purity:* What is meant by “purity” in a language? We use this word here figuratively. Purity does not mean total ban on the entry of words of other languages. Neither is it possible nor is it desirable. Do we not add a little water to the pure milk when it is boiled? A living and progressive language should always keep its door open for the incoming of foreign words to express certain ideas and thoughts clearly and truly. I do not subscribe to the view that any kind of any amount of borrowing should not be admitted in Tamil. At the same time I wish to emphasize that borrowing should be done on strict and definite principles. Borrowed words should not exceed 5% in a language. I shall give you briefly the three principles followed by the Tamil purists in their language movement.

1. Words of other languages, if borrowed, should be so changed as to get the appearance of the native forms in Tamil. Their forms should not disclose that they are alien.

2. The existing stock of Tamil vocabulary, literary and colloquial, should be fully used. Most of the unused words are not obsolete or dead. For many centuries, they are not given any opportunity for currency.

3. New words in Tamil should be coined to express modern ideas and things. Tamil is a language of agglutinative type. It has copious and varied morphemes. It is possible to form any number of new words if the scholars are earnest and faithful to the language.

These principles are not exclusively for Tamil. They are general. They may be adopted by all languages for purpose of purity. Love of language means love of preserving and safeguarding the fundamental structure and basic materials of the language.

*A Powerful Movement:* What is the present progress of this movement? What is its influence on writers and speakers? Has it attracted the youths and the common people? What will be its future? Answering these pertinent question I shall conclude my speech.

At the beginning this movement fought against the use of Sanskrit words. Now there is no great need for it. At present the target is against the use of English words. Though this purity movement is half a century old, it is gaining ground in governmental, administrative, educational and religious spheres. Text books for schools are written in simple and chaste Tamil. The Tamilnadu Text books Committee has translated more than 600 books on Science and Arts. Thousands of words have been coined for this purpose. Thanks to the introduction of Tamil as official language and court language, the movement is becoming powerful. On platforms only the speakers who command chaste and literary Tamil are attracting the mob. Theatres and cinemas are greatly in-

fluenced by this movement. Short and sweet Tamil words are chosen for the names of the plays. Youths display their love of purity in the essay writing and oratorical competitions. That Tamil is capable of expressing any idea of modernity has now become an acceptable fact. Yet some notable novelists and short story writers are wantonly introducing long sentences in English under the garb that speeches should reflect the characters. This may be said to be a modern style of manipravalam. This artificial style will not long last. The literary works written on this mixed style will not be understood by posterity. You will be surprised to know that under the auspices of the Madras University, the manipravala commentaries of Nalayira Divya Prabandam were translated into chaste Tamil test they might go into oblivion. Therefore I advise, with all sincerity, the Tamil writers not to fall in love with a new manipravala style using English words and sentences in Tamil letters.

The pure Tamil movement is not against the study of any language. Most of the purists are polyglots. The sole aim of this movement is to develop Tamil, one of the world classical languages on its own lines. Why should we sacrifice the purity and independence of a language, when that language possesses enormous resources and rich materials for its growth and development?

## 2. RENAISSANCE OF TAMIL

I take this rare and pleasant opportunity to congratulate Dr. Agesthalingom, Director of the Centre of Advanced Study in Linguistics and his learned colleagues for their new venture of holding a seminar of inter disciplinary studies in Dravidology. I welcome a seminar of this kind for the study of ancient Cankam classics also where we find many a reference to history, sociology, sexology, musicology, fine arts, fauna and flora, astrology, astronomy, economics, agriculture, religion, ethics and so on. What Tolkappiyar enumerates as seed topics (karupporul) as part of poetry contain several things belonging to different Arts and Sciences. We feel shy of our poor resource of knowledge when we begin to study the epic Cilappathikaram which is a repository of valuable information on many subjects.

### **Period of Cankam age**

It is not my intention to present a paper surveying the growth and development of Tamil Literature from the beginning, as it will appear to be a brief history of Tamil literature with books listed as in a catalogue. I therefore wish to restrict myself to the study of one period of Tamil History

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Keynote address in Tamil Literature at the seminar on Inter disciplinary studies in Dravidology conducted by the centre of Advanced study in Linguistics - Annamalai University held in 1976.



i.e. the Cankam age, introduce the readers to the researches done in the recent past and the research activities which are going on and point out many problems which stand in the way of doing research in the Cankam classics scientifically and arriving at any conclusion precisely. My purpose of taking up the period of the ancient Cankam Literature for today's speech is to enlighten the promising young scholars who are labouring under the impression that all fields relating to the Cankam works have already been covered by research scholars and that there is nothing left for further study. I am one of those who wholeheartedly welcome doing research on modern works like novels, short stories, dramas etc., as I hold the view that any pursuit of knowledge in any kind of Tamil literature will result in the enrichment of Tamil. At the same time I strongly feel that but for the devoted and continuous study of Cankam classics the research fields in 'the kingdom of Tamil Literature' will not be fertile and resourceful but will become barren and fruitless in the long run.

### **First renaissance**

In the checkered History of Tamil Literature, we come across revival of the Cankam classics thrice. In the third century A.D. there was a nationwide movement to search for the poems of Akam and Puram found scattered throughout the length and breadth of Tamil Nadu, with a view to collecting and preserving them for the posterity. Under the patronage of kings. great scholars undertook this tremendous and laborious work and collected them in eight anthologies, like Akananuru, Purananuru, Narrinai Nanuru etc. each having its

own principles of collection. The name of the poet, the situation in which the poem was composed and other particulars were briefly added to the text of every poem. Short commentaries were also written on them. This may be called the first renaissance of the Cankam classics. These collections were arranged and grouped on the basis of the number of feet each verse possessed the number of poems available, the subject treated and the like, with the purpose of the people remembering them easier. But I may be permitted to point out that the poems in these anthologies excepting those in Patirrupattu require redaction for purpose of research study.

### **Second Renaissance**

The second renaissance of the Cankam works commenced from the eleventh century in the middle ages with new zeal and hard work. They study, elucidation and spread of Tolkappiyam were considered as indispensable for the upkeep of tradition in the educational sphere of Tamil. A band of devoted and sincere commentators such as Ilampuranar, Nacchinarkkiniyar, Senavaraiyar, Perasiriyar, Kallatar and Teyvaccilaiyar brought home to the students of the day the inestimable value of Tolkappiyam by their excellent commentaries and expositions adapted to the society of the middle periods. Grammatical works like Venpamalai by Aiyanarithanar, Akapporul by Nampi and Nannul by Pavananthi were written to make Tolkappiyam easier for the young.

As Tolkappiyam and the Cankam classics are related to each other almost in all respects, commentaries were also

brought forth on Cankam Literature. The contribution of Naccinarkkiniyar in the mission of the propagation of Tolkappiyam and the Cankam Poetry will be ever gratefully remembered by the posterity. Minor poetical works in the forms of Kovai, Parani, Tootu/Toothu etc., composed by the poets of the middle ages helped to popularise the ancient classics which are broadly based on the twofold divisions of Akam and Puram. This revival did not last long and the study of the ancient literature once again went into oblivion on account of the onset of the minor poetical and highly religious works and of the obsession of the scholars therein.

### **Third renaissance**

It was at the end of the nineteenth century and the beginning of the twentieth due to the indefatigable and tenacious efforts of the great scholars and lovers of Tamil, Tolkappiyam and the Cankam classics and the commentaries thereon were 'reborn'. Dr. U.V. Swaminatha Iyer the uncrowned monarch in the world of editors is rightly called as the father of Tamil for his life-long service to this language.

The language-study of the Cankam classics was undertaken by the Department of Linguistics of the Annamalai University and the Tamil Department of the Kerala University. The immensely valuable editions of Dr. Swaminatha Iyer, the handy edition arranged in the alphabetical order of the poets published under the supervision of Professor Vaiyapuri Pillai, the index of the Ancient Tamil Literature in three volumes published by the French Institute of Pondicherry have been acknowledged as basic works for furthering higher studies in

Tamil. Naccinarkkiniyar's commentaries on Cankam classics have not fully revealed the meaning of the texts in several places, since he used to twist the texts so as to suit his view. The style of some other commentaries written in the earlier centuries was also considered too difficult to be comprehended by the Tamils of the present century. Hence Maraimalai Atikal, Mahavidwan Raghava Iyengar, Dr. Swaminatha Iyer, Venkatasamy Nattar, Pinnattur Narayanasamy Iyer, Avvai Duraisamy Pillai and Perumalaippulavar Somasundaram wrote commentaries on the Cankam Anthologies with elaborate explanation and illustrations. The Saiva Siddhanta Kazhagam arranged a series of popular lectures in all words of Tamil Literature and published them also for the benefit of the public.

Research scholars who were awarded the M.Litt. and Ph.D. degrees have elaborately dealt with the literary, historical, social, religious and cultural aspects and the aspects of the fauna and flora, the art and architecture, love and warfare, the religion and the people as revealed in the Cankam classics. If the theses many of which were written in English have the good fortune of being published, the world will get the golden opportunity to know of the philosophy of life enunciated in these Tamil classics. In this connection, I should like to say that while we attempt to do more research and produce more books on the ancient classics, we should not allow the valuable books ably written by the earliest scholars to go out of print. The History of Tamils by P.T. Srinivasa Iyengar, the Tamil India by M.S. Puranalingam Pillai and similar works need reprint.

The study of the Cankam classics means the inclusion of the study of Tolkappiyam also. It is not taken for granted that a deep and analytical study of this earliest grammatical work and its commentaries is a must for a student of Tamil whatever his area of research may be. Tolkappiyam in prose by K. Vellaivaranam, Tolkappiyam with elaborate introduction by Dr. Ilakkuvanar, the new commentary on Akattinai Iyal by M. Arunachalam Pillai and several articles on Tolkappiyam read in various seminars have contributed to the spread of Tolkappiyam among the students.

### **Need of a Chronological edition**

The myriad of publications and research activities, though praiseworthy, is not upto my expectation because of the imperfect nature of the result of these works.

As I said earlier, the method adopted in the compilation of Cankam anthologies was meant for the preservation of the ancient poems. There ends its service. To base one's research on one individual anthology like Kuruntokai, Narrinai etc. is not correct since the finding will be inconclusive. We know that the poems of many Cankam poets are scattered in almost all the anthologies and that some kings were patrons as well as poets. To arrive at any satisfactory conclusion on any problem, literary, linguistic, cultural and social, the need for a chronological approach is keenly felt. For this purpose a new edition of all the 2381 poems in 8 anthologies arranged in a chronological order is wanted. In this new edition the poems of the individual poets like Kapilar, Paranar, Avvaiyar and the like also should be arranged chronologically. I

therefore hold the opinion that many statements made so far in various research fields will require reconsideration and reexamination after the outcome of a chronological edition of Cankam classics. I am an optimist and I hope a monumental work of this nature will see its birth in a decade or two.

### **A speical study of Porulatikaram**

Tolkappiyam has three parts and the third part Porulatikaram which contains a wealth of information needs years of study and labour by a band of scholars. The commentators of the middle ages consciously or unconsciously passed the new ideas of their age as the ideas of Tolkappiyam. The real meanings of the essential technical terms Akam, Kaikkilai, Aintinai, Peruntinai etc. are not still understood. It will be interesting to know that one commentator has stated that Tolkappiyar wrote his book to point out the futility of the sexual pleasure and to advocate the idea of renunciation. A student of Tamil literature will know the strong influence and impact of the Akam forms in one way or other on the literary works of subsequent periods. To write an authentic commentary on Porulatikaram, a detailed and comparative study of Cankam classics, Tirukkural and Cilappatikaram will be required. To pay exclusive attention to the development of research in various aspects of Tolkappiyam and Cankam classics, it is hoped that a chair will be instituted by the Government in one of the universities of Tamilnadu as has been done for Tirukkural.

### **Modern interpretation of Cankam Classics**

India believes in democracy, secularism, socialism, casteless society and sex equality. We know that Tolkappiyam and Cankam poems were composed in an age when all these noble ideals were prevalent in the Tamil community. The rich people considered themselves as trustees of wealth and protected the poor with food and clothing and shelter. It seems that there was also family planning. Pari had only two daughters and Kopperun Cholan only two sons. The Akam Literature refers to only one son when it describes the love quarrel between the lovers. Therefore I think that Cankam classics represent the society we like to establish today in India. I also think that there is no harm in studying Tolkappiyam and the Cankam classics from the modern point of view, as they are works of permanent value composed by noble scholars.

### **3. DEVELOPMENT OF TAMIL RESEARCH**

The All India University Tamil Teachers' Association has had the unique objective of stimulating, developing and spreading research activities in Tamil among the Tamil scholars all over India for the last eighty years. It does not pass any resolution expressing the grievances of Tamil teachers and making demands for their monetary benefit. The members meet annually in the different parts of the country, present their research papers and discuss them with open-mindedness. Because of its intellect-conscious and research-oriented objective, the Association does not give any opportunity for strife and conflict and has planted the seed of cooperation and progress. This is crystal clear from the fact that it is able to hold the conference continuously from its inception. The growing strength of the delegates and the increasing number of papers presented will testify to the popularity and usefulness of the conference. The publication of the research papers at the commencement of the conference has added to the interest of the researchers and made the discussion in the conference hall easier. Nearly 750 papers relating to all fields of Tamil have been presented in

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Keynote address in Tamil Literature - 8th seminar. All India University Tamil Teachers' Association held at Mysore 1976.



these seminars. This is no mean achievement in the field of research. The Association may hold legitimate pride in its contribution to the real and substantial growth of Tamil. It has justified its existence and necessity by its achievement.

We should be very thankful to the Universities in Tamil nadu for relaxing regulations for registration for the Ph.D. degree thus giving equal opportunity to all the College teachers to engage themselves in higher research. The acceptance of the theses written in Tamil, against the age long custom of writing them in English, has removed the handicap felt by the research scholars. A special allowance of Rs.100/- announced by the Governemnt for teachers with the Ph.D. degree has become an incentive to those who are moving slowly towards the path of research. Thus we see a pleasant climate of research coming into existence for Tamil teachers and also a large number of teachers attempting to avail themselves of this opportunity-an opportunity denied to the previous generations of scholars.

Thanks to its hoary antiquity among the languages of the world and to its possession of a rich, varied and perennial and beautiful and realistic art and architecture, Tamil offers immeasurable scope for research activities and intellectual adventure. Its literature is of an inter-disciplinary nature. As pointed out by Tolkappiam/ Karupporul or seed-things form a major structure of a poem. Karupporul includes history/ economics, culture, nature, art, labour, religion and anything that goes into the making of a fuller and happier life. Looking at Tamil Literature merely as a literature containing the so called literary aspects like imagination, emotion, form etc.,

will not reveal its entire picture and useful purpose. We should realise, of course, we have realised to a certain extent, that our works like Tolkappiam, Cankam classics, Tirukkural, Cilappatikaram, Manimekalai, Perunkatai, Cintamani, Ramayanam, Periyapuram, Devotional songs, Puranas, Minor literature, Paarati's work etc. can each produce many a Ph.D. since they are the repository of incalculable information. It is wrong to hold the opinion, as some do, that Tamil had no proper and new developments in the middle and post-middle ages for lack of patronage and imagination. This view is not correct. Its line and field of growth have been different in every century. Each century has created a new kind of literature and fulfilled the need of the day. The literature reflects the trend of the society and the poets compose songs on topics which are current. In the middle and post-middle ages people were extremely religious-minded; hence the production of the literature of this period was of a highly religious nature. Inscriptional Tamil, prose development in the commentaries, philosophical literature and the like belong to these ages. The eight volumes of the History of Tamil Literature systematically arranged and ably presented by Thiru M. Arunachalam will show the uninterrupted growth of Tamil in new vistas in every century. The works of Arunakirinathar, Thayumanavar, Sivagnanamunivar, Sivaprakasara, Kumarakuruparar, Remalingar reveal that every century has given birth to one or two great Tamil scholars to its credit. The growth of Tamil in the 20th century is entirely on a different line. Prose form has become prominent. New kinds of literature like novels, short stories, dramas, children's literature, travelogues etc. are written by modern

writers to satisfy the expectations of the society. Students of literature should understand that the literature of any age never dies or loses its literary values. The topics may not be current;; the style and diction may be different;; the form also may be outmoded. Yet literature in its nature has a permanent universal value and appeal. Do we hold the opinion that Paarati's emotional songs on the freedom movement of India became lifeless after the attainment of Independence? Some scholars do propagate the view that Puranas, minor works like Thoothu, Pilaittamil, Parani, Ula, etc. have become obsolete and that they need not be taught to the students. I differ from them. Literary men should not have the outlook of the businessmen who always attach importance to the current value of the commodities. Our approach should be out and out literary. By 'literary outlook' I mean, we should develop broad and noble and impersonal outlook in the critical study of literature without bias to any particular society, religion, region, age, form etc. If you develop this literary outlook, you will certainly come round to my view that Tamil has had constant and continual literary growth in all periods, every period confining to the development of a new genre of literature. I therefore advise the research scholars not to neglect the literature of any period for doing research.

An analytical study of the topics taken by the candidates will be interesting and fruitful. Earlier research students were fond of doing research on Cankam classics on subjects like nature, culture, civilisation, historical references, love and war etc. Cankam poems were collected as eight anthologies on the basis of the number of metrical feet, form and matter.

The Anthologies as such do not provide sufficient ground for scientific research. The age, the literary merit and the grammatical features of each Anthology cannot be determined without reference to other Anthologies. Therefore the conclusions arrived at on the basis of individual Anthology will naturally become incomplete, Research works on particular region like Kurincittinai, Palaithinai, Patantinai etc. on the basis of the collection of all poems relating to a tinai in all Anthologies have been brought out satisfactorily. Tirukkural, Cilappatikaram and Ramayanam, because of their high literary value and unparalleled popularity, have attracted a number of scholarly writers with the result that now we are in a position to do supra research on the research so far done on these three monumental classics. It is pleasing to note that modern creative works like novels, short stories, dramas and folklore have formed a major part of the research theses and it shows that our universities give due recognition to the authors who intend developing Tamil to the international standard. In this connection a note of warning is necessary;; careful attention should be devoted to the choice of the subject for research. The works of the living authors should not be taken for research as a rule. When the authors in question are still writing books how can a researcher say anything final on his earlier works? His thesis will be ineffective and inconclusive. Sometimes it is found that the living authors are chosen for research to please them and to get some benefit from them. It is also found that the living author's reputation or unpopularity will affect the candidate's approach to the topics. Therefore I feel that a healthy tradition in the domain of Tamil research should be built up by

excluding the works of the living authors from being brought into the scene of research.

The standard of research hitherto made in Tamil, though commendable, does not come upto our expectation. The research theses reflect the hard work of the candidates by way of collecting materials and preparing charts and appendices; but most of the theses do not deal with problems and views of different schools. The onerous task of collecting materials for some years by the candidates which is a mechanical one blunts the intellectual sharpness of the young scholars. It is the chief duty of the guide to develop the research faculty of the candidates who have registered enthusiastically for the Ph.D. and to ask them to understand the unsolved problems in their subjects and to find out solutions for them.

Ph.D. research theses form only a small percentage of research activities in a language like Tamil. They are unconnected and piecemeal. They are submitted with a view to getting degrees. The Universities in Tamilnadu have awarded so far about 100 Ph.Ds, That does not mean that Tamil has been much enriched by these works. What timeans is that the Universities, have produced a band of scholars well equipped for the task of valuable research projects when such projects are undertaken. The Tamil savants for the last four decades spent much of their energy and time and money to popularise our literature, particularly Cankam classics which were unearthed after many centuries. Manuscripts and palm leaves were searched out and printed Cheap editions were

reprinted with splitting of the stanzas. The contents of the ancient and mediaeval literature were reproduced in prose. A movement was enthusiastically started to make the Tamil public aware of their literary heritage and to love their mother tongue. There are hundreds of prose books in Tamil. But they do not exceed more than 150 pages each. They were written only to be prescribed as text books in colleges and high schools. As they are marketable, private publishers gladly come forward to publish and sell them. These works no doubt served their useful purpose viz, the popularisation of Tamil literature among the common people; but they do not increase the wealth of the Tamil Muse. Now what we need is research programmes, research projects and reference books. The Tamil Encyclopaedia by Tamil Development Academy, the Cankam classics arranged in the alphabetical order of poets by Samajam, the collection of various commentaries of Tirukkural by Mahavidwan Dandapani Desikar, the collection of commentaries on Tolkappiyam Collatikaram by Dr. V.I. Subramaniam, the Index of Cilappatikaram by Dr. S.V. Subramaniam, the 16 volumes of Kampa Ramayanam with variant readings by the Annamalai University are some noteworthy publications for reference. The research institutions of Tamilnadu should be ashamed of not having many reference works of Tolkappiyam, the extant first work in Tamil. An Index of Ainkurunuru, An Index of Akananuru, An Index of Purananuru etc. based on individual anthology need rearrangement for proper reference. An Index of Tholkappiyam, An Index of Perunkatai, An Index of Manimekalai, An Index of Cintamani which have been prepared with great labour by the research students should

be published with texts. All works big and small should be published with elaborate introduction and complete index and concordance. A series of editions like anthology of Ulas, anthology of Thoothu, anthology of Parani, anthology of Kalampakam, anthology of Pallu and so on in the chronological order should be brought out for easy reference to scholars. It is too much to expect that every researcher should collect the materials from all books concerned. It is a waste of time. Unless voluminous editions and reference works are made easily available to the scholars, real progress in the field of Tamil research will only be a dream. The State Government, the Central Government and the U.G.C. should deem it their duty to invest huge amounts in the research projects as they do in the projects of economic developments.

At the end of my keynote address. I may be permitted to express my view on the prose of modern writers, however unpalatable it may be to a few. Most of the novelists, playwrights, and writers of short stories pay more attention to the themes and treatment of themes. We would welcome it. But I am sorry to state they they do not care for the language. Whether they really write in Tamil or non-Tamil, is a matter of doubt. It is said, and of course we should admit, that Tamil should be developed to express scientific ideas and thoughts. But nobody will dare to say that novels, short stories etc. Great scholars like Parithimarkalaigan and Maraimalai Atikal vehemently fought against the use of foreign words in Tamil. Now what we find is that some great novelists and short story writers purposely mix paras of foreign words and sentences in their popular writings. I hold

the doubt whether Tamil is incapable of expressing their thoughts or they are incapable of expressing their thoughts in Tamil. Occasionally use of foreign words is always admissible in all languages. To use foreign words in the place of local words and to mix long sentences and long paras of foreign words will reveal that the writer does not have the capacity to write in a particular language according to the genius of that language. A book will not be permanent, because of its theme and treatment and form alone; permanency rests mostly upon the language also. The history of Tamil has shown that the books written in mixed language have very few readers in course of time and that they need pure Tamil translations as the Vyakkiyanam of Nalayira Diviya prabandams. Hence I appeal to the writers of novels, short stories etc. to pay more attention to the language side also. If possible, I request them to revise the language of their works in reprint. Otherwise most of the modern literature, solely for want of language purity, will not last long. After a great deal of thought, I make this appeal to the writers who are really enriching ancient Tamil with new forms and thoughts.



## **4. SCRIPT REFORM IN TAMIL**

I am extremely happy to present before this enlightened audience my constructive and pragmatic views on a problem which is agitating the minds of the young scholars who are eager to reform the Tamil scripts scientifically and rationally. They think that the present forms of Tamil letters are not suited to typing and printing; they are difficult for the children and the foreigners to learn and write and that the modernisation of Tamil scripts will give a fillip to the general spread of Tamil far and wide.

The movement of script reform is not confined to Tamil alone. After the introduction of printing and linotyping all Indian Languages have been subjected to their impact. While in India the script reform is towards the modification of old forms to the requirement of type board, the reform in western countries, particularly in America is to have a close relation between the graphemes and the phonemes. Thus the reform in script has become a world feature.

### **Three views**

Different scholars advocate different kinds of script reforms. They may be classified under three heads:

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Paper presented at the seminar of socio Linguistics and Dialectology arranged by the Linguistic Department of Annamalai University in 1977.

a) One section of scholars is in favour of complete Romanisation of Tamil language. They contend that by this change-over, Tamil language will develop internationally and be easily read by the foreigners. Another advantage of it is that most of our children who are learning English in Roman scripts may easily pick up Tamil also without undergoing the trouble of learning another script. These scholars recommend adoption of Roman scripts for other Indian languages also.

b) Another section of scholars is in favour of completely adopting the Devanagiri script for the Indian languages including Tamil whose script is different. They hold that this universal adoption will strengthen the solidarity and integration of our nation and pave the way for the understanding of different Indian languages and culture by all Indians.

c) The third section of scholars intends reforming the Tamil scripts themselves. They want regularity in the forms of vowels, consonants and syllabic letters. My paper is concerned only with this reform.

What defects do we find in Tamil alphabets? What kind of reform do we need to set right the irregular diacritics? What are the methods to be adopted? The movement for this cause began in the early part of this century. Individual scholars, private organisations and committees sponsored by the Government have time and again suggested ways and means for this purpose. Before the analysis of the problem, I shall give you in a nutshell the defects that are pointed out and the reforms that are contemplated by various scholars.

## 1. Short and Long vowels

The short vowels are அ, இ, உ, எ, ஓ. The corresponding long vowels are ஆ, ஈ, உஊ, ஏ, ஔ. Thus altogether we are having 10 signs for 10 vowels. There are two ways of reducing them either to 6 or 5. If a common sign like 'ஈ' for the long vowel is adopted the number will be only six அஈ, இஈ, உஈ, எஈ, ஔஈ. If the sign of the same vowel is juxtaposed to indicate the elongation like அஅ, இஇ, உஉ, எஎ, ஔஔ 5 letters will be sufficient for 10 vowels. This is not a new suggestion. Do we not adopt the letters of short vowels to represent the further lengthening of the long vowels, what is called alapetai (ஆஅ, ஈஇ, உஊஉ, ஏஎ, ஔஔ)?

## 2. al and au

The enumeration of ஊ and ஔ along with the vowels has been a subject of controversy even in the middle period. Linguists who give much importance to the spoken tongue support the removal of them from the Tamil alphabet. These two diphthongs may be easily replaced by அஹ் and அஹ் respectively.

Be bidding good-bye to the so called diphthongs and doubling the signs of short vowels even for long ones, Tamil may eliminate the existing seven signs from its vowel alphabet table.

## 3. Velar nasal and dental nasal

Velar nasal (ன) has not much phonemic value. It is used only morpo phonemically. There is no contrast between dental nasal (ந) and the alveolar nasal (ண). Therefore it is suggested

that these two consonants (ஊ and ஞ) are not worth preserving in the Tamil alphabet.

#### 4. Vowel sings in ‘uyirmey’

a) There are three irregular syllabi letters ஐ, ஒ, ஔ in ‘ஆ’ combination. They may be easily written as like zh, wh, dh other consonants, by adding ‘kal’ form. Yet it may be noticed that there is some regularity among these three forms, ஐ, ஔ, ஒ since it becomes easy to draw the curve from z, w, d.

b) There are four (irregular syllabic letters, ஐ, ஔ, ஐ, ஐ in ஐ combination. By adopting ஐ sign we may write them as ஐ, ஐ, ஐ, ஐ in consonance with other consonants. Yet it may be noticed that there is some regularity among these four forms since they have loops at the beginning of the sign. In printing and typing it is possible to adopt these forms ஐ, ஐ, ஐ, ஐ without confusion. But in handwriting nobody could be expected to count the loops before or after writing. There will be five loops for ஐ and four loops for ஐ. To avoid this inconvenience the ‘ai’ sign is raised over the consonantal sign. Because of this easiness no reform attempted in these letters was successful. This should be noted by the enthusiasts of the reform.

c) Diverse irregularities are found in the syllabic combinations of ஊ and ஊ. In ஊ there are three varieties ஊ, ஊ, ஊ in ஊ five varieties ஊ, ஊ, ஊ, ஊ, ஊ. If there is any reform immediately needed in the field of Tamil scripts it is to be adopted in these two vowels. Recently, the Kerala Government boldly introduced one new sign for short ஊ and one new sign for long ஊ, thus eliminating a number of

cumbersome signs in these series. For Tamil some scholars have suggested to adopt the Grantha form ூ for short ூ for long ூ.

5. The vowel signs in the syllabic letters are suffixed or prefixed in some cases and are done in both ways in some other cases.

- |                   |   |                       |
|-------------------|---|-----------------------|
| a) கா, கி, கு, கூ | - | suffixed              |
| b) கெ, கே, கை     | - | prefixed              |
| c) கொ, கோ, கெள  | - | prefixed and suffixed |

In the combination of vowel-consonant (uyirmei) the sound of the consonant is uttered first and that of the vowel comes next. Accordingly vowel sign or allograph in the syllabic writing should follow the consonantal sign. This principle is followed only in the case of கா, கி, கு, கூ. It is curious to note that ஒ, ஓ, ஔ having two vowel allographs each and that they also stand split in the order of syllabic letters. Reform loving persons want to rectify this anomaly by adopting only one allograph for each phoneme and placing it after it.

6. The present trend of some modern writers is to use aytam a kind of fricative phonema to represent foreign phonemes like 't'. Therefore you find new forms of words such as: ஃபைல், ஃபுளு, ஃபேன், ஃபின்லண்ட், ஃபில், ஃபைலேசியா in newspapers, advertisements etc.

7. A revolutionary view of the script reform needs mentioning as the last item. According to this, Tamil will have only 28 phonemes and 23 graphemes.

short vowels	long vowels	consonants
அ	அஅ	கஙசஞடண
இ	இஇ	தநபமயர
உ	உஉ	லவழளறன
எ	எஎ	
ஓ	ஓஓ	

அண்ணாஅஅம்அல்அய்ப் ப்அல்க்அல்அய்க் க்அழ்அக்அம்  
ம்ஒழ்இய்இய்அல் த்உறஅய்ப் ப்அண் இக்அள் வ்அள்அர்க்அ

(அண்ணாமலைப் பல்கலைக்கழகம் மொழியியல் துறைப்பணிகள்  
வளர்க)

It is held that there is no need to have separate scripts for long vowels since the doubling of the signs of the short vowels themselves will serve the purpose. Then 23 scripts may be used to write the 28 phonemes. This number will be very handy in composing and typing. The complete elimination of separate allographs in the combination of Uyirmei and the juxtaposition of vowel symbols after the consonantal signs are two important principles involved in this view. Though this view seems to be very radical and revolutionary it is not new to us who are familiar with English.

In the foregoing pages I have given the several views put forth by different schools in the matter of script reform from time to time. I request you not to identify me with them. To say plainly, I am not subscribing to many of them since they do not take into consideration the genius of the Tamil language, its historical development and its sound pattern.

For any change, in so far as Tamil script is concerned, the following points need deep consideration.

**Points for Consideration:**

1. The scripts of Tamil have been historically and basically divided into three classes, as vowel, consonant and vowel consonant. This is evident from the earliest extant Tamil grammar, *Tolkappiyam* and the grammatical works of later period. This is part of the nature of Tamil scripts. Beschi points out this nature thus. “The Tamilians do not, after the excellent plan of Europeans, place the vowel after the consonants to form syllables, but of the consonant and vowel united they form a third figure”.

b. Linguists have praised Tamil for its having graphemes for each and every phoneme. This fundamental relation should be maintained.

c. In English and other Western languages spelling and pronunciation are two different aspects. Tamil has no such distinction. What we spell we pronounce. What we pronounce we spell. This character should not be altered. The use of *aytam* to represent English ‘f’ phoneme strikes at the root of this basic principle.

d. There should be no difference in the scripts between typing and printing on the one hand and writing on the other. Tamil scripts should be common to both as at present.

e. When compared with other cultivated Dravidian languages and Indo-Aryan languages, Tamil has not many

phonemes in the consonantal series. There are no voiced sounds, aspirates and sibilants in Tamil.

f. Similarity as well as dissimilarity are a part of nature and beauty. There is no harm in the attempt to bring unanimity wherever possible. To think that there should be no dissimilarity and that all dissimilarities should be removed may be logical but unnatural and unpracticable. Not only in phonology but in morphology and syntax also every language disclose dissimilar features.

g. It was possible for Beschi in the 17th century to introduce few changes in the vowel scripts when the printing was just on the field. For the past two hundred years we have published many of the Tamil works that were once in the palmyra leaves. Now change of scripts makes them sealed books even to the educated. The following is the warning of Professor T.P. Meenakshisundaram. “Any remedy will be only worse than the disease, because there is the great danger of making the handful of our literates in Tamil, illiterate by introducing revolutionary changes. It is this overpowering consideration that stands on the threshold of our enquiry preventing the acceptance of the Roman alphabet”. We know that Vidutalai, a Tamil Daily, is persistently and consistently using  $\omega$  sign for all consonants and that Swadesamitran, another well known daily sincerely brought out some editions with new scripts but of no use. Any reform movement in Tamil scripts has not so far attracted the scholars and the public for many reasons well known to all.



It should not be misunderstood when I say that no script change in Tamil is necessary that I am not for it. What I feel is that after the numberless productions and publications for the last one hundred years, any artificial change in script will do more harm than good to the normal growth of Tamil and will result in the extinction of a large number of printed books, for want of reprint in the new scripts they come into use. This fear looms large in many a mind. If any script reform unconsciously creeps in, I hope we may welcome it.

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## 5. AN INTRODUCTION TO THE STUDY OF TOLKAPPIYAM

*Tolkappiyam*, the earliest work now extant in Tamil, is generally assigned to about the third century B.C. It deserves a comparative and comprehensive study at the international level of research by eminent scholars here and abroad, in view of its treatment of universal themes like love and war, government and society, married life and renunciation, language and literature, and culture, and civilisation of a people living in the southern part of India whose hoary past has been accepted by historians. A Tamil work *Purapporul Venpamalai* embalms the oral tradition that the heroic Tamil race was born on the peaks of mountains when the rest of the land was still immersed in the ocean waters. It is to be observed that Tamil alone is reputed as the international Indian language spoken in different Asian countries with the status of one of the State languages. The time is also now ripe for starting international pursuit of research study of *Tolkappiyam* since we have already held three World Tamil Conferences and the Government of Tamil Nadu with the aid of the UNESCO has founded the International Institute of Tamil Studies.

*Tolkappiyam* from its birth has greatly influenced Tamil literature and grammar throughout the ages. It has to its credit many commentaries written in different periods by erudite scholars well-versed also in Sanskrit. But for these commentaries, survival of this old work against the odd vicissitudes which caused the loss of hundreds of works in the middle ages would be doubtful. Therefore any study of *Tolkappiyam* cannot but include the glosses thereon. It is gratifying to note that *Tolkappiyam* which was unfortunately a sealed book for Western Orientalists for centuries is now rapidly gaining ground at least in the field of linguistics.

Researchers on *Tolkappiyam* must, at the outset, give up the wrong notion hitherto held that it is a grammatical treatise and that its main concern only the Tamil language and its various phenomena such as phonemes and phonology, morphemes and morphology and syntax. No doubt it is a work on grammar. But grammar of what sort? Nowadays the word 'grammar' has often a very restrictive sense and sometimes a degrading sense too. One who enters into the portals of *Tolkappiyam* must realise the varied and vast subjects treated in it directly and indirectly. Only this realisation will throw new light and open new vistas for the furtherance of research about this work.

*Tolkappiyam* in its first two parts systematically brings out the phonetic, phonemic, morphemic and syntactical nature of the Tamil language. But more than that, even these two parts abound in interesting and pointed references to the customs and manners of the Tamil people and the Tamil Nadu.

Proper names, names of measures, names of fauna and flora etc. are profuse in the aphorisms. Social impact has pervaded the first two parts also. No language can be divorced from society as its very existence depends upon the social intercourse of the community. Linguists are expected to understand this mode of treatment adopted by Tolkappiyar even in the field of language. So far, no attempt has been made to discover the unique methods employed by this author in writing his magnum opus. We are content with simply applying modern methods to the study of this ancient work while analysing the production of articulate sounds. It is customary for writers on linguistics to arrange phonemes from the labials to the velars. Tolkappiyam in the third chapter Pirappiyal enumerates consonants beginning from the 'k' stop which is produced by the complete closure of the soft palate. This natural order of sounds is worth noting.

The third part of *Tolkappiyam* is entitled *Porulathikaram*. The work 'porul' has several meanings. The appropriate meaning in this connection will be subject matter of theme of compositions. In Akam chapters, principles evolved from love literature technically called Akam are minutely described. What scholars have missed is to bring out into prominence the universal and independent approach of Tolkappiyar to sexual love with no historical colour. The anonymity of the characters in the drama of Akam is an unassailable evidence to prove its universal outlook. The unqualified declaration that, notwithstanding their social and economic status, all should receive equal treatment in Akam literature in the matter of purity of love is noteworthy.

The *Puram* chapter has not been taken up so far for serious consideration. I accept that the art of war portrayed in *Tolkappiyam* is a thing of the remote past. But this portrayal is only secondary. The purport of *puram* is not to describe the actual activities going on in the war front but to unearth and reveal the energetic human tendencies leading one always to entertain mistrust, provocation and hostility. According to Tolkappiyar's analysis, power struggle for the establishment of one's supremacy over others by all means and at all costs is the eternal motive for waging war. This mentality is termed as 'tumpai'. It should be remembered that importance is not given in *Tolkappiyam* to wars undertaken to annex the land of belligerent states and thus enlarge one's own domain.

In *vetchi* theme of *Puram* chapter, protection to civilian people and innocent livestock is emphasised as the first duty of the aggressor before resorting to actual fighting. In *Kanchi* theme, seeds for religion and spiritualism are sown by pointing out the horrors of war, mass annihilation of human lives and devastation of individual and national properties and by exhorting some people to do service to the community at large. In *Vakai* theme, the competitive spirit in all walks of life, like education, administration, business, profession, sports and pastimes is activated by rousing one's eagerness to win fame, reward and recognition before the public. It will be clearly seen from the 'cuttirams' of *Vakaittipai* that *Puram* subjects are varied and related to all strata of society. The last theme 'patan' asserts that *Puram* division does not confine its treatment to political conflicts and war campaigns but holds under its purview treatment of social and national services

an individual could render according to one's capacity. The readers will be convinced now that a work treating of such subjects, as referred to above, should not be called a mere grammar book in the ordinary sense of the word.

In the third part there is a chapter Ceyyuliyal wherein lies an ocean of information about Tamil culture and civilisation and Tamil literature. This is the largest and greatest among the 27 chapters in Tolkappiyam but it is also the least studied one. Scholars have turned a blind eye to this section as its study requires sufficient equipment in several disciplines. In order to draw the attention of the pandits to this valuable but untraversed section, a lover of Tolkappiyam announced an award of one thousand rupees for those who were able to identify the correct readings of two cuttirams relating to alliterations and rhymes.

What is meant by Ceyyul? *Tolkappiyam*, as the Prologue puts it, has treated all themes on two fundamental grounds - Usage (valakku) and composition (ceyyul). By usage we mean the practice which was in vogue at the time of the author. Composition means any form composed with literary merit with a view to preserving something. It need not necessarily be in writing; it may be in speech also, as is evident from the inclusion of proverb as one of the compositions in Tolkappiyam. Be it in writing or in oral form, anything concise and poetical and couched in the choicest words is a composition. Cey means to cultivate. Land reclaimed for ploughing is called cey in Tamil. In chapter Verrumai Iyal under Part II, a composition is beautifully defined as 'terintu molic ceyil'.

This chapter has given expression to the existence in olden times of seven kinds of composition in poetry or in prose or in ordinary speech. It mentions 34 constituents making up compositions. To study each of these will involve a laborious but fruitful research. As it needs a detailed study of the three commentaries now available on this section and a comparative study of the later works on prosody like Yapparunkalam together with a flood of literature, this chapter along will claim life-long devotion from an ardent student.

I should like to conclude that vastness of subjects, orderly and analytical treatment, social background universal outlook, principles of composition, relation between forms and contents, are some of the guidelines to be borne in mind while framing schemes for the study of Tolkappiyam.

## **6. A PHONOLOGICAL STUDY OF TOLKAPPIYAM**

1. Tolkappiyam is the earliest Tamil grammar. Its age is generally placed in the third Century B.C. All the available literature now are only of the post Tolkappiyam period. No work contemporaneous with Tolkappiyam has reached us. It is calculated that there must be an interval of two centuries between the age of Tolkappiyam and that of Sangam classics. Tolkappiyam, though very ancient, has come down to us more or less intact. It has been studied by scholars at all times. To understand the principles of Aham and Puram, the well known classification of literature in Tamil, we have still to rely on this treatise. In the thirteenth century which may be styled as the “Renaissance of Grammar”, there appeared a flood of commentaries on this monumental work, to make it easy to understand. New grammatical works also emerged, based on Tolkappiyam.

2. From the beginning of the twentieth century, Tolkappiyam is being studied by scholars in different branches both in India and abroad. There is immense scope in this ancient work for research in the fields of Sociology, Anthropology, History, Economics, Psychology, Philosophy,



Military Science, Politics and Linguistics. That Tolkappiyam has become popular is evident from the publication of critical dissertations and explanatory books on it by many writers. It is heartening to note, that even students of Tamil studying in high schools, apart from under-graduates and graduates and research students, know something about the greatness and contents of this book of their ancestors. Translations of Tolkappiyam as a whole or in parts are also forthcoming, Like Tirukkural, I Hope Tolkappiyam too will be translated in many world languages so that scholars will find it a repository of valuable material for the study of the successive and continuous thought-current of the human race. The more ancient a book is, more is the value of its material for research.

3. Linguistics is the latest addition to the domain of science. Language is subjected now to scientific treatment. Philologists of nineteenth century did research in language on hypothetical basis in unknown regions. They concentrated their attention mainly on the origin of language and the relation between the word and its meaning. But, linguists of modern thought try to unravel the exact nature of a language synchronically at first. Synchronic linguistics or Descriptive linguistics has become the order of the day. For Linguistic scholars, Tolkappiyam is an infallible guide. Though old, fortunatel, it deals with a language which is still alive and growing. It has really described the features of the utterance of the speech-community of its times and also brought out the grammatical core of the language. For the study of phylogeny or historical linguistics also, we may derive a good deal of help from Tolkappiyam.

4. Tolkappiyam has three parts. The first part called Eluttatikaram deals with all features of phonetics such as phonemes, allophones, phonemic structure, phonetic symbols, phonemic symbols, morpho-phonemics, alternations, juncture, phonetic changes and canonical forms. The second part called Collatikaram explains all features of morphology and syntax, free morphemes, bound morphemes, substitutes, derivatives, compounds, morphological processes, inflection, syntactical constructions, congruence etc., The third and last part called Porulatikaram, bigger than the other two parts combined, treats elaborately of the culture of the Tamils in regard to love, heroism, philosophy, customs and manners, various kinds of literature, prosody etc., Though the third part does not deal directly with any linguistics aspect, it offers a good deal of material for linguistic analysis, being a repository of a lot of morphemes and morphological and syntactical constructions. The growth of any language in modern times is artificial and it is by leaps and bounds. It is nurtured by rapid means of communication. Its quick development may be compared to the yield in land supplied with artificial manure. The impact of modern culture on any pattern of language in these days cannot be easily conceived by us. Only future linguists can ascertain the mode of changes correctly. But in the days of Tolkappiyam the language grew naturally, steadily and peacefully. Nothing was done specially and rapidly for this sake of language. Therefore the description of Tamil as found in Tolkappiyam may be accepted as true for all times.

5. In this paper I shall confine myself to the phonemic analysis of Tamil as represented in this ancient work Panamparanar in his Preface to Tolkappiyam eulogises the author as one who has elicited the phonemic features with no disorder (“mayanka marapin eluthu muraikatti”). This gives us encouragement to hold Tolkappiyam as an authoritative and authentic treatise in the field of phonetic study. True to this praise, Tolkappiyam commences with the enumeration of thirty phonemes in Tamil. That they are along phonemes and no more is emphatically said in the beginning of the sentence “eluttenap patuva”. The next Suttiram enumerates three more, Kurriyalikaram, Kurriyalukaram and Aytam and they are called phoneme-like, ‘eluttoranna’. This means that these three have not the value of a phoneme; but only the semblance of it. What is meant by this is that they have no phonemic value and they are only non-distinctive sounds. They have no independent articulation. For their expression they are dependent on the sequence of phonemes either in a morpheme or in a word or in syntax “carntu varal marapu”. Linguists call these three as allophones in modern terminology. Really these three are problematic. There are thirty phonemes in Tamil. Are we going to say that only three have allophones and all the other twentyseven phonemes have none? Of the three, two namely Kurriyalikaram and Kurriyalukaram belong to the category of the vowels. Aytam is said to be the allophone representing the three phonemes l, j and v. It may be noted that the so called three allophones are diminutive in quantity as clearly revealed in the descriptive nomenclature given to them.

6. According to quantity or mattirai Tamil phonemes may be classified as threefold, vowel phonemes (7) having two mattirai; vowel phonemes (5) having one mattirai and consonantal phonemes (18) having half mattirai each. This classification is based on the Suttirams 3, 4, 11 in Tolkappiyam. All these thirty phonemes are distinctive and are called base or primary sounds. There is no phoneme or distinctive element of sound in Tamil having three mattirais. It does not mean that we should not employ three mattirais in Tamil. What the author wishes to point out is that it has no phonemic value and it has also no single symbol. These aspects of a sound having three mattirais and more are brought out in the following two continuous Suttirams.

“Muvala picaittal orelut tinre” (Tol: 5)

“Nittam vēntin avvaja putaiya

kūtti elūtal enmanar pulavar” (Tol: 6)

This kind of lengthening of quantity in vowels is called Alapetai. To indicate the lengthening usually signs of short vowels will be placed along with the signs of long vowels. In like manner, dots are employed by Tolkappiyar as diacritical marks to denote only diminution of mattirai. The placing of a dot on the word miya or natiyatu will show that there is only a phonetic change but of no phonemic value. In this connection a note of explanation is necessary in regard to the symbol of aytam. It is traditionally held by Tamil Scholars that aytam will have three dots like the three heads of a hearth or like the mathematical symbol ... for the word ‘therefore’. The phrase “mupparpulli” in the second suttiram has misled

scholars to hold the above view. “mupparappulli” does not denote Aytam alone. It denotes all the three ‘phoneme-like’ in that suttiram. The new discovery by me that Aytam too will have only one dot is clear from the following suttiram which describes its occurrences in the sequence of phonemes.

