Studies on
Art and Culture of Tamils

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**Papers submitted at the International Conference on
"Art and Culture of Tamils" - 2024 (ICACT - 2024)
Eastern University, Sri Lanka**

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தமிழ்ப் புதுவை

Puducherry

भारतीय उच्चायुक्त
High Commissioner of India

15 May 2024

Message

It gives me great pleasure to convey my greetings to the Eastern University of Sri Lanka for organizing the International Conference on Arts and Culture of Tamils 2024. Let me also at the outset congratulate the University of Vavuniya, Sri Lanka and the Indian institutes including Puducherry University, Anna University and Vellore Institute of Technology for collaborating in this endeavour.

2.   The Conference brings together experts from both India and Sri Lanka on the themes of historical heritage, language and literature, traditional communication, education and employment systems, architecture, festivals and rituals. I am confident that the conference discourse will produce valuable scholarship on these subjects.   Personally, it is interesting to note that one of the themes of the Conference includes a discussion on cultural globalization, which is even more pertinent for our two countries with a significant diaspora population.

3.   The collaboration between Indian and Sri Lankan Universities for this conference is itself a demonstration of the fact that India and Sri Lanka are civilisational twins. Our history, geography and our deep cultural connect demonstrate a shared antiquity, and dictate a shared future.

4.   Guided by our Neighbourhood First policy and our SAGAR strategy, India has in recent years reaffirmed that we remain a natural, time-tested, trusted and reliable partner of Sri Lanka. With the adoption of the Connectivity Vision document by our leaders at their summit meeting in July 2023, our relations have acquired new drive and energy to forge ahead. This conference is an instance of our people-to-people linkages that form the centre of our long-term economic partnership.

5.   I take this opportunity to wish the organizers, delegates and the stakeholders of the Conference all the best in their endavours. The success of the Conference and other such collaborative activities between out institutes of education excellence is the success of the India-Sri Lanka friendship.

(Santosh Jha)

Foreword

On this auspicious occasion, I pray to evoke Kural number 213 of the revered Thirukkural by Thiruvalluvar :

புத்தே ளுலகத்தும் ஈண்டும் பெறலரிதே
ஒப்புரவின் நல்ல பிற (குறள் 213)

It means that, it is most difficult to obtain another good equal to benevolence either in this world or in that of the gods.

The ancient Tamil civilisation, is truly about the sublime soul and the benevolence of Tamil culture and creative expression over centuries.

I am happy to note that the array of Research Papers for the International Conference on the landmark hermeneutic and heuristic theme "Studies on Art and Culture of Tamils" which were submitted in English are in the volume The International Conference on Art and Culture of Tamils organised by the Eastern University of Sri Lanka in collaboration with the University of Vavuniya and other Indian Universities is truly unique in scope and nature.

I acknowledge that the International Movement for Tamil Culture (IMTC) was launched at the 4th International Tamil Research Conference in Jaffna in 1974. This is befitting in a sagacious as well as inclusive perspective that the IMTC is organizing its Golden Jubilee Celebrations in 2024 in Jaffna.

In Asian countries, the academic nature of the arts and culture of Tamils is predominantly dominated by ancient literature in Tamil. This tradition is well protected in the educational institutions. The competence to teach as well as good pedagogy requires both knowledge and skills in a particular domain.

At this juncture, it is worthwhile and reassuring to note that the younger generation of Tamils is enthusiastic about the seamless merging of the quintessential traditions of Tamil culture and civilization with modern innovations all around us. They are equally motivated to recite the Thirukkural and about successfully earning a degree in the latest areas of science and technology from the best institutions. This is the principal

motivation and reason why, I am happy to record that the International Conference attracts more than 500 delegates from eleven countries including India, Malaysia, USA, United Kingdom, France, Austria, Japan, Iran, Thailand, Nepal, Bangladesh, and Sri Lanka, inter alia.

From the depths of my heart and soul, I congratulate the contributors of this volume for their incessant and precious efforts in the assiduously curated papers for publication in the present form. I am happy to note that the papers included in this volume were selected by a peer review process and found suitable for publication in the present form.