“Kuriyatan munnar aytap pulli  
uyirotu punarnta vallaran micaitte” (Tol. 38)

Aytappulli, the dot representing in writing for Aytam will come after a short vowel and before a stop. While pointing out this occurrence the author has used the finite singular verb “micaitta”. If more that one dot should represent Aytam, the finite verb ought to be in plural as ‘micaya’

7. The first International Conference of Tamil Studies now at Kula Lumpur must evolve a scientific transcription of Tamil Phonemes to be adopted by all Dravidologist in future as the International Phonetic Association did in 1912. I have so far explained that Tolkappiyar has employed phonemic transcriptions and phonetic transcriptions. Now we are using more or less phonetic signs used in Tamil Lexicon of the University of Madras. Certain changes in symbols are being made by individual writers sporadically to suit typing and composing. Any use of linguistic symbols should reflect to a great extent the true phonemic nature of a language. To indicate long Vowel phonemic geminates or diagraphs like paari, Aaytam have come in vogue. The phonemic system will not allow the juxta-position of two vowel without any prevention of hiatus as in Fox. The sequence of vowels within a morph or word is phonemically impossible. The insertion

of a semi-vowel when two vowels occur as in *Avan, Aval, Ayan* is necessary. The method of doubling the ordinary symbol of short vowel phoneme to indicate the long one will be misconstrued that Tamil has no long vowel phonemes. Moreover we use the regular symbol of short vowels in *Alapetai* with no prevention of hiatus. This absence will show that the geminates have no phonemic value.

The use of *Aytam* by some modern writers needs careful study. *Aytam* has no independent production. In writing the name of the country “France”, *Aytam* commences the word. It is elevated as a phoneme and as an initial contrast. I hope this conference will pay some attention to the enunciation of a uniform policy in regard to symbols and use of Tamil phonemes.

8. Modern Linguists have defined vowel as a sound for whose production the oral passage is unobstructed. Conversely, consonant is a sound for the production of which the air current is occluded in the oral passage at various levels and degrees. This physiological definition is understood by *Tolkappiyar*. The terms *Uyir* (vowels) and *Mei* (Consonant) have been philosophically interpreted by many commentators and scholars. They expound that *Uyir* like the soul has an independent movement and *Mei* a metaphorical and not linguistic interpretation. Tamil grammarians have always taken both *Uyir* and *Mei* as primary sounds, ‘*mutal eluttu*’. No inferiority in phonemic value is assigned to the consonants. When *Tolkappiyar* says that the twelve vowels will be produced by the air expelled from the throat (“*mitarrup piranta valiyin icaikkum*”) he has definitely known the

unobstructed production of vowels. The terms Mei and Orru reveal on the face of them that consonants will be produced by the touch of various organs in the mouth cavity. This is evidenced by the use of verbal participle 'Orra'. According to Tolkappiyam suttiram 86 there is some tinge of touch even in the birth of certain vowels like i, i, e, e, ai ("Mutal na vilimpural utaiya") Therefore in the first general suttiram of Chapter Pirappiyal (production of phonemes), he has mentioned the touch of organs "uruppurru amaiya" as a feature common to vowels and consonant. This is a point to be considered by phoneticians.

9. Tolkappiyar sets apart two thirds of the first part for the study of morpho-phonemics. Rules in relation to phonemically conditioned alternations and morphemically conditioned alternations are framed. That the phonetic change will be such, if such and such phoneme is followed by such and such phoneme, is brought out systematically in the order of phonemes. The rules relating to phonemically conditioned alternations have uniform application. In regard to the morphemes 'se' 'puji' 'ekin' etc. special rules are framed to bring out their semantic aspects. If 'puji' means a kind of tree, the syntactical construction will be pujiyankotu, puliyampalam. If 'puji' means acidity the construction will be pujinkari, puliccaru. It is said by Bloch and Trager that juncture phenomena have as yet been little studied. In two suttirams this Tamil grammarian speaks of not only the feature of juncture in sequence of phonemes but also their breaking up to know the meaning of the speaker.

10. The study of the principles of modern linguistics enables us to understand the scientific treatment of Tolkappiyam. It also makes us realize that the ancient Tamil grammarian has left nothing unsaid in the description of the features of Tamil, phonetically, phonemically, morphologically, syntactically, and last but not the least semantically. The study of Tolkappiyam by scholars of linguistics will, in my humble opinion, lead to the discovery of new features of language yet to be studied. Tolkappiyam will certainly help and not deter the development of linguistic science.



## **7. PSYCHOLOGICAL APPROACH TO TAMIL SYNTAX**

1. In modern linguistics, the study of the various features relating to syntax, like sentence-types and relation between syntax and semantics has not yet been seriously taken up. Linguistics are now deeply interested in the analysis of phonetics and morphology. The sentence alone is the organic and living form of a language. For the sake of research-study we dissect it into morphemes, and again into phonemes. The importance of the formation of sentences had been well realised by Tamil grammarians. In almost all grammatical rules in *Eluttatikaram* and *Collatikaram*, this aspect is revealed. From this point of view Tamil grammar should be examined.

2. Language is a human instrument. Anything related to human beings cannot be divorced from the study of psychology. Language is the medium of communication in the society, and emotion is the background and impulse of all utterances. Changes, developments and commissions and omissions in a language are the result of the ever-changing process of the human mind. Grammatical works at first try

to lay down a uniform rule for every linguistic feature, but exceptions are growing in abundance. And these exceptions become part of the general rule in course of time and new exceptions spring up. Linguistic developments cannot be arrested as the source for these developments, i.e., the mind is always changing and changeable.

3. How the mind has influenced many exceptional rules which are called 'Valuvamaiti' (வழுவமைதி) by Tamil grammarians, will be illustrated in this article. In the structure of a Tamil sentence seven kinds of congruence are expected: 1. class, 2. gender, 3. person, 4. tense, 5. question, 6. answer and 7. convention.

Tinaiya palitam polutu vinavirai  
marapam elum maya im valuve (Nan. 375)

The violation of concord is condoned, when it is actuated by love, passion, happiness, eulogy, emotions etc. When one comes across a snake, he cries 'snake, snake'. This is called a sentence of repetition (அடுக்குத்தொடர்). There is no predicate in the sentence. Language does not require a full sentence when the emotion is high. But there is also a limit to this repetition in haste or in fear.

'viraicol atukke munru varapakum' (Tol. 907)

Sometimes in a mood of joy or pleasure, recurrence of a word four times is also allowed. What is the reason for allowing repetition thrice in the cast of fear, and extending it to four times in the case of joy? A frightened man cries because he needs some one's help to kill the snake. He cannot

speak continuously and his utterance will be abrupt. If he goes on repeating the word 'snake' many times, the word will become devoid of emotion, and will lose reaction in the hearer, as in the story of a boy who frequently cried "Tiger, Tiger". In case of joy, no feeling will interrupt his speech. Joy is of a personal nature. Without a hearer one may express one's feeling or ecstasy.

4. In Bhapters kilaviyakkam and Ecchaviyal of Tolkappiyam and Potuviyal of Nannul, condonation of grammatical errors in sentences is elaborately dealt with. Nouns of high class (உயர்நினை) and nouns of non-high class (அஃறினை) should be governed by the finite verbs of the same class, This is the general rule.

vinayir tonrum palari kilaviyum  
peyarin tonrum palari kilaviyum  
mayankal kuta tammera pinava (Tol. 494)

Cut even poets of high repute like Thiruvalluvar, Ilanko, and Kampar purposely transgress ordinary grammatical rules, in order to identify themselves with the feelings of the characters. In the example "Away ran John", the adverbial expression commences the sentence. Upsetting of the normal structure is one of the devices adopted for the purpose of emphatic expression.

“தம்முடைய தண்ணளியும் தாமும்தம் மான்தேரும்  
எம்மை நினையாது விட்டாரோ விட்டகல்க”  
(சிலப் : கானல்வரி)

“தனிமையும் தானுமத் தையலும் ஆயினான் ”

(இராம. பால. மிதிலை)

The finite verbs ‘vittaro; and ayinan’ have become the predicates of different classes, genders and numbers. To bring home the oneness of lovers, the poets have employed one predicate at the expense of grammar.

evavum ceykalan tanteran avvuyir  
poom alavumor noy (Kural 848)

Tiruvalluvar says that he who has neither the capacity of doing things on command, nor the power of understanding by himself is an anathema till his death. He despises the existence of such a person, and his contempt is revealed by the expression ‘அவ்வயிர்’ Avvaiyar also uses similar contemptuous expression about the rich people who leave this world having never done charity. ‘ஈயாது வீயும் உயிர்தவப்பலவே’ (புறம். 235)

uvappinum uyarvinum cirappinum ceralinum  
ilippinum paltinai ilukkinum iyalpe (Nan. 379)

In this suttiram, feelings of diversity and contrast are pointed out for the violation of rules, The author, it should be noted, does not think that such transgressions are exceptional, but considers them as natural or conventional. ‘இழுக்கினும் இயல்பே’

## **8. THE PRESENT TENSE MARKER “A:NINRU”**

Historical sense is necessary not only for the entire language but also for individual words for the correct exposition of literature and grammar. The earliest commentators of Tolkappiyam have amply shown their historical awareness in interpreting the *suttirams* of Tolkappiyam in many places. In the Introductory verse it is said by Panamparanar that Tamilnadu had Venkatam and Kumari as its northern and southern boundaries respectively. About this reference, Ilampuranar historically explains that the mention of Kumari as the southern limit was necessitated because of the existence of other countries beyond that southern limit in the days of Tolkappiyar. Yet I may be permitted to say that there are many shortcomings in the commentaries disclosing their lack of historical perspective due to the preponderant influence of their Age.

We undoubtedly know that “a:ninru” the present tense sign came into vogue after the Cankam period though it preceded kinru and kiru the other two suffixes. In spite of its later origin all the commentators have given unna:ninran.

unna:ninra:l, unna:ninra:r, etc. as examples for all the finite verbs of the present tense in Tolkappiyam [S. 488-492]. Deivaccilaiyar, in addition to the use of a:ninru, has instanced unkiruranan, etc. with kinru tense sign. To give examples with a:ninru and kinru for the expression of present tense in Tolkappiyam is against the historical fact. This anachronism is also noted by Dr. Israel in his research work 'The Treatment of Morphology in Tolkappiyam' [p. 231]

### Use of a:ninru

The sign a:ninru is the earliest of the three present tense suffixes of the Middle Ages. It is interesting to find this chronological order adopted in suttiram 'a:nintu Kinru Kiru mu:vitattin' [142] by Pavanantiyar.

Turaivan turantamai turrakol munkai  
Irai irava:ninra valai (kural: 1157)

For the first time in the domain of Tamil liereature Thirkkural uses a:ninra in the relative participle. Whether it is used in the present tense or the preterite is a matter of interpretation. It may mean bracelets which are loosening or which loosened. Whether it is right to hold here that the particle denoting time sense is a:ninra is also a matter for consideration.

Colla:ta:l colla:la ninra:l annankaikku  
colla:tum colla:tum ta:n (Cilap. XVIII)

In the finite verb 'colla:ta: ninra:l', we may presume that a:ninru is made use of. Again I doubt about its tense and form. Atiyarkkunallar, the commentator of Cilappaikaram has

not taken Colla:ta:ninra:l as one phrase and finited verb. According to him, Colla:ta: is a verbal participle of Ceyya: pattern, meaning ‘having said’ and ninra:l as a participial noun meaning ‘she who stood’. This has another reading as colla:ta:l ninra:l in which case it is clear that there is no possibility of the use of a:ninru here.

### Special features

The past tense markers t t r and in and the future tense markers p and v are by themselves bound morphemes. They do not show any grammatical forms, They are allomorphs. But in the case of the three present tense markers, a:ninru and kinru bear the forms of verbal participle, Kinru and kiru are allomorphs. a:ninru has no relation with the other two. They have no complementary distribution. They occur in all verbs. The presence of r an allomorph of t expressing past time in these three signs is a problem. We know that a:ninru is now used only poetically and that too rarely. It is not used in spoken language. I doubt whether it was ever used in common speech. These peculiarities should be borne in mind in the study of the above three present tense markers. However, in this paper I shall confine myself to bring out the grammatical and linguistic nuances of a:ninru since its origin and disuse need a detailed scrutiny.

### Semblance of a:ninru

‘nikalu:u ninra pa:Ivarai kilavi’ is a line occurring in Tol. S. 658. Here Hampuranar and Senavaraiyar say ‘nikalu:u ninra’ means nikala: r:inra, pointing out a semblance of a:ninru. This shows their presumption that u: ending may be changed into

a: ending. According to Deivaccilaiyar, nikalu:u ninra is a relative participle. All the commentators think alike that nikaly:u ninra denotes present time, even though ninra the second component of the phrase usually expresses past tense, like cenra, konra, venra. Thus we happily come across a probable clue in the commentaries of Tolkappiyam for the beginning stage of the so called a:ninru. But it should be clearly understood that these commentators never said that a:ninru is the present tense-denoting particle, Though there are references to tense signs in his work. Tolkappiyar has not enumerated these signs as he did in the case of detailing and analysing the tense signs goes first to Senavaraiyar and subsequently to Naccinarkkiniyar among the commentators of Tolkappiyam. It will be rewarding to make a special investigation of these parts in these commentaries to get a historical background for the development of tense markers.

### **nil and a:ninru**

It is the view of Senavaraiyar that unna:ninra:n should be split as unna : + nil + r + a:n and that nil signifies present time. Naccinarkkiniyar also agrees with him. Whether these commentators hold nil as the tense suffix like the suffixes of other tenses or as a verb itself needs further investigation. Anyhow it may be presumed that splitting up unna:ninra:n into un+a:ninru+an will not be agreeable to them.

Puttamittranar, the author of Viracoliyam who is credited with the adoption of a new method in the segmentation of the components of a word holds a:ninra as the pratyayam of present tense. Pavanantiyar, a later



grammarians who is generally opposed to Puttamittiranar in many respects, has I think, unconsciously followed him in mentioning a ninru, kinru and kiru as present tense particles.

Let us now closely examine the present tense verbs like va:ra:ninr:n. po:ka:ninra:n. I think va:ra:nil and po:ka:nil should be taken as the verbal bases. Of course va:na:nil consists of two verbs like eluntiru and patutiru. the first member being the main verb and second the auxiliary one. As Senavaraiyar rightly pointed out, nil is a suitable verb for denoting present time.

neri nira:r ni:tu va:lva:r	[kural: 7]
va:ninru ulakam valanki	[do 11]
ninra oliyo:tu olukappatum	[do 698]
ninratu mannavan ko : l	[do 543]

In these instances 'nil' neither indicates the physical posture of standing nor past time. The verbal theme irrespective of the time markers that followed, will suffice to bring out the sense of continuity of an action. The significance of present time will in no way be affected even if it is followed by r the supposed past tense marker like ninra, ninru. Caldwell himself has admitted that the use of d the ordinary sign of the preperiter in all the dialects was not originally restricted to that tense so absolutely as it is now (Dravidian Comparative Grammar, p. 491). Tamil grammarians call the occurrence of some sounds like t,r between the root and the ending as eluttuppe:ru (sound occurrence) thereby meaning that they have no time value.

**ceyya : pattern**

Having explained the position of ‘nil’ in the forms like va:ra:ninra:n, po:ka:ninra:n, I now proceed to expound the first part i.e., va:ra:, po:ka:. My view is that va:ra: is a verbal participle of Ceyya: pattern (Tol. 223). There are more than 16 kinds of verbal participles. Their difference in meaning and structure is subtle and minute. Ceyya: is mentioned as one of the four past verbal participles and it should be used to denote a simultaneous action.

mukaipurai viralin kappi:r tutaiya:	[puram. 144]
nilam kilaiya na:ni ninro:l	[Akam. 16]
meyve:l pariya: nakum	[kural 774]
I:lam oruka:l mitiya: Varume:	[Muttoi. 26]
makkalai mun ka:na: manam	
natunka : veytuyira :	[Nala. 390]

In these quotations tutaiya:, kilaiya:, pariya: etc. the actions denoted by ceyya: verbal participles and the actions followed are occurring at the same time. This special feature is made mention of in senavaraiyar’s commentary. He equates Ceyya: verbal participle with Ceyyu : [col.228]

Viracoliyam does not say that a: is a part of ceyya: verbal participle. But it adds some more points for our consideration. According to it, a: is not a part of a:niru. It is a separate particle without whose addition ninru cannot function. It further explains that though poka:ninra:n appears to be juxtaposition of two verbs, it should not be considered as tvantam, since po: the first verb alone has a doer and ninra:n does the function of pratiyayam. It is gratifying to note that

Viraccoliyam also finds out inseparable action in the instances po:ka:ninra:n, unna:viruna:n. unna:kitanta:g [S. 74]. It is the view of Dr. Caldwell that a: was a representative a:gi [Dravidian comparative Grammar, p. 192]. Thus here two points are clear: [1] a: is not an integral part of a :ninru [2] po:ka:ninra:n implies simultaneous action.

The Tamil grammarians of Middle Ages have found it easy to say that a:ninru is the particle of present tense because of its uniform occurrence in the formation of compounds like va:ra:ninra:n/ po:ka:ninra:n and cella:ninra:n. They do not realize that this kind of segmentation does not reveal the genuine origin of the compound. They also do not realize that a:ninru the grammatical form of past verbal participle is not suitable for being a particle in consonance with the suffixes of past and future tenses. The main points I should like to emphasize in this paper are that [1] po:ka:ninra:n has to be traced to ceyya: verbal participle [2] a: is a part of this particle signifying simultaneity and [3] 'nil' is a verb expressing present time.

### **disuse of a:ninru**

Even now we say Va:ra:mal nirkira:n po:ka:mal nirkira:n But the use of old forms va:ra:ninra:n po:ka ninra:n in the present tense have been completely dropped in poetry as well as in elegant prose writing. The reason for it is simple and understandable. With the passage of time their usage came to connote negative sense. The old Ceyya: verbal affirmative participle gave way to its counterpart -- negative verbal participle.

**Substitute**

As pointed out before, Ceyya: pattern had a subtle meaning. It served the purpose of expressing a simultaneous action in a sentence. The form of expression may come and go; but the content certainly needs another form, should the earlier one fall into disuse. What is the present form which has taken the place of Ceyya?

- a) kanni:r tutaiya: aluta:l - Kanni:r tutaittukkonde:  
aluta:l
- b) viral kilaiya: ninra:l - viral kilaittukkonde: ninra:l
- c) o:ta: varum - o: tikkonde: varum
- d) natava: patikkum - natantukkonde: patikkum

The meaning conveyed by one word Ceyya: in the ancient days is now expressed by the pattern ceytukonde: though of course in uneconomical and peripheral way. Grammarians who generally know the historical linguistic process of a living language will not regret the loss or change in it. They will take it as the manifestation of a growing language.

## 9. LITERARY HERITAGE OF THE TAMILS FROM B.C. TO 1000 A.D.

There is no need to discuss the antiquity of Tamil literature. That Tamil literature is as old as and as rich as Greek, Sanskrit and Chinese literature is a proven fact. Even the pessimists who question fixing the beginnings of Tamil literature in the pre-historic times are not willing to assign its date to the post-Christian era.

*Sources:* What is the exact date of the origin of Tamil literature even in the pre-Christian era? Is it possible to say anything exact in this matter? What are the works belonging to that period that are still available? What are the sources which may be relied upon for writing a history of ancient Tamil literature? At first these questions may appear as insoluble for those who view age long traditions and literary evidences as fictitious and unreliable. It is not wise to reject these sources as totally unfounded: for, other sources such as inscriptional references and authentic written records are developments only in the historical period. Therefore there is no escape for historians except to depend upon oral traditions and literary references. Of course, I agree with those

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Paper presented at the seminar on "Literary Heritage of the Tamils" arranged by the International Institute of Tamil Studies on 25-2-1978.

who suggest that these sources should not be taken as such and they may be accepted only after very careful investigation. It should be noted that there are some traditions which are still orally transmitted from generation to generation with variations and there are others which had the good fortune of being written down in black and white centuries ago, thereby giving no room for variation. Whether a tradition is oral or written, the historian should consider the spirit underlying it.

*Earliest Works:* The Tamils may be said to be very fortunate and lucky in having Tolkappiam and Cankam classics which are the extant old Tamil literature truly representing the bulk of ancient Tamil works lost for ever. Tolkappiam whose age is generally placed in the 5th century B.C. gives us a lot of information for tracing the heritage of the Tamils. This treatise, though old, should not be misconstrued as the first composition in Tamil. Comparatively speaking, it is the latest one in the order of ancient Tamil works. Tolkappiam being a grammatical work, must necessarily have been preceded by a wealth of literary and poetical composition for the codification of Akam and Puram principles. It should be remembered that Tolkappiam is not also the first grammatical work in Tamil. The prologue by Panamparanar points out that Tolkappiyar studied previous works in grammar (முந்தையநூல் கண்டு) in order to make his writing perfect and precise. The word 'nūl' denoted work on grammar in the age of Tolkappiyar. As there was a number of grammatical treatises, Panamparanar refers to them in general. About the ancient Tamil works, P.T. Srinivasa Iyengar in his "History of

the Tamils-from the earliest times to 600 A.D.” remarks: “Numerous poets must have flourished before the age of Agattiyandar; for he could not have composed a grammar of literary Tamil and its literature without having previously studied innumerable poems. But the existence of these poets is not even hinted at by the commentator on Iraiyanar Agapporul.” (p. 233)

Any casual reader of Tolkappiyam will easily understand that this work would not be the outcome of the literary growth of a few centuries in a language and that the pattern and plan, method and mode adopted by Tolkappiyar reflect the time-honoured tradition held in the various schools of thought. It is wrong to hold, as some do that there were only two kinds of literature Akam and Puram in ancient days. Ceyyuliyal, the best and biggest in Tolkappiyam provides us with ample material for constructing the history of Tamil literature before the 5th century B.C. In pre-Tolkappiyam period, there were epics, minor literature, devotional hymns, folklore, proverbs, prose etc. The kinds of literature as revealed in Ceyyuliyal are more than 30, It is no exaggeration to say that the kinds of Tamil literature we come across in the medieval and modern periods were mostly in existence in pre-Tolkappiyam age also, perhaps with some difference. There is a saying that history repeats itself. Why should we not coin another saying that literature repeats itself?

*Legend and Truth:* The commentary on Iraiyanar Akapporul has embedded the tradition of founding of three Tamil Cankams, giving in detail the duration and venue of each Cankam, the number of poets, the number of patrons, the

works, etc. There is no doubt that this contains historical and quasi-historical truths. However, it is the duty of the historians to find out the element of truth in the legend and make use of it profitably. Dr. K.K. Pillai in his voluminous work “A social history of the Tamils” aptly states: “On the whole the legend, as it appears in any of the versions available at present, is unacceptable to the student of history. Nevertheless, the entire tradition concerning the Academy could not have arisen normally without any basis. Secondly certain kings and poets mentioned in the traditional accounts, figure in more than one classic in the Sangam Age which fact strengthens the historicity of these personalities. Perhaps fact and fiction have not mixed up in the various versions now available to us.” (p. 98) Writers on Tamil or Indian history should adopt the spirit evinced by Dr. K.K. Pillai in the interpretation of traditional accounts in India.

*First Millennium B.C.:* The commentary totals 9990 years as the duration of the three Tamil Academies. It is natural for a historian to consider them as false figures. Yet we have to ponder over some points in the origin, growth and development of a literature. Today writing has become professional and commercial. Thanks to the printing press and new developments in modern societies books are manufactured at great speed in large numbers like goods. In the distant far off days writing was a normal but slow process. For hundreds of years the society remained unchanged and unaffected. The pace and degree of transition was, if any, invisible. A stretch of 10000 years in olden days could not have witnessed so many tremendous and astounding changes which we find in a small period of two or three decades of



our time. This difference should be taken into account when we attempt to write the literary histories of earlier days.

To produce grammatical treatises like *Tolkappiyam* and the previous works on which it was based and the huge literary works which were the sources for these works, a long period of hundreds of thousands of years was normally required. These basic works could not have been produced in quick succession. In the light of this explanation, we should view the long duration of the three *Cankams* as the period of the orderly growth of ancient Tamil literature. One millennium is not too long for the history of a classical language like Tamil. Therefore I may not be wrong in concluding that the humble and ordinary beginnings of the Tamil literature may be traced prior to ten thousand years before Christ.

*The Age of Tolkappiyam:* According to the plan of the Seminar my paper should cover the longest period of the history of Tamil literature—from B.C. to 1000 A.D. It will be insipid and ineffective if my paper catalogues the names of the poets and gives a summary of the contents of their works as in a text book or students' notes. You will certainly not expect a paper of that sort in this research-oriented seminar. Therefore I wish to restrict myself the presentation of the distinctive literary trends and norms that may be singled out as belonging to the period under investigation.

*Tolkappiyam*, one of the greatest works that the world has every produced is the oldest extant treatise in Tamil. Its solitary survival against old vicissitudes is a wonder. Books literary and grammatical prior to it were completely lost. No works have reached us for three centuries subsequent to

Tolkappiyam. We notice a big interregnum between Tolkappiyam and the Cankam literature. The influence of Tolkappiyam is felt on all the periods of Tamil literary history in various degrees. Earlier a work, greater is its impact.

Tolkappiyar consciously or unconsciously gave unusual importance to two kinds of literature Akam and Puram as if there were no other forms of literature in Tamil. In his Ceyyuliyal references are to be found to 30 kinds of compositions only with outline. Unlike them, Akam and Puram are elaborately treated in several chapters. This predilection on the part of Tolkappiyar resulted, I presume, in the loss of old treasures of Tamil and in the new compositions of the so called Cankam classics. Because of the aristocratic influence of Tolkappiyam, scholars were obsessed by it and they let the other works dealing with the subjects other than Akam and Puram go into oblivion unnoticed and unhonoured. This may one of the powerful factors for the ancient works being forgotten.

Poets in the post-Tolkappiyam period who revered Tolkappiyam as a beacon light followed its codes faithfully and as a rule, treated mainly the twin themes Tolkappiyar was fond of. Tolkappiyam was definitely against the composition of a long treatise and the method of weaving the Akam incidents into a long web in the epic form. Because of this principle. Cankam poets were inclined to compose unconnected and isolated poems in the post-Tolkappiyam era. Tolkappiyar is not blameable for this trend. It is the scholars' love of Tolkappiyam and the new line of thinking born of that love that limited the progress of the literary activities.

### **The Age of Cankam Classics:**

In the footsteps of Tolkappiyam, Cankam celebrities vied with each other to compose single and individual poems on Akam and Puram themes. They treated the Akam themes with universal outlook on the background of the fauna and flora of Tamil country. They were realists and naturalists. They wanted to train the youth in sexual discipline. Abnormal, abominable and obscene themes were purposely avoided by them in the description of love.

Cankam poets are not of a revolutionary type. They approached every problem with humanism. They were pious and theistic. Yet Gods and Devas were not allowed to take part in the love affairs and war activities of the people. That they had sound historical sense is evident from the innumerable references to political events of the day. Patirrupattu is a work on history of the Cheras written in literary style.

Most of the Cankam poems were composed in Akaval metre, the simplest of all verses. In pre-Tolkappiyam age, Kali metre seems to be more prominent. To compose Kali is very difficult since it needs some kind of melody in its structure. Therefore Cankam poets who were brought up in the democratic and social way of thinking adopted simple and short Akaval verse so that the common people could understand them easily.

We are now in the making of a new world. Our vision is to treat the world as a household and the entire humanity as a family. We are anxious to obliterate unnecessary differences

and distinctions among the people. To achieve this noble aim, Cankam classics which are free from any kind of dominations will be of immense help to the modernists. I hope the world thinkers will acknowledge the Cankam classics as the classics of the new world and make use of them for achieving their triple objectives of socialism, equality and liberty. It is the duty of the Tamils also to make strenuous efforts for the spread of Cankam works by translating them into every language of the world.

*The Age of Tirukkural:* The later development of Tamil literature after the Christian era, needs to be studied from one important point, i.e. the inevitable and inescapable impact of three fundamental works, Tolkappiyam, Cankam classics and Tirukkural.

In the history of Tamil, Tolkappiyam is the first big work consisting of 1610 suttirams and composed by a single author. The second big work with 1330 couplets written by an individual author is Tirukkural. We know the Cankam classics which arose in between these two big works are only collections of isolated poems composed by more than 400 poets.

Tiruvalluvar who is also a follower of Tolkappiyam made a new approach to Ceyyuliyal and gave a concrete shape to some of the ideas contained in that chapter in Tolkappiyam.

Annilai marunkin aram mutalakiya

Mummutar porutkum uriya enpa (Tol. 1363)

This suttiram captured his mind and he produced Tirukkural, the greatest of ethical literature for the benefit of the world at large. The Cankam poets treated mostly of Akam themes, giving only the second place to Puram subject. Tiruvalluvar has given equal importance to both subjects cherished by Tolkappiyar. Like Cankam poets he also adopted a simple and small kural verse in his immortal work in order to make it easily understandable to the people.

*The Age of Cilappatikaram:* The third biggest work in old Tamil is Cilappatikaram. It is also an embodiment of the ideas of the earlier three great works. In writing this magnus opus, Ilanko was greatly influenced by all the chapters of Porulatikaram in Tolkappiyam. Cilappatikaram may be credited as a true literary Tamil epic incorporating all the literary canons codified by Tolkappiyar. For the right interpretations of Suttirams in Tolkappiyam, a comprehensive and minute study of this epic is indispensable.

It should be admitted that Cilappatikaram, inspite of its high literary values, faultless structure and employment of diverse verses has not exercised much influence on the Tamil epics of later days. The reason is that the epoch of true and pure Tamil civilisation, culture, political institutions, educational methods, subjects of study and the like came to an end in the fourth century A.D. Cilappatikaram may be said to be the last product of this era. Therefore it is no wonder that it failed to influence the epics of the Middle Ages which were subjected to foreign influences born of different religions and sects, myths and legends and new dynasties of kings.

*The Age of Tamilised Epics:* Cintamani, Perunkatai, Culamani and Ramayanam have not their roots in Tamilnadu. They are adopted Kavyas from Sanskrit. The exposition and propagation of religions and their gods through literary medium are the chief objectives of these works. In the true Tamil epoch, characters in literature are not described as belonging to any faith. Religions did not play the least role in the ancient literature proper. But on the second epic period, heroes and heroines and other minor characters are shown as the devoted followers of certain religious faiths by birth. This significant difference between the Tamil literature that came into existence after the 4th century A.D. and the Tamil literature existing before that century should be borne in mind when we study the circumstances which are responsible for the many-sided developments in Tamil History.

## 10. THE WORLDLINESS OF TIRUKKURAL

It is my duty to welcome the delegates representing all the National languages of India for their interest in the study of Tirukkural and its propagation throughout the length and breadth of India.

The Annamalai University is one of the three centres of Tirukkural studies which came into existence as a result of the Second World Tamil Conference. As the Head of the Department of Tamil of the Annamalai University, it is my duty to place in brief before this scholarly audience the work the Annamalai University is doing in the field of Tirukkural Research. The big five Kappiyams and the five small Kappiyams have quoted Tirukkural in the various situations of the epics. In quoting Tirukkural, the authors of these Tamil Epics have given new interpretations and explanations to many a couplet of Tirukkural. Therefore, the poetical works in Tamil which followed Tirukkural may be estimated as commentaries in verse on Tirukkural. We have collected the ideas and the contribution of the authors of these works to the study of

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President address in the second session of the All India Seminar on Tirukkural organised by the university of Madras in 1972.

Tirukkural by way of new interpretations and expositions to hundreds of Kurals in verse form.

The Annamalai University has also prepared a subject index of Tirukkural. Though Tirukkural has 133 chapters on 133 different subjects a subject is not confined to one particular chapter alone. For instance, to know the concept of virtue (அறம்) God (இறை) Bliss (இன்பம்) Wisdom (அறிவு) Love (காதல்) we have to make a comparative and detailed study of the various chapters in all the three sections. I am happy to note that the two works 'Tirukkural and Ten Kappiyams' and 'the subject Index of Tirukkural' will be released shortly.

To the delegates and the participants in the Seminar, I have to say a few words regarding translations of and commentaries on Tirukkural. In Tamil there are nearly 20 commentaries and still Tamil scholars are anxious to bring out more commentaries according to their tastes and inclinations. It is only in English that we have more translations of Tirukkural both in prose and in poetry. After the achievement of the independence of India, in the name of National integration, classical works of every Indian language are being translated into the other languages of India. I mention all this to stress one point. Are we really reading in these works, the ideas of the commentators and translators or the ideas of Tiruvalluvar? in my humble opinion, these commentaries etc. have misled and are still misleading not only the people of Tamil Nadu but also the readers of other States and countries who regard there works of translation as



faithful to the original. The Seminar of All India character of this type, will, I hope, take note of this warning in the propagation of Tirukkural the systematic, scientific and moral work the world has ever produced.

Speakers on Tirukkural usually compare it with Vedas. Githa, Koran, Bible etc. Basically this is a wrong approach. Tirukkural is called 'Tamil Vedam' or 'Uthara Vedam'. The word 'Vedam' should not be added to Tirukkural as the word has more or less the sense of religion. Tirukkural should be regarded as a work whose aim is to make the people live with all prosperity in this world. As Dr. Albert Schweitzer in his 'Indian thought and its Development' emphasised, its main accent is on life affirmation. When we compare Tirukkural with the scriptures of various religions we are doing a disservice to Tiruvalluvar himself by not giving importance to his worldly approach to the human welfare. His orderly treatment of politics in about 70 chapters and love in 25 chapters will suffice for a clear understanding of his main difference from the prophets and their teachings. It should be noted that unlike the founders and prophets of religions, Tiruvalluvar had no followers and he neither instituted any organisation nor headed any movement to spread and enforce his teachings;

I trust the Tirukkural Seminar will try at first to understand the real nature of Tirukkural and its individuality from other great works of the world, by giving unqualified prominence to the happy life of the people and to the order of society in this world.

## **11. RELIGIOUS APPRAOCH TO TIRUKKURAL**

Tirukkural is acclaimed as one of the greatest ethical works in the world. It has been translated into many classical and modern languages. This is the only book in Tamil known to the international community for the past two hundred years. Recently its popularity is on the increase in the national and international forums. In Tamil Nadu, Tirukkural, since its birth in the 2nd century A.D. has greatly influenced the literary world. It has been profusely quoted in all kinds of Tamil literature. There is no poet or scholar or speaker who is not indebted to Tirukkural for his beautiful expression and noble thoughts. It is no exaggeration to say that any Tamil work which has not borrowed something from Tirukkural will not receive the imprimatur of the Tamil people. It has become customary for a critic on any literary work in Tamil to point out the occurrence of words or ideas or similes of Tirukkural in that work in order to being out the scholarship of the author. Tirukkural has many commentaries and expositions to its credit. Even now new interpretation is pouring over several couplets. The establishment of three Tirukkural Chairs in three Universities of Tamil Nadu at the time of the Second

World Tamil Conference in 1968 accelerated the study of this great work in different aspects. The installation of statue for Tiruvalluvar, not only in important places in Tamil Nadu but at Delhi, the capital of India, shows his growing popularity all over the country. It is worth mentioning that Tirukkural from the days of its composition has captured the minds of the different denominations of the world at large without any special movements or organisations for its propagation.

The fact that the world is giving due and deserved recognition to Tirukkural, an encyclopaedia on all aspects of morality, is no doubt a good thing to be welcomed; but at the same time whether the true and distinct merit of Tirukkural is rightly understood, I am sorry to state, is very much doubtful. Its basic structure and unique treatment of morals were hardly comprehended by the commentators of the middle ages and writers of the present day. It is very unfortunate that in the enthusiastic attempt to heighten the greatness of this work, scholars have not only failed to know its fundamental difference in the selection and arrangement of morals and in their application in life from other works of this kind but also misguided the public by attributing to it other notions to be found in other treatises. In my book 'Valluvam' written in Tamil in 1953 an attempt was made for the first time to point out the wrong conceptions traditionally held in respect of Tirukkural and to show how it should be interpreted and studied. It is gratifying to note that even though scholars are not prepared to give up the age long ideas, they have not come forward to question my views.

Tirukkural is not a collection of unconnected maxims. Well planned and arranged, it was composed by a single author with a purpose. All things relating to the individuals, the society and the Government have been systematically treated from the angle of human life. Spiritual aspects are not excluded but the stress is on spotless character and good conduct while living in this world. Valluvar is a theist. A citizen who is a devoted patriot of this country need not be a member of any political party. Similarly Thiruvalluvar is a pious worshipper of the Almighty without belonging to any religion. He is neither a preacher nor a prophet. His book is not a scripture of religious nature. It is his wish that men and women should lead a married life, enjoy conjugal pleasures, beget children, do household duties, earn money, serve the society, be good citizens of the country, practise detachment in life, worship God and so on. In 25 chapters of the third section he speaks of the enjoyment of sexual congress between faithful lovers. A book dealing with the physical and mental aspects of love will not be regarded as scripture of holy book. The second section of Tirukkural is really a political science. The first section enumerates the kinds of morals to be followed by every individual. Among 133 chapters the first chapters alone is devoted to the description of Godship. All the rest are concerned with the mundane and spiritual life of the human being as an individual and a member of the society and the State.

The subjects spoken of in 133 chapters and the author's approach to them bring home to our mind that the dominant note in Tirukkural is a happy, pleasant and prosperous life in

this world with all good qualities and character. His book is out and out a treatise dealing with the behaviour of the human beings during their life time. No chapter has the subject of any religion within its fold. It is not its intention to refer to religions and their philosophical tenets, and point out the commonness in their doctrines. The author has nowhere attempted to effect a compromise between religions by saying that all religions should be treated as equal and good, as we do at present. Truly speaking in the days of Tiruvalluvar, religions had not exerted any significant influence on the individuals, society or Government. In the second section on Politics there is no reference to the religion to which the king and the subjects belong. Therefore I hold that to name Tirukkural as (பொதுமறை) common Veda or Bible thereby attributing religious background to it is not wholly acceptable. Because of the faulty approach we failed to understand the worldly background on which this great book is based.

Tiruvalluvamalai, a garland of poems on the greatness of Tiruvalluvar, frequently compares Tirukkural with the four Vedas of Sanskrit and speaks highly of Valluvar for his ingenuity in explaining the four purushatas under three heads- virtue politics and pleasure (4, 8, 15, 19, 23, 24, 33, 37, 42, 43).

ஒன்றே பொருளென்னின் வேறென்ப வேறென்னின்  
அன்றென்ப ஆறு சமயத்தார்-நன்றென்ன  
எப்பா லவரும் இயைபவே வள்ளுவனார்  
முப்பால் மொழிந்த மொழி (தி. மாலை.9)

Kallatanar says that the followers of the six religions who always differ with one another on the doctrine of

Godhead will accept unanimously the religious concept put forth by valluvar. This statement clearly shows that Tirukkural was considered as a religious work, acceptable to the various sects which were at loggerheads.

தேவர் குறளும் திருநான் மறைமுடிவும்  
 மூவர் தமிழும் முனிமொழியும்--கோவை  
 திருவா சகமும் திருமூலர் சொல்லும்  
 ஒருவா சகமென் றுணர் (நல்வழி. 10)

In this stanza of Avvaiyar who is supposed to have lived in the 12th century, Tirukkural is placed in the series of Saiva canonical literature.

What I wish to emphasise is that the religious approach to Tirukkural is fundamentally wrong, since religion is not at all its theme. The scholars of the middle ages, when religions and religious feuds were the order of the day, were ignorant of the milieu of the earlier age which gave birth to Tirukkural. Instead of rejecting the wrong expositions coming down from the middle period, we are still following their footsteps and giving the unjust title (பொதுமறை) 'common veda' to Tirukkural. No argument is necessary for the statement that all mixims and morals will naturally be common to humanity. Ethical works are different from religious scriptures. Once this distinction is understood we will not commit again the same mistake our forefathers did in respect of Tirukkural whose main theme is the ordinary and orderly life of the people in this world. The highest virtue one should practise is purity of mind, the fountain head of all activities of a man or a woman in any walk of life. The line 'வையத்துள்

வாழ்வாங்கு வாழ்பவன்' (a man who lives as he ought to live in this world) is a clear proof of the view that Tirukkural stresses on the ways and modes a man should adopt during his life time here. Therefore to give Tirukkural the greatest ethical literature any religious colour and to call it பொதுமறை needs to be discontinued. It is the highest moral work in Tamil written by a great thinker to be read and followed by men and women in this world.

## **12. TAMIL LITERATURE AND PHYSICAL EDUCATION**

After Independence we are very anxious to preserve our ancient culture and institutions and try to fit them in with modern developments. In every field we have a history and it is not improper to probe into our past and give our old methods a new life. In those days no physical education was imparted to the youth separately as a subject. Physical exercise was part and parcel of the daily life of all people. Women did many things needed for home like husking, winnowing, pounding etc., and men also did several kinds of manual labour like gardening, ploughing, hunting, mountaineering, swimming etc. As there were no cheap transport facilities as at present, walking to any place at any distance say 20 or 25 miles was undertaken with pleasure and ease. Military training was more or less compulsory for adults even in villages. Every youth was expected to go to war if called for. The weapons used in war demanded strong limbs. Above all, girls loved only those who possessed physical stamina and proved to be heroes in the battle field. In the land of pasture called Mullai there was a custom named “subduing of bulls” in the community of shepherds. Youths who conquered the

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Speech delivered at the Valedictory Function of the N.D.S. Re-orientation course conducted by the Alagappa College of Physical Education. Karaikudi 1967.



fierce bulls could conquer the hearts of the lovely maidens. A girl tells her friends that she will not consent to be married to a lad who fears the sharp horn of the bull, not merely in this birth but in any birth. We know that Desdemona loved Othello, the Moor, for his valiant acts. She loved him for the dangers he had passed through with courage. Poets never fail to describe the good physique of the heroes of their poems. The folded muscle of the masculine shoulder is likened in Tamil literature to the round shape of the pot. Compare the tendency of the present day when University diplomas have become the passport of love passage. Educated persons are in demand in the field of marriage. Mostly many of them are lean, fragile and feeble. The value of physical exercise goes down as academic education grows. A man without luggage is waiting for a bus in the evening, to go even a short distance through the distance may be covered by a pleasant walk. In ancient days all attached much value to manual labour. Their limbs were strong and beautiful. The saint poet Tirumular who lived in the 10th century has sung thus emphatically, "if the body becomes weak the soul also becomes weak and it is not possible to achieve self-realisation. I understood the rules of maintaining the health and developed not only my body but also my soul". Shakespeare advises that "health is the vital principal bliss". Juvenal the satirist, prays for a sound mind in a sound body. The first thing we should do nowadays is to bring home to the people of all ages the value of a robust constitution as fundamental of the art of life.

The body is the supreme machine and all the machines invented by human beings are only secondary and

complementary to our body. Constant and regular exercise is now more necessary than ever, when people become machine-minded. Many educated persons prefer only office work under the non-stopping fan. Like adult education in the academic side, adult education in the subject relating to the body may be introduced.

I understand that one of the aims of the National Discipline Scheme is to revive indigenous physical activities. It is a good and laudable effort. I hope that anyone who is interested in this scheme may travel throughout India, visit the nook and corner of the remotest villages, collect information about the kinds of dances, games and sports, both indoor and outdoor and publish them with colourful pictures and details. The collection of this kind will not only be a personal pleasure but a real contribution to the development of physical education. It will also lead one to know the cultural heritage of our motherland and preserve them and pass them on to our posterity.

## 13. THE AGE OF TOLKAPPIYAM

1. To find out the age of Tolkappiyam does not appear to me to be so knotty a problem as many scholars think, if we are able to confine ourselves to certain infallible methods of research and unquestionable evidences, A school of thought has fixed its age at five thousand years B.C., as its upper limit; another school holds its age as the second half of the fifth century A.D. as its lower limit. Antiquity or proximity itself does not enhance or bring down the value of a book. To suppose that the more ancient a treatise is, the higher will be its value is a wrong notion. Even if we accept the supposition of the lower limit i.e., 5th century A.D. ascribed to Tolkappiyam it bespeaks its greatness.

2. In this short article it is not possible to discuss the various and different views on the subject in detail. My views regarding the period of Tolkappiyam will be presented in a nutshell. All writers on this question have fundamentally erred in one aspect. They unnecessarily brought into play evidences and comparison from Sanskrit works like Panini's Ashtadhyayi, Patajali's Maha Bhashya, Bharata's Natya Sastra and Vatsyayana's Kama Sutra. In making this comparative study, the scholars who hold Tolkappiyam as the work of Post-

Sangam period have invariably taken for granted that these Sanskrit works are anterior to Tolkappiyam. Similarly of ideas alone cannot stand as concrete evidence. Therefore, in the discussion of the date of Tolkappiyam the comparative study of common ideas should not be given more weight than it deserves.

3. In the Preface (Payiram) to Tolkappiyam the line “Aintiram niraita Tolkappiyam” has been subjected to severe criticism. Whether Aintiram (ஐந்திறம்) is a book on grammar or religion is not yet settled, If it were a book, whether its language is Sanskrit or Tamil is to be studied further. I doubt whether Aintiram stands for a literary composition at all. The verb ‘nirainta’ (நிறைந்த) is supposed to mean “well-versed.” This meaning is not ordinarily acceptable. In the Preface, the President of the Academy, Atankottasan is praised to have been well versed in the four vedas as in the line “nanmarai murriya” (நான்மறை முற்றிய). To denote intensive study, the verb ‘murriya’ is employed. If it were as Aintiram murriya or Aintiram payinra, the meaning will be clear. The verb followed by Aintiram in the Preface is ‘nirainta’ meaning “full of”. In Tolkappiyam (Suttirams 42 and 44) this verb is found to be used in this sense. To Quote a line which still needs clarity as evidence is not proper; I therefore desire to exclude Panamparanar’s Preface from my study.

4. In the chapter on Prosody (Seyyul), Tolkappiyar says that he is dealing with the metrical forms that are prevalent within the four directions of Tamil Nadu ruled by three kings - “வண்புகழ் மூவர் தண்பொழில் வரைப்பு”. This historical allusion should be carefully examined. The historians of South

India will know that, thanks to the Kalpras interregnum in the 3rd century A.D., the whole Tamilakam was in chaos and that afterwards there was no period when these three Tamil Kingdoms flourished simultaneously. In Middle ages there was the great empire of the Cholas and sometime the great empire of the Pandyas. But the kingdom of the cheras lost its entity and individuality. Therefore the reference in Tolkappiyam to the three Tamil kingdoms in glowing terms clearly indicates their existence before 2nd Century A.D. In the chapter on Purathinai also Tolkappiyam makes mention of the royal flowers of these three monarchs.