I congratulate Prof. V. Kanagasingam, Vice-Chancellor, Eastern University of Sri Lanka, and Prof. Panch. Ramalingam, Chief Editor and Convenor of the Conference, and his colleagues for bringing out this useful volume.

Prof. T. Marimuthu
Chairman
International Association for Tamil Research (IATR),
Malaysia.

Preface

According to noted Indologist and linguist David Dean Shulman's 'Tamil:A Biography',Tamil is a living entity and more than just a mere language.Much of it is intrinsic to an ancient culture and sensibility. It survives as a mother tongue spoken by more than by eighty million people in South Asia and a diaspora that stretches across the globe.

'Yamarindha mozhigalile Thamizh mozhi pol inidhavadhu engum kanom (Of all the languages that we know, there is none as sweet as Tamil),' remarked Mahakavi Subramania Bharathiyar – an immortal comment expressing his quintessential obeisance for Mother Tamil.

Our Tamil.as we know, is nectarine and for ever.

The unboxing and the arduous compilation exercise for these research papers included in this volume presented in the International Conference on Art and Culture of Tamils organised at Eastern University of Sri Lanka on 13-14 June 2024 was an inspiring experience. The Eastern University, Sri Lanka in collaboration with the University of Vavuniya, Asian and South Asian Universities organised this memorable and pioneering Conference. The Department of Tamil Studies, Faculty of Arts and Culture is organizing this International Research Conference. The Conference Theme is *"Art and culture of Tamils"* தமிழர்களின் கலை மற்றும் கலாச்சாரம். The Sub-Tracks are Historical and Cultural Heritage, Language and Literature, Traditional Communication System, Traditional Education System, Traditional Employment System and Society, Arts and crafts, Architectures, Traditional Dresses and Games, Cuisine and Culinary traditions, Festivals and Rituals, and The Impact of Globalization in Tamil Arts and Culture.

This compendium is a treasure trove of 71 papers in Tamil and 11 papers in English. The Tamil papers are included in the volume, *"Thamizhar Kalai, Panpatu Aivu Kovai"* and English articles are included in this volume as Studies on Art and Culture of Tamils. Tamil – as a human social phenomenon and a global force has been amply addressed in this volume.

The insightful takeaways from the Conference on Art and Culture of Tamils provides an invaluable opportunity for Research Scholars and policy-makers to converge and exchange findings and hypotheses. By harnessing the knowledge and expertise shared at the Conference, policymakers can make informed decisions, improve policy

implementation, and address pressing socio-cultural issues. By seamlessly integrating recent advancements in Tamil research into policy making processes, professionals can shape policies that have a positive and lasting impact on the society. The Conference serves as a melange of for young researchers in policy-making and a stepping-stone towards a more informed, inclusive, and equitable society.

This book provides nature, scope and essential features of art and culture of Tamils. Several papers have explored various aspects of broader areas of studies to focus upon the theme of the book. I certainly believe that the strong methodologies adopted in the amazing bricolage of the papers by the esearchers will provide invaluable resource material to the budding researchers, PhD scholars and scholars sui generis, decision makers in Higher Education, professionals working in the various genres of language and literature.

I would like to thank sincerely our illustrious banyanesque leviathan and dynamic leader Professor Gurmeet Singh,Former Vice-Chancellor of Pondicherry University, and Professor K.Tharanikkarasu,Vice-Chancellor(i/c),Pondicherry University for their continuous support and guidance in all my academic endeavours.

I record my sincere gratitude to Prof. V. Kanagasingam, Vice-Chancellor, Eastern University of Sri Lanka, Prof. T. Mangaleswaran, Vice-Chancellor, Vavuniya University for initiating the International Conference on Arts and Culture of Tamils with overwhelming response from researchers.

In the same breath,I wholeheartedly thank Dr. V.G. Santhosam, President, VGP World Tamil Sangam, Chennai for graciously donating two revered Thiruvalluvar Statues for the Eastern University of Sri Lanka. I record my sincere thanks to Dr. G. Viswanathan, Founder-Chancellor, VIT University Vellore, Prof. R. Velraj, Vice-Chancellor, Anna University,Chennai, Shri. N. Nallusamy, Former Minister of Tamil Nadu, Trichy for their consent to attend the Conference.I sincerely appreciate the efforts Dr. A. Baheerathan, Coordinator, AEDU,London, Shri. Mavai So. Thangarajah, Advisor, IMTC, Germany, Dr. S.Poologanathan, Chairman, Institute of Family Medicine, Jaffna, and Rev Fr. A. P.Thirumagan, Rector, St. Patrick's College, Jaffna for their support and guidance.

My sincere thanks are due to Prof. S. Santhirasagaram, Organising Secretary, Dr.T. Megaraja, Editor, and the Conference Committee I congratulate all the delegates of the Conference.

I also heartily congratulate all the delegates who have contributed their research works for this much-awaited seminal publication.

Before I conclude, I evoke Kural No 430 on 'The Possession of Knowledge' from the immortal Thirukkural which states:

> அறிவுடையார் எல்லா முடையார் அறிவிலார்
> என்னுடைய ரேனும் இலர்

This means, 'Those who possess wisdom, possess every thing; those who have not wisdom, whatever they may possess, have nothing'…

Prof. Panch. Ramalingam

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INTERNATIONAL RESEARCH CONFERENCE ON "ARTS AND CULTURE OF TAMILS"

2024

13,14,15th JUNE- 2024

EASTERN UNIVERSITY, SRI LANKA, VANTHARUMOOLAI

The Eastern University, Sri Lanka in collaborartion with the University of Vavuniya. Asian and South Asian universities hosts an International Research Conference on "Arts and Culture of Tamils" (IRCACT). The Department of Tamil Studies, Faculty of Arts and Culture is organizing this international conference.

CONFERENCE THEMES

Historical and Cultural Heritage, Language and Literature, Traditional Communication System, Traditional Education System, Traditional Employment System and Society, Arts and Crafts, Architectures, Traditional Dresses and Games. Cuisine and Culinary Traditions. Festivals and Rituals, Impacts of Globalization in Tamil Arts and Culture.

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Studies on Art and Culture of Tamils: International Opportunities and Challenges

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The centuries-old Tamil culture finds expression in a teeming repository of the language, literature, music, dance, theatre, folk arts, martial arts, painting, sculpture, architecture, sports, media, comedy, cuisine, costumes, celebrations, philosophy, religions, traditions, rituals, organizations, science, and technology. 90% of the population of Tamil Nadu are Hindus. எங்கள் இருப்பிடத்தில் முழு உலகமும் – Innumerable civilisations across the world across centuries have enriched themselves from the rich treasure trove of the Tamil way of life and its culture.

Keywords: Tamil universe, diaspora, language, literature, culture

Prologue

We begin with a quote from the **Thirukkural** – one of the immortal classics among the *Patiren-kirkkanakku* ("Eighteen Ethical Works")in the Tamil universe :

தெய்வத்தான் ஆகா தெனினும் முயற்சிதன்
மெய்வருத்தக் கூலி தரும் (குறள் 619)

Though fate-divine should make your labour vain;

Effort its labour's sure reward will gain.

(Although it is said that, through fate, it cannot be attained, yet labour, with bodily exertion, will yield its reward)

The Tamil culture is well expressed in language, literature, music, dance, theatre, folk arts, martial arts, painting, sculpture, architecture, sports, media, comedy, cuisine, costumes, celebrations, philosophy, religions, traditions, rituals, organizations, science, and technology. 90% of the population of Tamil Nadu are Hindus. Christians and Muslims account for 6% and 5.5% respectively. The majority of Muslims in Tamil Nadu speak Tamil, with less than 15% of them reporting Urdu as their mother tongue. Tamil Jains number only a few thousand now. There are atheist, rationalist, and humanist philosophies adhered to by sizeable minorities (Panch. Ramalingam et al., 2023).

The principal early settlement patterns of the Tamils can be traced to the historical sugarcane plantations of Mauritius and Réunion located in the Indian Ocean; Jamaica, Trinidad, and Tobago in the Caribbean; Guyana and Suriname in South America; plantations in South Africa; rubber estates and railways in the Federated Malay States (Malaysia); coffee and tea estates in Ceylon (Sri Lanka); and to coal mines of New Caledonia of Australia in the Pacific Ocean. To understand the spread of the Tamil diaspora some details are given below with approximate data. There is however no official data available in any country due to various reasons.