5. In the chapter on Akattinai, it is pointed out that love theme is entitled to be sung in only two form of prosody Kali and Paripattu. Thus rule enables us undoubtedly to fix the age of Tolkappiyam prior to the existing Sangam works. Kalittokai and Paripatal which are included in Eight Anthologies are not accepted by many scholars as true Sangam works. Barring these two, all the other six anthologies contain poems of true Sangam Age. Of these six there are four Akam anthologies Ainkurunuru, Kuruntokai, Narrinai and Akananuru, having 1700 love poems. All of them are in Akaval metre. In Pattuppattu also there are four love poems of great length in Akaval meter. Should Tolkappiyar have lived after 2nd Century A.D. or after the birth of these anthologies, he would have certainly given due importance to the Akaval metre for the treatment of love theme. Therefore it may be inferred that Tolkappiyam had its birth before any of the Akam poems of the Sangam age found in the anthologies.

6. There is a view, acceptable to a certain extent, that some poems posterior to the Sangam Age have found a place in these Anthologies. But everybody will accept that Kapilar, Nakkirar and Auvvaiyar really belong to the Sangam age i.e. 2nd Century A.D.

1. “சகடம் பண்டம் பெரிது பெய்தன்றே”  
-புறம் 102-ஒளவையார்
2. “ஏற்றுவலன் உயரிய எரிமருள் அவிர்சடை”  
-புறம் 59 - நக்கீரர்
3. “முன்புதுரந்து சமம் தாங்கவும்”  
-புறம் 14 - கபிலர்
4. “பொன்னைத் திகிரி முன் சமத்து உருட்டி”  
-புறம் 362 - மார்க்கண்டேயர்
5. “சந்து நீவிப் புன் முடிந்திடுமின்”  
- மலைபடு - 393
6. “பஞ்சாய்க் கோரை பல்லிற்சவட்டி”  
- பெரும்பாண் - 217

In all these lines sung by true Sangam poets, ஸ has occurred initially in a word. If Tolkappiyar had lived after these poets these occurrences could not have escaped his notice. He would have certainly postulated rules for the use of ஸ as the initial sound commencing a word. Instead he has definitely mentioned ஸ will not occur initially. This is an unassailable evidence that Tolkappiyam came into being before the existing Sangam stanzas. Likewise there is a large number of grammatical differences between Tolkappiyam and Sangam poems by which we may safely conclude that these linguistic differences developed later on, after Tolkappiyam.

For many rules in Tolkappiyam, the existing Sangam works offer no illustrations and for many new developments in Sangam poems, Tolkappiyam has laid down no rules. This may be convincingly explained if we place Tolkappiyam in the age prior to the Sangam literature.

From this short study, I have proved that Tolkappiyam precedes all the existing Sangam works whose date is assigned to the second century A.D. This is its lower limit. Regarding its upper limit very critical study is necessary, lest it become mere guess and conjecture. I therefore confine myself now to the remark that Tolkappiyam is the oldest of all Tamil works we fortunately possess.

## **14. SOME THOUGHTS ON PALLAVA HISTORY**

Thanks to the sincere and strenuous efforts of great scholars. European and Indian, for a century and over, we have today a good and detailed account of the History of the Pallavas of Kanchi. The Pallava dynasty was the first foreign dynasty which, after the glorious Tamil Sangam age, penetrated into the northern frontiers of Tamil Nadu and established a long and peaceful sway over it. Nayanmars and Alvars who spread Saivism and Vaishnavism respectively at the expense of Buddhism and Jainism, flourished in this period. The Pallavas were the pioneers of the Cholas and others in various cultural activities of a permanent nature. Because of its location in the northern part of the Tamil land, the Pallava Kingdom had political contacts with the Pandyas in the extreme south and with the Chalukyas of Badami and the Rashtrakutas of Malkhed in the Deccan. The Pallava sovereigns encouraged Sanskrit study, patronized Sanskrit poets and followed the Aryan thoughts and ideals in politics and religion. Mahendravarman I (615-630 A.D.) was the greatest of the Pallava monarchs. He was an original thinker and a versatile scholar. His idea of changing the material for temple building from brick to stone opened new vistas for



the rapid and charming growth of art and architecture in Tamilakam. His change of faith from Jainism to Saivism was a landmark in the religious annals of South India. All these features were thoroughly brought to light by a minute study of different sources-epigraphy, monument, numismatics and literature.

Notwithstanding such continuous and ardent penetration into the subject, a student of Pallava history still needs clarification and elucidation of many aspects. One of them is about the builder of the Adivaraha temple at Mallallapuram. Who was its excavator, Simhavishnu, the father of Mahendravarman, or Mahendravarman himself? This monograph purports to answer the question, after examining all doubtful points.

Several historians held the view that the cave at Mandakappattu was the first of its kind excavated by Mahendravarman. Father Heras says emphatically that “the Mandakappattu cave is undoubtedly the first cave carved by Mahendravarman, and incidentally the first cave temple ever carved in the Tamil Nadu, after the specimens seen in the valley of Krishna. (Studies in Pallava History, p-80). This view is based on the inscription found in the cave itself. The English translation of it runs as follows :- ‘This is the temple caused to be constructed by the (king) Vichitra chitta a title of Mahendravarman) for Brahma, Isvara and Vishnu, without bricks, without timber, without metals and without mortar.’ In spite of this inscription whose interpretation is, in my opinion, totally wrong, the earliest origin attributed to Mandakappattu cave is hardly acceptable.

It is a fact accepted by all substantiated on many grounds that the cave temple at Sittannavasal was excavated by Mahendravarman I. In the early period of his reign, he was a staunch Jain. He supported the jains of Pataluputra a renowned Jaina seat of learning in the seventh century A.D, and acting on their advice, persecuted Appar for his desertion of Jainism and conversion to Saivism. In fine, we see Mahendravarman too being proselytised to Saiva religion by Saint Appar and the Jain monastery being demolished by the preselyte. The Periyapuranam narrates that the Pallava monarch built a temple to Siva at Tiruvadhikai out of the materials of the Jaina monastery. From these circumstances one may easily conclude that the Jaina cave at Sittannavasal came into existence before Mahendravarman became a zealot of Saivism. It was characteristic of this Pallava king to throw himself heart and soul into his religion. When he was a Jain he was pleased to dedicate the first rock-cut cave for Tirthankaras and decorate the entire cave with colourful pictures. He also graced the cave by allowing his figure and that of his queen to be portrayed on one of its pillars. As it was the first creation of his architectural genius, Mahendravarman, even after his conversion, left the Jaina cave with all its beauty intact; otherwise it would have received the same fate as the monastery of Pataliputra. This shows Mahendravarman's love of art transcending his faith. The first cave hewn out of rock, at the instance of the Pallava king, without brick, timber and mortar must certainly be the Sittannavasal cave.

Let us revert to the Mandakappttu cave. This cave was consecrated to the Hindu trinity by Mahendravarman. He might have done so only after he embraced Saivism. Even then I do not hold the Mandakappttu cave as the first temple built by the king. It is natural to expect a convert to make his first dedication to the Supreme God of his new faith. I am of opinion that the first cave built by Mahendravarman after his conversion to Saivism, was the one at Tiruchirapally. It was dedicated by him to Siva. One of the verses engraved in this temple refers to his conversion to Siva religion and his worship of Linga. The Tamil scholar, historian Mayilai Seeni Venkatasamy opines on inscriptional evidence that the figure of Mahendravarman once existed by the side of Linga in that cave Mahendravarman (P. 53 P.55). When in later days he developed catholicity for all sects of Hinduism, temples for other gods of the Hindu pantheon, i.e. Vishnu and Brahma, were built by him. In the light of the above explanation we have to interpret the stone inscription at Mandakappattu. We know that Mahendravarman built and dedicated several cave temples dispensing with brick, timber and mortar, to Siva and Vishnu separately, but only one to the trinity in common and that is at Mandakappattu. The emphasis in the inscription is not on the kind of the material of building but on the nature of dedication. The wording of the inscription clearly conveys this idea.

Now it is time for us to take the question about the builder of the Adivaraha cave at Mamallapuram. Its construction was attributed to Simhavishnu. If it were true, the honour for introducing stone building and rock carving

would then go to Simha Vishnu. All historians agree in the view that Mahendravarman was the pioneer of this new system in Tamil Nadu. Unless Adivaraha temple is said to have been built by Mahendravarman, this view cannot hold good. I agree with the statement of Reverend Heras that Mahendravarman was the builder of the Adivaraha Temple. It was built by the king. I think, in memory of his father Simhavishnu whom the Udayendiram plates of Nandivarman II praise as “Bhakti Aradhita Vishnu Simhavishnu.” In this temple there are two carvings, one representing Simhavishnu with his consorts and the other Mahendravarman with his consorts. The difference in the posture of these figures unfortunately escaped the notice of the research workers. Simhavishnu is sitting on a pedestal, his wives standing on each side of him. This posture means that Simhavishnu was deified. On the other hand Mahendravarman is in a standing position. His wives are also standing behind him. This posture means that they are alive at the time of its construction. Moreover, Mahendravarman is represented as pointing his finger towards his father. The implication of this gesture is that the cave-temple is mainly constructed as a memorial of Simhavishnu. Another point to be noticed in this connection is the painted bust of Mahendravarman on the pillar of the Jaina cave at Sittannavasal. In this figure he is shown along with only one wife. But in the Adivaraha temple, Mahendravarman stands along with two wives. How are we to reconcile this position? One may also notice the youthfulness in the face of Mahendravarman’s figure at Sittannavasal as against his figure at Mamallapuram which shows his being older. These sculptural evidences lead us to decide that Sittannavasal cave

was excavated by Mahendravarman when he was young and had only one wife and that the Adivaraha temple came into existence long after he embraced Saivism and was advanced in age.

## **15. THE CHETTIAR COMMUNITY - ITS CONTRIBUTION TO RELIGION**

Tolkappiyar the ancient Tamil Socialist has prophetically said that merchants are next in rank to kings in society. It is a historical fact that the cultural and religious institutions of Tamil Nadu would have been starved but for the incessant patronage of Nattukottai Chettiar community called “Thana Vanikar”, after the fall of the great Cholas and the pious Nayakas. The perfect maintenance of the sacred monuments in the Tamil country and the gradual spread of Saivism in the Far East are the chief contribution of this community to the preservation and development of Hinduism. This contribution is still going on and will be ever going on.

Religious charity is the inborn characteristic of the Chettiar family. Whenever a business was started, a Chettiar would set apart a certain amount as fund in the name of the Almighty. There would be a separate account for the fund and a separate business also would be started out of this fund in order to multiply it. It is no exaggeration to say that a Chettiar

is as much interested in the business conducted in the name of God as in his own business. His religious ambition is always broad and to put into practice his big scheme, a large fund is needed. He has therefore to do this two-fold business simultaneously. This is evident from the earliest inscriptional records called “Nakarattar Arappattayankal” edited by me with the help of Thiru K.PL.S.PL. Subramaniam Chettiar of Nerkuppai. The oldest record belonging to the 16th century gives a detailed account of a devoted Chettiar Kumarappa, a salt trader, his allotment of a certain percentage of income in the name of Velayuthaswami of Palani as “makamai”, his salt business for God and for himself etc.

The contribution of the Chettiar community to Hinduism is varied and manifold. The big and small temples and kopurams built by the several dynasties of different periods were renovated by the Chettiars all over the country. New temples were also erected by them wherever necessary. Nakarattar temples of nine divisions are also magnificent structures. In every Nakarattar village one will find huge temples with many-sided activities. Anything needed for the temple service invariably attracts the attention of the Chettiars. Flowers and milk are two important things for worship in temple from morning till night. Freshness and purity cannot be assured if we purchase them. Therefore Nanthavanams (flower gardens) and Pasumadams (Cow-houses) are maintained by the Chettiars in the vicinity of the temples at great expense with good care. Patasalais for Vedas and Thevarams are conducted as a part of temple administration in order to chant and sing hymns during daily

worship. In every temple there are nathaswaram players and drum beaters. For all the employees, there are free quarters around the temple. Temples under the management of the Chettiar are self-sufficient in every respect.

It should be clearly borne in mind that temple renovation, temple construction, building of employees quarters and maintenance of other connected things were done by the chettiar from their own funds, individually or collectively. No government support had ever been sought. No supervisor was appointed to look after these constructions. The Chettiar would camp at the site and pay his personal attention to all matters, leaving his business in the hands of an agent. To make his construction permanent is always a Chettiar's cherished aim.

It may be humbly estimated that the religious contribution of the Chettiar community, in Tamil Nadu, in other parts of India and overseas countries like Burma, Ceylon, Malaya, Saigon would be more than Rupees fifty crores. In spite of this sincere and systematic service, the Chettiar community has never thought of fame and name. One can hardly find any inscription or any statue of the Chettiar-donor in the temples. self-effacement is the highest lesson of religion. The attainment of salvation lies not in earning a name but in doing one's duty simply and selflessly. The sacrifice of the Chettiar community reveals their realisation of this essential doctrine of religion.



## **16. THE ANCIENT HISTROY OF THE NAGARATTARS (FROM B.C. 2898 TO A.D. 1800)**

### **PART I (B.C. 2898 - A.D. 1565)**

The first part of this article attempts to give a short account of the origin, spread and settlements of the Nagarattar or Nattukottai Chettiar community from the earliest times upto A.D. 1565. As the inscription of Poonkonrai Velankudi also known as Cundakkadu Velankudi in Ramanathapuram District which is the main and authentic record for writing this history covers the period mentioned above, this chapter confines itself to that period for the present. This inscription of great significance no doubt contains many a reference to the religious life of the Nagarattars and their social customs and manners. As these aspects need elaborate treatment separately this chapter intends only to summarise, analyse and explain the historical portions of it. The exact date of the inscription is yet to be studied on grounds of palaeography and linguistics; but considering the fact that the inscription gives the events only upto A.D. 1565, its date may be roughly fixed in and around the 16th century.

**Four periods :**

The history of the Nagarattar may be conveniently divided into four parts:

**1. Prehistoric age :**

upto B.C. 2898; Santiyapuri of Naganadu in Campuddivu  
- The original home.

**2. Ancient period**

B. C 2897 to B.C. 790 (2107 years); Emigration from Santiyapuri to Kancheepuram in Tondai Mandalam.

**3. Early period :**

B.C. 789 to A.D. 706 (1495 years); Emigration from Tondaimandalam to Kaviripoompattinam, Cholanadu.

**4. Middle period :**

A.D. 707 to A.D. 1565 (858 years); Emigration from Cholanadu to Pandianadu.

1. Pre-historic age upto B.C. 2898-Santiyapuri of Naganadu - the home of Nagarattar.

***History :***

The beginning of the Velankudi inscription says that the Vaisiyas of lunar gotra lived originally in the city of Santiyapuri of Naganadu in Campuddivu in the sea-girt world. They got the darsan of Gopatheesvaraswami, received dikshi from Sadasiva Peetam. worshipped Vinayaga made of emerald, dealt in precious stones and lived a wealthy and prosperous

life. They received royal presents and royal honours. They embraced Siddanta Saivism, studied Sivagamas and Puranas, adorned themselves with sacred ashes and rudra beads and were doing charities of Siva dharma till kali 203 (B.C. 2898)

### ***Explanations :***

From the above inscriptional evidence we come to know that the original settlement of the Vaisiyas was Santiyapuri of Naganadu and their origin dates back to B.C. 3000. As no mention is made of the period of their occupation in Santiyapuri, it is to be taken for granted that Naganadu was their original home. No writer on the History of Nagarattars has ever placed their origin outside India. Campuddivu or Navalam tanpo lil, in Tamil generally means India.<sup>1</sup> In some context it is used to denote only South India. Therefore the mention of Campuddivu in the inscription is a clear proof of the native origin of Nagarattar in India. To identify Naganadu is a problem. The cul of the Nagas had once spread throughout India, Ceylon, China and South East Asia. In Tamil Literature there are innumerable references to the Nagas and their culture. One of the Cankam poets who is supposed to have lived during the great war of Paratam is called Multinagarayar<sup>2</sup> Manimekali (Circa A.D. 300) one of the five Tamil epics has many references about Naganadu, the Nagas and their customs and their relationship with Tamilnadu. This epic seems to have mentioned four Naga countries.<sup>3</sup> From their description we come to know that three Naga countries

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1. Perumpanarruppatai 1.465; Manimekalai 22 1.29.

2. Purananuru S. 2.

3. Manimekalai K. 8,9, 16 and 24

mentioned in Kathais 8, 16, and 24 were surrounded by the waters and that the Naga country referred to in Kathai 9 was a land of 499 yojanas in the Dekkan area of Campuddivu, south of Tamilnadu. The lines run thus.<sup>4</sup>

‘Tinkani naval onkumit tivitai  
inrel nalil irunila makkal  
ninrunatuk keita ninila venta  
poomi natukkurum poltat tinnakar  
nakanan nattu nanuru yosanai  
viyanpa talattu vilntuke teytum’

‘தீங்கனி நாவல் ஓங்குமித் தீவிடை’  
இன்றேழ் நாளில் இருநில மாக்கள்  
நின்றநடுக் கெய்த நீணில வேந்தே  
புமி நடுக்குறும் போழ்தத் திநநகர்  
நாக நன்னாட்டு நானூ றியோசனை  
வியன்பா தலத்து வீழ்ந்துகே டெய்தும்’

When we compare these lines in Manimekalai with the line ‘Camputtivatinkan atiyil nakanattile’ (சம்புத்தீவத்தின் கண் ஆதியில் நாகநாட்டிலே) in the Velankudi inscriptions, I am of opinion that 5000 years ago, the original home of the Nagarattar might have been in the submerged part of Naganadu in the Dekkan territory. Thus theory does not go against the traditional view that the Nagarattars were Tamilians. For, according to the Dravidian Linguists, the Dravidian tongues were spoken in many parts of India in those distant days. Therefore I cannot subscribe to the view held by A. Seshadri Sarma that Naganadu mentioned in the Velankudi inscription

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4. Ibid. K 9, 11 17-22

was nothing but Aruvalar nadu adjacent to Tondaimandalam in the north.<sup>5</sup> Another view that the original home of the Nagarattars was Kaverippumpattinam<sup>6</sup> is also not acceptable for want of recorded evidence.

Proper names like Nagappan and Nagammai are still in vogue in Nagarattar community. In some Chettiar families secluded rooms are kept for the movement of snakes and they are worshipped as deities. When snakes are dead, milk is poured into their mouths as obsequies. These customs in this community reveal their erstwhile relationship with Naga cult.

Yet another view that Nagarattars were the descendants of a Muhammandan man and a Kalla woman<sup>7</sup> is ridiculous. The birth of Islam was in the seventh century. A.D. whereas the origin of Nagarattar goes back to 5th millennium B.C. Again all the literature relating to this community unmistakably points to the fact that Nagarattars were staunch Saivites in all periods and that proselytisation is therefore out of question in their religious bent. Some other views quoted by Edgar Thurston regarding the origin of this community<sup>8</sup> need not be discussed here as they are not worth discussing.

The worship of Maragatha Vinayakar is an important point to be remembered in the history of Nagarattar, since

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5. A. Sshadri Sarma, Nattukkottai Nagarattar Varalaru (Vanathi pathipakam, - 1970 P.14.

6. Pandithamani Kathiresa Chettiar, Nattukkottai Nagarattar Varalaru p. 7; Edgar Thurston, castes and tribes of Southern India Vol. V.P. 262.

7. Ibid. p. 252

8. Ibid p. 270

the preservation of this idol at all costs and continuation of its worship in all their new settlements are mentioned throughout the Velankudi inscription. The advent of Vinayaga in Tamilnadu is fixed in the seventh century A.D. after the victory of the Pallava Narashimhavaram I over Pulikesi II at Vatapi in A.D. 642<sup>9</sup>; but the Velankudi inscription mentions the worship of Vinayaga by the Vaisiyas even before B.C. 2896 in Naganadu. I, therefore, presume the existence of Vinayaga deity in Naganadu itself, north of Telugu country 5000 years ago.

The mention that the idol of Vinayaga was made of emerald shows that the Vaisiyas of those days were traders in all kinds of gems and that they were in affluent position.

As the Vaisiyas were rich, industrious, pious and charitable they expected royal honour (மன்னிணை மரியாதை) and equal rank with the rulers. They never bargained their high status for profits. The preservation of their self-respect has been brought out in all events of the community. Cilappatikaram, the earliest Tamil epic which treats of the life of Kovalan and Kannaki, who are supposed to belong to Nagarattar class, mentions that Masattuvan, the father of Kovalan was given the status of being equal to the Chola king who ruled the extensive land<sup>10</sup>.

perunila mulutalum perumakan talaivaitta  
orutanik kutikalotu yarntonku selvattan

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9. Saw Ganesan Pillaiyarpatti Talavaralaru (Tamil) (1955) p. 16;  
T.M. Baskaratutondaiman Pillaiyarpatti Pillaiyar (Tamil) (Mankala Nooalakam,  
Madras 1961) p. 2

10. Cilappatikaram K.1.11. 36.7

பெருநீல முழுதானும் பெருமகன் தலைவைத்த  
ஒருதனிக் குடிகளோ டுயர்ந்தோங்கு செல்வத்தான்

2. Ancient period B.C. 2897 to B.C. 790 (2107 years);  
Emigration from Santiyapuri to Kanchipuram in  
Tondaimantalam.

***Histry :***

Due to the cruelty of the king of Naganadu, the Vaisiyas migrated to Kanchipuram in Tondaimandalam in Kali 204. The ruler of Kanchi, knowing their arrival, called for them and inquired of their antecedants. He asked them to reside there, bestowed royal honours on them and granted lands for temples and mutts. He permitted them to receive religious orders from ARunagiri Sivasankarachariyar. Accordingly, they lived in Kanchipuram, performed the puja of Maragatha Vinayaga and continued their trade in precious stones. They lived very happily till kali 2311.

***Explanations :***

Neither the kind of cruelty nor the name of the king of Naga nadu who did it was specifically mentioned. Thus shows the honesty of the inscriber of the Velankudi stones, Because of the long interval he could not give more details.

The Vaisiyas in their new country led a respectable life for 2109 years till they tasted the highhandedness of Prataparasan in B.C. 790. The continuation of the same Vinayaga worship and the same trade should be noted.

3. Early period B.C. 789 to A.D. 706 (1495 years)  
Emigration from Tondaimandalam to  
Kaverippumpattinam in Choladesa.

***History :***

(a) Due to the unjust and heavy punishments and fines imposed upon the Vaisiyas by Pradaparasana of Kanchi, they migrated to Choldadesa in Kali 2312 (B.C. 789). Manunidhi Cholan who was ruling that country called for them and enquired them of their history. In reply, they told the king all their past history and expressed their wish to go to Dakshinadesa (southern Country). On hearing them, the king said: "All of you may live in my country. We will bestow all royal honours upon you. We regard you as pradana Vaisiyas and you will be given the rare honour of placing the crown on us, thereby you will be called as Makuta Vaisiyas: you may reside in the east, west and south streets in Kaverippumpattinam, as the north street has residences for different vanikas. Thus the king provided them with residential quarters gave them the lion flag, permitted them to display golden "tupi" on their buildings and to receive religious orders from Isanya Sivachariyar of Patanjali Kshetra in Chidambaram. Accordingly 8000 families lived there for a long time with loyalty to the king. They were called Rathinatanamakutavaisiyas (vaisiyas dealing in precious stones possessing great wealth and crowning the Cholas). They continued the worship of Vinayaka deity, followed the path of Saivism and erected Siva temples with Gopuram and tanks.



b) As Poovanti Cholan who was the king of Chola nadu in Sali 596, Kali 3775 (A.D. 674) seized the Vaisiya women wokedly and imprisoned them. 8000 Vaisiya families, after entrusting only their male children to the care of their teacher Atmanatha Sastri and all their properties to him in order to bring up their children and perform the puja of Marakata Vinayaka, sacrificed their lives to save their honour, 1502 male children consisting of 600 children of 6 lines in the west street, 400 children of 4 lines in the south street and 502 children of seven lines in the east street were thus living under the guardianship of Atmanatha Sastri.

In Sali 605, Kali 3784 (A.D. 683) Poovanthi Cholan who was very aged, wished to celebrate the coronation of his son Rajabushana Cholan. For that he invited the Vaisiya sons who were brought up under the care of Atmanatha Sastri and requested them to crown his son according to the custom. The Vaisiya sons said, “O king! Thanks to your unrighteousness all our elders gave up their lives for honour. There are no women in our caste. Are we, the unmarried, entitled to place the crown?”.

Thereupon the king consulted Isanasivacharya, the Guru of Vaisiyas and other elders. They informed him that Dharma Sastra enjoined that Brahmins can marry women of Kshatriya caste, Kshatriyas can marry women of Vaisiya caste and the Vaisiyas can marry women of Vellala caste. The king then invited the Vellalas and their Gurus and explained to them the position.

The Vellalas were prepared to agree to his request on condition that this kind of marriage alliance should continue for ever and should be mutual also. The Vaisiya sons told decisively that they would marry the Vellala girls and not give their girls in marriage to them. At last the king and the Gurus who felt that the contention of the Vaisiya sons was 'sastric' made the Vellalas consent to their proposal. The Vellala chiefs finally agreed to it and requested that their girls should be permitted to receive Diksha from their Mutt Gurus. This was accepted.

c) 600 sons of six lines in the west street wedded the girls of Karkatta Vellalas. Tirunavukkarasu Gurukkal of Tiruvarur became the Diksha Guru for these girls. 400 sons of four lines in the south street married the girls of Kaniyala Vellalas. Sivagnanakkurukkal of Kumbakonam was appointed the Diksha Guru for these girls. 502 sons of seven lines in the east street married the girls of Soliya Vellalas. Nirampa Alakiya Kurukkal of Sri Vanjiyam was the Diksha Guru for these girls. After these marriages and appointments of Gurus, all the Vaisiyas placed the crown on Rajabhushana Cholan and received equal royal honours.

d) It was agreed between the Vaisiyas and the Vellalas that Vellalas would give Sridanam and other presents, female servants (Vellatti) would be provided to help the women, the Vellala uncle would have no right to do any rites, the uncles of two lines had the right of performing ceremonies and none but them would do any rite, auspicious or inauspicious. After this marriage alliance, the Vaisiyas came to be called as 'Upayakula poopala Vaisiyas', Rathina dana makuta poopala

Varsiyas and chandra ganagakula Vaisiyas'. They enjoyed fame in the king's court. They followed all Saiva practices and Sivadharmas and lived in happiness.

e) In Sali 622, Kali 3799 (A.D. 700) there arose a dispute between the Vaisiyas and the Vellalas about the order of preference in receiving sacred ashes etc. because of only one Guru for both the girls of the Vaisiyas and the Vellalas. Thereupon it was decided to appoint the eldest sons of the three Gurusthanas as the Gurus for the girls of the Vaisiyas for purpose of getting Dikshi and the like.

***Explanation :***

The third stage in the history of Nagarattar is very important in many respects. It is mentioned that at the time of their emigration to Cholanadu from Thondaimandalam i.e. in B.C. 789, Manunidhi Raja was the king of the Chola country. He was highly praised in the Tamil Literature and in the legend as an unparalleled righteous ruler in the Chola country. His date is generally assigned to the pre-historic times. When enquired about their history, the Vaisiyas told the king that they intended going to Dakshinadesam. This implies that they came to Kaveripoompattinam from the north direction i.e. Thondaimandalam. From the assignment of three streets for their occupation in the city, it may be presumed that the population of Nagarattar in B.C. 789 was considerable. This inscription specifically mentions for the first time that the community consisted of 8000 families. Three great honours, namely, crowning the king, the right of having a separate flag and the adorning thier houses with golden "tupis" were

bestowed upon them by Manunithi Cholan. This shows their considerable influence on the political affairs of the State and their fabulous wealth earned by way of trade. The lion flag represents their bold adventures in the world of business and the golden domes on top of the bungalow indicate their affluent position. That the custom of placing the crown on the prince by some respectable families was not new to the Tamil culture is evident from the statment of Kampar that the sage Vashishta received the crown from the forefather of Sadaiyappar during the coronotion of Sri Rama.

From the chronological reference in the Velangudi inscription, we may calculate that the Nagarattar resided in Cholanadu altogether for 1495 years from B.c. 789 to A.D. 706. Thier life there went on happily without any interference from the successors of Manunithi Chola for 1462 years till A.D. 673. It seems that throughout this long period the Vaisiyas enjoyed all the previleges including the placing of crown at the time of coronation.

An irretrievable catastrophe fell on the Vaisiya community in A.D. 674 when Poovanti Cholan imprisoned all the Vaisiya women. The inscriptiom does not mention clearly the circumstances which forced the king to take the entire women folk including even infants as captives. Further, the inscription is silent on the question whether the king killed all the women or the males of the community did so on the ground of prestige when the ladies were freed by the king. That the male community of the Nagarattar was always hard and strict in the matter of the character of their women being involved is evident from the later portions of the inscription

also. I therefore think that the total annihilation of the women community was done by the horrible act, all men of this community except those who were underaged, gave up their lives. At the time of migration to Cholanadu in B.C. 789, there were 8000 Nagarattar families pointing to a population of 32000 approximately. In A.D. 674 when the community lost the entire women folk and a majority of men on account of the atrocity committed by Poovanti Cholan there were only 1502 male children belonging to 17 lines.

Poovanti Cholan though aged was still alive. He might have repented for his unkind act. He did not want to deviate from the age-long custom during the coronation of his son Rajabushana Cholan. Therefore he requested the living male children and their Guru and the Vellalas and their Gurus to consent to a new marriage alliance. What ever demerit of Poovanti Cholan the survival of the Nagarattar community to this day speaks of the good act of that king in his last days.

The Cholanadu was under the rule of the Pallavas for 3 centuries from 600 A.D. to 880 A.D. The Chola kings during these days were paying tributes to the Pallavas. Poovanti Cholan and Rajabushana Cholan may be supposed to belong to the insignificant periods in the Chola history of the middle ages, One of the Gurus appointed for Vellala girls is called Tirunavukkarasu. The reputed Saiva Saint Tirunavukkarasu Nayanar lived in the early part of the seventh Century A.D. Therefore the reference in this inscription to the Gurukkal of the same name in the later half of that century is historically acceptable.

The appointment of new Guru peetams separately for Vaisiya wives of the three Vellala castes is elaborately described in this period. It shows the consciousness of the women folk of their former vellala castes and their independent spirit in religious matters.

4. Middle period A.D. 707 to A.D. 1565 (858 years)  
Emigration from Cholanadu to Pandianadu

***History :***

a) Soundra Pandiyan of Pandiya country went to Cholanadu, met Rajabhushana Cholan and said; “During the rule of Kirtibhusana Pandiyan, our country was submerged upto Tiruppovanum due to deluge. The country suffered much during the rule of 18 Pandiyas. Because of the immigration of good citizens from different places, the land is becoming prosperous. Kindly give us some more good citizens and Vaisiya merchants. On hearing his request, the Chola gave him some good citizens. He called for the Rathinadana makuta poopola Vaisiyas and asked some of them to go to Pandiyadesam to which they answered thus; “We living in three streets will be united wherever we are. There is no point in some of us being here and some of us being there’. Thereupon the Chola king told all of them to go to Pandiyanadu. They consented to go there, should the Pandiyan King promise in the presence of the Chola king to treat them with royal respect and protect them with kindness. The Pandian King assured a better treatment and agreed to provide them with residences in a contiguous area, to build temples and mutts for their gurus and to give them the right to maintain

them. The Pandiyan took leave of Rajabhushana Chola and came to the village Omkarakkudi in his country along with Vaisiyas in Sali 629, Kali 3808 (A.D. 707).

b) As promised, Soundra Pandiyan allotted the territory west of the sea, north of river Vaikai, east of mountain Piranmalai and south of river Vellaru for the occupation of the three kinds of Vaisiya since that part was the living place of Vellalas. He granted Ariyur city and Piranmalai temple, Sundarappattinam and its temple and mutts for their gurus. After paying respect to them and blessing them he left for Madurai city.

c) As the Vaisiyas took their wives from different Vellala families, they found it difficult to be united in the long run. Ariyur city and Piranmalai temple were entirely allotted to the Vaisiyas of six lines. Sundarappattanam and its temple to the Vaisiyas of four lines and Ilaiyarrankudi Nagaram and its temple to the Vaisiyas of seven lines. It was decided to build a temple for Maragata Vinayagar - the deity common to the three Vaisiyas in the west street of Ariyur to perform all pujas there and to bear the expenditure in common. It was also decided to receive religious orders from the Achariya and Pandinadu as and when they liked, according to the direction of Isanya Sivachariyar.

After their advent to Pandiyadesam, the six lines Vaisiya were called Ariyurar, the four line Vaisiyas Sundarattar and the seven line Vaisiyas Ilaiyarrankudi Nagarattar. Because of the situation of Ilaiyarrankudi Nagaram in the centre of the Nadu they alone came to be known as Nattukkottai Nagarattar.

(d) The three branches agreed that they would settle the disputes among themselves, they would worship only mothers, fathers, gurus, deities, vaithikas and other greatmen and that they never do obeisance to the rulers, the Brahmins who are employed and others. Soundarapandiyan promised them not to decree unjust punishment on them.

(e) Thus the seven line Vaisiyas of the Nattukkottai Nagarattar of Ilaiyarrakkudi were living united for some years. There appeared signs of quarrel among them. A majority of Nagarattars divided themselves into eight groups and approached the Pandiyan to give them separate temples to which he agreed: In Kali 3813 (A.D. 712) Marrurk kovil and Vairavanpattikkovil, in kalu 3815 (A.D. 714) Iraniyurkkovil, Pillaiyarpatti, Neman kovil and illuppaikkudikkovil and in Kali 3819 (A.D. 718) Curaikkudikkovil and Velankudikovil came into existence. Those who did not approach the king took possession of Ilaiyarrakkudi kovil and its temple properties.

(f) While the nine parties were maintaining their nine temples and their properties independetly, Karunya Pandiyarajan who went for hunting saw a girl 5 years old called Muthumeenal and took her to the city in his chariot. She was the daughter of Arunachalam, son of Muthuveerappa Chetti, Ilanalamudaiyan of Nemankovil living in Manicka broad street in Velankudi of Poonkonrai nadu. The nine divisions of Nagarattar, on hearing this news, convened a meeting and decided to give punishment to the girl imprisoned, according to their custom. They met the king and asked him to hand over the girl. He told them plainly that he would not have taken her, had he known her to be their girl. He feared that



they would instantly put her to death, if he freed her. Finally he handed over the girl to them saying that they would have to pay a penalty of 8 heads and 8000 sovereigns if they killed her. Unmindful of the penalty they gave capital punishment to the girl on the way to their village. They met and discussed about the fulfillment of the punishment. They could find out seven heads, as the Nagarattar of Ilayarrakkudi consisted of seven lines. They found it difficult to get one more head. Finally Okkurutaiyar, one of the seven divisions of Ilayarrakkudi came forward to give one more head on the condition that Nagarattars should agree to give first respect to Okkurutaiyar in receiving all temple honours. Thus was unanimously approved. Then they daringly met the king and sought his punishment. The king took pity and told them that he was not prepared to earn infamy by taking the lives of those eight, as he had already become responsible for taking the life of a girl. He let them off with no punishment. To atone for the sin of having killed a girl, the Vaisiyas did service to temples, dug tanks, instituted festivals and endowed lands for dharma. They left that village and settled in Marrur and other villages.

(g) In the disturbances that took place in Kali 4389 (A.D. 1288) Ariyur was completely destroyed. 64 Vaisiyas living in the west street there strayed away and reached Malayalam country (Malabar) and settled in Kottarrankarai. They built a temple for Maragata Vinayagar. They are still performing ordinary and special pujas.

(h) While Nagarattars of seven line were living in Nattarasankottai in Kali 4644 (A.D. 1543) some of the Vaisiya

women were raped in the disturbance caused by the robbers. The Vaisiyas met their Gurus and sought their permission to kill the females according the custom of their caste. The Gurus advised them not to do so as the crime was committed with no will of theirs and as these kinds of crimes were pardoned by the Dharma Sastras. On the insistance of the Nagarattars, the Gurus finally gave permission to carry out the capital punishment and went away to the Ganges for holy bath. The Guru of Pandinadu did not return for 12 years. Some of the nine Nagarattars received Dikshas from the Guru at Tiruppunavayil. Some others waited for some more time till the return of their Guru. The expected Guru came back from Kasi to Kalamatam after 21 years in Kali 4665 (A.D. 1564). The Naarattars who were afraid of their transgression met the Guru of Pandinadu along with Ramanathaswami of Tiruppunavayil and told him that because of his long absence they received Diksai from Ramanathaswami and that they would obey his direction in future. Then the Guru allowed those who got Dikshs from Ramanatha Swami to continue so for ever. Accordingly, some families of Ratna tana makuta poopala vaisiyas were allotted to this Gurusthana in Kali 4666 (A.D. 1565). Mutts and other properties in Illanceri pattanam also called Kanakapuram were earmarked for it. From those days Kalamutt and Patharakkudi mutt known as Illancerippattanam have become Gurusthanas for males and Tulavur mutt exclusively for women.

### ***Explanation***

The final part of the Velankudi inscription actually deals with the present settlement of the Nagarattars from A.D. 707,

the development of nine divisions from three and the establishment of three religious mutts. The inscription does mention the quarrels among the Vaisiyas of the three branches after their advent to Pandinadu which resulted in the partition of temples and temple properties and in founding three mutts. That the women of Nagarattars who originally belonged to the Vellala castes continued to maintain their independence in the matters of religious orders from A.D. 683 is evident from their having a separate mutt in Tulavar to this day.

Three migrations are referred to in this record. The first two i.e. from Naganadu to Tondaimandalam and from Tondaimandalam to Cholanadu were caused by the cruelties of the rulers. During these two adverse circumstances, Vaisiyas migrated to other places along with their women. It is to be noted that when they felt humiliation at the hand of Poovanti Cholan who rudely imprisoned their wives, they did not wish to go to some other countries along with the women discredited but decided to give up their lives en mass.

The third emigration from Cholanadu to Pandinadu was due to the kind invitation from the Pandiyan King. The reason why the Chola king was willing to permit the Vaisiyas who were an asset to the country and whose hands crowned him at the coronation, to go away is not understandable. One may conjecture that the growing problems between the Vaisiyas and the Vellalas might have induced the former to leave Kavirippumpattinam where their wives were born. During the early three periods the inscription employs names such Vaisiyas, Rathinatana makuta Vaisiyas, Poopala Vaisiyas and so on. Only in the last period, the word 'Nagarattar' is used. From this record we clearly understand that 'Nagarattar' at

first meant only the residents of Ilayarrakkudi nakaram. The phrase 'Nattukkottai Nagarattar' also meant in the beginning the residents of the same place. For the first time here we come across the usage of 'Chetti' as caste name.

In the description of the Nagarattar history the inscription names seven kings (1) Prataparasan of Tondaimandalam (2) Manunithirasan of Choladesam (3) Poovanti Cholan (4) Rajabushana Cholan (5) Soundarapandiyan (6) Kirtibhushana Pandiyan and (7) Karunyarajan. It also refers to some occurrences (1) the destruction of Tiruppoovanam by flood, (2) the destruction of Ariyurpattam in a disturbance in Kali 4389 (A.D. 1288) and (3) the disturbance caused by robbers at Nattarasankottai in Kali 4644 (A.D. 1563). Some villages and cities associated with the names of kings are found in this record. Onkarakkudi the first village of the sojourn of the Vaisiyas on their arrival in Pandinadu is yet to be identified. To identify it with Karaikkudi is not convincing. All these references need further study and elucidation.

This record points out one more migration of a group of 64 Vaisiyas to Malaiyalam in Kali 4389 (A.D. 1288) due to a local disturbance and it reminds us of the possession of Marakata Vinayakar by them. This indicates that the history of the Nagarattars will not end with the history of the Chettiars residing in Tamil nadu. It would be worthwhile to study the history of these people who are now in and around Nagerkoil. It will be interesting to know that "Talaimuraikal" a novel written by Neela Padmanapan depicts fully the life of Iraniyal Chettiar now residing in the border of the Kerala State.

**PART II**  
**(From A.D. 1565 to A.D. 1800)**

In Part I have narrated the history of the Nagarattars from B.C. 2898 upto A.D. 1565 on the basis of the traditional record known as Poonkonrai Velankudi inscription. Three migrations (1) from Santiyapuri to Tondaimandalam (2) from Tondai mandalam to cholanadu and (3) from Cholanadu to Pandianadu, the founding of nine temples and the establishment of three mutts were chronologically delat with in that article. The eight Nagarattar records or pattayams of Palani were published by me with necessary introduction in 1961 when I did not attach much importance to them. Now I am surprised to find that they offer ample data to continue writing of the Nagarattar history from the period where the Velankudi inscription left.

**The eight Palani records are:**

- |    |                                  |           |
|----|----------------------------------|-----------|
| 1. | Nirampa Alakiya DesikarPattayam  | A.D. 1627 |
| 2. | Palani Temple Current Table      | A.D. 1670 |
| 3. | Seven Nakarattar Dharmasasanam   | A.D. 1680 |
| 4. | do.                              | A.D. 1766 |
| 5. | do.                              | A.D. 1788 |
| 6. | Piranmalai Adeenam Current Table | A.D. 1800 |
| 7. | Adeenam Pattapiseka Table        | A.D. 1802 |
| 8. | Matavalaya Dharmasasanam         | A.D. 1805 |

In these pattayams, the Salivahana era, Kali era and Tamil era are mentioned. In pattayams Nos 6 and 7 there is no mention of any era. (Salivahana era + 78-Christian era. Kali era-3101-Christian era).

The style of the Velankudi inscription is mostly in literary Tamil whereas these Palani pattayams are written in spoken tongue. The former purports to cover the longest period (about 4450 years) of the history of the community in four different countries a Naganadu (b) Tondaimandalam c) Chola nadu and d) Pandi nadu. The prehistoric portion of that inscription is dark and obscure. On the other hand the Palani Pattayams give only an account of the two centuries (A.D. 17th and 18th) in Palani proper. It is to be noted that the Nayaks of Madurai and the two Maruthu Pandiyas of Sivaganga actually ruled this part of the country. These records frequently refer to the names of the rulers. A resume of the records is given below:

1. *Nirampa Alakiya Desikar pattayam* narrates (a) the event in the presence of Chola king which led to the establishment to a separate mutt (Tulavur) in Pandi nadu for the vellala girls who married the males of the Nagarattars (b) the contribution (makamai) given by Kumarappan of Nemankoil and his wife Velatti Cittal from the profit of the salt trade and (c) the first respect shown to him in Kunrakudi as in Palani. It is to be remembered that the Velankudi inscription ends with the mention of three mutts, two for males and one for girls and that this pattayam points to the maintenance of the Tulavur mutt for girls with the help of Kumarappan. Hence the continuity.

2. *Palani Temple Current Table* elaborately states the humble beginning of salt trade by one Kumarappan, sone of Kuppanchetty of Nemankoil Ilanala division in Palani, the help he received at the hands of Deivanayaka Pandaram and his wife Parvathi, makamai contribution to Velayuta swami, salt business followed by Chettiars of other temples, the ways through which kavati was taken, the cure of chronis stomachache of the wife of Nattalinkama Nayaka by Kumarappan, her going to his house to express her gratefulness, the grant of two spears by the Nayak and the order of temple respect to Kumarappan and others.

The Kavati starts from Kandavarayanpatti though Maruthu Toppu, Singampitari, Sevakapperumal koil, Campatti, Kovilpatti, Dindukkal and reaches Palani. The names of these places are still in vogue.

Three Nayaks, Visayakiri velayutha cinnappa Nayak, Nattalingama Nayak and Mittalingappa Nayak are mentioned. In the history of Madurai we do not come across these names. They might have been local officials. This pattayam reveals that the Guru Desikar of Isanya mutt wore margosa garland and held fish banner to show that he was the religious Guru of Pandiya Maharaja.

3-5. Seven Nagarattar Darmasasanans begin with an account of the cosmogony in the puranic way. New references to the greatness and wealth of the community are given. It is said that Nagarattars weighed the elephant with gold and stopped the Kaveri flood by the gunnies of cotton. Offer of

golden anklet to the poetess Avvai for her sweet Tamil, her blessing in gratitude with the words 'maticcelai peruka' (may the money purse overflow), the golden covering of the Kampanar temple, coral pillar at the marriage entrance, golden rope for ordinary well-rope, crowning the three kings in Chola nadu, holding lion flag etc. are referred to in these Sasanas. One of them corroborates the two incidents mentioned in the Velankudi inscription i.e. (1) the atrocity of the Chola king towards a girl of this community which resulted in the emigration to Ilayattankudi and (2) the offer of one more head by Okkurutaiyan to fulfil the punishment of the king and the first respect shown to that kovil.

These sasanas elaborately deal with the expanding salt trade begun by Kumarappan of Nemankoil, his spiritual feats, his contribution to the welfare of the religious mutts, his everlasting gratefulness to Deivanayaka Pandaram and his progeny and manifold respects he and one Kuttaiyan received from the Gurus and other Nagarattars.

The fourth sasana contains many historical references. It enumerates several kings of Vijayanagar empire such as Krishna Rayar, Sadasiva Rayar, Saluva Rayar and so on and the rulers of the Nayaks of Madurai beginning from Viswanatha Nayak the founder of this kingdom upto Tirumalai Nayak and Maruthur Pandiyans junior and senior.

The two great Pandiya warriors who fought vehemently against the British are said to have put some political questions to one Kuttaiyan who was possessed by the grace of Muruga



and received satisfactory reply from him. It seems that Nayaks and Maruthu Pandiyas directed the Nagarattars at Palani to come to an agreement in matters of getting temple respect.

#### **6. Piranmalai Adeenam Current Table.**

#### **7. Adeenam Pattapiseka Table.**

The sixth sasana points out the duty enjoined on the guru Pandaram, Kumarappan and Nagarattars and the respect given to Kuttaiyan of Iranikkoil. The seventh sasana mentions the objection raised by Annamalai, son of Arunachalam Chetty of Pattanasami division of Iilaiyattankudi to the special respect shown to one individual Kumarappan against the age-long custom of bestowing that respect to Nagarattar in general. After the explanation from the Guru in regard to the continuous and selfless services of Kumarappan and his spiritual attainment. Annamalai, like 21 Gotras, accepted the new proposal in the matter of rank and order.

8. *Matavalaya Dharma sasanam* registers an agreement made between Kulandaivelu Pandaram and Seven Nagarattars for the purchase of a plot to construct a 31 pillared stone mandapam. This sasana refers to the visit of Tondaiman, king of Pudukkottai, to the house of Muttappan of Sivappatti, on hearing of his spiritual grace and his grant of a copper spear to Muthappan's Temple house.

It is pleasant to note that the four families relating to the four great spiritual men honoured by the Gurus, the Nagarattars and the kings as narrated in these sasanas are still living at Nerkuppai, Kandanoor, Karaikkudi and

Melasivarppatti respectively and that they are going to Palani every year to worship Velayutasamy with religious fervour.

***Some noteworthy points in these sasanas:***

1. Pulli is an important term in the Nagarattar community life. For the first time this term occurs in the second sasanas as Pulli and 'Pullikkasu'. It clearly says that every 'Pulli' of Nagarattar should give some amount agreed upon for the maintenance of the religious functions at Palani. In other sasanas also this term is used in connection with the collection of contribution for that purpose. That pulli is a word equivalent to kudi is evident from the fourth sasana where the line runs . 'இந்த படிக்கி குடிக்கி கல்யாணம்'. Thus we definitely come to know that this term came into use from A.D. 1670. It is to be remembered that the great velankudi inscription does not mention this term.

2. Vellatti is another important word in this community. The Velankudi inscription refers to the marriage of the Vellala girls of the three divisions with the Vaisiya males of the then existing three classes. In the Marriage Agreement which is known as Isaikuti manam (இசைகுடி மானம்) a traditional line occurs thus (வெள்ளாட்டிக்குப் பணம் 30) (30 panams to Vellatti). Some writers are of opinion that Vellatti means female servant (வேலைக்காரி) Pillaiyarpatti Talavaralaru by Saw Ganesan p.59. In the first sasana 'vellatti' clearly means wife. The wife of Kumarappan is called as 'Vellatti Cittal' The word Acci (ஆச்சி) used nowadays is not found.

3. In the Marriage Agreement referred to above, we will find the sentence like (முருகப்ப செட்டி வீரப்பர்,

அருணாசலஞ் செட்டி ராமநாதர்) and the like. Even in the 'Moy' account written at the time of marriage, the community uses this kind of sentence. It is not traditional to say like முருகப்ப செட்டி மகன் வீரப்பர், அருணாசலஞ் செட்டி மகன் ராமநாதர். In the sasanas under reference which are dated before A.D. 17th century we find similar usage like நாச்சியப்ப செட்டி முத்துக்கருப்பன், முத்துவடுகன் செட்டி வீரப்பன் and so on.

4. Nagarattar, Chettiar, Chetty, Chettippillai are frequently employed in these sasanas unlike the Velankudi inscription in which they are mostly mentioned as vaisias.

5. In the third sasana some festivals like Deepavali, Tirukarthikai, Pillaiyar Chaturthi, Sivan Ratri are mentioned.

6. In the fourth sasana which has many historical references Rupee (ரூபாய் அஞ்சு) coin has found a place.

7. The contribution of the Chettiar community to the growth of Tamil is known to the Tamil world. In these sasanas there are references to their love of Tirukkural (வள்ளுவ மறை) and Tirumantiramalai (திருமந்திரமாலை). In three sasanas their patronage of Tamil by giving golden anklet to Avvai and by constructing Kampanar temples with golden plates is brought out.

8. The worship of Vinayakar of emerald which began ever since the community came into existence continues in this period also.

The eight Palani sasanas do not refer to the activities and kinds of trade of the Nagarattar in other places. They confine only to the salt trade started by Kumarappan at Palani and the subsequent development in religious fields at that sthala. They assert clearly the royal recognition-மன்னினை மரியாதை of Velankudi inscription received by this community even in this period under reference.

## STATEMENT GIVING ALL IMPORTANT INFORMATION

Salivahana Era	Kali Era	Tamil Year	Christian Era	Kings	Countries	Events
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Upto 203	upto 203		B.C. 2898		Naganadu Santiyapuri	Original home
204	204		B.C. 2897	Pratapa rasan	Tondaiman dalam Kanchi-puram	First emigration due to the cruelty of Naganadu king
	2312	Viro thi	B.C. 789	Manu-nithi cholan	Cholanadu Kaverippum pattinam	Second emigration due to the cruelty of Kanchi King
596	3775		A.D. 674	Poo vanti cholan	do	Imprisonment of Vaisiya wives; males and females gave up their lives except 1502 male children of 3 divisions
605	3784		A.D. 683	Raja bhushana Cholana	do.	Coronation

### MATIIONS FOUND IN VENLANKUDI INSCRIPTION

Gurusthas and Gurus 8	Dharsans 9	Other references 10
Sadasiva Gurupeetam Arunagiri Sivasan- karachariyar	Gopathes waraswami Sathipuris varar	Marakatavinayagar; Siddhanta Saivism; trade in gems; Royal respect. -do- bathing in Pushkaranathi
Chidamba ram Isana sivachariyar	Rudrapa- theeswarar	marakata vinayagar; 8000 families residents in 3 streets; Lion flag, golden dome, crowning the king; Rathina tana makuta vaisiyar; bathing in Kaviri
Tiruvarur Kumbakonam Srivanchiyam 3 gurus for Vellala girls		Marakatavinayagar, Atmanatha upattiyayar brought up 1502 male children: they married Vellala girls of three kinds. Agreement between Vaisiyas and Vellalas
upayaya Gurus for ladies		upayakula poopala Vasiyar, Rathina tana makuta poopala Vaisiyar, Chandra gangakula Vaisiyar

## STATEMENT GIVING ALL IMPORTANT INFORMATION

Salivahana Era	Kali Era	Tamil Year	Christian Era	Kings	Countries	Events
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
3799		A.D. 700	do.		do.	
629	3808	Pilavanga Sukki ra varam vaikasi	A.D. 707	Soundrapandiyana	Pandinadu onkarayakudi	Third migration at the request of Pandiyana settlement in the present locations
634	3813		A.D. 712	-	do.	Establishment of nine temples
634	3813		A.D. 712		Pandinadu	Marrukkivil Vairavanpatti
636	3815		A.D. 714		“	Iraniyurkoil Pillaiyarpatti Nemankoil Iluppaikkudi
640	3819		A.D. 718		“	Curakudi Velankudi
1083	4262		A.D. 1161	Karunya Pandiyana		Muthumeenal with Pandiyana offer of one more head by ookurutaiyar

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**MATIIONS FOUND IN VENLANKUDI INSCRIPTION**


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Gurusthas and Gurus	Dharsans	Other references
8	9	10

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appointment  
of upaya Gurus  
for Vaisiya women

Eldest sone of the Gurus were  
appointed

Pandinattu  
Acharyar

Kirthipushana Pandiyan and 18 kings.  
Allotment of villages and temples, Dis  
unity among 3 branches Ariyurar, Sundar  
attar, Ilayarrakkudi, Nagarathar. Nattukk  
ottai Nagarattar, Agreement on social  
customs.

Disunity in the branch of Ilayarrakkudi,  
historical names such as Atimeerapandi-  
yapuram, Tiripuvanacchakravarti,  
Nemarajan

Chetti as caste name Arunachalam  
Muthuveerappan Chetty, Special  
honour to okkurutaiyar, no enforcement  
of punishment by the king. Velankudi  
deserted.



## STATEMENT GIVING ALL IMPORTANT INFORMATION

Saivahana Era	Kali Era	Tamil Year	Christian Era	Kings	Countries	Events
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
1220	4389	saru vadari	A.D. 1288		“ (Chera country)	Disturbance in Ariyur pattanam, emigration of 64 vaisiyas to Malabar
1465	4644		1543		Pandiyanadu	Disturbance at Nattarasankottai. Molestation of women
1486	4665		1564			Return of Pandi Guru from Kasi after 21 years
1487	4666	Atsaya Aipasi 1 day Monday				Establishment of a new Gurupheetam at Illancheripattanam

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**MATIIONS FOUND IN VENLANKUDI INSCRIPTION**


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Gurusthas and Gurus	Dharsans	Other references
8	9	10

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Maragathavinayagar in possession  
of Vaisiyas of Chera country at  
Kottarrankarai

Tiruppunavayil  
Guru for a group  
of Vaisiyas. Nirampa  
Alakiya Guru

Women were punished inspite of the  
the opposition from Gurus. Two Gurus  
went to bathe in Ganges for  
atonement

Acceptance by the Guru of Pandinadu  
of the Tiruppunavayil Gurusthan

Ramanathaswami  
at Tiruppanavayil

Kalamut and Patharakkudi (Illanceri)  
for males, Tulavur for females

## **17. COMPARATIVE DRAVIDIAN LITERATURE**

My first duty is to express my sincere thanks and gratitude to the organisers of the All India Oriental Conference for having elected me to preside over the Dravidic Studies Section of the 29th session and given me an opportunity to meet the scholarly Jambavans of the Dravidian family and share my views with them. I am extremely thankful to Dr. S. Shankar Raju Naidu, Professor of Hindi, University of Madras and Mr. R.N. Dandekar, the General Secretary of the Conference for their help in my election to this exalted position.

At the commencement of the session it is our duty to pay our homage to the two departed souls who had contributed much to the development and greatness of Dravidic studies.

Professor Suniti Kumar Chatterji who passed away on 29-5-1977 was the Chairman of the Sahitya Academy of India and the National Professor of Humanities. He was the President of the Dravidian Linguistics Association. He was closely connected with the activities of the linguistics Centre of the Annamalai University. His book 'The Origin and

Development of the Bengali Language' has been a model for the linguists of India. We associate ourselves with the sentiments expressed by Professor V.I. Subramaniam in the glowing terms: "His embracing personality and the gift of recognising merit wherever it is, found for him many young men who gratefully remember his help in their academic upliftment".

Mahakavi G. Sankara Kurup who breathed his last on 2-2-78 was the Jnanapitam awardee for his best work Oda Kuzhal in 1966. His poetry revealed the mystery and majesty of the universe. He was the President of Kerala Sahitya Academy.

### **Dravidic**

Our section is called Dravidic section. What is meant by 'Dravidic'? What are the frontiers of the Dravidic studies? It is generally held that the study of the Dravidian languages and culture has its jurisdiction only over the physical contours of the four southern States of India-Tamil Nadu, Keralam, Andhram and Karnatakam. No doubt the major four Dravidian languages are now spoken in these regions. But historically speaking, the roots and branches of the Dravidian Culture are to be found in many parts of India and the world. That is why Tamil, Telugu and Malayalam have conducted World Conferences and scholars of different countries participated in them. We know that Tamil is the official language not only in Tamilnadu but in Ceylon, Singapore and Malaya also and that four World Conferences were held for Tamil. Arrangement is being made to convene the fifth World Tamil Conference shortly by the Tamilnadu Government.

The growing linguistic researches have shown that Dravidian Languages had once widely spread throughout India and that the existing pockets of these languages in Northern States are a clear proof of this theory. During Dr. Caldwell's time only six were enumerated as uncultivated languages. Now it has increased to 20. Brahui spoken by about 4 lacs of people in Pakistan, Afganistan and Iran belongs to the Dravidian family. It is gratifying to note that the Dravidian Linguistics Association D.L.A. has deputed a scholar to survey and study this language on the spot, K.C.A. Gnana Giri Nadar, a noted polyglot in his book 'Tamil-its contribution to the European Languages' has made a beginning showing 200 Tamil roots found in Greek and Latin words and their derivatives and cognates in the modern Western Languages. Dr. K.P. Aravanan in his recent book. "Sentamil, Senegal and Senghor" has well established the close affinity of the Dravidians and Africans on grounds of culture, language and tradition. Seizing the importance of the subject, I am glad to mention, that the Institute of Kannada Studies, Mysore has decided to offer a course in Afro-Dravidic studies and provide facilities for doing research in that area.

### **World Culture**

Regarding the finds at Harappa and Mohenjo Daro, the Finnish scholar Dr. Asko Parpola has come to the conclusion that the Indus people was Dravidians and that their religion had prominent astral features. This view has added support from literature also. The ancient Tamil epic Cilappatikaram praises moon and sun in its invocatory verses. During his recent visit to Madras, Dr. Nikita Gurov, a Soviet Indologist

who has made a special study of the Indus script has expressed the view that ancient Tamil Literature and Telugu folklore point to a wave-like emigration of cultural groups of the ancient Indus Valley Civilisation to the South, that the language of the Indus Valley in which no prefixes occur, attributes precedes nouns and inflexional increments are used in the oblique cases corresponds to the Dravidian type. Thus we see foreign scholars particularly Soviet Scholars who do not believe in religions and legends are interested in deciphering the Indus hieroglyphic script and identifying its type of culture. But it is regrettable that no South Indian Universities have evinced any keen interest in the investigation of this Proto-Dravidian Culture, at least by offering a course in this subject and training some Dravidian students to interpret our literature and legends in relation to Indus valley excavations.

The above references to World conferences for Dravidian Languages, linguistic pockets in North India, Africo-Dravidian relationship, Mohenjo Daro Harappa civilisation etc. are purposely made by me to assert that Dravidian culture is a world culture embracing all directions within its fold and that the term Dravidic means a type of civilisation in any region of the globe. In the study of Dravidology a wide comprehensive outlook and approach is necessary. To attempt to treat this culture as if it were confined to the limited areas of the present four States in South India will be an injustice to the subject itself. The language Departments of the South Indian Universities should realize the ubiquity of Dravidian culture and impress upon the

students of M.A., M.Phil. and Ph.D.the Dravidian contribution to the ancient world culture.

The modern development of major Dravidian Language in all kinds of literature is significant and noteworthy. We, the sons of the Dravidian family feel proud to mention that all the major Dravidian languages - Malayalam, Kannada, Telugu and Tamil have received Jnanapida awards and that Kannada language had the good fortune of getting the highest literary Indian award twice.

### **Tamil**

Tamil is the first Indian Language to bring out an encyclopaedia in ten columes. The Tamil Development Council has a plan to revise and reprint them at a cost of 70 lakhs. Dr. N. Subbu Reddiyar a well known Tamil writer on modern science is now the Chief Editor of this new edition. The University of Madras which has earned the reputation of bringing out Tamil Lexicon in 1936 and English-Tamil Dictionary in 1963 has now taken up a Tamil - English Dictionary project. This is directed by Dr. C. Balasubramaniam. The Tamil Lexicon also is in the process of revision. The Annamalai University which completed the stupendous task of publishing 16 variorum volumes of Kampa Ramayanam is engaged in editing Uttarakandam with commentary as follow up work. The first volume of this work was published. The second part of the History of Tamil Poets - another project of this University will be available shortly. The Madurai University, the youngest of the Tamilnadu Universities has published a new edition of Akattinai Iyal in

Tolkappiyam with old and new commentaries. The Tamil Department of the University which has a special interest in the study of folk literature has published some old ballads.

The contribution of the Tamil Department of Kerala University to both Tamil and Malayalam is very significant. Dr. M. Ilaiyaperumal has translated Tamil grammatical works Thokappiyam, Nannool and Viracoliyam into Malayalam and Malayalam works Leelavati and Kerala Paniniyam into Tamil. For comparative study these translations are immensely helpful. This Department is encouraging M.A. students to publish their dissertations which are also valuable. The Department of Sri Venkateswara University has published some excellent books on Vaishnavism and seminar papers on Tirukkural, Cilappatikaram and Ramayanam.

The International Institute of Tamil Studies is serially bringing out books on Tamil Literary theories. Its publication "Dissertations on Tamilology" is a useful reference book. Dr. S.V. Subramaniam, Director of the Institute has recently edited the grammatical work Tonnul Vilakkam of Fr. Beschi. Thiru M. Arunachalam, Director, Tamil-Sanskrit and other Indian Languages has so far published 11 volumes on the History of Tamil Literature singlehanded. His monumental works are extremely useful for researchers. This Institute has undertaken 'The Study of Campu Kavya in Tamil and Sanskrit and' The Study of Lexicography' in Tamil and Sanskrit.

Dr. V. Sp. Manickam, Director, Centre for Tamil Development and Advanced Research, Karaikudi has taken up the project 'A comparative Literature of the Dravidian'.



The Literary works of the ancient and medieval periods will mainly be taken for comparative study.

The All India University Tamil Teachers' Conference has brought out 7 volumes of *Ayvukkovai* containing more than 800 papers on all subjects of Tamilology. Young scholars are encouraged to write articles to this publication. It is needless here to mention the output of publications of seminar papers by all educational institutions.

Publishers have always played a prominent role in the productions of books on all subjects of a language. The Saiva Siddanta Kazhagam, Parinilayam, Manivasakar Noolakam, Vanathi Pathipagam, Tamil Puthkalayam, Meenakshi Puthaka Nilayam and Poompukar Pirasuram - to mention a few - are interested not only in publishing modern works but also works of classical period as cheap editions. The Tamil Research students are really fortunate in having a well equipped library of international fame- Maraimalai Atikal Noolagam - ably managed by Saiva Siddantha Noor pathippu Kazhagam.

The present Tamil Nadu Government is creating a new climate for popularising Tamil literature and Tamil culture. Tamil Scholars are publicly honoured. Indigent Tamil Pandits are given regular monetary assistance. The State Government itself is arranging for the festivals of Tamil Poets like Tiruvalluvar and Bharatidasan. Thiru M.G. Ramachandran, the Chief Minister of Tamilnadu has instituted from this year onwards "Bharatidasan Virudhu" of Rs.10000 to be awarded annually for popular poets in Tamil. Poet Kannadasan has been appointed Poet Laureate. He will be paid a honorarium of

Rs.1000/- per month. Private Charities like M.A.C. Charities are also awarding annually Rs.10000 as Tamil prizes for best writers on literature, music and Arts.

### **Malayalam**

The Kerala State Institute of Encyclopaedic publications has planned to publish “An Encyclopaedia of Dravidian Culture” in 10 volumes. The proposed magnum opus will contain detailed information about the philosophers, saints, tourist centres and important events in South India, besides the languages spoken by the different hill tribes. The first volume of the Malayalam Encyclopaedia was released in May, 1978. We are happy to know that our Prime Minister Moraji Desai inaugurated the Ulloor Research Centre and the Vallathol Birth Centenary Celebrations at Trivandrum. The Department of Malayalam of Madurai University is doing research on the Message poems in Tamil and Malayalam and the folk dances of South India. The Dravidian Linguistics Association of Trivandrum is doing yeomen service to the cause of Dravidian languages. Though its main objective is to do higher research on their linguistic aspects it has published two books on literature- “A history of Malayalam Metre” and “The commonness in the metres of the Dravidian languages”.

### **Kannada**

The Institute of Kannada Studies, Mysore has started M.A. course in folklore. One of the subjects in the M.Phil. Course in this Institute is translation. The 10th volume of Kannada Encyclopaedia, the first volume of the Subject Encyclopaedia and the fourth volume of the History of

Kannada Literature are to be published shortly. The Centre of Kannada Studies of the Bangalore University is about to start a new course - Comparative Literature in M.A. I hope literature of Dravidian Languages - cultivated and uncultivated - will be given due prominence. The annual features of this Department is to bring out the year book of Kannada Literature containing useful information for nothing the progressive development of its literature.

The Kannada Department of the Madurai University has undertaken some projects relating to comparative study. Translations of Tirukkural and Porulatikaram in Tolkappiyam into Kannada are in progress. A Tamil-Kannada bilingual Dictionary is also planned. The Department of Kannada, Madras University has published a translation of Periya Puranam (vol. 1). A comparative study of Kannada grammar Subdamanidarpana and Tamil grammar Tolkappiyam is in progress. The Department is engaged in reediting Kittel's Kannada Dictionary.

### **Telugu**

The Department of Telugu, Osmania University has published "A concordance on Srinath's Works". It is preparing a critical edition of Padma Purana. The Telugu Department of Madurai University, in collaboration with Departments of Tamil and Kannada, has undertaken a project "A comparative study of the biographies of Saiva Saints. A Telugu translation of Tirukkural and a Dictionary of Tamil and Telugu are under preparation.

I have given above only a brief account of the progress of the major Dravidian languages in respect of research and publications to show that the Language Departments of the Universities have made some significant contributions to their respective fields with the limited resource available and within the framework of the Universities. It is to be remembered that these Departments are spending much of their time in teaching post-graduate classes and in guiding M.Phil and Ph.D. candidates. What they have done with the skeleton staff is commendable.

### **Dravidian Comparative Literature**

At the conclusion of my Presidential address, I should like to point out two important things for all round development of the Dravidian literature (1) greater attention to the literature of the minor Dravidian and (2) Comparative study of Dravidian literature. The study of Dravidology has many facets. Dr. Caldwell, Kittel, Gundert, Arden Dawson, Beschi, Graeter, Hodson, Pope, Jules Block, Burrow, Emeneau, L.V. Ramasamy, Bh. Krishnamurthy, S.K. Chatterji, Venkatarajulu Reddiyar and a host of others were specially interested in the research of the linguistic aspects of the Dravidian family. Departments of Dravidian Linguistics were started in many Universities. Dravidian students received higher training in linguistics abroad.

The Centre of Advanced Study in Linguistics, Annamalai University has published several books on Dravidian languages including Toda, Kodagu, Malto, Gondi and Kolami. The Dravidian Linguistics Association, Trivandrum is actively

engaged in the comparative study of the Dravidian linguistic features and has brought out some outstanding works. Because of the strenuous effort made by foreign and Indian scholars for over a century the comparative study of the Dravidian family of languages has become a world wide research subject. It may be said to the credit of these scholars that they have paid equal attention to the investigation of the uncultivated Dravidian languages and dialects also.

On the other hand, no attempt has been made on the comparative study of the Dravidian literature. No scholar has seriously thought of that kind of approach. Language Departments in the Universities are doing research only in their own sphere of literature. As things stand, they are not blameable. New institutes and centres for research in the broad field of the Dravidian Comparative Literature should be started. Classical literature of one Dravidian should be translated into the others. Now the material available for this is very scanty. When we speak of the Dravidian we are having in mind only the four major languages. This is unfortunate and unfair. For broad comparison and definite conclusion, literature mostly folklore of the uncultivated Dravidian should also be made available in all major Dravidian Languages in translation.

The Dravidian culture has its own distinctive characteristics in poetry, grammar, religion, philosophy, art etc. One world outlook, kindness to all beings, social harmony and adjustment and good conduct in life characterize this culture. Proper understanding and appreciation of the high thoughts of the Dravidian is good for India and for the world.

We know that the Dravidian civilisation, one of the oldest of the world civilisations stood for test of time and that it is still a living culture. These distinct and noble ideals are preserved in their literature. Therefore a comparative study of the Dravidian literature - poetry, grammar, Kavyas, Puranas, Prabandas, hymns, drama and folklore - is to be taken up extensively and intensively, in order to recognise it as a world literature. For this lofty cause I hope the Government of India and the four Southern States will come forward to start Centres of comparative study of Dravidian Literature. The Universities also may offer this topic as a course of study in M.A. and encourage research students to take up comparative study in Dravidian Kavyas, Dravidian Prabandas, Dravidian lyrics and so on, you will be glad to know that the Centre for Tamil Development and Advanced Research of which I am the Founder-Director has made an attempt to survey and study the new research field-Dravidian comparative Literature and that the three aspects - Dravidian Kavyas, Dravidian ethical literature and Dravidian Folklore will be at first taken up for comparison. We invoke the blessings of the Gods and deities praised in the Dravidian Literature for its preservation and glory.

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## A Study of Tamil Verbs

First Edition - 1972

Published by Annamalai University,  
Annamalainagar, 1972





## FOREWORD

It is with great pleasure I have gone through the monograph "A Study of Tamil Verbs" by Professor V. Sp. Manickam and I must say that this is a worthy book from a worthy scholar. Dr. V. Sp. Manickam is one of the few scholars who is well-versed both in Tamil literature and grammar and from whom one can legitimately expect scholarly works on literature as well as on grammar.

"A Study of Tamil Verbs" is a good contribution towards the study of Tamil grammatical theories and the author has succeeded in his attempt to bring forth various problems with regard to Tamil Verbs. In the course of the discussion he has raised many controversial issues and has convincingly argued to establish his view points with lucid explanations and lively arguments coupled with illuminating interpretations and linguistic insights.

To mention one or two, the author has dealt with in detail the place of 'Uriccol' in Tamil grammar and asserts that 'Uriccol' does not denote the verbal roots which is quite contrary to the opinions of many renowned traditional grammarians. Quoting profusely from various grammars in Tamil, the author is able to establish that "Uriccol is not the basic part of noun or verb but the defective nature of it." In the course of the arguments the author has clearly shown the fallacy found in the established view and has brought out the contradictions that one can find in the statements of even one and the same scholar. It is also very gratifying to note the expla-

nation of the author that the word *Uricco!* can be connected with the word *Urimai* 'right' which does not mean independence and therefore these words may be considered as words in their own right but not as independent words.

The treatment of *tanvinai* and *piravinai* is also very illuminating. The author has rightly pointed out that "English terms Intransitive, Transitive, and Causative will in no way be appropriate to denote the classification which divides the entire Tamil verbs into two classes, namely *tanvinai* and *piravinai*." Mention has to be made that though most of the *tanvinai* and *piravinai* verbs can be brought under intransitive and transitive verbs the concept behind the Tamil terminology is not found in the English terms. It is worth noticing that the author has come to the conclusion that *piravinai* verb has two subjects -which is a well established fact in modern linguistics-though in surface level the subject of the root (as the author puts it) is transformed into the object of the sentences. The discussions on 'Tenses' and 'Changes of meaning' are some of the inspiring sections of the book and the mastery of the author over the subject can be felt throughout.

The author has to be admired for the wonderful way in which he had dealt with various grammatical problems and I must say that the book 'A Study of Tamil verbs' is one of the valuable additions to the study of the grammatical tradition of the Tamil language.

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## PREFACE

It really gives me immense pleasure to publish after a long spell of twenty four years, my research thesis "Tamil Verbs" approved by the University of Madras for the award of M. O. L. Degree in 1948. I am aware that most of the philological terms used in this thesis are not now in vogue and that new linguistic terms have replaced them. Notwithstanding the change of terminology, I do hope that the collection of material bearing on the several aspects of verbs in Tamil and the conclusions based on them are still valid in the field of linguistics. This prompted me to make this thesis available to researchers in print.

I feel honoured by the favour shown to me by the Vice-Chancellor and members of the Syndicate of the Annamalai University for sanctioning publication of this book in the University series. I am very grateful to them for their kindness.

It is my duty to record my sincere obligation to the late Dr. A. Chidambaranathan Chettiar, former Professor of Tamil in this University for his fruitful guidance in this research work of mine.

I wish to express my thanks to Dr. S. Agesthalingom, Director of the Centre of Advanced Study in Linguistics, Annamalai University for his valuable Foreword. My thanks are due to Dr. S. V. Shanmugam, Reader in Linguistics for going through the thesis before publication and for his useful suggestions and to Thiru K. Narayanan, M.A., Lecturer in Tamil for preparing Index.

Annamalainagar }  
12-10-72 }

*V. Sp. Manickam*

## NEW FINDINGS

1. The ancient Tamil grammarians have recognised only Noun and Verb as parts of speech.
2. *uricol*, on the face of its meaning, is bound to belong either to noun or verb.
3. *Kuraiccorkiḷavi* reveals that *uricol* has some defect in its nature or application, not in form or in meaning.
4. The unique nature of the verb is to possess only the capacity to indicate time, not to include in itself the tense-sign, as against the view of Iḷampūraṇar and Cēṇāvaraiyar.
5. Tolkāppiyar has knowledge of the existence of the common roots.
6. To denote a secondary meaning without any mark of derivation is one of the peculiarities of the Tamil verbs, as against the view of the later grammarians.
7. The suttiram “Viḷampiya pakuti” etc., of Naṅṅūl (S. 139) is formulated by the author to indicate the change which the verbal roots undergo, as against the view of Caṅkaranamacivāyar and Civagnāṅamuṅivar.
8. The verbal root almost remains unchanged.
9. *āku* and *pōku*, *varu* and *taru* and *nō* should be the original roots.

10. The first member constituting the compound of 'Viṅaittokai' is the best means to ascertain the roots of any doubtful verbs.
11. *pōku* an uriccol has superseded 'ce!', a viṅaiccol, after the days of the Sangam Classics.
12. The wording of Tol. 934 lends itself to two meanings covering both the loss of old words and the appearance of new ones.
13. The roots *ce*, *civaṅ*, *āṅ*, *nūl*, *eṅ*, *coli*, *ey* and *paḷiccu* fell into desuetude.
14. The new words beginning with 'ca' have originated from the old materials.
15. *iḷa*, *cūl* and *tūṅku* changed their meanings after the period of the Sangam literature.
16. Taṅviṅai consists of the verbs of *ceyappaṭu poruḷkuṅriya viṅai* and of the verbs of the first subdivision of *ceyappaṭu poruḷ kuṅṛā viṅai*.
17. Piṅaviṅai consists of the verbs of the second subdivision of *ceyappaṭu poruḷ kuṅṛā viṅai*.
18. The peculiar combination of 'i' with a verbal noun is specially constructed to change the rest of the verbs to which the regular modes are inapplicable, into piṅaviṅai.
19. *vi* and *pi* the so-called causative particles are the combinations of the 'v' and 'p' the final parts of the verbal nouns with 'i' the shortened form of an auxiliary verb.
20. The adding of 'i' to the verbal noun to form piṅaviṅai is not an innovation which is found even in Tolkaṅṅiyam.

21. The long 'i' in *ceṅṅi* is a *taṅviṅai* verb, not an expletive, as against the view of all the later grammarians and the commentators.
22. The construction and meaning of *ceṅṅi* and *ceyvi* are remarkable.
23. The author of *Naṅṅūl* seems to be at fault when he has included in his composition the *suttiram* '*muṅṅilai muṅṅar*' (933 of Tol.) separating it from its preceding *suttiram* '*ceyyāy eṅṅum*' (932 of Tol.)
24. *Tolkāppiyar* has knowledge of the existence of tense-signs.
25. The reference with no particular time will not preclude '*kuṅṅippu*' from holding '*viṅai*'.
26. Notwithstanding the characteristic of the verbal root to possess the capacity to express time, the Future is implicit in the root.
27. The verbal root will denote the imperative singular of the second person, requiring no sign for that purpose, as against the statement of the commentators.
28. *Tolkāppiyar* has clearly stated that only the past and the present tenses are understood in the compound of '*Viṅaittokai*', as against the theory of the later grammarians.
29. '*aṅ*' in *noṅṅappaṅa* and '*v*' in *nāṅṅuvāṅ*' should be regarded as the particles of differentiation.
30. The future tense of the third person neuter singular, like all other persons, was also regularly formed by the addition of the suffix 'atu' to the verbal noun, as against the statement of Dr. Caldwell.



31. The combination of the person-signs with the verbal nouns or with the verbal themes, with the minor changes as euphony requires, contributes to the expression of the idea of the Future requiring no sign for that purpose.
32. The long vowel *ā* the sign of negation is nothing but the detached portion of the suffixes of the third person.
33. The direct combination of the signs of personality with the verbal roots alone tends to the expression of the idea of negation.
34. The addition of '*ta*' to the negative relative participle is of later development.
35. Tamil like Malayalam, possesses the three tenses in the negation, as against the view of Dr. Caldwell.
36. Before the advent of *āniru*, *kiru* and *kiṟu*, *utu* and *um* were used by the ancient people to denote the present time through all persons.
37. The usual interpretation and explanation to the sutirams 512, 553, 682, 897, 932, 933 and 934 of Tolkāppiyam are not correct.
38. What characterises the Medieval History of the Tamil Language is the tendency towards simplifying and systematising the grammatical forms through the force of analogy.



## TRANSLITERATION

### Vowels

a	-	அ
ā	-	ஆ
i	-	இ
ī	-	ஈ
u	-	உ
ū	-	ஊ
e	-	ஏ
ē	-	ஐ
ai	-	ஐ
o	-	ஓ
ō	-	ஔ
au	-	ஔ
h	-	ஹ

### Consonants

k	-	க
ñ	-	நீ
c	-	ச
ñ	-	ஞ
t	-	த
ṇ	-	ண
t	-	த
n	-	ந
p	-	ப
m	-	ம
y	-	ய
r	-	ர
l	-	ல
v	-	வ
l	-	ழ
ḷ	-	ள
ṛ	-	ற
ṣ	-	ச

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## I. THE VERBAL FORM

It will be my endeavour in this Chapter to investigate the views put forth by the Tamil grammarians with regard to the Verbal Form and to ascertain the true nature of that form as distinct from those of Peyarecol, Iṭaiccol and Uriccol, - together with the origin and meaning of 'Viṇai', the Tamil denomination for verb.

*Tolkāppiyar's View :*

Ancient Tamil grammarians have regarded only Noun and Verb as the two component parts of speech in Tamil. They do not at all recognise 'Iṭaiccol' and 'Uriccol' as parts of speech. It seems to me that they logically opposed such a recognition on the ground that 'Iṭaiccol' and 'Uriccol' are not independent categories and they are the dependants of noun and verb for their expression. This statement is amply borne out when we analyse the two suttirams :

*"col eṇaṭ paṭupa peyarē viṇai eṇṇu  
āyiraṇṇu eṇṇa aṇṇintici nōrē."* (Tol. 642)

(The learned say that words are of two kinds -  
noun and verb)

*"iṭaiccol kiṭaviyūm uriccol kiṭaviyūm  
avaṇṇuvali maruṅkiṇ tōṇṇum eṇṇa."* (Tol. 643)

(They also say that itaiccol and uriccol will express  
themselves after them - noun and verb)

The composition of two different *suttirams* – one for noun and verb and the other for ‘iṭaiccol’ and ‘uriccol’, the clear emphasis ‘*colleṇap paṭupa ..... āyiraṇṭu eṇpa*’, the unwillingness to mention that Tamil has four parts of speech even after the enumeration of ‘iṭaiccol’ and ‘uriccol’, and the meaning of the very words ‘iṭaiccol’ and ‘uriccol’, all go to justify the primary and independent status of *Peyar* and *Viṇai*, and the secondary and dependent status of *Iṭaiccol* and *Uriccol*.

There is a close analogy in *Tolkappiyar*’s approach to the statement regarding the primary sounds and the primary words:

“*eḷuttu eṇappaṭupa,*  
*akara mutal,*  
*ṇakara iṅuvāi muppaṭu eṇpa*” (Tol. 1)  
 (Sounds are thirty from a to ṇ)

“*col eṇappaṭupa .. āyiraṇṭu eṇpa*” (Tol. 642)

Here the emphasis is upon *Peyar* and *Viṇai*, similar to the emphasis upon the thirty sounds. Likewise a similar analogy is perceived in his approach to the statement regarding the secondary sounds and the secondary words:

‘*cārntu varal marapiṅ mūṅṅu alaṅkaṭaiyē*’ (Tol. 1)  
 (excluding three dependent sounds)

“*iṭaiccol kiḷaviyum uriccol kiḷaviyum*  
*avaṅṅuvaḷi maruṅkiṅ tōṅṅum eṇpa*” (Tol. 643)

It is clear therefore that *Tolkāppiyar* and his predecessors recognised that *Peyar* and *Viṇai* are the only two parts of speech which enjoy an independent status. In this connection, *Vendryes*’ view also seems to support the position taken by *Tolkāppiyar*; for he says, “pursuing the process of elimination, we end by leaving intact only two parts of speech, the noun

and the verb. The other parts of speech all fall within these two fundamental classes.”<sup>1</sup>

*The views of the later Grammarians :*

Civagnāna Muṇivar is of opinion in his ‘Sūttiravirutti’ that all the verbal roots such as naṭa, vā, etc. are naturally uriccol and that they become verbs only when they are employed to denote action. His explanation is that as uriccol deals with the two kinds of qualities, i. e., abstract qualities and qualities of action, the verbal stems like naṭa, vā, etc., when they do not denote actual happening (puṭai peyarecci), should be held as the qualities of action.<sup>2</sup> The same scholar, contrary to his above view, seems to have stated in his commentary of S. 137 of Naṅṅūl that all the verbal forms are to be regarded as nouns (taṅi viṅaipeyar).

Subramaniya Dikshitar, the author of Pirayōka vivēkam, misunderstanding some of the suttirams in Tolkāppiyam, has advocated a new theory that there is only one part of speech in Tamil and that too uriccol.<sup>3</sup> Teyvaccilaiyār, one of the commentators of Tolkāppiyar’s Collatikāram, has remarked that what is expressed by uriccol in Tamil, is identical with that denoted by ‘dhātu’ in Sanskrit,<sup>4</sup> thereby suggesting that all the roots, whether nominal or verbal, belong to uriccol. He quotes as a proof of his point the expression ‘kuṛaiccoṛkiḷavi’ a synonym for uriccol found in Tolkāppiyam S. 482. Dr. P. S. Sastri, says, ‘This and the word kuṛaiccoṛkiḷavi mentioned in the last but one sutra of Eḷuttatikāram clearly suggest that uriccol is the root of nouns or verbs. It cannot be taken to be identical with Sanskrit dhātu as mentioned by

1. Vendryes, Language, p. 117.

2. Suttira virutti. p. 47.

3. Pirayōka Vivekam, S. 18.

4. Teyvaccilaiyār, commentary on Tolkāppiyam, S. 293.

Teyvaccilaiyār, since dhātu is, according to the Sanskrit Grammarians, a verbal root and since Tolkāppiyāṅār has not suggested anywhere in his work that all nouns are derived from verbal roots".<sup>5</sup> Though Dr. Sastri rightly expresses the defect of comparison drawn by Teyvaccilaiyār, he fully agrees with him in point of the nature of uriccol, i. e., uriccol comprises the nominal and verbal roots.

All the later grammarians and the commentators of the ancient grammar, Tolkappiyam, inspite of their slight differences in unimportant details, seems to have agreed in one point that uriccol contains in itself all the roots, and nouns and verbs are derivable from it. The following extracts taken from 'Tamil Studies' by Mr. M. Srinivasa Aiyangar, will show somewhat the reason for their failure to understand the real meaning of uriccol:— "Most of them were acquainted with both Tamil and Sanskrit, yet they had greater love and reverence for the latter ..... The authors of 'Nēminādam' and 'Virasōḷiam' and the commentators of the Tolkappiyam and the Kural countenanced the above view. Again, in the eighteenth century, the authors of 'Ilakkaṅak-kottu' and 'Prayōga vivēkam', both of whom were good Sanskritists, boldly asserted that Tamil was a dialect of Sanskrit with a grammar common to both."<sup>6</sup>

*The true significance of uriccol :*

Tolkāppiyar has clearly pointed out his and his predecessors' opinion of the nature of uriccol in the line "uriccol kiḷaviyum, *avaṟṟuvali* marunūkin tōṅṟum eṇṇa" (643). He has again expounded what he means by *avaṟṟu valī* 'by the side of them' in the line 'peyarīṇum viṇaiyiṇum mei taṭumāṟi' (781)

5. Dr. P. S. Sastri, History of Grammatical Theories in Tamil, p. 200.

6. M. Srinivasa Iiyangar, p. 152.

Uriccol, like Iṭaiccol, shows, on the face of it, that it has no independence and it must belong either to noun or verb. To suppose that those words exclusively belong to poetry or that those independent of Peyarccol and Vigaiccol are termed as Uriccol will be easily shown as incorrect. In Tamil, there is no word set apart to be used solely in poetry. In my article on 'Valakkum Ceyyuḷum' published in Tamil-polil I have attempted to expose the hollowness of the commonly held view of the significance of Tiriccol, quoting a considerable number of words which are even now in the daily use but which are considered to belong to the category of Tiriccol by scholars.<sup>7</sup>

The word 'urimai' at all times, means only 'right' not 'independence'. We find this word expressing this meaning throughout the ancient classics.

*'uyartiṇaikkū urimayum aḥṛiṇaikkū urimayum'* (Tol. 644)

*'urimai uṇaittu ivvulaku'* (Kural. 578)

By 'uripporuḷ' we understand that the subject treated in Akam literature is entitled only to the human beings.

The 120 words enumerated in 'uriyiyal' of Tolkappiyam do not suggest in the least that they could be the basic roots of noun or verb. Can anybody venture to say, after carefully studying these words that uriccol is defective either in form or in meaning? It is true that Tolkāppiyar has regarded uriccol as 'kuṛaiccolkiḷavi' (482). The latter expression unquestionably points out that uriccol has some defect of its own. What is that defect? The defect is mentioned in the definition of uriccol. Uriccol, incapable of being declined in all cases which the pure noun enjoys or being used in the

7. Dr. V. Sp. Manickam, Tolkappiyap putumai, p. 72.



imperative which characterises the pure verb but capable of being declined or conjugated in some respects is considered as a separate unit. Yet as the term uriccol suggests, it is bound to belong either to noun or verb, according to the circumstances in which it is put to use. Such a kind of uriccol seems to have sprung only from *isai*, 'sound' *kuzippu* 'implication' *paṇṇu* 'quality'. That this is the meaning expressed by the word *kuṛaiccol kiṇavi* is evident from the line,

'*peyarinum vinaiyinum meṅ taṭumaṇi*' (Tol. 781)

(appearing ambiguously as noun or verb)

Therefore, it may be concluded that uriccol is not the basic part of noun or verb but the defective nature of it. Then it naturally follows that the words *noṭa*, *vā*, etc., which enjoy the fuller application of the definition of verb can by no means be classified as uriccol and are purely verbal forms. The grammarians who propose that uriccol in itself contains all the roots of noun and verb fail to perceive that this advocacy of theirs renders the classifications of all words, primarily into noun and verb unnecessary and futile. Arasan Caṇmukanār in his *Payira virutti* has briefly criticized the false theory of the later grammarians.<sup>8</sup>

*The unique nature of the verb :*

There is another controversial subject which deserves discussion in this section. Iṭampūraṇar and Cēṇāvaraiyar show *uṇṇaṇ* 'he ate' as an instance of verb under the *suttiram* 'viṇai eṇappaṭuvatu' (Tol. 682). Following suit, Pavanantiyar has formulated thus:—

"*ceypavaṇ karuvi nilam ceyal kālam*

*ceyporuḷ āṇum taruvatu viṇai)ē*"

(Nan. 320.)

8. Arasan Cammukanar, *Payira virutti*, p. 228



This and the illustration shown by the two commentators give rise to the new thought that verb means finite verb. The Nannūl Suttiram indicates only the significance of finite verb, not the definition of verb. *uṇṇāṇ* 'he ate' no doubt, is a verb. It would be the best example, if shown under the suttirams 112 and 42' of Tolkāppiyam. In the example *uṇṇāṇ*, 'uṇ' alone is the verbal root. It alone deserves to be regarded as part of speech. The preterite sign *ṇ* and the pronominal suffix *āṇ* are appended to the verbal root, in accordance with the rule 'avaṇṇuvali maruṅkiṇ tōṇṇum' (Tol. 643). These two appended particles are called 'Iṭaiccol'. A minute analysis of the suttiram,

*"viṇai eṇappaṇuvatu vēṇṇumai koḷḷātu*  
*niṇaiyum kālai kālamotu tōṇṇum"* (Tol. 682)

makes it clear that the characteristic of verb is to possess only the *capacity* to indicate time. The commentators took a false position when they interpreted that the verb should include in itself the tense-sign too. It must be remembered here though the essential characteristic of a noun is its declension, nobody will say that *avaṇ* 'he' *avaḷ* 'she' etc., are not nouns because of no case-sign affixed. *maram* 'tree' is shown as an example of noun by the said commentators themselves. If the verbal root, tense-infix and the personal sign go to make up a verb, it is untenable to say, as Tolkāppiyar said '*niṇaiyum kālai kālamotu tōṇṇum*'. (It will express time tacitly). Moreover we expect him say that not only time but the gender and number too will be apparent in a verb. Tolkāppiyar wishes us to understand by framing this suttiram 682 that expressing time is the part and parcel of a verbal root and it is the latent capacity of it. Nacciṇārkkiniyar, another commentator of Tolkāppiyam, understanding the

real import of this *suttirum* shows *uṇ*, *tiṇ* etc., as examples of verb under it. This is the view that is acceptable.

*The meanings of 'viṇai':*

*Viṇai*, *ceyal*, and *tolil* are commonly regarded as synonyms. But on closer examination, it will be found that a great difference lies in their meaning and usage. This distinction can be understood by a reference to the expressions, 'viṇai-yiyal' in *Collatikaram* and 'ceyuṭiyal', in *Porulatikaram* employed in *Tolkappiyam*, wherein *ceyyuṭ* is found to arise from the root *cey* (to do). As a verbal noun, it means "anything that is done or composed - a composition". The compounds like 'ceyviṇai' and 'viṇai ceyalvakai' also emphasize this distinction. *Viṇaipeyyar* and *Tolipeyyar* are the grammatical terms different in meaning. The former denotes the personal noun *naṭantān* (one who walked) possessing the same form as that of the finite verb (he walked), while the latter denotes a verbal noun *naṭattal* (walking). *Viṇai* itself is a word with different meanings which are derived according to the context. It means deed in 'ceytu irāṅkā viṇai' (*Puram*. 10), employment in 'viṇaiyē aṭavaṅkku uyirē' (*Kurun-tokai*. 135), an undertaking in 'āḷ viṇai', the results of action in former births in 'iruḷ cēr iruviṇai' (*Kural*. 5) and war in, *viṇai naṅrē* (do. 673).

*The origin of viṇai (வினா)*

*Viṇai*, meaning 'a doing' as a verbal noun probably arose from the crude root *viṇ* meaning 'to do'. *Viṇā* meaning 'a question' also sprang probably from the same root, meaning a deed again but with special reference to a particular deed, namely questioning. 'Viṇā uṭai viṇaiccol'

(Tol. 728) contains the special and general meanings of the words formed from the same root.

'ā' in *vinā* is a particle of specialisation restricting the meaning of the word to questioning or a question. Likewise, 'ai' in *vinai* is a particle of specialisation, restricting the meaning in this word to 'a deed' as a noun. Whereas *vinā* could be used both as a verb and as a noun, *vinai* is used only as a noun.