Again, the above statements about the demographic spread of the Tamil Diaspora is tentative. There may be considerable variations and it needs to be updated. Thus, the statistical details about the Tamils in other diaspora countries should be collected through field study and updated.

Objectives

The rather pellucid theme of the Conference is Studies on Art and Culture of Tamils. Given the broad scope of the Conference, it invites Research Papers focusing on issues related to the historical, cultural, and present scenario of Tamils in various countries. The Tamils, consisting of people of Tamil origin living outside of Tamil Nadu in India, and Sri Lanka mostly face both opportunities and challenges. If I were to speak of one consistent leitmotif for the Tamil community I would say that Lord Murugan remains a redolent pillar of strength for the Tamil community and the Tamil Diaspora.

Opportunities:

•   Economic Opportunities: The Tamils have had access to economic opportunities in countries where they have settled, such as the United States, Canada, the United Kingdom, European Countries, Australia, Singapore, Mauritius, and Malaysia. This includes mostly job opportunities, entrepreneurship opportunities, and commercial investments.

•   Cultural Opportunities: The Tamils have the opportunity to preserve and promote their culture and traditions in their adopted countries. They frequently organize cultural events, establish cultural centres, and Tamil schools, and promote the Tamil language and literature.

Challenges:

•   Cultural and Linguistic Barriers: The Tamils face challenges in preserving their cultural and linguistic identity in countries where Tamil is not the dominant language.

•   Discrimination: The Tamils have been known to face discrimination and racism in their countries of settlement, which can affect their social, cultural, and economic opportunities.

•   The Tamils have also been known to engage in peace and development where there is conflict and help to maintain sustainability and harmony amongst the community.

To analytically discuss the opportunities and challenges of the Tamils Art and Culture.

Analytical Discussion

Historical background of the migration of Tamils

According to historical records, Ceylon became a British colony in 1796 (De Silva, 1981). The majority of its population, that is 88%, was engaged in agriculture during the colonial period (Cull, 1901; Ormsby Gore, 1928). The population was divided into two main groups, the Sinhalese majority and the largest minority, the Tamil people, each speaking its own language. The latter group was divided in addition into those indigenous to Ceylon and those brought from southern India to work on plantations (De Silva, 1987). Individuals can conceive their self-interests quite differently. The cultural interest of the people polarised between Tamils and Singhalese. There was a conflict between language policy

issues. This brings up a crucial element of the language policy equation. If you make ethnicity, nationality, and minority status the unit of analysis, you can conclude that people would want to or have in their interest to maintain their mother tongue (Brutt-Griffler, Janina. 2002).

Sri Lankan Tamils are among the newest wave of migrants in North American and European metropolises. They started migrating in large numbers after 1983 when the ethnic conflict in the island took a military turn. Language is at the root of the ethnic conflict in Sri Lanka, which has come close to being torn asunder in almost three decades of ferocious fighting between majority Sinhalese and minority Tamils, now costing at least 80,000 lives by conservative estimates. When parliamentary negotiations to win official status for the Tamil language and a fair share in economic resources, employment, and higher education failed to produce satisfactory results after independence from Britain, the Tamil youth launched a military campaign for a separate state (Canagarajah, 2008). As a background to the Tamil language and the diaspora, we have to note that Tamil is a diglossia language, although some of the boundaries are weakening in the context of democratization activities in Sri Lanka (Canagarajah 1995). Though Tamils from diverse national backgrounds have now established settlements in Australasia, Europe, and North America, it is fair to consider the Sri Lankan diaspora as a distinct entity. Furthermore, because of historic conflict with the Sinhalese island, Tamils rarely join the Sinhalese in these migrant locations to form a common Sri Lankan diaspora identity. Hence my restricted construct, Sri Lankan Tamil diaspora (Canagarajah, 2008).