## 2. THE NATURE OF VERBAL ROOTS

### *Three kinds of roots :*

It is generally accepted that there are three kinds of roots in Tamil, viz. verbal roots, nominal roots and the roots common to both noun and verb. The common roots may be sub-divided into two classes. One set of roots are identical both in meaning and form, e. g. *aṇi*, as a verb means to adorn with ornaments; as a noun, an ornament; *tupi*, as a verb, to cut in pieces; as a noun a piece of cloth. Roots identical in forms but different in meanings constitute the second sub-division - e. g. *vil*, as a verb, to sell; as a noun, a bow. *ōṇu*, as a verb to run; as a noun, a tile. Dr. Caldwell seems to have made no mention of the existence of this sub-division.

### *The common roots:*

The existence of the common roots is not unknown to the earliest Tamil grammarians. The sole verbal roots *naṭa*, 'walk' *uṇ*, 'eat' *tiṇ* 'chew' etc., can never be declined, nor the roots entirely belonging to noun indicate time. The possibility of either having declension or conjugation rests only on the roots of the twofold use. In order to give clarity, Tolkāppiyar explains the nature of verb in a double way, i. e. positive and negative in the *suttiram*,

“*viṅṅaiyeṅap paṭuvatu vē ṛṛumai koḷḷātu*  
*niṅṅaiyum kalaik kalamoṣu tōṅṅu*” (Tol. 682)

(verb - a part of speech which has no declension and which will express time by implication).

Apparently, it appears inappropriate to say with reference to the nature of a verb *vē ṛṛumai koḷḷātu* - a characteristic of the noun. But the existence of the common roots (for verb as well as noun) renders this statement necessary. In the verb form, it will take conjugation but not declension; in the noun form it will take declension but not conjugation. The latter point is also brought out by Tolkāppiyar's statement,

‘*peṅṅarnilaik kiḷavi kalam tōṅṅā*’ (Tol. 533)

Thus the double description - positive and negative - is balanced for the verb form as well as the noun form by Tolkāppiyar himself.

It seems, on scrutiny, what are called common roots are primarily the roots of verb. The so called indiscriminate common roots *aṅi*, *muṅi*, *col*, etc., denote at first verbal actions, to beautify, to break in two, and to speak. They become nouns only in their secondary meanings, like *aṅi*, that which is put on; *muṅi*, what is broken in two; *col*, what is spoken. To denote a secondary meaning without any mark of derivation is one of the peculiarities of the Tamil roots, i. e. denoting both action and its object. As this is the nature of this kind of verbal roots, they do not require any object in the accusative case. Nobody says *aṅiyai aṅi* and *collaic col*, as in the case of *vantēṅ* which is in no need of *nāṅ* as its nominative. Knowing this feature, Tolkāppiyar, the most reputed of the Tamil grammarians has laid the rule to his credit,

“*vaṭaṅkiyal maruṅkil kuṅṅuva kuṅṅum*” (Tol. 596)

(In actual usage those that deserve to be ceased will cease)

*Objection to Sivagnanamunivar's and others views :*

Some of the statements made by certain commentators like Sivagnānamuṅivar and Āṅumuka Nāvalar, regarding the verbal and nominal roots reveal an imperfect understanding of the characteristics peculiar to the Tamil roots. They contend that a word without any change in form cannot have a change in meaning and change in meaning necessarily involves also a change in form. They accept that *tirai*, 'to ripple' *nurai*, 'to froth' *talir*, 'to bud' *pū*, 'to bloom' *kāi*, 'to bear fruit' *kaṇi*, 'to ripen' and the like are originally verbal roots. They do not agree that these forms can by themselves denote things. They assert that they denote wave, froth, bud, blossom, unripen fruit, and fruit respectively, definitely having *i* a suffix of agency in the end. If so, the derivative forms would be *tiraii*, *nuraii*, *taliraii*, *pūi*, *kāi* and *kaṇi*. Nobody can deny that their argument is almost logically correct. Paul, a German philologist, says :- “Grammar and logic do not coincide, because the formation and application of language does not proceed on the basis of strict logical inquiry, but by the natural and untrained movement of the groups of ideas, which either follows or not the agency of the laws more or less logical, according to the natural or acquired capacity of each individual.”<sup>1</sup> The commentators' principle is applicable only to the derivatives from nouns like *muḷḷi* 'a thorny shrub' and *villi* 'a bower'. It does not hold good to the realm of verbal roots, capable of being used also as nouns which constitute by far the most numerous class. We do not come across anywhere in the extant Tamil literature from the age of Tolkāppiyam down to the present, such forms as *tiraii*,

1. Paul, Principles of the History of Language, p. 18.



*nurai*, etc., as nouns. On the contrary, some of these forms were used in the ancient classics as verbal participles. Sivagnānamuṇivar and his followers evade the question as to the non-occurrence of *i* in those places, in the whole Tamil literature, by saying that *i* the suffix of agency is ever understood. They are anxious to introduce compulsorily a rule which has no precedent either in literature or in practice and which is against the fundamental principle of 'ilakkiyam kaṇṭu ataṅku ilakkaṇam iyampal'. (Nan. 141) 'Grammatical rules are evolved from the usage, oral or written. Even Aracañ Caṇmukaṇār, a great Tamil scholar of the first half of this century, expressed his disagreement with this untenable view, but unfortunately failed to realize the inherent nature of the Tamil roots.<sup>2</sup> His argument is that the verbal roots *tirai*, *nurai*, etc., express the meanings wave, froth, etc., by means of metonymy. In metonymy, the expressed word should be a noun in order to suggest another related meaning as is given by the rule 'oṅṅaṅ peyarāṅ ataṅkuiyai piṇṭai' (Nan. 290). As *tirai*, *nurai* and the like are verbal roots, his reasoning is objectionable.

*Tolkāppiyar's classification .*

Taking into consideration collectively all the verbal roots, including the appended formatives, we will find that the verbal roots in Tamil are of three kinds:- monosyllabic, dissyllabic and trisyllabic.

“ōreḷuttu orumoḷi ireḷuttu orumoḷi  
iraṅṅu iraṅṅu icaikkum toṅṅarmoḷi uḷappaṅa  
mūṅṅē molinilai tōṅṅiya neṅṅiyē.” (Tol. 45)

This sutṭiram is a perfect analysis of the entire roots in Tamil. It is significant that the third classification is styled as 'toṅṅarmoḷi'. 'Toṅṅarmoḷi' does not mean a sentence but a word with more

2. Arasan Caṇmukanar, Payira Virutti, p. 227.

than two letters. Words having shortened *u*, like *aṅṅu*, *varampu*, *aṅṅaku* etc., mostly fill up this class. In this language, so far as the verb is concerned, no word with more than four letters is to be found.

Dr. Caldwell, the father of the Dravidian Comparative Philology, has made us realise that 'the Dravidian roots may invariably be traced up to monosyllabic roots, by a careful removal of successive accretions'.<sup>3</sup> Though we do find that a large proportion of the Tamil verbal roots are dissyllabic and trisyllabic, we should not forget that the ultimate basis from which these roots have sprung are indeed monosyllabic. Yet, as the three kinds of roots are indispensable in daily use, Tolkaṅṅiyar's classification of all the Tamil roots into *ōreḷuttu orumoḷi*, *ireḷuttu orumoḷi* and *toḷarmōḷi* educates us about the line of development of the roots and the daily practice.

*The combination of verbal roots :*

Let us now turn our attention to the study of the combination of verbal roots with nouns or some other forms, together with the significance of certain verbal roots which they have acquired in practice.

1. Some nouns have been prefixed to the verbal roots so that we find compound words with a noun and a verb used at all ages. I shall first adduce a few instances and then explain the peculiar construction of them.

(a) <i>talai - kaviḷ</i>	'to hang down ones head'
<i>talai - kuṅi</i>	'to hang down ones head'
<i>talai - koḷu</i>	'to support'
<i>talai - accai</i>	'to nod'
<i>talai - iḷu</i>	'to interfere'

3. Dr. Caldwell, A Comparative Grammar of the Dravidian Languages, p. 196.



(b)	<i>kai - koḷu</i>	'to lend a helping hand'
	<i>kai - niḷḷu</i>	'to attack'
	<i>kai - pāṛ</i>	'to read the lines of the palm'
	<i>kai - p - paḷḷu</i>	'to seize'
	<i>kai - y - āḷu</i>	'to employ'
(c)	<i>kaṇ - vai</i>	'to cast the evil eye'
	<i>kaṇ - oḷu</i>	'to be sympathetic'
	<i>kaṇ - vaḷar</i>	'to sleep'
	<i>kaṇ - pōḷu</i>	'to cast wistful looks'
	<i>kaṇ - pāṛ</i>	'to show compassion'
(d)	<i>kāl - koḷ</i>	'to plant'
	<i>kāl - āḷḷu</i>	'to be in affluent position'
	<i>kāl - vāṅku</i>	'to retreat'
	<i>kāl - vai</i>	'to enter'
	<i>kāl - āḷu</i>	'to rest from walking'
(e)	<i>aḷi - kōḷ</i>	'to lay a foundation'
	<i>aḷi - paḷi</i>	'to surrender'
	<i>aḷi - p - paḷu</i>	'to become accustomed'
	<i>aḷi - viḷ</i>	'to fall prostrate'
	<i>aḷi - vai</i>	'to begin'

It is interesting to note that the prefixed nouns are always the several parts of body like head, hand, eye, leg, foot, etc. These nouns prefixed to ordinary verbs such as, *kaviḷ*, *kuṅi*, *koḷu*, *pāṛ*, *vai* entirely change their meanings. *Koḷu* means to give; but when it takes *talai* and *kai* as prefixes the compound words change to mean to undertake the whole business and to lend aid respectively. *vai* 'to lay' becomes

to mean to look at wistfully and to step, respectively when prefixed by *kaṅ* and *kāl*. *Asai* means to remove; but *talai-yaṣai* to nod the head in approval. *Vaḷar* means to grow; but *kaṅvaḷar* to sleep. Here we find abstract notions are expressed by figurative terms drawn from the physical world

Nowdays some of the prefixed nouns do not find a place; yet the ordinary verbs themselves will suffice to indicate the figurative meaning which they expressed when they were associated with their corresponding prefixes. This may be explained by the law of association of ideas.

2. In the Sangam classics we come across a considerable number of instances where a verbal noun is combined with a verbal root. Of these two parts, the first has a particular meaning; the second a general meaning. The second element is restricted only to the words *taral* 'to give' and *varal* 'to come'. It alone has all conjugations. Examples are:—

<i>aḷi-taral</i>	'to become grief'	<i>aṅcu-varal</i>	'to fear'
<i>peyaṛ-taral</i>	'to return'	<i>aṅai-vāral</i>	'to move'
<i>iḷi-taral</i>	'to despise'	<i>tuyal-vāral</i>	'to swing'
<i>cūḷ-taral</i>	'to think out'	<i>katu-varal</i>	'to hasten'

Of these two elements, the last is regularly conjugated, whereas the first is not affected. e. g., *aḷi-tantāṅ*, *aḷi-tara*, *aḷi-tantu*, *aḷi-tarum*, *aḷi-tariṅ*. The only difference which exists between the isolated verbal root and the second member of this compound word lies in this that the latter cannot be used as the second person singular or plural of the imperative like *cḷi-tā*, *aṅcu-vā* and so on. In the medieval period, these auxiliaries are not used. Consequently, the first real root takes the regular conjugation, like, *aḷintāṅ*, *aḷiya*, *aḷintu*,

*aliyum, aliyiṅ*. When the second element disappeared, the first, like all other verbal roots, is capable of being used in the imperative mood. To use these compounds in our age however, seems to be pedantic.

3. In a few instances, we cannot altogether dispense with the use of the second part. The second member is absolutely necessary to convey the meaning and to pronounce the first. Instances are *paruvaral* 'suffering', *aṇavaral* 'to embrace', *ulamaraḷ* 'to be perturbed', *alamaraḷ* 'to be vexed' etc. These words are similar to the previous one in conjugation, but they differ from the former by the persistent use of the second element. In the examples shown above, it is a moot point as to whether *varaḷ* or *maralaḷ* constitutes the second element. A. Kumarasami Pulavar holds *varaḷ* to be the second member.<sup>4</sup> Considering the words *ulamantu* and *alamantu*, the verbal participles of *ulamaraḷ* and *alamaraḷ* and also the constant use of *taraḷ* and *varaḷ* as auxiliaries, we are prone to take his side. If *maralaḷ* is really the second element the verbal participles should be *ulamaruvi*, not *ulamantu*, and *alamaruvi*, not *alamantu*. But one may raise an objection that *v* before *m* will not disappear, quoting a parallel instance *valamvaraḷ*. In support of the splitting-up into *alam-maraḷ*, one may even produce an example, *kāmaru*, a combination of *kāṁam-ḷ-maru* or *kāṁ-ḷ-maru*, where *m* the final is elided. Yet for the present I prefer to subscribe to the view holding *varaḷ* as the second part on the assumption that *v* is first assimilated by constant use and then is elided.

4. A peculiar combination is also found in the following illustrations:

<i>kēṅṅi</i>	<i>maṅṅanti</i>	<i>niṅṅi</i>	<i>kāṅṅi</i>
<i>ceṅṅi</i>	<i>kaṅṅanti</i>	<i>eṅṅi</i>	

4. Vinaip pakupata Vilakkam. p. 6.

Here *i* a verbal root 'to give' is appended to the verbal participle of preterite tense. This combination differs in many particulars from those of *iḷitaral* and *ulamaraḷ*. *kēḷḷi* simply means *kēḷ* 'to hear'. It is *i* the second element that is regularly conjugated, like *kēḷḷimin*, *maḇantiḷōy*, *kāḷḷi yāyīn*, etc. In the instances *eḷḷi* and *kāḷḷi*, 'i' the sign of the verbal participle has disappeared before long *i*. It is therefore wrong to split them into *eḷ+i* and *kāḷḷu+i*. These forms probably imply some sense of respect. Whereas, for example, *ceḷ* means 'to go' *ceḷḷi* might mean 'please go' (cf. *pōni* in Telugu meaning 'let him go'). Tolkāppiyar has countenanced this peculiar combination as is evident from the *suttiram*,

*"muṇṇilai muṇṇar iyum ēyuni ;*  
*annilai marapiṇ meyūrntu varume"* (Tol. 934)

(*i* also will be suffixed to the second person when  
it has a suitable consonant)

##### 5. The auxiliary verbs :

The words *tā*, *vā*, *i* shown above as auxiliaries, lost their own significance and became appended to the verbs of different forms. Of these three words, as *tā* and *vā* themselves used to take *i* as their appendix like *tantiyāyēḷ* and *vantiyāyāyīn*, *i* alone is to be reckoned with as the foremost verbal root which displayed the role of auxiliary at first. There are many reasons to confirm this supposition. The fact that *i* has the advantage of being used in all grammatical forms including the second person singular of the imperative, when used as an auxiliary, the absence of single instance to show that *i* ever stood in need of an appendix and the many functions which long *i* or its shortened 'i' fulfils in the domain of grammar, all go to prove its high antiquity. I am inclined to believe therefore that *i* should top the list of

the Tamil verbs. *i*, being the easiest vowel to pronounce and its meaning being the rudimentary one, we have every reason to hold that it was the earliest in origin.

*iru* and *iṭu* are most largely used as auxiliaries from the medieval period, like *eḷuntiru* and *naṭantiṭu*. They have almost taken the place of *i* nowadays.

6. In Tamil, a verbal root is often repeated twice, occasionally thrice too, to denote completeness or quickness. e.g.

*tēṭu tēṭeṇat tēṭiṇēṇ* 'I searched thoroughly'  
*pōṭu pōṭeṇap pōṭṭēṇ* 'I went ahead unhesitatingly'

Tolkāppiyar seems to have framed a rule for this repetition under certain circumstances;

“*viraicol aṭukkē mūṅṅu varampākun*” (Tol. 936)

(Repetition of a word to denote haste should not exceed three times)

#### 7. A new kind of classification :

The examination of the significance of the verbal roots leads us to place them into three groups:— (1) roots exclusively belonging to rational beings (2) roots belonging to irrational beings and (3) the roots which belong to both groups: *kaṭṭal* 'to learn', *paṭṭal* 'to read', *eḷutal* 'to write', *arāyṭal* 'to research', etc: resolve themselves into the first group. *pūttal* 'to bloom', *kāyttal* 'to bear unripe fruit', *kaṇital* 'to ripen', *paḷuttal* 'to grow ripe', etc., belong to the second. Numerous words of this group may be transferred to the first by means of metaphor. *iṭa* 'to die', *piṭa* 'to be born', *uṇ* 'to eat', *uṇṅku* 'to sleep', etc., are common to both. These

three classes may be subdivided into many categories; but it will be out of place here. To adduce a few examples here will be enough to show how these groups may be sub-divided without the least expense of enthusiasm.

Let us take the verbal root *iṅ* 'to give birth', (இங்) which belongs to the common group. It has the exclusive use of feminine gender :

'*iṅga poḷutil peritu uvakkum*' (Kural. 69)

'*iṅru Iḷaippaiṅga koṭuvāip pētai*' (Akam. 3)

Nowhere in Tamil literature do we find a single instance as *iṅṅāṅ*. But *peṅu* 'to bring forth' is a common root to both genders. *pirital* 'separation' one of the five themes in Love Poetry is entirely used with the husband like 'talaivaṅ talaiviyai ppirintāṅ'. It is harsh to the Tamil ears to say 'talaivi pirintāl'. *iraṅkal* 'lamentation' another love theme is attributed only to the lady. Tolkāppiyar has given clue to this kind of classification in his *suttiram*,

"*peyarinṅum toḷiṅṅum piriṅṅavai yellām*  
*mayāṅkal kūṅṅā vaḷḷkkuvaḷip poḷḷama*" (Tol. 533)

(words common to nouns and verbs will denote either of them in usage. It should not be mistaken)

These refinements, however, have now been lost. A minute investigation into this field will not only be interesting but also instructive.

#### 8. Idiomatic roots :

Tolkāppiyar has made an inquiry into the usage of a few verbs. He says that *tā* and *vā* are used only when the recipient



is in the first or in the second person and the words *cel* and *koḷu* belong to the third person. It is evident from this that the verbal roots themselves resolve into some particular pronouns, without any aid of construction. Thus in a sentence, *avaṅ poruḷaiḱ koḷuttāṅ*, 'he gave (him) a thing' the dative case is understood; yet by rule, we may correctly supply the place with the word *avaṅukku*. It seems to me by this rule that the sentences *avaṅ eṅakkuṭ tantāṅ*, 'he paid to me' *avaṅ eṅpāl vantāṅ* 'he came to me' might have sounded unidiomatic to the ancient scholars. Simply saying, *avaṅ tantāṅ* would mean 'he gave it to me' and *avaṅ vantāṅ* would express 'he came to me'. Tamil idiom requires no dative or locative case in these places.

9. Tolkāppiyar has also made clear the different meanings of *i*, *tā* and *koḷu* which are considered synonyms in our days. These three words are employed only in begging; yet they betray the status of the beggar. *i* means 'to give to the inferior'; *tā*, to give as equals; and *koḷu* 'to give to the superior'. An interesting analogy will be here furnished from the book entitled 'Semantics' by Prof. Breal.

"When the popular mind has once devised a certain kind of differentiation, it is naturally tempted to complete the series. It is well known that there are languages in which the various acts of life are not designated in the same way if an exalted personage be concerned, as when the ordinary man is in question. The Cambodians do not designate the members of the body nor the daily operations of life by the same terms when speaking of the king, as when speaking of a mere individual. To express that a man eats, they used the word *si*; in speaking of a chief, they would say *pisa*: if they spoke of a bonze or of a king, it would be *soi*."<sup>5</sup>

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5. Prof. Breal, Semantics, p. 35.

10. *The inherent capacity of verbal root:*

Philologists writing on the Dravidian structure of the verbal roots have unanimously agreed that the crude theme of the verb itself is expressive of the second person singular of the imperative. Almost all the commentators contradict this view and give different explanations. This will be discussed in due course.



### 3. CHANGES IN THE VERBAL ROOTS

*The interpretation of a Nanṅūl Suttiram (139)*

Dr. Caldwell in the section on 'Roots' has briefly treated this subject, taking illustrations, in the main, from nouns. As this thesis entirely devotes itself to 'Verbs' it is bound to deal with this subject quoting verbs as illustrations. Besides, this head needs an elaborate investigation, as it has been scarcely touched by grammarians, both ancient and medieval alike. Tolkāppiyar has said nothing of the changes which the roots either as noun or verb undergo, when added by any suffix. Pavaṇantiyār whose ambition is to study the composite nature of a single word, has countenanced the occurrence of changes in the verbal root itself and laid a rule authorising such modifications, in the suttiram,

*"viḷampiya pakuti vēṛātahun vitiyē"* (Nan. 139)

The meaning of this is that the said roots *naḷa*, *vā*, etc., will alter and the alteration is lawful. This is the interpretation given by Mailainātar, the first commentator of Nanṅūl. The comment of Caṅkara nāmacivāyar and Civagnānamuṇivar to this suttiram is inappropriate to the context. *Pakuti* is an adaptation of the Sanskrit word 'pirakṛti' the uninflected form of a word. It means that it is incapable of being altered. This idea is in the mind of these two commentators as is manifest from their own words 'vēṛuṇātātatu niraḷakṛti

yāmanṅṅi. vēṟupaṭṭatu pirakirutī ākātu'. They contend that the changes in the roots are not to be treated separately, as *vikāram*, one of the constituents of the divisible word includes them. But as the author of *Nannūl* has indicated the changes to which the uncompounded words of quality and the suffixes of person are subject, in the following *suttirams* :

'*iṟu pōtal iṟaiyukāram iyyātal*' (Nan. 136)

'*ā ō ākolum ceyyuṟuṟ urittē*' (Nan 353)

outside the jurisdiction of *vikāram*, our inference that the *suttiram* (*viṟampiya pakuti*) in question purports to hint the changes occurring in roots themselves is reasonable. Then the interpretation of *Mailainātar* holds good.

Though this is an elaborate subject, I restrict myself to mention only the major changes which the actual verbal root undergoes, on the addition of the signs of person and time and on the conversion into verbal noun and the causative form. According to a rule in *Nannūl*, there are twenty-three endings in which all words terminate (eleven vowels, eleven consonants and one short u). For the sake of clearness and simplicity, each ending will be discussed individually, in the order given by *Nannūl*.

*Vowel endings :*

1. *naṟa      naṟi      naṟu*
2. *ira        iri        iru*
3. *iṟa        iṟi        iṟu*
4. *uṟa        uṟi        uṟu*
5. *maṟa      maṟi      maṟu*

These examples indicate how the primary vowels *a*, *i* and *u* play an important function, in the specialisation of meanings, without altering the preceding consonants. Possibly the whole series of them have an ulterior relationship, in virtue of their possession in common, the same nuclei or radical bases, the central consonants *ṭ*, *r*, *l*, *ṛ* and the same generic signification.

### 1. *a* ending : (அ)

The roots of this termination are without exception dissyllabic.

*naṭa* 'to walk' :— its transitive verb sometimes becomes *naṭāttu*, instead of *naṭattu* cf. 'yāṇā naṭāttukinṇēṇ' (Kārikai).

*cuma* 'to bear' : It becomes *cummā* 'with no purpose' colloquially, instead of *cumavātu*, in the negative verbal participle.

Verbal noun :— a few verbs form their verbal nouns thus; *naṭai*, *cumai*, *paṭai*, *valai*, etc.

Verbal and relative participles :— In ancient classics some of the roots of this kind have probably taken the forms *naṭaii*, *naṭaiiya*, *kaṭaii* and *kaṭaiiya*. That is, the forms of the verbal nouns are the bases from which the verbal and relative participles are effected.

### 2. *ā* ending : (ஆ)

Most of the words of this ending are monosyllabic. A few words like *ankā* 'to open the month' and *annā* 'to gape' are also to be found.

*cā* 'to die' :— it becomes *ce* in the preterite tense like *ceṭṭāṇ*.

*yā* 'to bind':— After the Sangam period this root has practically lost its initial consonant and has become similar in form to *ā* 'to become', *yākkai* > *ākkai*.

*vā* and *tā* 'to jump over'. *tā* has also the meaning 'to spread'. These are the two words which originally and really bear this termination. The grammatical forms of these words differ very much from those of *vā* 'to come' and *tā* 'to give' the corrupted forms of *varu* and *taru* respectively.

*koṇā* 'to bring':— Aṟumuka Nāvalar says that it changes into *koṇar*.

3. *i* ending: (இ)

Verbal noun.— *paṇi* becomes *pāṇi*; *tuppi* > *tūppi*; and *kuṇi* > *kūṇi*.

4. *i* ending:— (ஈ)

This ending calls for no remark.

5. *u* ending: (உ)

(a) lengthening of the initial vowel to form verbal noun:—

*keṭu* becomes *kēṭu*; *paṭu* > *pāṭu*; and *cuṭu* > *cūṭu*.

(b) change of u into ai for the above purpose:—

*taku* becomes *takai*; *aṭu* > *aṭai*; and *uṭu* > *uṭai*.

(c) to lengthen the initial vowel and change the final:—

*viṭu* becomes not only *viṭu* but *viṭai*; *iṭu*, *iṭu* *iṭai*; and *uṭu*, *ūṭu*, *uṭai*.

- (d) lengthening of the initial vowel as a compensation for the final u :-

*viḷu > viḷ; eḷu > ēḷ.*

- (e) lengthening of the final vowel :-

*taḷu > taḷū; veru > verū; kuḷu > kuḷū,*

- (f) reduplication of the consonants in the preterite tense :-

*viḷu - viḷḷa; miku - mikka; paḷu - paḷḷa.*

- (g) formation of the preterite tense from the verbal noun :-

*nakai - nakkaittēṅ; pakai - pakaittēṅ; muyarci - muyarçittēṅ.*

- (h) lengthening of the penultimate vowel for euphony :-

*paravu - parāvū; viravu - virāvū.*

- (i) *varu* and *taru* :- As this is the original ending of these words, I have shown under this head. These words have kept 'r' in all the grammatical expressions save the imperative and the preterite tense. *Vāram* 'week' may be derived from *varu*.

#### 6. *ū* ending : (~~est~~)

Only a very few verbs take this ending. *kū* sometimes is compounded with other words like *aḷaikū* 'to challenge' and *iṅaikū* 'to cry'.

7. *ē* ending : (ஏ)

*Vē* 'to boil' becomes *ve* (வெ) in the preterite tense. It retains its long vowel in all other connections. I cherish a doubt about the long vowel of this word which will be discussed in the next chapter.

8. *ai* ending : (ஈ)

(a) *ai* wholly disappears in some grammatical connections like *kaḷkum*, *taḷkum*, *vittum*. Their roots are *kaḷai*, *taḷai*, *vitai* respectively

(b) It is sometimes subject to extraordinary alterations *kai* 'to be bitter' changes into *kaca*. *vai* 'to abuse' becomes *vacavu* or *vacai*. In this change a consonant *c* generally appears. Even in noun *mai* 'ink' becomes *maci*.

(c) It greatly evidences a tendency to become *a* in the colloquial; e.g., *vaṭṭāṅ* > *vaccāṅ*; *taṭṭāṅ* > *taccāṅ*.

9. *o* ending : (ஔ)

*no* 'to suffer' (நொ) alone has this ending. It is lengthened in all forms except in the preterite. The original form of '*no*' is in doubt. It will be discussed along with *vé*.

10. *ō* ending : (ஔ)

*pō* 'to go' is a softened form of *pōku*. Its original form will be discussed along with '*āku*' in the next chapter. It is to be remembered that it was not a verb in the days of *Tolkāppiyar* and its meaning also was different from that of the present day.

### 11. *au ending* : (ஔ)

*vau* and *kau* 'to seize' (வௌ, கௌ) are only two words in possession of this ending. They sometimes have been written as well as pronounced as *vav* and *kav* (வவ், கவ்). Even the author of *Nāṅṅūl* has written thus : '*tēy pār cel vav*' in the *suttiram* 137. Therefore this ending gradually becomes obscure.

*A peculiarity noticeable in the change of root - vowels :*

'to divide' *paku* (a+u) becomes *pā*  
 'to spare' *miku* (i+u) „ *mī*  
 'to enter' *puku* (u+u) „ *pō*

From these illustrations adduced, we notice how the two short vowels associate themselves into a long one after completely eliminating the consonant in the middle. Curiously enough, these corrupted verbs take the same grammatical forms, as though they were the real ones :

*paku* :- *pakuttatu, pakuttu.*  
*pā* :- *pāttatu, pāttu.*  
           '*pattarum paṅpa*' (Cilampu. XI)  
*miku* :- *mikuntatu, mikuntu.*  
*mī* :- *mintatu, mintu.*  
*puku* :- *pukuntatu, pukuntu.*  
*pō* :- *pōntatu, pōntu.*  
           '*pōntu acointa muralvāic caṅkam*' (Cilampu. VII)

This corrupted root *pō* 'to enter' (புகு) should not be confused with *pō* another corrupted root of *pōku* 'to go' (புகு) though

certain poets and scholars have used as if they were one. *Pō* 'to go' will take the forms *pōṅṅēṅ*, *pōṅṅa* or *pōkiya*, *pōyiṅa*, etc., but 'pō' the corruption of *puku* will take the forms *pōntēṅ*, *pōnta*, *pōntaṅa*, etc. It is clear now that these two sets of examples are originally different from one another, yet confusion has been made by the indifferent use in later period. Likewise *pā* the corruption of *paku* 'to divide' is different from the original *pā* 'to spread' though the forms seem to be identical. *pā* 'to spread' will take the forms *pāyatu*, *pāya*, *pāyiṅa*, etc., whereas *pā* 'to divide' will take *pāttatu*, *pātta*, *pāttāṅa*, etc. in conjugation. These two have their distinct usage in literature even now.

*Consonant endings :*

12. *n̄ ending* : (ṅ)

Only one verbal root has this ending. That is *uriñ* 'to rub one's self'. This invariably takes 'cu' for enunciation in the end. Thus *uriñcu* is the base for all grammatical expressions.

'*tiñkāl naṅṅukuraṅṅu uriñciya*' (Muruka: 32)

Even in *viṅaittokai* like '*ā uriñcu taṅi*', *uriñcu* is employed. It may be said that this *n̄* ending does not exist now.

13. *n ending* : (ṅ)

There are two words *porun*, a verb and *verin*, a noun with this ending. *porun* 'to act' has taken *tu* as a help to enunciation and has changed into *poruntu* differing in meaning with the similar form *poruntu* 'to agree' the *piṅavigai* form of which is *poruttu*.

14. *m ending* : (ṁ)

*Tirum* 'to return' is only one verb with this ending. It has become in use *tirumpu* with the addition of *pu*. It is



curious to know how these three endings or words *uriñ*, *porun* and *tirum* have become *uriñcu*, *poruntu* and *tirumpu*. The three newly added vowel-consonants *cu*, *tu* and *pu* are not formatives, the purpose of which, as Dr. Caldwell defines, is to show intransitives.<sup>1</sup> *uriñ*, *porun* and *tirum* are themselves tañviñai. If so, what is the nature of these additions? Let us take 'tirum' for explanation. *Puṟam* 'outside' becomes *puṟampu*. cf. '*puṟampu aṇaiyāñ vāḷkōḷḷam*' (Cilampu. IX). It is therefore manifest that 'm' takes the enunciative *u* with the hard consonant *p* merely for the vocalisation. In this manner, *tirum* has become *tiru+pu*. This rule has another example in the word *paṟampu* in the line of Puṟanāṅṟu '*aḷitō tāñē pāriyatu paṟampe*' (Puram. 09). *paṟam* should be regarded as the real word, *pu* being added as in *puṟampu* and *tirumpu*, as is evident from the poem '*paṟa nāḷḷup peṇṇir aḷi*' and from the expression '*paṟanāḷḷup peruḷkōḷḷanār*' the author of a poem 323 of Akanāṅṟu. Thus *paṟam* or *paṟampu*, the name of the country seems to have shifted its meaning to the mountain which is in the country itself and thereby to have become a synonym with *malai* 'mountain'. This tendency to make addition for the sake of vocalisation is found even in pronouncing foreign words, e. g., room becomes roompu in Tamil.

As in *tirumpu*, *m* is the root ending, so in *uriñcu* and *poruntu*, *ñ* and *n* should be taken as real endings. It is wrong to split them into *uriñ+cu* and *porun+tu*, on the analogy of *peruñ cuvār*, and *perun tiṟai*. As Tolkāppiyar has said that *u* alone will be added to these consonantal verbs, it must be correctly inferred that *c*, *t* and *p* are later developments. The familiarity with the piṟaviñai verbs *tiruppu* and *poruttu* wrongly leads us to hold *tirumpu* and *poruntu* as their tañviñais. Nobody will think *uruṇṇu* and *uṇṇu* as tañviñai on the ground that their piṟaviñai forms are *uruḷḷu* and *uḷḷu*. *uruḷ* and *uḷ* are their tānviñai forms. It is therefore accurate to hold *tirum*,

1. A Comparative Grammar of the Dravidian Languages, p. 198.

*porun* and *uriñ* as real *taṅviṅai* forms. Pavaṇantiyar seems to be at fault when he mentions simply following *Tolkāppiyam* that these endings will require only *u* (உ) as against the instances *uriñcu*, *poruntu* and *tirumpu* which were in vogue in his time.

15. *ṅ ending*: (ஊ)

Under this ending, we see two sets of verbs one beginning with a short vowel like *uṅ*, *maṅ*, *paṅ* etc., and the other with a long vowel like *kāṅ*, *pūṅ*, etc.

*uṅ* 'to eat': It has been lengthened into *ūṅ* in verbal noun and *ūṅṅu* in *piṅaviṅai*. *kāṅ* 'to see': it becomes shortened in the preterite *kaṅtāṅ*.

The general change of *ṅ* into *ṅ* in combination of two words is not considered here because of its little importance.

16. *ṅ ending*: (ஊ)

*miṅ* and *tiṅ* become *miṅ* and *tiṅ* or *tiṅi* in nouns.

17. *y ending*: (ய)

*tiy* 'to be charred' has omitted its ending even in ancient times 'ilai tinta ulavaiyāl' (Kali: 11).

In the colloquial, *tēñca*, *kāñca* and *ōñca* are used for *tēynta*, *kāynta* and *ōynta*.

18. *r ending*: (ர)

*ārntu* has become *aruntupu* in *Akanāṅṅuru* 3. *ār* > *aru*.

19. *l ending*: (ல)

(a) *l* changes irregularly in many words.

*kaṅṅāṅ*, *ceṅṅāṅ*, *pullinām*

roots: *kal*, *cel*, *pul*.

- (b) *kol* and *nil* become *kolaiiya* and *nilaiiya* in the verbal participle.
- (c) *cel*, *vel* and *kol* form their verbal nouns by means of lengthening the initial vowel and by the addition of a suffix of the verbal noun like *cēral*, *vēral*, and *kōral*. In this connection it is desirable to note that *cēl*, 'a fish', *vēl* 'a spear' and *kōl* 'a rod' may be derived from *cel*, *vel* and *kol*.
- (d) *ival* 'to move' changes into *el* and takes the forms *eṅṅu*, *eṅṅāṅ* etc.
- (e) *nōl* 'to suffer' (சொடு) From the instances *nōṅāṅ*, *nōṅār*, *nōṅāḷ* and *nōṅpu*, one would assume that *nōṅ* should be the root; but *nōlātavar* (Kural. 270) stands against it. As we do not find no other instances than this, it is hard to take *nōl* as the root. *nōṅṅal* and *nōṅṅār* may be split up as either *l* or *ṅ* ending. The comparison with other examples like *niēṅa* from *mēla*, *nāṅku* from *nāḷku*, *aṅ* the suffix of the first person from *al*, leads us to favour *nōl* as the root. The Tamil rule admits only of the change from *l* to *ṅ* and not the reverse. The root *ēl* which takes *eṅṅāṅ* in the affirmative and *ēlātavar* in the negative confirms our supposition that *nōl* should be the root in the forms *nōṅṅāṅ* and *nōlātavar*.

20. *v* ending : (வ)

There is no verb in this ending.

21. *ḷ* ending : (ḷ)

*ḷ* suffered no change in ancient days: but in the medieval period when *ḷ* was pronounced like *ḷ* (ḷ) the change which it had taken was also similar to that of *ḷ*. *viḷḷi* instead of *viḷḷi* and *vāḷḷāḷ* for *vāḷḷāḷ* are thus formed. Colloquially *ḷ* suffers great changes and often loses its existence. That is the fate of the letter *ḷ* the exclusive property of the Tamil language.

*vi* 'to die' may be traceable from *viḷ*.

'*iṇaiyaḷi toḷutu viḷntaṇaḷé*' (Cilampu. XX)

Here *viḷntaṇaḷ* seems to have the meaning of *vintaṇaḷ*.

## 22. *ḷ* ending : (*ḷ*)

*koḷ* is lengthened in verbal noun as *kōḷ*. The general change of *ḷ* into *ḡ* or *ḷ* in combination of two words is not considered here because of its little importance.

## 23. The shortened *u* :

A considerable number of Tamil verbs terminate in *u*.

- (a) The verbal nouns are formed by means of doubling the final consonants. e.g., *pōku - pōkku; kūḷu - kūḷḷu*.

This change mostly takes place in *neṭṭiṭṭark - kuṭṭi yalukaram*.

- (b) A verbal root of one of the six divisions of *kuṭṭiyal ukaram* becomes another by the mere internal changes :-

e.g. *muḷuku - mūḷku; tēḷu - tēḷḷu; kūḷu - kūḷḷu*.

The foregoing analysis of the changes in the verbal roots, classified according to each ending, will prove that in all the forms and under every shape which a verb can assume, the radical base remains unchanged, or is so slightly changed that its original form can be readily recognised with no great effort. To use the words of Dr. Caldwell, 'the root always stands out in distinct relief, unobscured, though surrounded by a large family of auxiliary affixes.'<sup>2</sup>

The next chapter is devoted to inquire into some of the verbs, the crude forms of which are at first sight unrecognisable but on scrutiny are clearly perceptible.

2. A Comparative Grammar of the Dravidian Languages, p. 197.

#### 4. SOME VERBAL ROOTS - AN EXAMINATION

##### 1. *āku* 'to become' and *pōku* 'to go':

The question whether the root is *ā* or *āku* and *pō* or *pōku* has vexed the mind of Tamil scholars from the medieval period. It is a matter for doubt as to from what original roots the verbal forms had developed in literature and in practice.

<u>ā</u> or <u>āku</u>	<u>pō</u> or <u>pōku</u>
<i>āyina</i> or <i>ākiṇa</i>	<i>pōyiṇa</i> or <i>pōkiṇa</i>
<i>āva</i> „ <i>ākiya</i>	<i>poya</i> „ <i>pōkiya</i>
<i>āy</i> „ <i>āki</i>	<i>pōy</i> „ <i>pōki</i>
<i>āyiṇ</i> „ <i>ākiṇ</i>	<i>pōyiṇ</i> „ <i>pōkiṇ</i>
<i>ātal</i> „ <i>ākutal</i>	<i>pōtal</i> „ <i>pōkutal</i>
<i>āvatu</i> „ <i>ākuvatu</i>	<i>pōtal</i> „ <i>pōkal</i>

From these instances, though they are numerous, we cannot definitely decide which form is original.

As Cēṇāvaraiyar has mentioned both the forms *āy* and *āki*, *pōy* and *pōki* in *Tolkāppiyam* commenting on S. 228, it is to be presumed that he has accepted *ā* and *āku*, *pō* and *pōku*, as the two forms of the same verb. But in another place in

the same *suttiram*, he has explained the examples *pōkiyar* and *pōkiya* of the future verbal participles as having inserted *k*. As such, his view is to hold *ā* and *pō* as the real verbal themes. Naccinārkkīyār has plainly said that *ā* and *pō* are original; but he is silent with regard to *āku* and *pōku* to be found in *Tolkāppiyam* of which he is a commentator. Pavaṇantiyār, the author of *Naṅṅūl* has indirectly but clearly put forth his view as *pō* is the original in the *suttiram*, '*noṭa vā maṭi cī viṭu kū vē vāi no pō*' (137). Parimēlaḷakar is of opinion that *āku* and *pōku* may be the roots (Kural. 317). As it is hard to find out the original of these words, Swaminata Decikar, the author of *Ilakkaṇakkottu*, keeps silent simply narrating the different views of the scholars as regards these two words.<sup>1</sup> Dr. Caldwell appears to support the side of those who take *āku* and *pōku* as originals; but he is inclined to discard the final *ku* as a formative.<sup>2</sup>

*Tolkāppiyam* the earliest extant Tamil grammar comes to our rescue in deciding with certainty about the true nature of these two words. Let us take at first *ā* or *āku* for consideration. In the text of *Tolkāppiyam*, we find that *k* the consonant makes its appearance abundantly in the affirmative and persistently in the negative to wit, *ākum*, *ākā*, *ākātu*, *ākiya*, *ākiṭṭa*, *ākkam*, *ākal*, *iraṇṇākuvatē*, etc. Eventhough we are in the habit of using *āya* and *āy* side by side with *ākiya* and *āki* in the affirmative, the appearance of *k* is unavoidable in the negative voice, like *ākātu*, *ākātōṇa*, *ākāta*, and *ākā*.

There are two ways by which we can find out and ascertain the real forms of doubtful verbs. One way, according to Dr. Caldwell and the other Dravidian philologists is to find out the form of the imperative singular and thus to

1. *Ilakkaṇakkottu* S. 86.

2. *A Comparative Grammar of the Dravidian Languages*, p. 199.



recognise in surety the real root of the verb. In most cases, this principle seems to hold good. When that way fails to clear our doubt, there is another way to which we may resort - a way which never betrays us. *Vigaittokai* is one of the six compounds in Tamil. It consists of two members. The first is a bare verbal root and the second a noun. The first member which constitutes *vigaittokai* will be an infallible means in deciding the original form of any verb. In the instances *ākūl*, *ākāru*, *ākījan*, and *aḷavāku moḷimutal* we find *āku* used in pure verbal forms. As *ku* is indispensable in the negative and appears in the affirmative in compound words, I am in favour of the theory that *āku* is the original form and that *ku* is understood in those affirmative instances of *āpa*, *avatu*, *atum*, *āti* etc. Kaviñchu, the Telugu causal will prove beyond doubt that *k* or *ku* is formerly radical part of *āku*.

Let us now take *pō* or *pōku* for consideration. From the foregoing explanations, it seems that *pōku* is original and *pō* is the softened form of it. Nobody can imagine the change of uriccol into *vigaiccol* (verb). This change has actually taken place in the case of *pōku*. This alteration is a tremendous one in the field of Tamil grammar. *pōku* was regarded not as a verb but as an uriccol by the ancient grammarians. Moreover *pōku* is never used in *Tolkappiyam* in the meaning 'to go'. The state of being straight and long is meant by it. These facts are evident from the *suttiram* found in 'uriiyal',

“*vārtal pōkal oḷukal mūṅṅum*

*nērvum neṭumaiyūm ceyyūm poruḷa*” (Tol. 799)

In *Tolkappiyam* without exception and in the Sangam classics in many places, the work *pōku* is used in the sense mentioned above.

'*pōkia tirattu narrai pulampal*' (Tol. 981)

'*kaḷḷi pōkiya kaḷariyam paṇantalai*' (Puram. 237)

'*puṇṇiya neḷuvarai pōkiya neḷuṅkaḷai*' (Cilampu. III)

The verb *cel* was generally used in those days to express the meaning 'to go'.

'*tamē cellum tāyarum uḷarē*' (Tol. 982)

'*ceṇṇu payanetirac conṇa pakkamum*' (Tol. 1036)

'*celaviḷai aḷuṅkal cellāmai aṇṇē*' (Tol. 1130)

In these lines of Tolkāppiyam, we can easily substitute *pō* for *cel*. It is therefore obvious that *pō* has taken the position of *cel* which is now disappearing even in literature. *pōku* an uriccol has all sorts of usage as if it were a verb. *pō* or *pōku* and *cel* have been considered synonyms from the medieval period; but they had a distinct usage in the days of Tolkāppiyar as is evident from the line *puḷai ketap pōkiya celavē* (Tol. 1003).

Tirukkural, a didactic work of the post - Sangam period makes frequent use of *pō* the corruption of *pōku* in place of *cel*.

'*puḷattāḷḷi pōoyṇ peḷuvatu evaṇ*' (46)

'*avvuyir pōmaḷavum ḍr nōy*' (848)

'*kaṇṇuḷḷiṇ pōkar*' (1126)

Thus, it is lavishly used in this sense in literature from the age of Tirukkural.

In the combination of viṇaittokai *pōku*, not *pō*, constitutes the first member. Examples are 'pōkiḷai kaḷiyana' (Cilampu XI)



and 'pökuyar purraḷai' (Mani. XX). From the above explanation, we have every reason to conclude that *pōku* is the original form and that though *ku* is eliminated in the instances of *pōya*, *pōy*, *pōvatu*, etc., it makes its persistent appearance in the negative forms. *Pōku* is an uriccol in its origin, according to the definition of Tolkāppiyam and pertains to the class of *paṇṇu*, one of the three sources mentioned in the line 'icaiyinuṁ kuṟippinuṁ paṇṇinuṁ tōṇṟi' (781). To make the above view clear, I will adduce another example in the word *pōkku* which even now means manner or way and which is hardly considered a *piṟaviṇai* form of *pōku*.

An analogy to the change of an uriccol into *viṇaiccol* is to be found in the word *uva* (உவ) 'to be happy'. That it is by origin an uriccol is evident from the *suttiram* "uvappē uvakai" (Tol. 788). It is used as a pure verb in the imperative mood in a line '*uva iṇi vāḷi tōḷi*' found in *Akanāṇūru* (65).

## 2. *vā* (வா) 'to come' and *tā* (தா) 'to give'

Before proceeding to inquire into the original forms of these two verbs, it is desirable to make some preliminary remarks for perspicuity. It is to be remembered at first that *vā* and *tā* do not possess the only meanings now attributed to them. They also mean 'to jump over.' It is wrong to suppose that *vā* and *tā* are the words with several meanings. The words *vā* and *tā*, the meaning of which is 'to jump over' are entirely different from the similar forms whose meanings are 'to come' and 'to give'.

(a) '*vā māṇatu vakai uraittaṇṟu*' (Venpāmālai. 90.)