Lord Murugan and the Tamil Diaspora

The Tamil Kadavul, Lord Murugan, also known by different names, Karthikeya, Karthikeyan, Skanda, Dandapani, Subramanya, Shivakumara, Kumaraswami (Bachelor God), Shanmukha, Saravana, Muthukumaraswamy to mention a few is the son of Lord Siva and Mother Parvathi and the brother of Lord Ganesh also known as Pillaiyar in Tamil Nadu and Sri Lanka. The endearment of Lord Murugan to the Tamils ensured that, those who migrated to other parts of the world for work and economic opportunities carried with them the language of Tamil, the culture and yes, Lord Murugan, the festivals, and the ethos and the divinity that He stood for. Sivasupramaniam (n.d.,) speaks of the fact that the dispersal of Tamil around the world is not of a recent origin and there would be more than seventy million of them spread over more than fifty countries. The Tamil diaspora is a growth of togetherness of these people,

and from a religious and philosophical perspective, Lord Murugan becomes the cornerstone of their lives. The Tamil togetherness rooted in its ancient heritage, rich language, and vibrant culture, ensured that they were able to create an identity for themselves and assimilate as a community.

Shrikumar (2015) quotes in his article V.A., Vidya, Academic Director, Chella Meenakshi Centre for Educational Research and Services who has worked on the 45-minute documentary, *Lord Murugan and South Indian Hinduism*, states, "is there something called Tamil religion? North India has Lord Ram and Krishna, while in the Southern part of India gods like Murugan and other demi-gods are venerated. Lord Murugan is a people's God, and thence, there is a people's religion, which contains folk myths, personal and cultural histories. There are no doubt 60 million gods in India, but somehow, the peculiarity of the folk religion in Tamil Nadu and the Murugan cult is fascinating." It is the folk religion that many talk about that the Tamil diaspora took along with it to the faraway lands.

Trouillet (2010) narrates, Murugan is one of the gods of the Hindu pantheon, whose religious figure has been present in South India for more than two thousand years. Its worship is associated with the mountains and the cultural identity of Tamil Nadu (the "Tamil country"), a regional State of the Republic of India whose cardinal points are marked by the six great pilgrimage centres dedicated to this god. This type of symbolic and geographic interaction between the temples of Murugan, the territory, and the religious circulations dates back at least to the Middle Ages. It is to be found today at the local level too, and at the scale of the Diaspora as well. The survey also shows that the cult of Murugan triggers human actions that are printed in the geographical space - such as the construction of temples, pilgrimages, or the use of a holy place as a political tool. So, this cult is endowed with a real spatiality, whose expression depends on the position of Murugan in the pantheon and on its meaning for Tamil society. Khan & Swarna (2024) have documented how a family that migrated from Andhra Pradesh to Tamil Nadu, who were ardent worshipers of Lord Vishnu (Perumal), named their four sons as Murugesan, Kumaran, Saravanan, and Karthikeyan. It is this love for Lord Murugan that endears the Tamils to Lord Murugan. The *Arupadai Veedu* (six abodes/war houses) located in Palani, Swamimalai, Thiruthani, Thiruparankundram, Tiruchendur, and Pazhamudircholai in Tamil Nadu, is another cause of celebration for the Tamils, who ensured, the philosophy of Lord Murugan to proliferate into their life.

Lord Murugan to the diaspora has become a cornerstone in a way, the population, whichever part of the world, are able to relate to their ancestry and home of yesteryears. In the words of Soja (1989) it is worthwhile considering the Lord Murugan temples as *hauts lieux* (high places) because of the importance of the spatial dimension. Guilmoto (1991) states, the relationships between places not only concerns the diasporic phenomena but also Tamil temples especially of Lord Murugan that have built over a period, which are now present on the five continents under the cumulative effects of the international migrations of the Tamils. Clothey (2006) writes that the establishment of the Tamil diaspora and the perpetuation of the tradition of temples and temples building across the continents is a unique feature.

Illustration 1: The Batu Cave in Kuala Lumpur during Thaipusam (Nava tv, 2021)

The Tamil diaspora too has ensured that the temples of Lord Murugan, are of a grand variety and truly attract one and all. In Malaysia the famous Lord Murugan destinations are to be found in Batu caves near Kuala Lumpur, Arulmigu Balathandayuthapani hilltop temple in Penang, and Sri Subramaniam Temple in Ipoh. Sri Thendayuthapani Temple in Singapore is very famous in the City Country. In Mauritius too, where Hindus make up half the population (Fischer, et al., 2014), there are temples dedicated to Lord Murugan. South Africa too is agog with religious activities during the month of *Thaipusam*, when the devotees invoke Lord Murugan.