(b) '*vām puravi voḷuti*'

(c) '*aḷi oḷāntāṇ tāyatu*' (Kurāi 610)

(d) '*tāviya cēvaḷi cēppa*' (Cilampu. XVII)

From these quotations, one could easily find that they are two verbs *vā* and *tā* as distinguished from these under discussion. These *vā* and *tā* whose meaning is “to jump over” may be said to have the real termination in *ā*. The simplicity of their conjugation through all tenses and persons will be self-evident to indicate that these two verbs are the real *ā* endings. On the other hand the irregular mode in which the *vā* and *tā* in question are conjugated and the different forms which they take will suffice to show at least that *ā* is not the original ending of the verbs. The various forms wherein *vā* ‘to come’ and *tā* ‘to give’ assume in conjugation are as follows :—

	<u>vā</u>	<u>tā</u>
1. Imperative singular	<i>vā</i>	<i>tā</i>
2. Imperative plural	<i>vāmmiṅ</i>	<i>tāmmiṅ</i>
	<i>or</i>	<i>or</i>
	<i>vāmmō</i>	<i>tāmmō</i>
3. Future tense	<i>varuvāṅ</i>	<i>taruvāṅ</i>
4. Present Tense	<i>varukiṅṟāṅ</i>	<i>tarukiṅṟāṅ</i>
5. Past tense	<i>vantāṅ</i>	<i>tāntāṅ</i>
6. Infinitive	<i>vara</i>	<i>tara</i>
7. Subjunctive	<i>vantāl</i>	<i>tāntāl</i>
	<i>or</i>	<i>or</i>
	<i>variṅ</i>	<i>tariṅ</i>
8. Negative	<i>vārāṅ</i>	<i>tārāṅ</i>
9. Verbal noun	<i>varukai</i>	<i>tarukai</i>
	<i>or</i>	<i>or</i>
	<i>varavu</i>	<i>taravu</i>

In the singular and plural of the imperative 'r' (ṛ) is not found. The future and present tenses, the infinitive and subjunctive moods, negative voice and the verbal noun invariably possess 'r'. Long vowel ā appears only in the singular of the imperative and in all the negative forms, while 'a' appears in all other grammatical forms. In a few places vārātē and tārātē in the negative and vārum and tārum in the plural of the imperative r and ā are to be found. It is manifest now that the numerous forms would bewilder one in tracing the original themes of these verbs. Yet I fervently hope that among these multifarious forms, the real root is hidden.

Dr. Caldwell who, more than others has taken the trouble of discovering the true forms of these verbs, says about the inexplicable nature of them: "There are two verbs in Tamil, vā, to come, tā, to give, which involve peculiarities of which it is difficult to give a satisfactory explanation" and concludes thus "Notwithstanding this, I am not disposed to regard the forms in vā and tā as having found their way into the conjugation of the verbs by mistake. It is evident that vā and tā, not var and tar, are the themes from which the preterites vandēṅ and tandēṅ have been formed, and which we find pure in the imperatives. We seem therefore driven to adopt Dr. Gundert's suggestion that vā and var, and tā and tar, are alternative roots - perhaps it would be preferable to say, different forms of the same root"<sup>3</sup>. This view of Dr. Gundert supported by Dr. Caldwell is not acceptable; for, we do not find an analogy in Tamil, i.e. the existence of the different forms of the same root. If his view were to be accepted, cā and ce, and vē and ve should be held as alternative roots because ce and ve are in the preterites. Moreover this would militate against the principle of Tamil syllabation; for according to the rule "rakāra lakāram kurroṟṟu akā" (Tot. 49)

3. A Comparative Grammar of the Dravidian Languages, p. 216.

'r' preceded by a short vowel will not constitute a word. Yet I confess that their view gives clue to find out the real root. I wish to propose *varu* and *taru* to be the verbal bases which might have been used even in the singular of the imperative at a more ancient period of the Tamil language. This theory will then show that Tolkāppiyam, the only extant ancient Grammar is not so ancient as many of us think, when we take into account the antiquity of the Tamil idiom.

*a* in *vā* and *tā* is not their original ending. I have mentioned in the preceding chapter the peculiar change of *paku*, *miku*, and *puku* into *pā*, *mī* and *pō* and explained how the initial vowel *a*, *i*, or *u* and the final *u*, phonetically coalesce into *ā*, retaining the first consonant and eliminating the last. In like manner, *varu* changed into *vā* even prior to Tolkāppiyam. Like the word *pō*, *vā* has taken the place of *varu*, in the imperative.

*vantēṅ* is not to be derived from *vā*, though we can cite *ventāṅ* from *vē*, as an analogy. It is safely traceable from *varu*. *varuntēṅ*, *varuntāṅ*, and *varuntāy* the preterites are corrupted into *vantēṅ*, *vantāṅ* and *vantāy*. It seems to me that Dr. Caldwell himself confirms the above supposition when he has put *varuntāy* within the brackets as a substitute for *vantāy*.<sup>4</sup>

Numerous evidences are there to show that the vowel-consonant *ru* always evinces a tendency towards absorption. Examples are *ampal* for *arumpal* 'to bud': *uṅṅai* for *uruṅṅai* 'ball'; and *ottāṅ* for *oruttāṅ* 'a man'. Thus *ru* has a tendency to disappear when preceded by a short vowel. Similarly *vārunṅēṅ*, *varuṅṅēṅ*, etc., discarding altogether *ru* in the middle become *vantēṅ* and *vammin*. These corrupted forms i.e., *vantēṅ* for *varuntēṅ*; *vantāy* for *varuntāy* and so on, have become

4. A Comparative Grammar of the Dravidian Languages, p. 502.

popular and the poets also have bestowed their consent to them in order to avoid collision with the preterites *varuntēṅ*, *varuntāy*, etc., formed from *varuntu* 'to suffer'. That to differentiate every word by every means with a view to make the language unambiguous and to avoid confusion in the exchange of ideas is one of the fundamental principles of Semantics. T. G. Tucker in his 'Introduction to the Natural History of Language' observes :- "The aim of language in its evolution is to express every possible notion in distinction from every other". *vantēṅ* is an example of this principle. This will be attested by another fact. As the difference between *varukinṅāṅ* and *varuvāṅ*, the present and future tenses of *varu* 'to come' and *varuntukinṅāṅ* and *varuntuvāṅ* of *varuntu* 'to suffer' is effected in some other way, *ru* is in no need of absorption here.

I have hitherto explained the change of *varu* into *vā* and *vantēṅ*. But in the instances of *vārum*, the imperative form of plural, and *vārakkāl*, *vārāṅ* and *vārāmai*, the negative forms of all sorts, *vār* requires explanation. It also is a corruption of *varu*, the original root. Compare *ōr* from *oru*, *kār* from *karu*, and also *tēr* 'chariot' probably from *teru*. It is significant that *vār* (वार) is used as the second person of the singular imperative in the Paripāṭal and Villi Pāratam :

'vantikka vāreṅa maṅattakka nōyitu' (Pari. XX-70)

'vār atā unakku yātu' (Pāratam Vet. 12)

The foregoing investigation will briefly show that *varu* will change into two kinds, *vā* and *vār*. One thing stands in the way of finally accepting the view '*varu*' to be the original. In the instances *paku*, *miku* and *puku* shown above, the consonant which disappears is *k*; but the consonant in *varu* is *r*. It is therefore fit to adduce a few examples in which *r* is elided. The examples which I am going to cite will be



illustrative of the point that *vār* and *vā* are the corruption of *varu*. *karu* changes into *kār* and *kā* in *kākkai* 'crow'; *peru* into *pēr* and *pē* in *pēy* 'devil'; *oru* into *ōr* and *ō* in *ōm* 'consent'; *aru* (mai) into *ār* and *ā* (interjection) and *ceru* into *cēr* and *cē* in *cēkkai* 'bed'. Similarly *varu* changes into *vār* and *vā*. Of all the Tamil consonants, *y*, *r*, and *ḷ* are most liable to change, when they are in the middle. Their change is frequently perceptible in the speech of the uneducated mass and sometime the educated too. Tolkāppiyar has used *vara* (வர) twice in the optative mood, adding 'a' to the original root *varu* :

'*piṅ vara eṅṅalum*' (Tol. 1059)

'*Iraṅṅum pakaliṅṅum nī vara eṅṅalum*' Tol. 1155)

In order to emphasise the view that *varu* and *taru* alone are the crude roots from which all the forms shown above have sprung, I will point out one more evidence which I have slightly touched, in the place of discussing the verbs *āku* and *pōku*. There we had an occasion to realize the fact that the imperative form sometimes fails to show the real base of a verb, when the verbal form to be used in combination with a noun in 'viṅaittokai' comes to our rescue; for, in such a combination the pure and uncorrupted verbal root alone ought to be used by rule. This rule does not appear to have any exception. On the contrary in the imperative what are called expletives like *miyā*, *ika*, etc., may be compounded with the verbal themes. Moreover the imperative forms are occasionally mixed with the auxiliaries. Thus the purity of the verbal root used as the first member of 'viṅaittokai' is sure to help us in identifying the original root of any doubtful verb. The following are the examples where *varu* and *taru* are used in viṅaittokai in their purest forms:— '*varu vicippuṅal*' (Tol. 1008) '*varu viruntu*' (Kural. 83) '*punal taru pacuṅkāy*' (Kuruntokai. 292). Further in another rule of Tolkāppiyam,

“*taruḥol varuḥol āyiru kiḷaviyum*  
*taṇmai muṇṇilai āyir iḷatta*” (Tol. 512)

the words *taru* and *varu* used undoubtedly reveal their primitive nature and also their use even in the imperative singular, long before the age of Tolkāppiyam. I presume that this *suttiram* might have been taken by Tolkāppiyar from a grammar of his predecessors.

The above elaborate investigation will prove beyond doubt that *varu* and *taru* must be the real bases and that all the grammatical forms may be ultimately traced up to them.

3. *vē* (வே) ‘to burn’ and *no* (நொ) ‘to suffer.’

	<u>vē</u>	<u>no</u>
1. Imperative singular	<i>vē</i>	<i>no</i>
2. -do- plural	<i>vēmiṅ</i>	<i>nōmiṅ</i>
3. Future Tense	<i>vēvēṅ</i>	<i>nōvēṅ</i>
4. Present Tense	<i>vēkiṅrēṅ</i>	<i>nōkiṅrēṅ</i>
5. Past Tense	<i>ventēṅ</i>	<i>nontēṅ</i>
6. Infinitive	<i>vēka</i>	<i>nōka</i>
7. Subjunctive	<i>ventāl</i>	<i>nontāl</i>
	<i>or</i>	<i>or</i>
	<i>vēkiṅ</i>	<i>nōkiṅ</i>
8. Negative	<i>vēkēṅ</i>	<i>nōkēṅ</i>
9. Verbal noun	<i>vēkāmai</i>	<i>nōkāmai</i>

From these instances adduced here, we find the mode these two verbs adopt in conjugation is one and the same. Their grammatical forms also are alike. Yet they are

differentiated in the imperatives or crude forms - one being in the long vowel and the other in the short. My contention is that either the two verbs should possess short vowels or long ones, by virtue of being conjugated alike. To take either side, we are confronted with the rules laid by Tolkāppiyar and the later grammarians. If we were to take 've' as the crude root in similarity with 'no' the rules,

'e yeṇa varumuyir meyyirākātu' (Tol. 71)

'ekaram meyyōtu ēlātu' (Nan. 108)

(short vowel *e* will not combine with consonant finally)

are against our supposition. Barring this idea, if we were to take the other side, i.e. *nō* as the crude root, corresponding to *vē*, because of the similarity we find in their conjugated forms, the rules

'ovvum arṛē navvalam kaṭaiyē' (Tol. 72)

'o navvōtu ām' (Non. 108)

(short vowel *o* will combine only consonant *n* in the final position)

would become faulty. How to reconcile this point of view with the considered opinions of renowned grammarians is a difficult task. In the next chapter with regard to the origin of 'ce' I am attempting to explain away this difficulty, on the assumption that the origin and disappearance of *ce* would have happened in between the periods of Tolkāppiyam and Naṅṅūl.

The absence of *no* in the whole Tamil literature, ancient, medieval and modern, except in two places in the commentaries 'no korṛā' and 'no alaiyal niṅṅāṭṭai' but the presence of *nō* in many places i.e., 'nōvēṅ nōval' (Akam. 63), 'nō nontu'



(Kural 157), *nōkkāṭu* and *nōvu*, and the use of *nō tiram* in 'vinaittokai' all go to prove that *nō* should be the real base. Dr. Caldwell too supports this view.<sup>5</sup> If *nō* the long vowel form is to be accepted, we have every reason to believe that it was shortened in the preterites on the analogy of *cettān* from *cā* 'to die' and *kaṇṭāṇ* from *kāṇ* 'to see'.

We may assume that in the days of Tolkāppiyar, *no* would be the root and all the grammatical forms sprung from it might have been *novvēṇ*, *nokēṇ*, *novval*, etc. the initial vowel being short. Pavaṇantiyār, following the rule (72) of Tolkāppiyam and also finding the example *no korṭṭā* and *no alaiyal* shown by the commentators who preceded him and whose commentaries he followed largely seems to have formulated the sutiram 'o *navvōṭu ām*' (108).

From the foregoing explanation, it is hard to decide whether it is *no* or *nō* which was the original root; yet I am inclined to favour *nō* (நோ) the long vowel as the original root, as it has a close resemblance with the long vowel *vē*, which I have already taken as the unformed root.

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5. A Comparative Grammar of the Dravidian Languages, p. 216.

## 5. THE LOSS OF OLD VERBAL ROOTS

*Introduction to the changes in Tamil vocabulary :*

Extinction of useless words, entry of new ones, changes of meanings in words like widening, restricting and shifting, together with the phonetic discrepancies, in the view of philologists, are the causes to the modification of the vocabulary of a language. Tolkāppiyar, the ancient Tamil grammarian has countenanced the disuse of old words and the rise of new ones and has given his sanction thereto in the *suttiram*,

*'kaṭicol illaik kālattup paṭṭiṇē'* (Tol 934)

The commentators seem to have not fully realised the import of this section. Their interpretation is that no word can be rejected if it arises anew in course of time. This meaning is only a partial representation of the author's view. If Tolkāppiyar was aware, as he was, that new words will appear in course of time, he should have been equally aware that old words also will disappear in course of time. Rightly understanding the implication of the *suttiram* in question, Pavaṇantiyar has clearly pointed out that the disappearance of old words and the appearance of new ones will generally take place in a language in course of time,

*"paḷaiyaṇa kaḷitalum putiyaṇa pukutalum  
vaḷuvāla kāla vakaiyi ṇāṇē"* (Nan. 462)

The view can be sustained that the wording of Tol. 934 gives the twofold meanings, justifying the loss of old words and the appearance of new ones. It can be interpreted thus: One of the meanings is: no word can be safeguarded, if it drops out of usage. 'To die' is one among the several meanings *paṭu* (பாடு) has. *kaṭi* (காடி) will mean 'to defend' as Tolkāppiyar has said '*kaṭiyēṅ kiḷavi, varaivē, kūrmai, kāppē*'. (Tol. 865). From these meanings which *paṭu* and *kaṭi* possess we may rightly interpret the sutiram "kaṭicol illaik kālattup paṭiṅṅē" as having the meaning 'none can save a word, when it does a natural death in course of time'. The second meaning is: 'no word can be suppressed, when time gives birth to it'. This interpretation is also emerging from the words *paṭu* and *kaṭi*, as they have the senses 'to rise' and 'to reject' respectively. Perāsiriyar, in his commentary on "marapē tāṅē, nārcol iyalāṅ yāppu vaḷippaṭṭāṅa" (Tol. 1337) has briefly shown with examples the disappearance and appearance of words together with the change of meanings, happening at all times.

The Tamil grammarians have actually but briefly mentioned in their texts the various changes that words suffer by constant use. The term *maruu* (மரூஉ) will suffice to justify the statement. Aṟumuka Nāvalar, a commentator on *Nannūl* has said in passing that changes of letters in the use of words are of five kinds - addition, assimilation, elision, elongation and change of place.

A detailed and comparative study of the Tamil metrical dictionaries show the words added time after time and the change of meanings in all aspects. It is curious to find that some words have not as yet been incorporated in them. It is to be realised that nominal forms are generally dropping out of usage due to the social, religious and political reasons. Scarcely verbal forms lose their existence. This is the view

which we reasonably infer from the illustrations shown by the Western philologists as well as our own scholars. The latter have shown *atōḷi*, *itōḷi*, *utōḷi*, *aḷaṅ*, *pulaṅ* etc., as the examples of words gone into disuse.

*The result of borrowing :*

A few Tamil verbs seem to have gradually faded out of people's memory by the replacement of their Sanskrit or English equivalents. Such a kind of replacement serves no purpose and does not enrich the language. Otto Jespersen has made a brilliant remark about the nature of borrowing thus :

"In a great many cases linguistic borrowing must be considered a necessity, but this is not always so. When a nation has once got into the habit of borrowing words, people will very often use foreign words where it would have been perfectly possible to express their ideas by means of native speech-material, the reason for going out of one's language being in some cases the desire to be thought fashionable or refined through interlarding one's speech with foreign words, in others simply laziness as is very often the case when people are rendering thoughts they have heard or read in a foreign tongue".<sup>1</sup>

The commentators on *Tolkāppiyam* have hinted that borrowing words of any kind should not be regarded as an addition to the Tamil vocabulary and that they have no place in Tamil grammar (S. 62, 65 and 75 of *Tolkāppiyam*). But the rapid inroad of Sanskrit words into the Tamil language from the 6th century A. D. onwards, necessitated the later grammarians to frame rules regarding the adaptation of the borrowed words to the phonetic laws of Tamil and its grammatical principles. '*Palaiyaṅa kaḷittalum putiyaṅa*

1. Otto Jespersen, *Language*, p. 210.

pukuttalum' seems to be the forced order of the day when the Sanskrit words were abundantly employed by the scholars. Thanks to the 'Tamil Puritans, the pure and necessary Tamil words have begun to recapture their former place in literature and in practice. As the scholars' view with regard to the treatment of the foreign words is such, in the following pages I am inclined strictly to confine myself to the Tamil words which have naturally dropped out of use or which have taken their origin from the sources suited to the Tamil language.

It was pointed out just a little earlier that verbs rarely become obsolete. But in Tamil we find a few instances which contradict the above view. On examination I am persuaded that these verbal roots except one or two have every right to live. This will be clearly borne out in the succeeding pages. The roots of some of the extinct verbs are not clearly perceptible so that I have a double duty in this chapter to say what the root was and to explain how it dropped out of memory.

### 1. *Cettu, Cettaṇaṅ and Cettaṇaḷ*.

What is the root of these forms? We do not find this root occurring in any other forms except in the past verbal participle and finite verb. The use of 'cettu' abounds in the Sangam classics. But there seems to be only two instances in ancient Tamil literature as the use of the finite verb. They are :

'veppuṭai āṭṭu cettaṇaṅ' (Patirru. 86)

'kāṇunar iṇmaiṅ cettaṇaḷ pēṇi' (Akam. 16)

The root of these forms means 'to resemble' or 'to suppose'. No one has thought of what would be the root of these forms. May we for a moment think that 'cā' can be the root of the forms *cettu*, *cettaṇaṅ* and *cettaṇaḷ* because of their similarity

with those which 'cā' 'to die' takes in the past participle and finite verb. This supposition becomes unascertainable when we find that cā does not at all have the meaning 'to suppose' or 'to resemble. Nor do *cāva*, *cākiṅ* and *cāvāmal* the other grammatical forms possess that meaning. The resemblance of two different roots in a few forms will not be the best authenticity to prove that the root itself must be one and the same. There is no analogy in Tamil whereby it must be supposed that while a root has only one sense, its verbal forms through the tenses and persons will express two fold meanings. Someone may suggest that *cetu* (செது) may be the root of the forms in question. If *cetu* were the root, it would not have doubled itself in the past tense. Only the words preceded by a short vowel, with the ending of *tu*, *ru* or *ku*, will express the preterite by the reduplication of the final consonant : e.g., *viṭtu*, *uṭru* and *pukku*. Moreover, there is no verbal root in Tamil which ends in *tu*, preceded by a short vowel. 'cetu' is a corrupted form of *cetukku* 'to cut off. It is evident from its verbal noun 'cetukkai' similar to 'patukkai' the root of which is *patukku*, 'to hide' not *patu*.

It may be presumed that *ce* (செ) is a monosyllabic root. There are some arguments which stand in the way of holding 'ce' to be the root. Tamil grammars of all times have unanimously declared that there is no vowel-consonantal word with 'e' (செ) ending. Tolkāppiyam, a treatise on grammar which arose unequivocally before the Sangam Classics definitely asserts that,

"*e yēna varum uyir meyyiṭu ākātu*" (Tol. 71)

Nāṇṇūl, a medieval grammar of 12th century, A. D. whose time is no doubt posterior to the Sangam Classics has reiterated the statement of Tolkāppiyam in the sutiram :

"*ekaram meyyōṭu ēlātu*" (Nan. 108)



If *ce* were in existence in the time of Tolkāppiyar, he would have certainly mentioned that one word was in *e* (ஈ) termination; for we find his mention of the existence of two words in *cu* ending and one word in *pu* ending:

'uccakāram irumolikkū wittē' (Tol. 75)

'uppakāram onṛṇṇa molīpa' (do. 76)

We are therefore sure that *ce* in this sense had its origin only after his time. Really speaking, Pavaṇantiyar is expected to have said that *e* (ஈ) can be the ending of a vowel consonantal word, as he had certainly come across the expressions *cettu*, *cetṭaṇṇ* and *cettaṇaḷ* quoted above (p. 51.) Probably he omitted in his grammar to mention them because such expressions were not to be found in medieval literature. Those expressions in question are only to be found in the Sangam classics. They have no place either in Tolkāppiyam, prior to the Sangam period, or in Tirukkuraḷ, Cilappatikāram, Maṇimēkalai, Peruṅkatai, etc., the literatures of the post - Sangam period. From the above explanation, it may be safely concluded that *ce* was a root which had its birth after the time of Tolkāppiyar, lived a prosperous life in the period of Sangam classics and fell into disuse before the time of Pavaṇantiyar.

*ce* like *o* 'to be like' takes the form *cettu* like *ottu*, in the preterite verbal participle and *cetṭaṇṇ* like *ottaṇṇ*, in the finite verb. It is interesting to inquire into the reason for the extinction of this root with its grammatical forms. *cā* (ஈ) meaning 'to die' which also takes the similar forms like *cettu* and *cetṭaṇṇ* would be an important factor to oust the root *ce* out of usage. No religious, political or social motive is to be attributed as the reason for the obsolescence of the root *ce* meaning to resemble or to suppose. The psychological factor looms large in making it obsolete. In course of time the poets seem to become averse to using *cettu* and *cetṭaṇṇ* as such

sound would certainly produce dangerous meaning and wound the feelings of the people. We find an analogy in *māṇṭa* (மாண்து) the relative participle which was abundantly used in the ancient literature in the sense 'good' and which came in the later period to be solely used in the sense 'dead' though the root (*māṇ* or *mā*) is different in either case. *cēttu* is wrongly mentioned as an article denoting comparison in all the Tamil Dictionaries. Probably it is a mistake for *cettu*. Perāsiriyaṅ, however, has rightly mentioned, *cettu* as a particle of comparison under the *suttiram* 1231 of *Tolkāppiyam*. The proper position of *ce* in *cettu*, *cettoṇaṅ* and *cettoṇi!* is that it is a root meaning 'to resemble', as I have indicated above.

## 2. *Civaṇ* 'to join' (சிவண)

This root occurs in several places throughout *Tolkāppiyam*. On the contrary, no single use is to be found in the Eight Collections except *Akanāṅṟu*, *Ten Idyls*, *Tirukkuṟaḷ*, *Cilappatikāram* and *Maṇimēkalai*. In *Akanāṅṟu*, one of the Eight Collections, *civaṇa* has a rare usage in,

‘*maṇipurai cevvaṅ mārpakam civaṇa*’ (Akam. 66)

The author of the poem is *Cellūrkkōcikaṅ kaṇṇaṅār*. He has given no other poem than this. Since *Kapilar*, *Paraṅar*, *Nakkīrar*, *Māmūlaṅār*, *Kallāṅar*, etc., whose contributions to the Sangam classics are many, seem to have certainly not used *civaṇ* in the whole of their compositions and since *Cellūrkkōcikaṅār*, the author of only one poem has used it, I suppose that he might have been a contemporary of *Tolkāppiyar* or at least a poet who lived before all other authors of the Sangam classics. The author of *Peruṅkatai* has revived the use of 'civaṇ' which was a rare usage in the Sangam literature,

‘*icaiyoṭu civaṇiya yā!*’ (Kātai. 32.)



It is nothing but an adaptation of 'icaiyoṭu civaṇiya narampiṇ maṇaiya' of Tol. 33. Tiruttakkatēvar too has employed this verb in two places. Therefore we may say that the verb *civaṇ* had its rebirth after a long interval. Yet it seems that it again fell into disuse. It is curious to find that the root *civaṇ* which had a favourite use in the grammar of Tolkāppiyam was not at all used in the later grammars.

3. *āṇ* - 'to cease' (ஆண்)

'āṇā ikai aṭupōr aṇṇal'	(Puram. 42)
'āṇātu uruvum pukaṭum āki'	(do. 6)
'aṭṭu āṇāṇē kuricil'	(Patirru. 47)

The root of these forms *āṇā*, *āṇātu* and *āṇāṇē* must be, in my opinion *āṇ* the meaning of which is 'to cease'. The affirmative forms also are found in the Sangam classics :

'āṇru avintu aṇṅkiya koḷkai'	(Puram. 191)
'aruvi āṇra peruvurai'	(Akam. 91)

These forms clearly show that *āṇ* must be taken as their root. We find the following explanations given to the two words *āṇāmai* and *āṇral* in the "Comprehensive Tamil and English Dictionary", by Rev. Miron Winslow.

"āṇāmai - An abstract noun belonging to a kind of defective negative verb - that which is inseparable; not leaving; unceasing".

"āṇral - An irregular defective noun".

The word 'defective' in the explanation should be particularly noted. What is the defect in these forms? Is there really any defect in them? As the root of them expresses the meaning 'to cease' there arises no doubt as to

its being a pure verb. It seems to me that as the compiler has not come across anywhere in Tamil literature the crude root *aṅ* (அங்) he has dubbed them as 'defective'. The word *aṅ* has several meanings. They are given in all the dictionaries. Among them, that it is a verbal root meaning 'to cease' is not to be found, because nobody dreamt of the existence of such a verbal root. They might have thought that the root of the forms *āṅāmai*, *āṅṅā!*, *āṅṅu*, etc., is untraceable solely because they found nowhere it has been used in the imperative.

It is natural to suppose at first sight why *āl* (ஆல்) may not be the root of the forms, *aṅṅu*, *āṅṅā!*, and *āṅṅa* on the analogy of *cāṅṅu*, *cāṅṅā!* and *cāṅṅa*. One should not rush to decide only taking affirmative forms. If *āl* were the root, the negative forms would be *ālāmai*, *ālā*, and *ālātu*, in comparison with *calāmai*, *calā* and *calātu*. But the fact is that we find *aṅāmai*, *āṅā*, and *āṅātu* as negatives. Therefore *āl* cannot be taken as the root. Let us take another example to prove *aṅ* must be the root. *iṅ* (இங்) 'to bring forth' is identical in all aspects with *aṅ*. It takes *iṅṅu*, *iṅṅā!* and *iṅṅa*, as its affirmatives and *iṅāmai*, *iṅāta* and *iṅāmai* as its negatives. Therefore the comparison of *āṅ* with *iṅ* fully justifies the view that *āṅ*, not *āl*, must be the root. In Tirukkuraḷ 'aruḷ ennum aṅṅiṅ kuḷavi' *iṅ* is used in its crude form in the compound of *viṅaittokai*. But there is no single instance to show that 'āṅ' is employed either in the imperative or in *viṅaittokai*. I am of opinion therefore that *āṅ* 'to cease' has dropped out of usage in all these connections.

Why is not *āṅ* used in its crude form? Why did it become obsolete? The reason lies in the predominant use of *āṅ* as a poetic expletive or as a case sign or as a noun meaning a cow or bull. With a view to making the language less ambiguous, the scholars have omitted this usage in the crude form, retaining however, all other forms arising from it.

Thus  $\bar{a}ṅ$  the original root became obsolete. 'To cease' the meaning of the lost ' $\bar{a}ṅ$ ' is generally expressed by *niṅku* the other alternative verb which had existed more or less co-terminously with  $\bar{a}ṅ$ . Therefore this omission should be welcome to the lovers of a living language like Tamil.

#### 4. *nūḷil* (நூழில்)

'Killing and heaping the killed' (*koṅṅu kuvittal*) is the meaning invariably given to *nūḷil* or *nūḷilāḷḷu* by all the commentators. Its use is very rare in poetry.

'*oḷvāḷ viciya nūḷil*' (Tol. 1017)

'*vēḷap poḷaṅattu nūḷilāḷḷu*' (Maturai. 257)

'*nūḷi lāḷḷi nukampaḷak kaḷantu*' (Malai. 87)

'*nūḷi lāḷḷiya cūḷkaḷal vēntaṅ*' (Cilampu. XXVI)

These are the forms we come across in literature. It is impossible to trace the original root of the word *nūḷil*. Two meanings killing and heaping seem to have combined in it. Doubt therefore arises whether *nūḷil* is one word or two words that are so much blended as if they were one. It seems to be a verbal noun like *kuḷil* and *neḷil*. After the elimination *il* the suffix of verbal noun, what remains is *nūḷ* which should be regarded as the crude root. Tolkāppiyar has used only the form *nūḷil* as a verbal noun and that too in one place. In the literature prior to Tolkāppiyam '*nūḷ*' like *ūḷ*, *tāḷ* and *vāḷ* might have possessed other forms like *nūḷtta*, *nūḷttiya*, etc. But in the extant Tamil literature such combinations are not found. Instead of using *nūḷtti* and *nūḷttiya* in an ordinary way, the poets are accustomed to use *nūḷilāḷḷi* and *nūḷilāḷḷiya* with an auxiliary verb '*āḷu*'.

It is curious to mention that *āḷḷu* (ஆல்) another verbal noun is appended to *nūḷil* which is itself a verbal noun. The

double verbal nouns do not change the meaning in any respect. They serve only as examples for the people's laxity in the use of words through ignorance or misapprehension. Numerous examples are in Tamil like *nūḷilāḷḷu*. *kōḷ* is a verbal noun of *koḷ* 'to get', yet we say *kōḷpāḷu* or *kōḷal*. Thus *nūḷ* the crude root meaning 'to kill in heaps' became archaic probably before the days of the Sangam classics. This must be the reason, I think, for not forming the grammatical forms from *nūḷ* but from *nūḷilāḷḷu*. Nowadays even the forms *nūḷil* and *nūḷilāḷḷu* have gone to the same fate.

### 3. *eṇ* 'to say' (என்ற)

We find this root occurring in all grammatical combinations except in the second person singular of the imperative, like *eṇpa*, *eṇṇaṇṇaṇ*, *eṇṇōy*, *eṇṇu*, *eṇṇa* and so on. Its use in its crude form is also found in the compound of Viṇaittokai.

'yā *eṇ* *ciṇaimicai uraiyacaik kiḷavi*' (Tol. 34)

'col *eṇ* *eccam muṇṇum piṇṇum*' (do. 923)

It seems that on minute observation, we are fortunately able to discover that *eṇ* (என்ற) the crude root meaning 'to say' is also used in the second person singular of the imperative in Tirukkuṛaḷ, in certain contexts, though the commentators interpretation is different.

'*kaṇṇataṇṇāl āya payaṇ eṇ kol*' (Kuraḷ. 2)

Here '*payāṇ eṇ*' may be interpreted as 'say the object of learning (*payāṇaic col*), the accusative case-sign 'ai' being understood.

'*illatu eṇ illavaḷ māṇṇāḷ uḷḷatu eṇ*

*illavaḷ māṇāk kaḷai*'

(Kuraḷ. 53)

Here *illateṅ* and *u||ateṅ* are to be interpreted as 'say what is not' and 'say what will be' the case-sign *ai* being understood in both places. The difference between the interrogative *eṅ* and the verbal theme *eṅ* is minute. It seems that the former might have taken its origin from the latter. Scholars, probably of the medieval period, with a view to avoiding collision with the interrogative *eṅ* purposely guarded themselves against using the crude root *eṅ* in the imperative mood but at the same time using all other forms sprung from it. When in this way *eṅ* became archaic, *col* (சொல்) is largely used in its place. I am sure that this is the reason why the Tamil Dictionary has not given the meaning to say to *eṅ* and has not mentioned *eṅ* as a verb.

6. *Coli* 'to remove' (சொல்லி)

'paṭukaṭum kaḷiṅṅin varuttam coliya' (Akam. 8)

'puzavin allal colliya kaḷaiyaṭi' (Puram. 39)

What is the root of these forms? Is it *col* or *coli*? The existence of the forms *colliya* and *coliya* in the same grammatical expression, like the verbal participle of the formula *ceya* does not throw light on the question of what the root may be. As such, we are driven to search for some other forms in literature.

'kāmpu colittanna aruvai uṭi' (Cīrupāṇ. 236)

'tiṅkaḷ ukiriṅ colippatu pōl' (Cintāmaṇi 350)

*colittu* the verbal participle of the preterite tense and *colippatu* the participial noun clearly indicate that *coli* ought to be the root. If *col* were the root, these forms would be *colliyanṅa* and *colliyatū*. There is also another point to confirm this. *Coli* is used as a noun which means bark of some trees. What is removed or barked is called *coli*, 'kaḷaipatu coli' (Puram. 383)



Therefore *colliya* occurring in certain places should be considered as a reduplication for euphony.

The root *coli* became obsolete when a Sanskrit word different in meaning 'to shine' but similar in sound superseded it and occupied a place not only in the colloquial but also in the poetic compositions.

In this chapter, it is desirable to mention two other obsolete words. They really belong to the category of uriccol; yet they deserve mention here as they take conjugation, according to the description of the nature of uriccol explained in the first chapter.

7. *eyyāmai* - 'ignorance' (ஏய்யமை)

Tolkāppiyar, in the chapter on 'uriyiyal' has framed a *suttiram* which runs thus :

'eyyāmayē aṟiyāmayē' (Tol. 824)

The negative form confuses us and leads us to doubt whether this form is capable of being used in the affirmative. This is the only word given in negative form by the author in the whole of that chapter. Ceṇāvaraiyar is of opinion that this form should not be held as negative as we do not come across in classics any affirmative form, like *eytal* or *eyttal* signifying 'knowing'. Naecinārkkīyiar, another commentator differing from his view, points out that *eyttal* is the affirmative form of *eyyāmai*, citing a line from *Civaka cintāmani* of the 10th century A. D. which has the commentary from his pen. It is to be noted here that the negative form alone has been invariably used from Tolkāppiyam down to Manimekalai. Peruṅkatai, a poetical composition anterior to *Cintāmaṇi* seems to have employed this word affirmatively for the first time,

*'attoḷil nirtteṅa eyttaṅṅ'* (Makata. 8)

Following this, Tiruttakka Dēvar has used it twice in the verbal affirmative participle in poems 2481 and 2683.

Naccinārkkīṅiyar states that Tolkāppiyar has used the negative form to indicate that negative forms should also be regarded as *uriccol*. If it were the author's view, it would have been wrong to mention it in reference to a particular word, as it will certainly lead the student to suppose that no other words except this will become negative. If Tolkāppiyar wished to convey this view, he would have laid down his intention in a separate *suttiram* as he had done in similar cases, like

*"peyareñcu kiḷaviyum vaṅaiyeñcu kiḷaviyum  
etirmaḡuttu moḷiyiṅum poruḷṅilai tiriḡā"* (Tol. 720)

I agree with Naccinārkkīṅiyar in this that it has affirmative forms but disagree with him in the point of reasoning. I infer from the fact that Tolkāppiyar has mentioned only the negative form of *ey* (ஏ) that its use in the affirmatives fell into desuetude even before the days of the author. This is borne out from the Sangam classics where only negative forms are to be found.

*'eyyā yāyiṅum uraiṅṅal tōḷi'* Akam. 28)

*'eyyātu ākiṅṅu eñciṅucen nāvē'* (Puram. 148)

*'eyyā maiḡalai niyum varuntuti'* (Kuṅṅi. 8)

Parimēlaḷakar, one of the most beloved Tamil scholars has unfortunately given a wrong meaning to the expression *eyyāmai* to be found in the following stanza,

*"poyyāmai aṅṅa puḷaḷ illai eyyāmai  
ellā aḡamun tarum"* (Kuṅṅal. 296)

Here *eyyāmai* is interpreted by him as 'without exertion'. It should mean, in my opinion, 'ignorance to utter a lie'. This interpretation in this context is in accordance with the meaning given by Tolkāppiyar.

From the foregoing explanation, it may be concluded that *ey* (ஏய்) with its affirmative use was virtually dead even in literature prior to Tolkāppiyam. The authors of *Peruñkatalai* and *Civaka cintāmaṇi* seem to have attempted to revive the old fashioned words in their poetical compositions; but the words thus revived seem to have been short-lived.

It is necessary to say why the affirmative forms should go into disuse. The word *ey* has several meanings. Its use, in the meanings 'to discharge an arrow' and 'to grow weary' is much favoured by the poets and the people. Nobody seems to have employed *ey* or *eymai* in the sense, 'knowing'. To mean that sense, *aṟivu* is much favoured. In the medieval period its use in the negative voice also was lost. Thus *eymai* and *eyyāmai*, the synonyms of *aṟivu* and *aṟiyāmai* ceased to exist. Breal remarks about the extinction of synonyms thus: "Now as the people is at once the depository and author of language, the fact that it denies the existence of synonyms actually brings about their speedy disappearance; either they are differentiated, or else one of the two terms ceases to exist"<sup>2</sup>. When the Tamilians could not understand the meaning of *eymai* and *eyyāmai*, they left them unused. The poets who sometimes avail themselves of the words which ceased to exist in daily use have also forgotten to use *ey* with its various forms, in the language of poetry.

#### 8. *Paḷiccu* 'to praise' (புலிச்சு)

Its use abounds in Tolkāppiyam and in the Sangam classics where *paḷi* (புலி) as a verb has a lesser usage. From

2. Breal, *Semantics*, p. 28.



the days of Tirukkuṛaḷ, *paḷi* has been predominantly used in all grammatical forms. Though *paḷiccu* and *paḷi* have no connection with each other either in meaning or in root, there is a closer resemblance in the forms which they assume in the grammatical relation, like *paḷiccal*, *paḷicciya* and *paḷicci* from *paḷiccu*, and *paḷittal*, *paḷitta* and *paḷittu* from *paḷi*. *c* (ச) always evinces a tendency to change into *t* (த). *tolaiccu*, a predominant use in the ancient literature has in later days changed into *tolaittu*. When *t* has begun to replace *c*, the poets of the medieval period have really been afraid of using *paḷiccal* 'to praise' on the assumption that it will become equivalent to *paḷittal* 'to blame'. Thus *paḷiccu* and its forms completely became obsolete.

Tolkāppiyar has mentioned in two suttirams 907 and 908, *kaṇṇīr*, *koṇṇīr*, *ceṇṇratu*, *pōyīṇru*, *kēṇṇai*, *niṇṇai*, *kāttai* and *kaṇṇai* as the expletives of the second person. I consider them as the obsolete forms in the sense in which they were used in those days. The commentators themselves make mention of their disuse in their time.

## 6. THE RISE OF NEW VERBAL ROOTS

The statements of the grammarians as to what letters come at the beginning and at the end of words in their time are of great importance to know the history of the vocabulary of the Tamil language. It is to be remembered that initial letters show probably the newly introduced words whereas the finals show the change or extinction of old ones.

Tolkāppiyam, a treatise on grammar of the 2nd academy has definitely said *ca*, *cai* and *cau* (ச, சை, சை) will not come at the beginning of a word. The author has formulated thus because in his time he found no words beginning with such letters either in practice or in literature. Later grammars, like Viracōḷiyam, Nēmiṅātham, Naṅṅūl, etc. finding the occurrence of words beginning with those letters have given the rule that *c* (ச) will combine with all the twelve vowels at the commencement of a word. If the literary records that existed before Tolkāppiyam were with us, we would certainly be able to find what initial letters have been newly included in it. Unfortunately they have not come down to us.

The commentators of Tolkāppiyam have unanimously put forth the view that only Tamil words whether corrupted or newly arisen must be taken into account when considering the initial letters and that those words beginning with *cai* and *cau* should not be reckoned with, because of their Sanskrit origin (Tol. 62 and 65). No word beginning with *cai* or *cau* is to

be regarded as sprung from the source suitable to Tamil language. But they have concurred with the latter grammarians in the introduction of *ca* (ॐ) as initial because of its Tamil origin. Among the words beginning with *ca* we find a few Sanskrit verbs which are frequently used by the Tamilians: *caki* 'to endure'; *cañcari* 'to roam about'; *canti* 'to meet' *cantēki* 'to suspect'; *campāti* 'to procure; *cammati* 'to agree;' and *campavi* 'to happen'. These Sanskrit words are not necessary, as they can be easily dispensed with by their Tamil equivalents *poru*, *tiri*, *pār*, *aiyappatu*, *iḷḷu*, *iṇaṅku*, and *nikaḷ*. All other verbs with *ca* as their initial should be regarded as Tamil words because they seem to have sprung from the old materials. Firstly, I shall here produce a list of verbs beginning with *ca*, newly arisen after the age of Tolkāppiyar and explain their sources of origin.

- |                                     |                       |
|-------------------------------------|-----------------------|
| 1. <i>caṇṇu</i> or <i>caṇṇi</i>     | to smear              |
| 2. <i>catir</i>                     | to gain strength      |
| 3. <i>camai</i>                     | to make or cook       |
| 4. <i>caḷi</i>                      | to be crushed down    |
| 5. <i>caḷai</i>                     | to check              |
| 6. <i>catai</i>                     | to crush              |
| 7. <i>cavaḷḷu</i> or <i>camaḷḷu</i> | to chew or to destroy |
| 8. <i>cavaṅku</i>                   | to languish           |
| 9. <i>carai</i>                     | to become grey        |
| 10. <i>camaḷ</i>                    | to be ashamed         |
| 11. <i>caḷai</i>                    | to grow tired         |
| 12. <i>cali</i>                     | to be weary           |
| 13. <i>cavai</i>                    | to chew               |
| 14. <i>cavi</i>                     | to curse              |
| 15. <i>cappu</i>                    | to suck               |

- |                    |                       |
|--------------------|-----------------------|
| 16. <i>cāri</i>    | = to fall on one side |
| 17. <i>cārukku</i> | = to slip off         |
| 18. <i>calāttu</i> | = to shake            |
| 19. <i>cāvu</i>    | = to be cheap         |
| 20. <i>caḷāṅku</i> | = to languish         |

It is to be held that the following onomatopoeic words arose only after the days of Tolkāppiyar.

- |                      |                        |
|----------------------|------------------------|
| 1. <i>cārēṇal</i>    | 5. <i>cavaccaveṇal</i> |
| 2. <i>carukkeṇal</i> | 6. <i>caḷakkeṇal</i>   |
| 3. <i>calacāṇal</i>  | 7. <i>cappēṇal</i>     |
| 4. <i>caraiṇēṇal</i> |                        |

The philologists who have devoted much attention to the creation of new words express more or less an unanimous opinion that new words rise probably from the already existing materials so far as the cultivated languages are concerned. T. G. Tucker has made an observation regarding the new creation: "It is manifest that the possibilities of creating new words, and so enlarging the vocabulary, were practically unlimited. Such new creation has gone on at all times, and is proceeding everyday; but in the overwhelming majority of cases, it is simply creation out of old material"<sup>1</sup>. This view is amply borne out when we examine the sources of the new words mentioned above.

#### 1. *ca* from *a*

A principle can be evolved from the following illustrations that *a* (அ) has a tendency to change into *ca* (ச) in the beginning of a word. For example *avai* 'assembly' changes into *capai* or *cavai*; *araṅ* 'protection' into *caraṅ*; *amar* 'war' into

1. Introduction to the Natural History of Language, p. 435.

*camār* and *amaiyam* 'time' into *camaiyam*. According to this tendency, the new words *caṇṇu*, *caṭir*, *camai* and *caḷi* may have taken their birth from the old words *aṇṇu*, *atir*, *amai* and *aḷi* without changes of meaning. Among these *camai* is to be noted. For the first time it has made its appearance in *cilapatikaram*.

'muṣimutaḷ kalankaḷ camaiṭṭēṅ' (Cilampu. XVI)

That *camai* is a corruption of *amai* will be obvious also from the fact that the commentator of Puṇḍaroruḷ Veṅṇāmalai has given the meaning *camāintāṅ* to the word '*amāintāṅ*' in the poem 157.

## 2. *cā* from *ta*

It is a common occurrence that *ta* and *ca* will change place: examples are :- *kotuku* > *kosuku* 'mosquito'; *vāttu* > *vacchu* 'to place'; *taittāṅ* > *taiccāṅ* 'to stitch'; *mātam* > *mācam* 'month' etc; likewise, *caṭai*, *catai*, *cavaṭṭu*, *cavaṅku* and *carai* may be traceable from *taṭai*, *tacai*, *tuvaṭṭu*, *tavaṅku* and *tirai*. The history of the origin of *cavaṭṭu* is interesting. It is the first word beginning with *cā* (ச) that entered into the Sangam literature, after the days of Tolkāppiyam. The first poet who has taken the courage to newly introduce this word in his composition in contravention to the rule of Tolkāppiyam is Kaṭṭiyalār Uruttirāṅ Kaṇṇaṅār.

'pañcāyḱ kōraip palliḷ cavaṭṭi' (Perumpāṅ 217)

*cavaṭṭu* being a form of *piṇṇaviṇai* its *taṇṇaviṇai* may be *cavaḷ* a corruption of *tuvaḷ*.

## 3. *ca* from *ka*

We have a number of instances to illustrate the change of *ka* into *ca*:- i. e. *kētam* > *cētam* 'loss' *kai* > *cey* 'to do' and

*kivi* > *cevi* 'ear'. In this way *caḷai* may be derived from *kaḷai*. We find the use of *camalppu* for the first time in *Paripāṭal*, in the line 'camalppu mukaṅ kāṇmiṅ' (XX *Pari*). In *Peruṅkatai*, its use is to be found as a finite verb like 'camalṭṭaṅṅ'. From the meaning attributed to *camal* 'to be ashamed', I think that it can be derivable from *kaviḷ* 'to bow'. As for the change of *v* in *kaviḷ* into *m* in *camal*, the change of *uvaḷḷu* into *umaḷḷu* 'nausea' and *kuvi* into *kumi* 'to collect' may be quoted.

#### 4. *ca* from *cu*

*Cavai* probably originated from *cuvai* 'taste' because 'u' and 'a' are readily interchangeable. Compare with *tuḷir* and *taḷir* 'bud' and *ulamaraḷ* and *alamaraḷ* 'confusion'

The words *cāpaṁ* or *cāvaṁ* meaning 'curse', *cavi* 'withered crop' and *cavam* 'corpse' seem to have given birth to *cavi* or *capi*, a verbal root 'to curse'. As a comparison, *avi* and *āvi* may be quoted here.

#### *Words from onomatopoetic roots.*

One of the theories regarding the genesis of the roots of human speech is called the onomatopoetic theory or the 'bow-wow' theory. By this we understand that words may be formed through the medium of imitation of natural sounds. Whitney remarks the importance of this theory thus: "Through all the stages of growth of language, absolutely new words are produced by this method more than by any other, or even almost exclusively".<sup>2</sup> I suppose that some of the words with *ca* as their initial, sprung after the days of *Tolkappiyar*, might have been formed in imitation of non-human sounds. Tamil vocabulary contains numerous words that have

2. Whitney, *Language and the Study of Language*, p. 429.

arisen in this way. The following words beginning with *ca* are formed by means of imitating the natural sounds :

*cappu* < *cappēṇal*; *cari* or *carukku* < *carēṇēṇal*;  
*cali* and *calāttu* < *calacaleṇal*; *cāvu* <  
*cāvaccaveṇal*; *caḷāṅku* < *caḷakkeṇal*.

As Tolkappiyar's rules relating to the initials are not compulsory and do not stand in the way of the origin of new Tamil words, it is shrewd not to find fault with those later scholars who have introduced in their compositions new words, on the false notion that they are in violation of the canons of Tolkāppiyam.

I shall here produce another list of words the origin of which is not traceable. The observation of T. G. Tucker in regard to the untraceable words, is apt to quote in this context :- "Apart from words which we know or believe to have begun in such slang, there does exist as Paul remarks, a large number of words, which can neither be referred to roots of the original language, nor yet proved to be borrowed from foreign tongues"<sup>3</sup>. The following new words in Tamil may serve to substantiate his view. Yet I have attempted to show to a certain extent the origin of a few verbs :

1. *kaṭai* = to talk much
2. *kaṇṇi* = to reprove
3. *kiṭai* = to be obtained - derivable from *kiṭa*
4. *kaḷal* = to become loose.
5. *koṅcu* = to prattle - derivable from *kuṅcu*
6. *kumpiṭu* = to worship
7. *kiṭṭu* = to approach

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3. Introduction to the Natural History of Language, p. 438.



- |     |                |   |
|-----|----------------|---|
| 8.  | <i>tīruṭu</i>  | = to steal                                |
| 9.  | <i>tuppu</i>   | = to spit                                 |
| 10. | <i>takar</i>   | = to break to pieces                      |
| 11. | <i>tiṭṭu</i>   | = to abuse                                |
| 12. | <i>teṇṇāṭu</i> | = to appear                               |
| 13. | <i>turuvu</i>  | = to seek                                 |
| 14. | <i>ciri</i>    | = to laugh                                |
| 15. | <i>cintu</i>   | = to spill                                |
| 16. | <i>cūmpu</i>   | = to shrink - derivable from <i>kūmpu</i> |
| 17. | <i>nakar</i>   | = to move                                 |
| 18. | <i>pōtum</i>   | = to be enough                            |

Some of these verbs might have been used by the common folk in the ancient day. But on the authority of *Tolkāppiyam* and the ancient literature where they are not found, we consider them as new. Some of the words in the list, like *kaṭal*, *tuppu*, *takar*, *cintu* and *nakar* are really found in the ancient classics where they are used not as verbs but as nouns with different meanings. There is only verbal resemblance between those nouns and these verbs.

I have hitherto explained how the Tamil vocabulary changes not only with the loss of old words but also with the increase of new words originating from the old material or from unknown sources. I shall here proceed to point out how the vocabulary is liable to change also by the words where nothing but change in sound alone is perceivable.

1. For instance, in the words *oḷir* and *oḷiru*, *muri* and *muṇi*, *kiral* and *kiṇal* and *citar* and *citaṇu*, the medial *r* and the rough *r* exist with no change in meaning.



## 2. piri and piṛi

'*intuṇaip piriyaṁ maṣamai yōre*' (Akam. 43)

'*piṛintivaṣ kātal vēṇṇi*' (Akam. 55)

In Akanāṅūṟu (55), *piṛintu* with rough *r* is found in the sense *pirintu* 'separation'. I think that it is a serious mistake done by the copyist, in imitation of the previous word. The line runs as follows :-

'*perumpiṛi tāki yāṅkup piṛintivaṣ*'

On the analogy of the first foot 'perumpiṛitu' the copyist has made the last foot also to correspond to it. This mistake has come down to us through many centuries. Except in this place, nobody will accept such a usage. This is the reason why I am inclined to suspect it to be a mistake.

## 7. CHANGES OF MEANING

In the foregoing two chapters, I have dealt with the loss of old verbal roots and the rise of new ones. In this chapter, I am inclined to mention a few words which have changed their meanings, in the form of deterioration, restriction, expansion or transference. I have attempted to show the reason for the changes of meaning of a few words. Yet it is hard to discover a satisfactory reason. T. G. Tucker states that the "laws of meaning-change are not yet discovered and are probably undiscoverable".<sup>1</sup>

### 1. *Ira* - 'to die'. (இற)

In Tolkāppiyam, in the Eight Collections and in the Ten Idyls, this verb is found to mean to go beyond, to pass by, or to trespass.

*'cīrantātu payiṟṟal iṟantatoṅ payoṅē'* (Tol. 1137)

*'kāṟiṟantaṅarē kātalar'* (Akam. 45)

Even the expressions '*iṟanta kālam*' (Tol. 725), and '*iṟantatu kāttal*' denote the meanings 'the time passed' and 'to assert once again what has already been said'. Nowhere before and during the period of Sangam classics, do we find *iṟa* in the meaning 'to die'. In the history of the Tamil literature we come across a transitional period – a period between Eṟṟuttokai

1. Introduction to the Natural History of Language, p. 373.

and Pattuppāṭṭu on one side and Peruṅkatai, Cintāmaṇi etc. on the other. In the transitional stage Tirukkuṟaḷ, Cilappati-kāram and Maṇimēkalai are to be placed. In all respects, they show the interregnum between the Sangam period and the medieval period. Among these three poetic compositions, Tirukkuṟaḷ seems to be the leading. In it *iṟa* is used in the sense 'to die' for the first time in the history of Tamil Language,

'*iṟantār iṟantār aṇaiyar*' (Kural. 310)

'*vaiyattu iṟantārai eṇṇi*' (Kural. 22)

Following it, the authors of Cilappatikaram and Manimekalai have used *iṟa* in the same sense in their works,

'*iṇṇē allāl iṟantōr palarāl*' (Cilampu. XIV)

'*iṟantavar piṟattalum*' (Mani. XVI)

The cause for its deterioration is very noteworthy. Antethesis is always expressed by analogous terms, to help the memory and to emphasize it. Vāl and tāl, pūkaḷ and ikaḷ, aṟam and maṟam and icai and vacai are all antetheses. We see from these that words of opposite meaning have approximated in form. But *piṟa* 'to be born' and *cā* 'to die' though antethesis are not identical in form. It seems therefore that *piṟa* by analogy has chosen the word *iṟa* and that 'to die' the second meaning has probably taken its birth from the first meaning 'to trespass'. Nowadays *iṟa* has become a synonym with *cā*.

## 2. *cūḷ* (சூல்)

'*cūḷtalum ucāttūṇai nilaimaiyīṟ polimē*' (Tol. 1071)

'*eṇṇoṟum niṇṇoṟum cūḷātu*' (Akam. 128)

In these instances *cūḷ* means 'to consider' or 'to consult'. After the Sangam period, it has degraded in its meaning and

used to express 'to plot' or 'to conspire. Its verbal noun *cūlcci* apparently shows at present the meaning of conspiracy or plot. This meaning seems to have taken its birth from some of the couplets of Tirukkuraḷ where *cūl* is always associated with *kēḷu* 'destruction',

*'pōllata cūlak keḷum'* (Kural. 176)

*"maṟantum piṟaṅkēḷu cūlaṟka cūliṅ  
aṟaṅcūlum cūltavaṅ kēḷu"* (Kural. 204)

### 3. *vicu* (விசு)

*vicu* in spite of its ancient meaning 'to throw' or 'to give' has acquired a meaning 'to diffuse bad smell'. Its use in poetry in this sense is rare; yet it is to be found as one among the meanings of '*vicu*' in the Tamil Lexicon. *vicutal* '*nāṟutal*' become synonyms at present.

### 4. *vaḷaṅku* (வழங்கு)

To move or to be current seems to be its original meaning,

*'vaḷi vaḷaṅku mallalmā nālam'* (Kural. 245)

*'munnir vaḷaṅku nāvāy'* (Puram. 13)

It has acquired a new meaning 'to give liberally' even in the days of the Sangam Classics, but it was not then popular.

*'vaḷaṅkat tavāp peruvaḷaṅ eyti'* (Perumpāṇ. 26)

Nowadays, *vaḷaṅku* is predominantly used in this meaning only.

### 5. *tūṅku* (தூங்கு)

This verb is used in several meanings in the ancient classics, to hang, to swing, to remain or to delay. Now it is

exclusively used to express only one meaning and that too 'to sleep'.

'*cōri taṅ vāy varat tūṅkuvāṅ*' (Kampa-Kumpā. 62)

When *tūṅku* shifts its meaning, its former place is taken by *toṅku* a corruption of *tūṅku*. But *tūṅku* the *piṇṇai* of *tūṅku* still retains its former meaning. That *toṅku* is a corruption of *tūṅku* is evident from *tūṅku* which is the *piṇṇai* form of both *tūṅku* and *toṅku*. The cause for the transference of meaning of *tūṅku* 'to sleep' seems to be attributable to the habit of sleeping in a swing.

6. *eri* (எரி)

'*kaḷiru erintu peyartal*' (Puram. 312)

In the Sangam Classics, its use in the meaning 'to hack' is alone to be found. Later days it is chiefly used to express 'to throw'.

7. The words *vāṅku*, *puri*, *pulampu*, *cōr*, *tolai* and *nampu* also have changed their meanings and are used nowadays to express 'to buy', 'to understand', 'to bewail', 'to become weary', 'to destroy' and 'to believe' respectively.

8. *One word denoting opposite meanings :*

(a) *amai* (அமை) - 'to be existent' or to be 'non-existent'.

'*uṇṇu amaintu ūraṅca velṇai*' (Kural. 761)

'*aṇi amai tōṇṇatu aruntavam*' (Mani. III)

(b) *paṇu* (பாடு) - 'to appear' or 'to disappear'.

'*paṇuṅ katir amaiyam pārttu*' (Cilampu. XIII)

Here *paṇu* is used in both senses.

(c) *nantu* (நந்து) - 'to prosper' or 'to perish'.

'*nattampōl kēṇum*' (Kural, 23)

'*nantutoru māṇṇa*' (Mullai, 49)

(d) *varai* (வரை) - 'to make one's own' or 'to abandon'.

'*veḷippaṭa varaital paṭāmai varaital*' (Tol. 1085)

'*mālvurai varaintaṅar emarē*' (Puram, 151)

(e) *kaḷi* (கலி) - 'to be abundant' or 'to become less'.

'*kāmam mikka kaḷipaṭar kiḷavi*'

'*meṇṇōkki iṇaiyāyk kaḷintatu*' (Tirukkovai, 61)

These words probably might have only one meaning in the beginning of their birth. That is almost amplified by the history of the ancient literature where some of these words have been used only in one meaning. The reason for the existence of two different ideas in the same expression is beyond our approach, as is evident from the general statement,

'*moḷipporuḷ kāraṇam viḷippat tonṇā*' (Tol. 876)

made by Tolkāppiyar.

## 8. TANVINAI AND PIRAVINAI

It is at first desirable to remember that the English terms Intransitive, Transitive and Causative will in no way be appropriate to denote the classification which divides the entire Tamil verbs into two classes, namely *tanvinai* and *piravinai*. To use the English terms will certainly lead, as they have led my predecessors into error and will obscure the significance of the Tamil terms. Therefore, I am inclined to employ the Tamil terms *tanvinai* and *piravinai* throughout this thesis.

*The classification of verbs:*

There is a classification in Tamil which makes division of all verbs into two kinds by virtue of their capacity to take an object or not, i. e. *ceyappaṭu poruḷ kuṇṇiyaviṅai* (verb which never governs an accusative) and *ceyappaṭuporuḷ kuṇṇāviṅai* (verb which always governs an accusative). This classification is probably more ancient than that of *tanvinai* and *piravinai* and might have been a source from which the latter seems to have been evolved.

### 1. *Ceyappaṭuporuḷ kuṇṇiyā viṅai*

No inferiority is to be attributed to this class of verbs solely because they do not govern objects. On the other hand, it seems that some of the verbs of this class might have taken their origin earlier than some of the verbs which govern

objects, because of their necessity in daily life. The verbs of this class are *naṭa* 'to walk', *vā* 'to come', *pō* 'to go', *iru* 'to sit', *ōṭu* 'to run', *paṭu* 'to sleep', *cel* 'to go', *vāḷ* 'to live', *tāḷ* 'to fall low', *aḷu* 'to weep', *uṭṭaṅku* 'to sleep', *tiruntu* 'to be repaired', *varuntu* 'to suffer' etc.

2. *ceyappaṭuporuḷ kuṅṅā viṅai* – (a) *The first subdivision.*

This class has two subdivisions. The first consists of the verbs, the objects which they govern having a title to be objects and objects only. The verbs of this subdivision are *uṅ* 'to eat', *kāṅ* 'to see', *cey* 'to do', *kaṭṭu* 'to bind', *aṭi* 'to beat', *kaḷ* 'to study', *paṭi* 'to read', *eḷutu* 'to write', *tōṅṅu* 'to cull', *vaṅṅaṅku* 'to worship' etc. The *suttiram* 555 of *Tolkappiyam* beginning with 'kāppiṅ oppiṅ ūrtiyiṅ' enumerates only the verbs belonging to this first subdivision. The following sentences will bring out the nature of this subdivision :

<i>nāṅ avāṅaik kaṭṭiṅēṅ</i>	I tied him
<i>nāṅ ataṅaik kāttēṅ</i>	I saved it

Here *kaṭṭu* and *kā* necessarily govern the objects *avāṅai* and *ataṅai* respectively. Even though the objects may be in the form of nominatives, like,

<i>avaṅ eṅṅāḷ kaṭṭappaṭṭāṅ</i>	He was tied by me
<i>atu eṅṅāḷ kākkappaṭṭatu</i>	It was saved by me

they (*avaṅ* and *atu*) stand here in the sense of the accusative. It does not matter whether a particular case takes its own form or forms of other cases. Tamil grammarians seem to have insisted on the realisation of the sense it produces, befitting to the context. According to *Teyvaccilaiyar*, this is the view expressed by *Tolkappiyar* in the following *suttiram* :



“*yātaṅ urupiṅ kūṟṟā yinūm*  
*poruḷcel maruṅkiṅ vēṟṟumai cārum*” (Tol. 589)

b. *The second subdivision :*

This subdivision has similarity with the former as this requires also an object to govern: but has dissimilarity with it because the object which the verb of this second subdivision governs is not a real one. What characterises this class of verbs is that its object, notwithstanding that it is in the form of the accusative and takes the second case-sign *ai* (ஐ) really denotes the sense of the nominative, in accordance with the rule quoted above (Tol. 589)

The verbs of this second subdivision are of two kinds. The first kind consists of the verbs which have taken their origin from the major class of *ceyappaṭu poruḷ kūṟiya viṅai*. Instances are *naṭattu*, *varuttu*, *pōkku*, *iruttu*, *ōṟṟu*, *paṭuttu*, *celuttu*, *vāṟṟu*, *tāṟṟu*, *tiruttu*, etc. The other kind comprises the verbs originating from the first subdivision of *ceyappaṭu poruḷ kūṟā viṅai*. Examples are *ūṟṟu*, *kāṟṟu*, *ceyvi*, *kaṟṟi*, *vaṇakku*, *paṟṟi* etc. The modes in which these verbs are converted into the second subdivision will be explained shortly.

The characteristic of this second subdivision is that the thing which is denoted by the object, notwithstanding that it is in the accusative form is a doer of action. The following sentences will throw light on the nature of verbs belonging to this subdivision :

*pākaṅ yāṅaiyai naṭattiṅāṅ* ‘Mahout rode (caused to  
 walk) the elephant’  
*avaṅ pakaivaṅai vaṇakkiṅāṅ* ‘He subdued his enemy’

Here *yāṅai* and *pakaivaṅ* are really the doers of the actions *naṭa* and *vaṇaku*. Therefore it is obvious that each of the



*The explanation of Taṅviṇai and Piṇai:*

Having given a preliminary explanation of the classification of ceyappaṭu poruḷ kuṇṇiya viṇai and ceyappaṭu poruḷ kuṇṇā viṇai, with the two sub-divisions of the latter, let us now turn our attention to the significance of taṅviṇai and piṇai. It is now easy to point out the contents of these two categories. Taṅviṇai consists of the verbs of ceyappaṭu poruḷ kuṇṇiya viṇai such as *naṭa*, *vā*, *pō*, etc., and the first subdivision of ceyappaṭu poruḷ kuṇṇā viṇai such as *uṇ*, *kāṇ* *cey*, etc. Piṇai consists of the verbs of the second subdivision of ceyappaṭu poruḷ kuṇṇā viṇai such as *naṭattu*, *pōkku*, *ūṭṭu*, *kāṭṭu*, etc.

What is the definition of taṅviṇai and piṇai? What are the meanings denoted by the epithets *taṅ* and *piṇai*? Is piṇai entirely opposite to taṅviṇai like Uyarṭiṇai and Aṇṇai and Vēṇṇumai and Alvali? These are the questions which deserve our careful explanation. The action denoted by the verbal root such as *naṭa*, *vā*, *aṭi*, etc., is called 'taṅviṇai' and the doer of such an action is styled as *taṅ*. The action denoted by the verb modified by the internal change like *kūṭṭu* and *urukku*, or by the external appendix like *uruṭṭu* and *ceyvi* is called piṇai and the doer of such an action is styled as *piṇai*. Thus it is clear that piṇai is not an opposite category of taṅviṇai but a category which has included the verbal root of taṅviṇai too. It is also clear that piṇai is in need of two subjects, one for itself and one for the included verbal root. For example, *naṭattu* is a form of piṇai and *naṭa* the first verbal theme is the form of 'taṅviṇai'. Therefore two subjects are necessary, one for *naṭattu* and one for *naṭa*.

*Modes of forming piṇai:*

We shall now enter upon the modes in which verbs of taṅviṇai are converted into those of piṇai. A considerable



These are the modes in which most of the verbs of *taṇviṇai* become *piṇaviṇai*. Yet there is a large portion of verbs which fail to conform to the above modes. We are therefore of necessity compelled to have recourse to other means for the conversion of this large portion of verbs into *piṇaviṇai*.

1. *A peculiar way :*

A peculiar way in which the rest of the verbs become *piṇaviṇai* consists of adding *i* (≠) a verb to a verbal noun to express the sense of *piṇaviṇai*. *i* seems to have been shortened into *i* (ᱚ) by long usage. By this process, *kaṇpi*, *ceyvi*, *peyvi*, *kēṭpi*, *koḷvi*, *velvi*, etc., are formed. It should be remembered that the definition of *piṇaviṇai*, i. e., It requires two subjects, is applicable to this kind of formation too. *kaṇpi* and *ceyvi* should be split into *kaṇpu+i*, not *kaḷ+pi*, and *ceyvu+i*, not *cey+vi*. *i* is really a corruption of long *i*. It has lost its original meaning 'to give' but generally denotes the meaning 'to do'. Dr. Caldwell remarks about the origin of the Dravidian causal particle *i* thus: "The Dravidian causal particle 'i' may be supposed to have been derived from *i* 'to give'. This *i* is short in various portions of the Telugu verb..... The meaning of 'give' is tolerably suitable for a causal particle"<sup>2</sup>. He fully gives also his consent to the view that the first part of *kaṇpi* is a verbal noun. Therefore *kaṇpi* means 'make him do the learning' (*kaṇḷalai cey*). Two subjects are necessary because it includes two verbs, *kaḷ* and *i*.

One may raise a voice in holding *ceyvu*, *peyvu*, *kēṭpu*, *koḷvu* and *velvu* as verbal nouns in the *piṇaviṇai* verbs of *ceyvi*, *peyvi*, *kēṭpi*, *koḷvi* and *velvi*. This objection may be easily set aside, for since we find that a verbal root like *vāru*

2. A Comparative Grammar of the Dravidian Languages, p. 462.



takes many suffixes of verbal noun in *varutal*, *varukai*, *varavu*, and *varal* and since a suffix of verbal noun is added to many verbal roots like *naṭakkai*, *yākkai*, *uṭukkai*, *kaṭkai*, *vēṭkai* and *vāṭkai*, it is clear that there is no rule which regulates the modes in which verbal roots are converted into verbal nouns. In this connection it should be remembered that the easy way of splitting the oft-quoted examples *celvuḷi* and *cārvuḷi* is to divide them into *celvu+uḷi* and *cārvu+uḷi*, not *cel+v+uḷi* and *cār+v+uḷi*, as usually done by the commentators.

It is not an innovation that *i* is added to the verbal noun. It is as old as the modes mentioned above. Some scholars have suggested the view that adding *i* or in their opinion *vi* or *pi* to form *piṇaviṇai* is an introduction only from the days of Tirukkura]. But this kind of formation is found in all the existing Tamil literature.

Examples are :—

'amma kēṭpikkum'	(Tol. 760)
'arivippēm kollō'	(Akam. 52)
'piṇappittōr ilai'	(Pari. 3)

## 2. A Second peculiar way:

Another way in which the verbs of *taṇviṇai* change into *piṇaviṇai* consists of adding long *i* (⌘) to the crude verbal base. In this combination *i* is always in its original form and the part to which it is added, is the radical verbal root and not to the verbal noun. The verbs of *piṇaviṇai* formed in this way are *velii*, *uṇii*, *taḷii*, *tarii*, *uṇii*, *koḷii* etc. The short *i* (Ⓢ) standing by the side of *i* is not the sign showing the elongation of *i* but a suffix of the verbal participle and is written in this character (Ⓢ) so that the completion of a foot may be effected.

*Overlapping :*

I have mentioned that the formation of adding *i* to the verbal noun occurs only in those verbs of *tan̄vinaḡai* which are remaining out of the regular modes shown at p. 83. But we find that a remarkable number of verbs which can be converted into *piḡavinaḡai* by means of the regular modes are also formed by the addition of the shortened *i* to the verbal noun. For example, *uḡ*, *kāḡ*, *vāḡ* and *naḡa* take the forms of *piḡavinaḡai* like *uḡpi*, *kāḡpi*, *vāḡvi* and *naḡappi*, instead of the regular forms *ūḡḡu*, *kāḡḡu*, *vāḡḡu* and *naḡattu*.

The medieval period of the History of the Tamil Language evinces a great tendency towards simplifying and systematising grammatical forms through the force of analogy. This tendency is felt in many phenomena. The systematic addition of the personal signs such as *aḡ*, *aḡi*, etc., to form finite verbs, holding *āniḡḡu*, *kiḡḡu* and *kiḡu* as the present tense infixes, *p* and *v* as the future tense signs, and *pi* and *vi* as particles of *piḡavinaḡai*, adding *kaḡ* to the suffix of the epicene plural *ar* on the assumption that *kaḡ* alone is the particles of pluralisation and making the form of the negative relative participle similar to that of the affirmative relative participle, like *vāḡataḡ*, *ceyyāta* etc., are all attributable to the inclination of the medieval period which favours uniformity at the expense of varieties. Such a tendency seems to have been at work in forming *uḡpi* and *kāḡpi* instead of *ūḡḡu* and *kāḡḡu*. What is more we find is that the operation of the force of analogy has gone to such an extremity as to add *vi* or *pi* even to the verbs of *piḡavinaḡai* under the wrong notion that *vi* or *pi* alone has the capacity to denote the sense of *piḡavinaḡai*. That the inclination to make everything analogous characterises the medieval history of the Tamil Language will be evident by a poem of 7th century A. D by Saint Tirunāvukkarasar.

āṭṭuvittāl āroruvar āṭṭā tāṛē;  
 aṭakkuvittāl āroruvar aṭaṅkā tāṛē;  
 oṭṭuvittāl āroruvar oṭṭā tāṛē;  
 urukuvittāl āroruvar urukā tāṛē;  
 pāṭṭuvittāl āroruvar pāṭṭā tāṛē;  
 paṇivittāl āroruvar paṇiyā tāṛē;  
 kāṭṭuvittāl āroruvar kāṇā tāṛē  
 kāṇpārār kaṇṇutalāyk kāṭṭāk kālē.

The argument that āṭṭuvittāl, aṭakkuvittāl, oṭṭuvittāl etc., are double causals becomes untenable; for, if there were so, the succeeding verbs ought to be āṭṭātārē, aṭakkātārē and oṭṭātārē. Therefore it stands to reason to hold that they are not double causals. Moreover the existence of double causals either in poetry or in practice is doubtful and seems to be wholly unnecessary.

*Objection to Dr. Caldwell's view :*

The explanation and the examples adduced in regard to taṇṇivai and piṇṇivai will disprove the statements of Dr. Caldwell that "the taṇṇivai or intransitive verbs are all necessarily, as well as formerly, intransitives",<sup>3</sup> that there is a class of Dravidian verbs which are distinctly causal and which are formed by annexing to the transitive theme of a causal particle and that "Tamil idiom and the analogy of the other dialects require that causals should be formed, not from neuter or intransitive verbs but from transitives alone".<sup>4</sup>

Dr. Caldwell does not consider the following as piṇṇivai, simply because they have no *vi* or *pi* in the end :- *perukku*,

3. Ibid., p. 449.

4. Ibid., p 456.



*pōkku, aṭakku, tiruttu, nirappu, paṭuttu, tāṭuttu, cuṭarṛu, miṭṭu, vāṭṭu, ṭiṭṭu, tiṭṭu, and māṭṭu.* The source of his many errors is to be found in his view that *ēvalviṅai* (verbs of command) is a separate existence other than *taṅviṅai* and *piṭaviṅai* and that the addition of *vi* or its hardened sign *bi* or *ppi* alone can convert the verbs into causals. It should be remembered that *ēvalviṅai* is not a classification at all, because all verbs will become *ēvalviṅai* and that it is a finite verb of the second person singular. I have already mentioned that there are four modes in which the verbs of *taṅviṅai* can be converted into *piṭaviṅai* and that the combination of *i* with the verbal noun is specially constructed to change the rest of the verbs to which the above modes are inapplicable, into *piṭaviṅai*. Therefore Dr. Caldwell's view that the sense of *piṭaviṅai* can be produced by *vi* alone is not acceptable.

The three examples *pō*, *aṅuppu* and *aṅuppuvi* shown by him to illustrate the significations of the intransitive, the transitive and the causal verbs lead to confusion; for *aṅuppu* and *aṅuppuvi*, being Sanskrit words, are not suitable to express the Tamil grammatical terms and they both can be expressed by one Tamil word 'pōkku'. In dealing with these subjects, he seems to have been carried away rather by the use of causal particle *vi* than by the sense of *taṅviṅai* and *piṭaviṅai*. The *suttiram* found in *Nāṅṅūl*,

*'ceyyeṅ viṅaiṅaiṅai vippi taṅivarir*  
*ceyyiyēṅ ēval iṅaiyēṅ irēval'* (Nan. 138)

is supposed to have misled him.

*The Colloquial way of forming taṅviṅai into piṭaviṅai :*

Colloquially, a large number of verbs are converted into *piṭaviṅai* by the periphrastic way,; i.e., by annexing a word

signifying to make, to let or to put, to the infinitive of the principal verb. . Examples are *kāṇac cey* for *kāṇṇu*; *pōkaviṭu* for *pōkku* and *vāḷa vai* for *vāḷvi*.

I have shown hitherto how the roots of *taṇṇai* may be changed into the roots of *piṇṇai*, by internal alteration in the root itself or by appending of some particles or *i* the auxiliary verb. I have also shown how Dr. Caldwell seems to have erred in certain points in regard to *taṇṇai* and *piṇṇai*. In all the modes referred to above, we can clearly see the importance of the hard consonant which is the chief factor in the transition of *taṇṇai* into *piṇṇai*. It should be remembered how again the hard consonant is chiefly useful, as a particle of differentiation to distinguish *taṇṇai* from *piṇṇai*, in the verbal combinations too. In most of the instances, the doubling of *tal*, the suffix of the verbal noun indicates the causative, if the verbal root is common to both *taṇṇai* and *piṇṇai*; e. g., *piri*, *pirital*, *pirittal*; and *vaḷai*, *vaḷaital*, *vaḷaittal*. This is not the only effect that the consonant thus doubled produces. If the root is expressive of several meanings, the doubled consonant of the suffix of the verbal noun restricts it and ascribes to it only one meaning:—e. g., *tuṇi*, *tuṇital*, *tuṇittal* and *maḷi*, *maḷital*, *maḷittal*. Thus the doubling of the hard consonant serves two essential purposes: (1) distinguishing *taṇṇai* from *piṇṇai* and (2) restricting the meanings of words.

## 9. 'Ī' (ஈ) - A TANVINAI VERB

In the chapter on 'The nature of verbal roots' mention has been made of the peculiar combination of *ī* (ஈ) a verb of tanvinai, with the verbal participle of the preterite tense, like *cenri*, *keṇṇi*, etc. In the previous chapter I have shown how the tanvinai verb *ī* or its shortened form *i* is peculiarly added to the verbal noun like *karpi*, *ceyvi*, or sometimes to the crude root like *veḷi*, *uḷi*. Thus the difference in construction between *cenri* and *karpi* is clear. They differ not only in construction but also in meaning. *cenri* is a verb of tanvinai, meaning *cel* 'to go'. *karpi* is a verb of piṛavinai meaning *karḱacey* 'make him do the learning'. *cenri* is a predicate of one subject because the doer of *cei* and *i* must be the same by rule, *cenru* being the verbal participle answering to the formula of *ceytu*. *karpi* is a predicate of two subjects, because the doers of *kal* and *i* are not the same, *karpi*, being the form of piṛavinai, as explained above. Though *cenri* and *karpi* differ in many particulars, they agree in this that they must be regarded as the verbal bases to which the signs of tense and person in turn should be added.

I shall avail myself of this opportunity to inquire into the following suttiram, in which the function of *i* is clearly pointed out by Tōlkappiyar.

*"muṇṇilai muṇṇar iyum ēyum;  
annilai marapiṇ meyyūrntu varumē"* (Tol.933)

Pavaṇantiyār has also included this suttiram of Tolkāppiyam in his grammar. The interpretation of this suttiram by all the commentators of Tolkāppiyam and Nannūl seems to be wholly untenable. They have all taken it to mean that *i* (ஈ) and *ē* (ஏ) with their appropriate consonants will occur in the end of the verb of the second person singular and have shown *ceṇṇi* and *niṇṇē* as examples. They consider *i* and *ē* as expletives and the consonants *k*, *ṭ*, *t*, *ṛ* and *m* in *pukki*, *uṇṇi*, *uraitti*, *ceṇṇi*, and *niṇṇē* as eḷuttuppēru - a term, the separate existence of which is unjustifiable. If *i* and *ē* were really the expletives of the second person, Tolkāppiyar might have certainly included them in the suttiram in 'Iṭaiyiyal':

“*miyā yika mōmati ikuñciṇ eṇṇum*

*āvayṇ ārum muṇṇilai acaiccol*”

(Tol. 758)

None has shown the reason for the necessity of formulating a separate suttiram for these two expletives and that too in Eccaviyal. The mere saying that the consonants appearing in the above examples are 'eḷuttuppēru' the meaning of which is 'having a letter' throws no light on the structure of the Tamil verbs. The meaning of *ceṇṇi* being *cel* 'to go' they are all inclined to discard all other elements *ṇ* and *i* as mere show. In the chapter on 'The Nature of verbal roots' reference has been made to the light thrown on the compound nature of verbal roots by the use of the verb *i*. *i* is no doubt an auxiliary verb and is added to the verbal participle to effect the forms like *ceṇṇi*, *uṇṇi*, etc. The meanings of these words can be rendered into *cel* and *uṇ*. Yet minute observation reveals the slight difference between *ceṇṇi*, *uṇṇi* and *uraitti* on the one hand and *cel*, *uṇ* and *urai* on the other. The former are the verbs of request whilst the latter are the verbs of command.

The commentators seem to have erred in holding *um* in *ijum* and *ēyum* in S. 933, as the conjunctive particles. In

Tolkāppiyam, the following suttirams are placed one after another,

“*ceyyāy eṇṇum munṇilai viṇṇiccol*  
*ceyyeṇ kiḷavi ākiṇaṇ uḷaittē*” (Tol. 932)

“*munṇilai munṇar iyum ēyum;*  
*annilai mar piṇ meyyūrntu varumē*” (Tol. 933)

It is wrong to suppose *um* in *ēyum* as a numerical connective. Here *ēyum* is a finite verb of the paradigm *ceyyum*. *um* in *iyum* should be regarded as a particle connecting what has gone previously in S. 932 (*iṇṇantatu taḷiyya yecca ummai*). In view of the above explanation the meaning of the suttiram ‘*munṇilai munṇar*’ will be thus:— ‘In addition to *ceyyāy* which yields the meaning of *cey*, the verb *i* occurring in the finite verb of the second person will also yield the same meaning. But there is a difference between *āy* and *i* with regard to their formation. *āy* will be directly added to the root like *ceyyāy*, whereas *i* will make its appearance in combination with the appropriate consonant—probably with the final consonant of the verbal participle. Now it is obvious that the author of *Naṇṇūl* has committed a serious mistake in the inclusion of the suttiram ‘*munṇilai munṇar iyum*’ in his grammar separating it from the suttiram ‘*ceyyāy eṇṇum*’; for these suttirams can make sense only when they are found in the order of Tolkāppiyam.

## 10. GENERAL REMARKS ON TENSES

### *The conception of three tenses :*

It is an accepted fact that the Tamil grammarians and the commentators have agreed, however, in the conception of three tenses, in spite of the different views existing among the different schools of logicians. Just as in the concept of almost limitless space, there is introduced "Direction" east, west, north and south, so also in the concept of the infinitude of time, there is introduced "Tense" past, present and future. This demarcation simplifies understanding and has been in vogue in man's day-to-day affairs. Pārimēlaḷakar, the commentator of Tirukkuraḷ has also expressed the same view in his commentary on 334:— "Kālam eṅṅum aruvapporuḷ ulakiyal naṭattar poruṭṭu ātittan mutaliya aḷavaikaḷāl kūṟupaṭṭatāka vaḷaṅkaḷ paṭuvatu". Though some scholars seem to divide "Time" as the Past and the Future, Tolkāppiyar, the best representative of the ancient Tamil grammarians divides it into the past, the present and the future and recognises their equal status, as is evident from the *suttiram*, '*kālan tāmē mūṅṅeṅa moḷipa*' (Tol. 683)

### *Terinilai and Kuṟippu :*

The line '*kuṟippuṅum viṅaiyiṅum nerippaṭat tōṅṟi*' (Tol. 685) is self-suggestive of the twofold classification according to their capacity to signify time, namely *terinilai viṅai*



(plain verb) and *viṅik kuṟippu* (appellative verb). The epithets *terinilai* and *kuṟippu* disclose the facts that the former consists of declarative verbs and the latter consists of appellative verbs. As these are the meanings of these epithets, it naturally follows that tense - signs can be affixed only to the verbs of *terinilai viṅai* and this class alone will express each of the three tenses conspicuously. Therefore, this and the succeeding chapters will deal with the class of *terinilai viṅai* and the modes in which the idea of tenses is expressed in the verbs of the same class. This does not in any way mar that *viṅaikūṟippu* or appellative verb is expressive of time. That it comes under the definition of verb is easily understood, when we remember that the expression *kālakkiṭavi* is used by *Tolkāppiyar* to mean both *terinilaiviṅai* and *kuṟippu* and that the *suttirams* 697, 698, 704 and 705 are solely formulated by him to emphasise that *kuṟippu* will certainly denote time. He himself has admitted that time in *kuṟippu* exists but without variation of tense, in the line *mukkālamum kuṟippoṭum koṭṭum*. The reference with no particular time will not preclude *kuṟippu* from holding *viṅai*, as the reference with no particular person will not stand in the way of accepting the optative or *viyaṅkōṭṭi viṅai*, as the finite. It is therefore wrong to say that the appellative verbs never indicate tense. They have the idea of tense inherent in them, because of their capacity to denote a particular tense, when added to words denoting time like *nēṟṟu* 'yesterday', *iṅṟu* 'today' and *nāṭai* 'tomorrow'.

*Tolkāppiyar's view on tense-sign :*

Of all the subjects relating to the Tamil verb the most important but the most complicated is the means whereby the idea of time is expressed. The chief characteristic of the verb as defined by *Tolkāppiyar* and accepted by the later grammarians is the capacity to express time. Of the several elements which go to make up a finite verb, *Tolkāppiyar* has

taken only the pronominal terminations for consideration leaving the modifications that the verbal roots undergo, the infixes of tense, the insertion of euphonic particles and the changes that occur in the combination of several elements which constitute a finite verb, to be inferred. The authors of *vīracōḷiyam* and *Nāṇṇūl* have treated some of them including the infixes of tense in detail. Though *Tolkāppiyar* has not treated all these, he has given his approval to split and explain the constituents of a single word either noun or verb. Reference has been made to the line,

*'pavēru ceṅṅiyiṅ nūlneri piḷaiyātu*  
*colvaraintu aṅṅiyap piritṅṅar kāḷḷal'* (Tol. 945)

Therefore it is not worthwhile to find any fault with the later grammarians whose different views respecting the tense-infixes and the like give us clue to find out the nature of the component elements. Since the particle *um* in the line '*kuṅṅipōṅum koḷḷum meynnilai uṅaiya*' (Tol. 684) suggests that there are also means to signify tense plainly, since the personal signs which denote tense in addition like *ku, ū, tu ru* and *kum, ūm, tum rum* are enumerated distinctively from other suffixes which denote persons only in the *suttiram*s 686 and 687 of *Tolkāppiyam* and above all, since reference has been definitely made in *Tolkāppiyam* to the existence of tense-signs in the line '*viṅṅai ceṅṅal maruṅkiṅ kālamōṅu varunavum*' (Tol. 734) there is no reason to doubt that *Tolkāppiyar* has knowledge of the existence of tense-infixes.

Mention must be made here in passing of the manner in which the concept of the past, the present and the future was brought out in ancient days. The preterite tense was expressed by a sign, probably *t* (த) which was closely added to the verbal theme. The expression *iṅṅanta kālam* invariably found in *Tolkāppiyam* clearly shows the means by which the



preterite tense was formed and indicates that *uṇṇa* and *ceṇṇa* in which *ṇ* and *ṇ* exist are only the corruption of *t* by rule. The present tense was denoted by a terminal suffix, probably *um* which did not take any other suffix after it. The expression 'nikaḷum kālattuc ceyyuṇṇe kiṇṇavi' (Tol. 711) unambiguously shows that it carries with it not only the sense of time but sometimes the person too. The future tense was effected not by any sign but by the mere formation of the verbal noun or the verbal root and the personal sign together. The fact there is no future sign will be explained in the succeeding chapters. I do not find myself in agreement with the view of Dr. Caldwell that the future is the least distinctive of the Dravidian tenses. It is used to denote what is, was or shall be habitually done and it is generally the connection alone which fixes it to a particular time.<sup>1</sup> in my opinion the future alone is the least complicated and it is subject to minor change. The following pages will be devoted to bear evidence.

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1. A Comparative Grammar of the Dravidian Languages, p. 513.

## II. THE FUTURE IMPLICIT IN THE ROOT

With regard to my statement in the previous chapter that the future is destitute of sign, I offer the following explanation. It is universally accepted by all the Dravidian philologists that the verbal themes are capable of expressing the imperative singular of the second person, by which we may hold that the verbal roots are capable of expressing the future without any sign for it. This idea is apparently hidden in the following *suttiram* of *Tolkāppiyam* which partially defines what a verb is:

*“viñaiyeṇap paṣuvatu veṟṟumai koḷḷātu  
niñaiyuñ kālaik kālamoṣu tōṇṟum”* (Tol. 682)

The expression, ‘*niñaiyuñ kālaik kālamoṣu tōṇṟum*’ may be taken to mean that a verb, on closer examination, will be found to indicate time by itself. In my opinion, the time indicated must probably be the future. This interpretation is not opposed to the nature of Tamil language when we remember that a noun, without any case-sign appears to be in the nominative, as is evident from the *suttiram*,

*‘eḷuvāi veṟṟumai peyartōṇṟu nilaiyē’* (Tol. 548)

As the noun in the nominative is destitute of any sign, so the verb in the future has no sign. Contrary to the above opinion of philologists, most of the Tamil scholars firmly hold that the verb is incapable of denoting the singular of the imperative by

itself and that the suffix *āy* (ஆய்) affixed enables it to that effect. The objection thus raised by them arrests our attention and deserves our careful consideration. The question is whether the verbal root denotes the imperative singular of the second person, with addition probably *āy* or without it. If the conclusion favours the latter supposition, i. e., no suffix is necessary for that purpose, it leads us to hold without discussion that the verbal root in itself has the capacity to express future tense and that the future tense has no sign for it. Because of the many advantages this result produces, the question ought to be dealt with in detail.

*The interpretation of a Tolkāppiyar's suttiram :*

Seṅāvaraiyar, the commentator of Collatikāram of Tolkāppiyam<sup>1</sup> Swaminatha Decikar, the author of Ilakkaṅakkottu,<sup>2</sup> Subramaniya Dikshitar, the author of Pirayōkavivēkam,<sup>3</sup> Sivagnāṇa muṇivar, the commentator of Naṅṅūl<sup>4</sup> and a host of others, whose view with regard to the significance of the verb is that the verbal root will denote the imperative singular only with the addition of *āy*. They contend that once the root is restricted to the purpose of denoting the second person singular of the imperative, it is logically wrong to say that it will receive other kinds of suffixes too to express other tenses and persons. In support of their theory, they quote a suttiram of Tolkāppiyam, the meaning of which is controversial. It is therefore necessary to find out the real meaning of that suttiram to know the side which Tolkāppiyar took. That suttiram is,

*'ceyyāy eṅṅum muṅṅilai viṅaiṅcol*

*ceyyeṅ kiṅavi ākiṅaṅ uṅaittē'*

(Tol. 932)

1. Tol. Col. S. 450.

2. Ilakkaṅakkottu, S. 66.

3. Pirayōka vivekam, S. 34.

4. Nannul, S. 137.

Ceṅāvaraiyar has taken this to mean that *ceyyāy* is the verb of the second person singular of the imperative in the affirmative and that it sometimes becomes *cey* omitting the final suffix of *āy* but not losing its meaning. This interpretation is literally accepted by one school of Tamil grammarians. Is this meaning right? No doubt that Tolkāppiyar has mentioned *i*, *ai* and *āy* as the suffixes of the second person singular. Here *āy* has a regular usage in *varuvāy* in similarity with *varuvāṅ* and *varuvēṅ* of the other persons. Its use does not here indicate any command. Sivagnāna muṇivar himself admits this distinction. The view that this suttiram in question refers to the form that the very word *ceyyāy* takes in certain places seems to be wholly wrong. It (932) actually deals with the meaning which *ceyyāy* yields in certain connections without change in form. The preceding and succeeding suttirams 926 to 931 and 933 will bear evidence to this fact. For example I will take one among them and illustrate this fact.

*'i tā koṭu veṅṅak kiḷakku mūṅṅum*  
*iraviṅ kiḷavi ākiṅṅ uṭaiya'.* (Tol. 926)

Nobody will interpret this suttiram to mean that the forms of these words *i*, *tā* and *koṭu* will change into the form of '*iravu*'. '*ceyyēṅ kiḷavi ākiṅṅ uṭaittē*' (932) has a closer resemblance to the line '*iraviṅ kiḷavi ākiṅṅ uṭaiya*' (926). Just as the three words *i*, *tā*, and *koṭu* will be used to mean 'begging' so also the expression *ceyyāy* will be used to denote the meaning of *cey*. It is therefore clear that the expression *ceyyāy* will sometimes be shortened into *cey* is incorrect. What is correct is that the expression *ceyyāy* will occasionally yield the meaning of *cey*. If this supposition is acceptable then it is also to be agreeable that the meaning of *ceyyāy* must be different from that of *cey*. What are the meanings of *ceyyāy* and *cey*? If both words are taken to be in the affirmative,

there will be no difference in the meaning at all. There will be sense if *ceyyāy* is taken in the negative and *cey* in the affirmative. This is only the possible way to differentiate their meanings.

If we are to say that *ceyyāy* will sometimes omit the suffix *āy* and become *cey*, there are many objections to it. If that were so, Tolkāppiyar would have placed this sutiram (932) in Viṇaiyiyal, in the place where he has said that *āy* is a suffix of the second person singular, not in Eccaviyal. If that were so, we must perceive *ceyyāy* used in the affirmative in abundance and *cey* in rarity, in conformity with the rule 'ceyyen kiḷavi ākiṭaṅ uṭaittē'. The grammar of Tolkāppiyam and the whole of Sangam literature are a clear proof of their false interpretation. On the contrary and according to the meaning explained by me, the negative form *ceyyāy* yields the meaning of *cey* the affirmative only in few places, in accordance with the rule 'ceyyen kiḷavi ākiṭaṅ uṭaittē'. Naccinārkkiniyar a commentator of Tolkāppiyam has cited instances from the Sangam classics to prove this point.<sup>5</sup> The scholars who assert the view that *āy* should be added to the verbal root for the expression of the imperative have not given satisfactory reply to the question for the absence of the so-called imperative suffix *āy* in the ancient classics in the affirmative. They say that *āy* is elided in all places (puṇarntu keṭṭatu). In the whole text of Tolkāppiyam, we never come across any single instance where *āy* is used as a suffix of the imperative singular in the affirmative :

'uraiyeṅat tōlikku uraittaṅ kaṇṇum' (Tol. 1057)

'eṅkayarkku uraiyeṅa uraittaṅ kaṇṇum' (Tol. 1092)

'māṇalan tāveṅa vakuttaṅ kaṇṇum' (Tol. 1094)

Is it a rarity in Tolkāppiyam, in accordance with the rule 'ceyyen kiḷavi ākiṭaṅ uṭaittē'. The author of Naṅṅūl, rightly

5. Tol. Col. S. 450.

understanding the implication of the *suttiram* in question has expressed his view that the verbal root is in no need of any suffix to denote the imperative singular of the second person in the affirmative in the following *suttirams*,

*'ceyyaṅ ēval viṅaiṅ pakāp pātamē'* (Nan. 137)

*"aiāy ikara iṅṅa mūṅṅum  
ēvaliṅ varūum ellā iṅṅavum  
muppāl orumai muṅṅilai moṅiyē"* (Nan. 335)

There is another reason to prove that the verbal root itself will suffice to denote the imperative singular in the affirmative and nothing should be added to the root for that purpose. In a considerable number of places in the Sangam classics, we really find that the particles such as *miyā*, *ika*, *mō*, *matī*, *ikum*, and *ciṅ* have been used with the verbal roots in the imperative. If the ancient grammarians held the view that the verbal root would express the idea of command only with the aid of a suffix, they would have certainly regarded the above particles, as the suffixes of the second person singular in the imperative. But the fact is that *Tolkāppiyar*, the best representative of the ancient grammarians has overlooked them as *expletives*, as is evident from the *suttiram*,

*"miyāika mōmati ikuṅciṅ eṅṅum  
āvayiṅ āṅum muṅṅilai acaiccol"* (Tol. 758)

He has overlooked them on the ground that the addition of any of them to the root does not change however the meaning already denoted by the verbal base itself. It is therefore to be remembered that *āy* which is to be found in the medieval classics as a suffix of the imperative singular in the affirmative should also be discarded as an *expletive* as in the case of *miyā*, *ika*, etc.



Tolkāppiyar is right in holding *miyā*, *ika* etc., as expletives, as his opinion seems to be that the verbal root is self-expressive of the command. But it is unjustifiable, on the part of the scholars whose view it is a particular sign should be attached to the verbal root for the purpose of expressing command, to hold such particles as mere expletives. It is significant to note that they discard the words *miyā*, etc., as expletives of the second person, eventhough they were used abundantly along with the verbal roots in the Sangam classics. But they advocate that *ay* is a suffix of the imperative singular in the affirmative inspite of the absence of such a usage in the Sangam classics.

From the above explanations, it is brought out that the verbal root stands also as the verb of command, requiring no particle for that significance. This fact suggests that the future is implicit in the verbal root because of its nature to be the verb of command also. There is also another point to prove that the verbal root is capable of expressing the future by itself.

The medieval grammarians have divided the relative participles into the past, the present and the future and have given the paradigms *ceyta*, *ceykinra* and *ceyyum*. They say that in an example like *kol kaḷiru*, *a* and *um*, the suffixes of the relative participles and the infixes of three tenses i. e. *konra*, *kolkinra* and *kollum* are understood. This view reveals that *um* is the sign of the future and it is understood in *kol kaḷiru*, like *t* and *kinru* of other tenses. Here is a great and remarkable difference between the medieval grammars on one side and Tolkāppiyam on the other. Tolkāppiyam is the ancient Tamil grammar, probably before the third century B C. and it is superior to any other grammars in point of accuracy and in presenting the true nature and the growth of Tamil language. It helps in many respects to understand that the verbal root is self-expressive of the future tense.

Tolkāppiyar has clearly stated that there are only two relative participles, the past and the present as is evident from the following suttiram where only two paradigms are given,

*"avvaṟu poruḷumōr aṅṅa urimaiya  
ceyyum ceyta eṅṅaṅ collē"* (Tol. 718)

In an example like *kol kaḷiṟu*, he thinks that only the present and past tenses are understood, as it is also evident from the suttiram,

*"ceyyum ceyta eṅṅum kiḷaviyṅ  
meyyoruṅku iyalum toḷiltoku moḷiyum"* (Tol. 482)

As there is no sign for the future and the verb itself has the capacity to signify that tense, it is reasonable to hold that the future is not understood but expressed in the compound of *Vigaittokai*, like *kolkallru*. That this is the view of Tolkāppiyar in holding only two relative participles will be apparent from the suttiram,

*'viṅaiyṅ tokuti kālattu iyalum'* (Tol. 897)

The statement that the compound (*Vigaiyṅ tokuti*) wherein the idea of the past and present tenses is understood, will denote time (*kālattiyalum*) clearly suggests that the remaining tense i. e., the future is expressed in that compound.

The foregoing explanations that the verbal root is capable of being used as the second person singular of the imperative, without a separate sign for that purpose and that the future is always expressed in the compound of '*Vigaittokai*' will prove the point that the characteristic of the Tamil verb is the capacity to express the future without any sign for it.



## 12. THE FORMATION OF THE FUTURE

For the sake of convenience, let us divide all verbs into two classes, viz., the first class of verbs and the second class of verbs. The first class consists of the verbs which have the endings in letters other than the shortened 'u'. The verbs which end in the shortened 'u' comprise the second class. That the latter class of verbs always demands a separate treatment is clear from the existence of 'kuṟṟiyalokarap-puṇariyal' (குற்றியலுகரப் புணரியல்) apart from 'uyiriṟrup-puṇarial' (உயிரீற்றுப் புணரியல்) in Tolkaṭṭiyam.

### 1. *The formation of the future tense of the first class of verbs :*

I have shown in the previous chapter the absense of any sign for the future in the verb of the second person singular of the imperative and in the first member of the compound of Viṇaittokai. That fact holds good even in the other persons of the future tense. The forms of the first class of verbs which take in the future in relation to the first person singular, the masculine gender of the third person and the neuter plural are as follows :-

First person singular	Third person Masculine	Neutal plural
1. <i>naṭappēṅ</i>	<i>naṭappān</i>	<i>naṭappa</i>
2. <i>naṭippēṅ</i>	<i>naṭippān</i>	<i>naṭippa</i>

3. <i>viṭuvēṅ</i>	<i>viṭuvāṅ</i>	<i>viṭuva</i>
<i>or</i>	<i>or</i>	<i>or</i>
<i>viṭuppēṅ</i>	<i>viṭuppāṅ</i>	<i>viṭuppa</i>
4. <i>colvēṅ</i>	<i>colvāṅ</i>	<i>colva</i>
5. <i>koḷvēṅ</i>	<i>koḷvāṅ</i>	<i>koḷva</i>

These illustrations clearly show that *eṅ*, *āṅ*, and *a* are added not to verbal bases but to the verbal nouns. The verbal noun is a peculiar category which is so flexible as to be used for many purposes. That peculiarity lies in its possession of the double characteristics of verb and noun. In the chapter on 'Taṅviṅai and Piṅviṅai' reference has been made to the manner in which the verbal nouns are employed in the formation of the piṅviṅai verbs. Now we have the opportunity to find how the verbal nouns do their function in the formation of the future tense, with the addition of the pronominal terminations to them. The above examples clearly indicate that the combination of the verbal noun with the personal sign contributes to the idea of the future tense, requiring no element for that purpose. As the first part of the verbal noun being the verb, and as it has the capacity to express the future tense by itself, the absence of any future element in the above combination will not surprise us.

When the signs of persons are added direct to the verbal nouns, some minor change is noticeable; but that change does not, however, contradict the above supposition that the future has no sign. *a* (அ) the suffix of the neuter plural is sometimes added not directly to the verbal noun, like *naṭappa* and *colva* but it is added to a particle *aṅ* which comes close to the verbal noun like *naṭappaṅa* and *colvaṅa*. Tamil grammarians and philologists consider this *aṅ* as euphonicly inserted in the middle. The form *naṭappa* may be taken to be the verb

of the neuter plural or to be the verb or the epicene plural. It is common to them, whatever may be the suffix in either case. But the form *naṣappaṇa* wherein *aṇ* is inserted leaves no ambiguity and belongs exclusively to the neuter plural. Therefore *aṇ* which comes in between the verbal noun and the suffix of the neuter plural should be regarded as a particle of differentiation. This supposition will be attested also by another point. The expressions *naṣanta* and *naṣavāniṇṇa* stand in common to the past and present relative participles and to the neuter plural of the past and present tenses. When *aṇ* is inserted, the forms *naṣantaṇa* and *naṣavāniṇṇaṇa* stand in particular to the neuter plural of the past and present tenses only. Thus *aṇ* as a particle of differentiation is obvious. This change is so insignificant as to contradict the above view that the combination of the verbal noun with the person-signs tends to the idea of the future. This change takes place in the verb of neuter plural only to do the function mentioned above. It has nothing to do with the time.

2. *The formation of the future tense of the second class of verbs:*

The second class of verbs *nāṭu*, 'to seek' *uruku* 'to melt' *aṇaṅku* 'to suffer' *varuttu* 'to afflict', etc., form their future by adding the signs of persons to the verbal roots themselves and not to the verbal nouns. As *u* (●) is the natural ending of this class of verbs, it is hard to add further *pu*, *vu* or *u* the suffix of the verbal noun. The forms which they take in the future in relation to the first person singular, the masculine gender of the third person and the neuter plural are as follows :

First person	Masculine	Neuter plural
1. <i>nāṭuvēṇ</i>	<i>nāṭuvāṇ</i>	<i>nāṭuva</i>
2. <i>urukuvēṇ</i>	<i>urukuvāṇ</i>	<i>urukuva</i>

- |                      |                   |                  |
|----------------------|-------------------|------------------|
| 3. <i>aṇaṅkuvēṅ</i>  | <i>aṇaṅkuvāṅ</i>  | <i>aṇaṅkuvā</i>  |
| 4. <i>varuttuvēṅ</i> | <i>varuttuvāṅ</i> | <i>varuttuva</i> |

In the above instances we find that the person-signs *ēṅ*, *āṅ* and *a* are added to the verbal roots to form the future and *v* (வ) occurs in all places in the middle. What is the use and force of this *v*? It should not be regarded as an intervocalic letter, as there is no necessity to prevent hiatus between the shortened *u* and the vowel. By rule, the shortened *u* will disappear so that the succeeding vowel will combine with the preceding consonant. I am inclined to say that *v* in the above examples should be held as a particle of differentiation. *v* (வ) is the seat of difference between the affirmative and the negative so far as the second class of verbs is concerned. The examples of the affirmative verbs are *nāṭuvēṅ* *nāṭuvāṅ*, and *nāṭuvā* and the corresponding negative verbs are *nātēṅ*, *nāṭāṅ* and *nāṭal*. The commentators of Nannūl are of opinion that *v* in the forms *ōtuvāṅ* a teacher, and *pāṭuvāṅ* a singer, is the particle of noun (peyar iṭainilai) and that *v* in *ōtuvāṅ* and *pāṭuvāṅ*, the finite verbs of the masculine gender of the third person is the sign of the future. I am of opinion that *v* in all these places is the particle of differentiation and that this particle distinguishes the above affirmative forms from their negatives like *ōtāṅ* and *pāṭāṅ*.

When the suffix of the neuter plural is combined with the verbal root of the second class, a similar change as shown above in regard to the verbs of the first class occurs. The suffix *a* (அ) is added to a particle *aṅ*, like *naṭappaṅa* and *uṇpaṅa*. 'aṅ' the particle of differentiation distinguishes the forms of the neuter plural from those of these epicene plural, like *naṭappa* and *uṇpa*.

*The future verbal participles:*

The initial consonants *v* (வ) and *p* (ப) of the suffixes of the future verbal participles *vāṅ*, *pāṅ* and *pāṅku* are not future

signs but are part and parcel of the verbal nouns. The examples *ceyvāṅ*, *uṅpāṅ* and *uṅpāṅku* are the combinations of *ceyvu* + *āṅ*; *uṅpu* + *āṅ*; and *uṅpu* + *āṅku*. The first portions of them are really verbal nouns. It will suffice to note here that *āṅ* and *ku* the latter portions of these suffixes should be regarded as the instrumental and dative case-signs respectively. These case-signs, combined with the verbal nouns, do the function of the future verbal participles. From this, it is evident that the formation alone contributes to the expression of the future, requiring no element for it. It should be remembered here that among the nine verbal participles enumerated by Tolkāppiyar, *ceyarku* has the verbal noun as its base, like *ceyvāṅ*, *uṅpāṅ* and *uṅpāṅku* and it, combined with the dative sign *ku* expresses the idea of the future without any separate sign for that expression.

*The future tense of the third person neuter singular:*

Dr. Caldwell observes that whilst 'he will be' is *iruppāṅ*, 'it will be' is ordinary *irukkum*, not *iruppadu*, and forms like *iruppadu* are in general used only as participial nouns. In this respect Tamil is less regular than Canarese in which the ordinary third person neuter singular of the future tense is *iruvadu*.<sup>1</sup> In the days of Tolkāppiyam and the Sangam classics, *um* was used to denote the present tense, not certainly the future. The *suttirams* of Tolkāppiyam,

'*nikaḷūu niṅṅa palarvarai kiḷavi*' (Tol. 657)

"*pallōr paṅarkkai nuṅṅilai taṅmai*  
*avvayṅ mūṅṅum nikaḷum kālattuc*  
*ceyyum eṅṅum kiḷaviyoṅu kollā*" (Tol. 711)

clearly point out that *ceyyum* is used as a verb of the present tense in the masculine and feminine genders and the singular and

1. A Comparative Grammar of the Dravidian Languages, p. 515.



plural of the neuter. In the medieval period *ceyyum* came to be used as a verb of the future tense in the third person singular neuter. The above statement of Dr. Caldwell holds good so far as the medieval literature is concerned. But when *ceyyum* was used as a verb of the present tense in the Sangam period, *ceyvāṇ*, *ceyvāṇ!*, *ceyvatu* and *ceyvāṇṇ* might have been used as the verbs of the future in the masculine and feminine genders and the singular and plural of the neuter. As Dr. Caldwell admits of the existence of the ordinary future verbs in the masculine and feminine genders and the neuter plural, I need not cite examples from the Sangam classics. I am inclined to quote examples from the ancient classics to show that the future tense of the third person neuter singular, like other persons, was formed by the addition of the suffix *otu* to the verbal noun:

- 'teṇṇirc ciṇṇukuḷam kiḷvatu māṭō' (Puram. 118)  
 'poru! piriyyiṇ puṇarvaṇu' (Akam. 51)  
 "iṇṇum varuvatu kollō nerunalum  
 koṇṇatu pōlum nirappu" (Kural. 1048)

Thus, the statement by Dr. Caldwell that there is no ordinary third person neuter singular of the future tense in Tamil as in Canarese is not acceptable.

From the foregoing explanations, it is brought out that the combination of the person-signs with the verbal nouns, in the case of the first class of verbs or with the verbal themes in the case of the second class of verbs contributes to the expression of the idea of the future. It is also brought out that *v* (வ) and *p* (ப) appearing in the future tense of the first class of verbs are part and parcel of the suffixes of the verbal noun and that *v* appearing in the future tense of the second class of verbs is the particle of differentiation. It is clear from this that there is no sign for the future in Tamil.

### 13. THE NEGATIVE VERB

I have explained in the previous chapter how the formation of the verbal noun or the verbal theme and the addition of the personal sign contributes to the expression of the future tense, without the need for any additional sign to indicate the future. I have fully satisfied myself by through investigation that the idea of negation is also effected by the combination of the verbal root with the personal sign, though the manner of combination is different in both cases. The negative forms of the *first class of verbs* through all persons are as follows :-

a. *Negative verbs of the First person singular and plural :*

Singular	Plural
1. <i>naṣavēṇ</i> 'to walk'	<i>naṣavēm</i> or <i>naṣavōm</i>
2. <i>aṣiyēṇ</i> 'to beat'	<i>aṣiyēm</i> or <i>aṣiyōm</i>
3. <i>ceyyēṇ</i> 'to do'	<i>ceyēm</i> or <i>ceyyōm</i>
4. <i>vāḷēṇ</i> 'to live'	<i>vāḷēm</i> or <i>vāḷōm</i>

b. *Negative verbs of the Second person singular and plural :*

Singular	Plural
1. <i>naṣavāy</i>	<i>naṣavīr</i>
2. <i>aṣiyāy</i>	<i>aṣiyīr</i>

3. <i>ceyyāy</i>	<i>ceyyīr</i>
4. <i>vāḷāy</i>	<i>vāḷīr</i>

c. *Negative verbs of the third person :*

Masculine	Feminine	Epicene plural
1. <i>naṭavāṅ</i>	<i>naṭavāḷ</i>	<i>naṭavār</i>
2. <i>aṭiyāṅ</i>	<i>aṭiyāḷ</i>	<i>aṭiyār</i>
3. <i>ceyyāṅ</i>	<i>ceyyāḷ</i>	<i>ceyyār</i>
4. <i>vāḷāṅ</i>	<i>vāḷāḷ</i>	<i>vāḷār</i>

Neuter singular	Neuter plural
1. <i>naṭavātu</i>	<i>naṭavā</i>
2. <i>aṭiyātu</i>	<i>aṭiyā</i>
3. <i>ceyyātu</i>	<i>ceyyā</i>
4. <i>vāḷātu</i>	<i>vāḷā</i>

In the affirmative formation of the future tense of the first class of verbs, the signs of personality are added directly to *the verbal nouns*, whereas in the negative formation of the first class of verbs those signs are added directly to *the verbal roots*, only with such insignificant changes as euphony requires. Those changes are the redoublication of the final consonants like *uṇṇēṅ*, *ceyyēṅ*, etc., or the occurrence of *v* or *y* to prevent hiatus like *naṭavēṅ*, *aṭiyēṅ*, etc. In these places, the person-signs are added to the consonants thus redoubled or to the intervocalic letters thus inserted. In all other places, those signs are added direct to the verbal roots to express negation like *vaḷēṅ*, *viṭēṅ*, etc.

Since *ē* (ஏ) invariably occurs in the first person singular\*  
\* (ஐ) in the first person plural and *ā* (ஊ) in other persons,



in the above examples and since Tolkāppiyar has said ‘ā, ē, ō, *ammūṅṅum viṅā*’ (32), I am inclined at first to favour the theory of Dr. Gundert that the particles of interrogative are the means whereby the idea of negation is expressed, and that the meaning of a question reduces to the meaning of negation. But on minute scrutiny of the above examples and on the discovery of the absence of any future sign, I am inclined to propose a different view, i.e., the direct combination of the person-signs with the verbal root tends to the sense of negation. This is also the view of Beschi. He says that “It is peculiar to this language to have a mode, whereby, without any particle importing negation, they express the negative sense of every verb”.<sup>2</sup>

*The signs of the third person :*

It is generally stated that the signs of the masculine and feminine genders, the epicene plural and the singular and plural of the neuter are *aṅ* and *āṅ*, *a|* and *ā|*, *ar* and *ār*, *tu* and *a* and *ā*. The only thing which has no suffixes beginning with *a* and *ā* is the neuter singular. We find that the first and the second persons too possess the suffixes beginning with short and long vowels in *eṅ* and *ēṅ*, *ai* and *āy*, and *ir* and *ir*. Thus we are surprised to find that the neuter singular of the third person alone has not been favoured with the initial vowels. Is it true that ‘tu’ has not been preceded by any vowel? If the neuter singular were not really in possession of the suffixes like *atu* and *ātu*, this non-possession would betray the irregularity of the nature of the personal signs in the Tamil language. *Atu* and *ātu*, the singular signs of the genitive case and the expressions *mutalatu* (Tol. 65) *iṅṅu ākātu* (do. 71) lead us to suppose that the neuter singular too, like all other persons is in possession of suffixes beginning with short and long vowels like *atu* and *ātu*. As a proof of the

2. Beschi, *Kudum Tamil*, p. 56.

practice of omission of the initial vowels *a* and *ā* of the suffixes, I will adduce the following suttirams of Tolkappiyam where *n*, *l* and *r* alone are mentioned, with the elimination of their vowels.

'*nahāṅ orrē āṭūu aricoi*' (Tol. 488)

'*lahāṅ orrē makaṭūu aricol*' (Tol. 489)

'*lahāṅ orrum pakara iṭutiyum*' (Tol. 490)

Thus we find that in the examples, *vāṭāṅ*, *vāṭāḷ*, *vāṭār*, *vāṭātu* and *vāṭā*, the suffixes of the third person are directly annexed to the verbal theme and that the direct annexation contributes to the expression of the idea of negation, in no need of any particle for that purpose. The long vowel *ā* regularly occurring in all these places has been wrongly taken as the particle of negation by the latter grammarians. They are unaware that *ā* (ஆ) is the first portion of the personal signs.

The latter grammarians who have had the least thought of the existence of the several modes and their peculiar functions they fulfil in the domain of Tamil Grammar, have had a tendency to find out a means in the shape of particles for every expression which a word could produce. This tendency rooted in them is the cause for their wrong splitting of several regular combinations so as to pronounce *p* (ஃ) and *v* (வ) as the future tense signs, *āniṅru*, *kiṅru* and *kiṅru* as the present tense-signs and *pi* and *vi* as the particles of *piṟaviṅai*. This is the tendency that seems to be at work in the say that '*ā*' is the particle of negation. The medieval grammarians have strongly put forth the view that wherever the negative sense exists, there '*ā*' must be invariably present. They used to say that *ā* is understood (*puṅarntu keṭṭatu*) in all the finite verbs *vāṭēṅ*, *vāṭēm*, *vāṭōm*, *vāṭiṅ*, etc., where the appearance of '*ā*' is beyond our imagination. In spite of this incongruity, to hold that the direct addition of the signs of persons to the

verbal themes contribute to the expression of the idea of negation is natural and reasonable.

The negative forms of *the second class of verbs* through all persons are as follows :—

(a) *Negative verbs of the First person singular and plural :*

Singular	Plural
1. <i>nāṭēṅ</i>	<i>nāṭēm or nāṭōm</i>
2. <i>urukēṅ</i>	<i>urukēm or urukōm</i>
3. <i>varuntēṅ</i>	<i>varuntēm or varuntōm</i>

(b) *Negative verbs of the second person singular and plural :*

Singular	Plural
1. <i>nāṭāy</i>	<i>nāṭir</i>
2. <i>urukāy</i>	<i>urukir</i>
3. <i>varuntāy</i>	<i>varuntir</i>

(c) *Negative verbs of the third person :*

Masculine	Feminine	Epicene plural
1. <i>nāṭāṅ</i>	<i>nāṭāḷ</i>	<i>nāṭār</i>
2. <i>urukāṅ</i>	<i>urukāḷ</i>	<i>urukār</i>
3. <i>varuntāṅ</i>	<i>varuntāḷ</i>	<i>varuntār</i>

Neuter Singular	Neuter Plural
<i>nāṭātu</i>	<i>nāṭā</i>
<i>urukātu</i>	<i>urukā</i>
<i>varuntātu</i>	<i>varuntā</i>

The difference between the formation of the first class of verbs and that of the second class to express the negative sense lies in this that in the former the signs of personality are added in most instances to the doubled consonants or to the intervocalic letters which closely come to the verbal roots as explained at p. 110; whereas in the latter they are added directly to the verbal roots, when the final *u* naturally disappears. This insignificant difference does not contradict the above view that the direct combination of the personal signs with the verbal themes is the means whereby the idea of negation is expressed. The credit of explaining the rationale of the above combination which tends to the expression of the idea of negation in the following words goes to Dr. Caldwell: His explanation is that "The absence of signs of tense appears to contribute to the expression of the idea of negation: it may at least be said that it precludes the signification of the affirmative. In consequence of the absence of tense-signs, the idea expressed by the verb is abstracted from the realities of the past, the present and the future: it leaves the region of actual event, and passes into that of abstractions. Hence this abstract form of the verb may be supposed to have become a negative mood, not by a positive, but by a negative process, by the absence of a predicate of time, not by the aid of a negative particle".<sup>3</sup>

*The negative relative participle (எதிர்காலப் பெயரெச்சம்)*

The negative relative participle has taken its origin from the negative finite verbs of the third person. As soon as the final letters, *n*, *l*, *r* and *tu* signifying the masculine and feminine genders, the epicene plural and the neuter singular are eliminated, in the negative final verbs *vāḷān*, *vāḷāl*, *vāḷār* and *vāḷātu*, the remaining *vāḷā* becomes the example of the negative relative participle. It should be remembered here that there is nothing to be eliminated in *vāḷā*, the negative verb of

<sup>3</sup> 3. A Comparative Grammar of the Dravidian Languages, p. 469.

neuter plural; for no sooner 'ā' is eliminated than the remaining portion *vāḷ* loses also the significance of the idea of negation. Therefore *ā* is to be retained. Whether *vaḷā* is a negative relative participle or a negative finite verb of the neuter plural should be realised by means of its significance. The following examples will show that in the days of Tolkāppiyam and the Sangam classics, the negative relative participle has the ending in 'ā' alone and thereby justify the above statement that the negative relative participle is formed by eliminating the final letters of the negative finite verbs of the third person. Examples are :—

' <i>vārāk</i> kālam'	(Tol. 723)
' <i>oṇṭāt</i> tamar'	(do 986)
' <i>tiriyā</i> māṭci'	(do 990)
' <i>vāḷā</i> vaḷḷi'	(do 1005)
' <i>kuṟiyā</i> iṇṇam'	(Akam. 2)
' <i>tavirā</i> ikai'	(Puram. 3)

The relative participle will qualify, by rule, only the nouns of the third person. The use of the negative relative participle in relation to the first and second persons like *vārāta yeṇṇai* and *varāta uṇṇai* is of a later development and also unidiomatic. The ancient idiomatic use seems to have been *varēṇai* and *vārāyai*. Therefore the view that the negative relative participle has taken its origin only from the negative verbs of the third person and that its final ā is only a remnant of the suffixes of the third person is justifiable.

From the days of Tīrukkuraḷ, the negative relative participle has taken a different form from that quoted above.

' <i>akalāta</i> kālai'	(Kural. 1226)
' <i>iūkkāta</i> oppuravu'	(do. 480)



'kaḷaiyāta tuṅpam'	}	(Cilampū. XXI)
'vaḷaiyāta ceṅkōl'		
'puṇarāta col'		(Iraiyāṇār. 15)

On the analogy of the affirmative relative participle *ceyta* where *ta* exists in the end, the negative relative participle also has taken its forms like *akalāta*, *tūkkāta*, etc. *ta* in the negative merely appears to correspond to its affirmative. Nowhere do we find in Tolkāppiyam and in the Sangam classics, the form of the negative relative participle with 'a' in the end. When the conception that relative participles, whether it is affirmative or negative, should invariably end in *a* arose, the original forms *vārāk kalam*, *vātā vaḷḷi* etc., are wrongly considered by the grammarians as negative relative participle losing its end *a* (ஈறுகெட்ட எதிர்மறைப் பெயரெச்சம்). In my opinion, the later forms *akalāta*, *tūkkāta*, etc. should be really designated as negative relative participles having *a* ending (ஈறு நீண்ட எதிர்மறைப் பெயரெச்சம்).

#### Various negative forms:

*ceyyā* the combination of the verbal theme with a detached portion of the suffixes of the third person is supposed to have been the bases for the origin of the various negative forms. The negative verbal participle is formed from that base.

'eñcātu kiḷanta'	(Tol. 1059)
'varaiyātu pirital'	(do. 1086)

On the analogy of the affirmative verbal participle *ceytu* where *tu* exists in the end, the negative verbal participle also has taken its forms like *eñcātu* and *varaiyātu*. In *ceytu*, 't' denotes the preterite tense whereas in *eñcātu* *t* exists only to correspond to the affirmative.

The negative abstract nouns and the negative verbal nouns also have originated from the same source, *ceyyā*. Negative abstract nouns are *vekuḷāmai*, *poyyāmai*, etc. and negative verbal nouns are *ceyyāmai*, *kūṟamai*. etc.

#### *Ceyyāti and ceyyātim*

The assertive statement of Dr. Caldwell that the Dravidian imperatives are in general nothing but verbal nouns, pronounced emphatically and hence, the Tamil *ceyyādi* do not thou, is simply *ceyyādu* doing not, with the addition of the emphatic *ē* seems to be incorrect.<sup>4</sup> For *ceyyādē* is a corruption of *ceyyāti*, where *i* the auxiliary verb combines with the verbal participle to make the sense of the negative imperative. Reference has been made to the peculiar function of 'i' in the Chapter on 'i' - a taṇṇai verb. *maṟavātimē* (473) and 'cellātimō' (186) of Aiṅkuṟunūṟu are the instances where *i* with the sign of plurality has combined with the negative verbal participle to express the idea of the prohibitive imperative of the plural.

#### *vēṇṭā and vēṇṭam* (வேண்டா, வேண்டாம்)

That *vēṇṭu* 'to desire or to beg' is the verbal root is clear from the constant occurrence of the line *aṅṅāy vāḷi vēṇṭu* in the Sangam classics. *vēṇṭā* the negative is the predicate of both the singular and plural of the neuter. Examples are:

'oṅṟum vēṇṭā kāppin uḷḷē' (Tol. 1160)

'molittalum niṇṇalum vēṇṭā' (Kural. 280)

Nowadays *vēṇṭān* is very much used in place of *vēṇṭā*. The addition of *am* or *ākum* in the end of the affirmative or the negative verbs is to be found in Tirukkural in a number of

4. A Comparative Grammar of the Dravidian Languages, p. 472.

places 'paṇiyum-am' (976), 'aṇiyum-am' (978), 'uḷat akum, (235) 'ākā vām' (376) etc.

*vēṇṭām* seems to be a corruption of *vēṇṭā + am*. This will be evident from the Kural,

'marunteṇē vēṇṭā-v-ām yākkaiḱku' (942)

It is wrong to split it into *vēṇṭu + am*, as it will express only affirmative sense. At present *vēṇṭām* is a finite verb common to all persons.

*il* and *al*, the isolated particles of negation (இல், அல்)

The use of *il* in verbal combinations is very much different from that of *ā* the detached portion of the suffixes of the third person. It can be prefixed to a noun like *ilporu!* or to be used after the tense-signs like *uṇṭilan* or to be used as a finite verb like *varutal il*. 'il' has taken the negative relative participle form *illā* corresponding to *vāra*, *colla* etc., in the days of Tolkāppiyar as is evident from the suttiram,

'illen kiḷavi ..... ākāram varutalum' (Tol. 372)

From the days of Tirukkural, the form *illāta* is to be found.

'*illāta col*' (Kural. 198) '*illātā kaṇ*' (Kural. 574). Here the addition of *ā* and *ta* to 'il' does not change its meaning in any respect. There is no difference in meaning between the ancient form *ilporu!* and the later forms *illāp poru!* and *illāta poru!*. 'il' has changed into *illātā* for the sole reason to be similar with the forms of the negative relative participle of 'terinilai-vinai' like *naṭavāta*, *kallāta*, etc.

The aforesaid explanation holds good in regard to 'al' too. Though Tolkāppiyar has not given any rule regarding 'al', as he has done in the case of 'il' his use of 'alvaḷi and 'karuṇṣom



*allac cārpu* (567) leads us to suppose that 'al' also takes the same changes as those of 'il'.

*The existence of three negative tenses in Tamil like Malayalam :*

Like Malayalam, Tamil also has three negative tenses – the past, the present and the future. The past and present negatives are effected by inserting the negative particle *il* (இல்) between the tense-signs and the personal terminations, e. g. *uṇṇiḷaṅ* and *uṇṇāniṇṇiḷaṅ*. The future negative tense is expressed by inserting the negative particle *il* between the verbal nouns and the personal signs, e. g. *uṇṇiḷaṅ* and *vātkiḷaṅ*. The difference in significance between these three negative tenses and *uṇṇāṅ* where 'āṅ' is directly added to the verbal root is remarkable. In the instances, *uṇṇiḷaṅ*, *uṇṇāniṇṇiḷaṅ*, and *uṇṇiḷaṅ*, 'il' the negative particle gives negation, not to the action denoted by the verbal theme 'uṇ'; but it negatives only the meanings denoted by the tense-signs. *uṇṇiḷaṅ* means that he has not done the eating in the past, suggesting that he may do it at present or in future. *uṇṇāniṇṇiḷaṅ* means that he is not eating at present, but he may do so in future. *uṇṇiḷaṅ* means that he will not eat in the near future, but his eating in the future is not ruled out. As 'il' the negative particle is attached to the past and present tense signs in the examples *uṇṇiḷaṅ* and *uṇṇāniṇṇiḷaṅ*, and to the verbal noun in *uṇṇiḷaṅ*, it gives negation only to the idea expressed by tense infixes and the verbal noun, not to the action denoted by the verbal root. But in the instance *uṇṇāṅ*, the direct combination of the signs of person with the verbal root gives negation to the action itself, with reference to no time. From the above explanation, it will be clear that there are four kinds of negative verbs in Tamil – *uṇṇiḷaṅ*, *uṇṇāniṇṇiḷaṅ*, *uṇṇiḷaṅ* and *uṇṇāṅ*. Therefore the statement of Dr. Caldwell that Tamil

negative is destitute of the signs of present, past and future time is not acceptable.<sup>5</sup>

*The position of the tense infix in the negative verb:*

In this connection it is worthwhile to mention why 't' (த) lost its meaning of past tense in the instances *ceyyāta* and *ceyyātu* of the negative relative and verbal participles. In the examples *uṇṭilaṅ* and *uṇṇāniṇṭilaṅ* the tense infixes (*t* and *āniṇṭu*) have not been deprived of their significance because they are placed closely to the verbal root and before the particle of negation. But in *ceyyāta* and *ceyyātu*, 't' is placed after the detached particle *ā* the sign of negation. There is nothing left to signify by 't' when *ā* standing before it already negatives the action expressed by the verbal theme. *ceyyāta* and *ceyyātu* are formed on the analogy of the affirmative forms *ceyta* and *ceytu*. From this we may infer that placing a tense infix after the negative element is the way to deprive it of its significance. There is also another example to substantiate it.

'pāṭil maṇṇaraip pāṭalmār emarē' (Puram. 375)

*m* (ம) is a sign of present tense in the ancient days as is evident from *ceyyum*, *uṇṇaṇār* and *koṇmār*. In the expression 'pāṭalmār' of Puram 375, 'm' has lost its function because it has placed behind the isolated particle of 'al'. Thus the position of tense-infix in the negative verbs is the cause for its significance or non-significance. If it is placed before the element of negation, it denotes tense. If it is placed after it, it loses its capacity.

*The suffixes of aṅ and āṅ etc.*

In the negative verbs, the euphonic particles *cāriyai* are out of place. The difference between the personal signs

5. Ibid., p. 469.

beginning with short vowel like *aṅ a!*, *ar*, *atu* and *a* and those beginning with long one *āṅ*, *ā!*, *ār ātu* and *ā*, so far as their use in the negation is concerned, lies in this that while the former are added to the isolated negative particle *il* or *al* like *uṅṅilāṅ* and *uṅṅalāṅ* the latter are annexed directly to the verbal roots like *uṅṅāṅ*, *uṅṅā!* etc. Because of this difference in use, the existence of the suffixes of the third person as two different sets is justifiable. It is to be remembered that the suffixes of the third person whether short or long are nothing but the corrupted forms of the demonstrative pronouns.

From the foregoing investigation, it is manifest that the direct combination of the signs of personality with the verbal roots tends to the expression of the idea of negation and that the long vowel 'ā' which is mentioned as a sign of negation by the Tamil grammarians is nothing but the detached portion of the suffixes of the third person. By this reason, I find myself in disagreement with the statement of Dr. Caldwell that the short vowel 'a' is the negative particle and that it is to be found in the invariable length of the initial vowel of the pronominal terminations.<sup>6</sup>

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6. Ibid, p. 469.

## 14. THE PRESENT TENSE - INFIXES OF THE SANGAM PERIOD

This chapter will deal with the question how the ancient Tamils expressed the idea of the present tense, through all persons, before the introduction of *āniṅṅu*, *kiṅṅu* and *kiṅu* which arose probably after the Sangam period. In Paripādal, one of the Eight collections, *cērkiṅṅa* is used for the first time. Therefore one may argue that *kiṅṅu* is used even in the days of the Sangam classics. But in all probability, it should be remembered that on etymological grounds and on the side of the matter, Paripādal cannot be regarded as contemporaneous with the other works of the Eight collections. I am inclined to hold that most of the authors of Paripādal are not anterior to the author of Tirukkuṛal. They may be contemporaneous with or posterior to him. As the compilation of the Sangam classics might have taken place only after the collapse of the Third Sangam, it is reasonable to hold that the poems of the authors who immediately followed the Sangam period might also have been included in the Collections. Above all, the poem (22) of Paripādal in which *cērkiṅṅa* is found is by an anonymous author. Therefore we cannot decide whether this poem in question is contemporaneous with other poems of Paripādal or it belongs to a later period. As it is a decided fact that among the three present tense-infixes of the later days *āniṅṅu* took its birth prior to *kiṅṅu*, it is reasonable to suggest that the poem of Paripādal in which *cērkiṅṅa* is found, must certainly be posterior to Tirukkuṛal in which we come

across the use of *āniṅṅu* in '*iravāniṅṅa*' (1157). For these reasons, the view that *kiṅṅu* was used even in the days of the Sangam Classics is not acceptable.

1. 'um' (உ.ஓ)

The point that *ceyyum* had expressed only the present and that it was used as a finite verb in relation to the masculine and feminine genders and the singular and plural of the neuter in the days of Tolkāppiyar is evident from the *suttiram*,

*"pallōr paṅarkkai muṅṅilai taṅmai  
avvayṅ mūṅṅum nikaḷum kālattu  
ceyyum vṅṅum kiḷaviyoṭu koḷḷa"* (Tol. 711)

This rule seems to have persisted even in the Sangam period. Thus *avaṅ ceyyum* 'he does', *avaḷ ceyyum* 'she does', *atu ceyyum* 'it does' and *avai ceyyum* 'they (neuter) do' were in practice in those days to denote the present tense. We are at a loss to know how the present tense was brought out in other cases, i.e., in the places of the first and second persons and the epicene plural. The commentators of Tolkāppiyam have shown the following expressions as examples under many *suttirams* of Tolkāppiyam :—

1. *nāṅ uṅṅāniṅṅēṅ* or *nāṅ uṅkiṅṅēṅ*
2. *nām uṅṅāniṅṅēm* or *nām uṅkiṅṅēm*
3. *ni uṅṅāniṅṅāy* or *ni uṅkiṅṅāy*
4. *nir uṅṅāniṅṅir* or *nir uṅkiṅṅir*
5. *avar uṅṅāniṅṅār* or *avar uṅkiṅṅār*

They have done great mistake in showing verbs of later origin as examples to the rules of Tolkāppiyam. They have done so because they were unaware that *āniṅṅu* and *kiṅṅu* took their birth only after the period of the Sangam Classics. I have

Here attempted to show the verbs of the present tense used in the first and second persons and epicene plural before and during the period of the Sangam Classics.

### 2. 'tum' (தும்)

In the days of the Sangam literature, *tum* is used to denote the present tense of the first person plural. Instances are :

'yām nāṭṭiṭṭaṅ nāṭṭiṭṭaṅ varutum'	(Puram. 152)
'yām avaṇṇiṅṇum varutum'	(Siru. 143)
'nāmilam ākutaḷ aritum'	(Naṅ. 299)

Now we are accustomed to use *varkuṭṭem* or *varuṭṭom*, in place of *varutum* 'we come'.

### 3. 'al' (அல்)

*al* is used to denote the present tense of the first person singular in the Sangam classics.

'āṭumali uvakaiyōṭu varuval'	(Puram. 165)
'niṭṭ kaṇṇaṅṇu varuval'	(do. 23)

Though the commentator of Puṇānāṅūru has interpreted the expression *varuval* in the past I hold it to be in the present. The context will bear evidence to my view. Nowadays we frequently use *varuṭṭēṇ* in place of *varuval* 'I come'.

As *tum* has denoted the present tense of the first person plural, we have reason to suppose that *tu* (து) might have been existed to indicate the present tense of the first person singular. Though we do not come across any instance to confirm this supposition, the mention of *tu* as one of the



suffixes of the first person singular by Tolkāppiyar at least shows that the above view is not wrong.

#### 4. 'ti' (தி)

*ti* is used to denote the present tense of the second person singular in the ancient period. The poems 8 and 10 of Puṛaṇāṅgūru are illustrative of this point. *varaiti*, *oḷitti*, *iṟatti*, *varuti* and *viḷaṅkuti* in the eighth stanza and *oṟutti* and *taṇiti* in the tenth are the verbs of the present tense in the second person singular. Now we are using *varukiray* in place of *varuti* 'you come'.

#### 5. 'tir' (தீர்)

'*kānam kaṟattir eṇakkēṟpin*' (Kali. 7)

'*tāyar nir pōltir*' (do. 9)

These instances indicate the present tense of the second person plural. We are now using *kaṟakkīṟir* and *pōlkiṟir* in place of *kaṟattir* 'you cross'; and *pōltir* 'you appear'

#### 6. *utu* - the present tense-infix

From the instances shown above, it is to be explained how *tum*, *ti* and *tir* denote the present tense; for 't' (தீ) is generally regarded as the infix of the past tense. Dr. Caldwell admits of the use of *utu* the intermediate demonstrative pronoun as the present tense particle in Canārese.<sup>1</sup> As it is generally accepted by the Dravidian philologists that *atu* the remote demonstrative pronoun was used to serve the purpose of denoting past tense, it is not wrong to hold that *utu* the intermediate demonstrative pronoun was also used as a particle to denote the present tense. Just as *a* the initial vowel in *atu* is elided in most instances like *naṟantatu*, *vantaṭu*, etc., so

1. A Comparative Grammar of the Dravidian Languages, p. 496.

also *u* the initial vowel in *utu* is understood in many places like *varaiti*, *oḷitti*, etc. Yet in some instances like *viḷaṅkuti* and *varuti*, *utu* the present tense particle survives in full. The disappearance of the initial vowels 'a' and 'u' leads us to confusion in certain contexts whether the remaining 't' is a part of *atu* the past and *utu* the present. In any way *t* (ஃ) will never denote the future. Therefore the view of Pavaṇantiyaṅkar that 't' will express both the past and the future ('tavvoṭu irappum etirvum' S. 145) is unjustifiable. What is justifiable is that *t* (ஃ) when deprived of its initial vowels takes a common stand to denote the past and the present. It is also to be remembered that the commentators of the ancient classics have wrongly interpreted many finite verbs, as if they were in the future, in spite of the fact that they denote the present. Before the advent of *āniṅru*, *kiṅru* and *kiṅu*, it seems that *utu* had a predominate usage as a present tense-infix. It is wrong to suppose that 't' the ordinary sign of the past tense came to be employed, in addition, to denote the present. For 't' when it denotes the present, should be regarded as the remnant of *utu* the present tense-infix. Therefore the opinion of Dr. Caldwell that 'the use of the ordinary sign of the preterite in all the dialects, was not originally restricted to that tense so absolutely as it is now'<sup>2</sup> is objectionable.

#### 7. *The present tense of the epicene plural:*

'*eṇmaṅār*' is the common occurrence in the text of *Tolkāppiyam*. Though the commentators differ from one another in respect of splitting the expression '*eṇmaṅār*' they agree that it denotes the future. To quote the different manners in which they split and explain this word is out of place here. '*eṇmaṅār*' *eṇm*+*aṅ*+*ār* is a combination of a relative participle and a noun which it qualifies. '*eṇṇum*' is shortened into '*eṇm*'

2. Ibid; 491.



in accordance with the rule (722) of Tolkāppiyam like  $pōlum > pōnm$ . It is a relative participle of 'ceyyum' formula, denoting the present. The final portion 'ār', in 'eṇṇaṇār' is the corruption of 'avar' the remote demonstrative pronoun. 'aṇ' in the middle is an euphonic particle. Thus the expression 'eṇṇaṇār pulavar' means 'the learned men say'. It is wrong to attribute to it the sense of future, as it leads to the mistaken notion that the contemporaries of Tolkāppiyar had not said so. 'eṇmar' enm+ar too is synonymous with 'eṇṇaṇār'. A considerable number of instances like *kāṇmār*, *puṇarmār*, *koṇṇār*, *muṇimār*, *piṇimār*, *uṇmār* to be found profusely in the Sangam classics bear evidence to the combination of the relative participle of the present with the suffix of the epicene plural.

From the above explanation, it is clear that the intermediate demonstrative pronoun 'utu' (உது) was used to express the present in the verbs of the first and second persons and that 'um' (உம்) was used to denote the present in the third person.

## 15. CONCLUSION

In the foregoing pages, I have dealt with the various aspects of the Tamil verbs. The true verbal forms, the loss of old verbal roots and the rise of new ones, together with the changes of meanings and the changes of forms have been dealt with elaborately. As a result of my research, I have emphasized that the inherent nature of the verbs is to possess the capacity to express time and that the future is always implicit in the root itself.

I have shown, after an elaborate and careful analysis, that *pi* and *vi*, mentioned as particles of *piṛaviṅai* by the Tamil grammarians, are the combinations of the *p* and *v*, the remnant parts of the verbal nouns with 'i' an auxiliary verb. I have also shown that *ā*, the so called negative element is nothing but the detached portion of the suffixes of the third person. I have put forth the view that the sense of *piṛavinai*, the concept of the future and the idea of negation in the finite verbs are effected by the different kinds of formations existing in Tamil, not by any external element.

I have attempted to show how the ancient Tamil people expressed the present tense, through all persons, when *aniṅṟu* and *kiṅṟu* and *kiṟu* had not taken their birth. It will be easily understood from the illustrations taken from *Tolkāppiyam* and the ancient Sangam classics, how they are chiefly helpful

in determining the antiquity and growth of the Tamil language. In various parts of this thesis I have clearly shown how Tirukkural has taken its birth only after the Sangam classics.

As a result of my research, I have given new interpretations and new explanations to the suittirams 512, 553, 682, 897, 932, 933 and 934 of Tolkāppiyam, as against the interpretations given by certain commentators.

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