Thaipusam, the festival that unifies the Tamil Diaspora

For a bystander, hearing *vel vel shakti vel* in unison from the devotees of Lord Murugan as the devotees enter a trance accompanied by drum beat which is incessant is an experience by itself. Indian Holiday (2022), a travel blogsite, mentions that, the Thaipusam festival is the celebration of the utmost devotion to the Lord Murugan. Edu Reviews (2019) mentions it is about faith, endurance, and penance.

The first Purnima or full moon day after the winter solstice and Makar Sankranti (Harvest festival in the Hindu Calendar) is called as Thaipusam. In the southern part of India, it is known as "Dhanya Pournami" – a full moon of fulfilment. Sadguru (Isha, n.d.) states, that in many ways, it is the most generous full moon of the year, due to the Earth's position in relation to the Sun, and it is on this day, Thaipusam, Mother Parvati gave the *vel*, the spear to Lord Murugan. He fought across the subcontinent with this weapon and became famous as the greatest warrior ever. It is said he went beyond the present borders of Bharat. He was an emperor of all the rulers, but he never held a kingdom. He only fought battles because he was committed to annihilating injustice. If the handing over the *vel* and subsequent developments point towards Thaipusam wherein, Lord Murugan defeats an evil demon Surapadman and thence, Lord Murugan is typically depicted holding a spear, as well as one of the mythical etiologies for why the Kavadi ritual involves bodily piercing (Xygalatas et al., 2021).

Illustration 2: Thaipusam in Singapore, the Kavadis, piercings and the milk pots (Beate, 2023)

Thaipusam, is not a festival for the meek and faint-hearted, many have seen people fainting on seeing the devotees who have pierced themselves in this tongue, cheek, the back, and are in a divine trance, that only the devotees can fathom and experience. It is the devotion that the Tamils not only in India but in the diaspora have on Lord Murugan, that ensures they continue the tradition of His belief, keep alive the 'sacred complex,' of the temples that they have built, and create an emotion that helps one to fathom the issues one faces in the world.

Direct Asia (2019) in a well-received blog on Thaipusam, states, look up Thaipusam on Google Images and you will be greeted with pages upon pages of orange and yellow. You will see pictures of worshippers smiling unfazed while sporting multiple piercings and hooks, as well as spellbinding acts against a backdrop of flames and drums. The blog adds, the all-famous body modifications Thaipusam is associated with are performed in the name of self-sacrifice and gratitude for favours granted through the year by Lord Murugan. Thaipusam, as mentioned by Murali Krishna of Happy Vacations (www.hvtt.in) an ardent devotee of Lord Murugan (Krishna, 2022), "is a journey of belief of the devotee of Lord Murugan and the month of Thaipusam, ushers in a thanksgiving and an element of sacrifice that the devotee would like to offer humbly to the Lord." Krishna, adds, "having witnessed the worship of Lord Murugan by the Indian diaspora in countries like, Malaysia and Singapore, I would say, it is devotion exemplified." Raj (2018) mentions that Thaipusam is celebrated wherever there is a significant Tamil community. Besides, India, Sri Lanka, Malaysia, Singapore, Mauritius, Fiji, some Caribbean islands and even the United States of America.

The diaspora and the Way Forward

Appadurai (1996) aptly mentions, the Tamil diaspora has not escaped the cultural, social, and spatial consequences of globalization. It is in this context of a 'globalised world' that the trans nationalization of Tamil Hinduism has developed. Basch et al., (1994) speaks of the fact, that, the relationship of the Tamil is characterized by numerous exchanges and the circulation of many goods and people between South India, Sri Lanka, and the diaspora countries, which fit into 'transnational social fields,' i.e., spaces of sociability created by a criss-cross of cultural, economic, political, and religious links across many nation-states.

Illustration 3. Locations of Tamil speaking areas in India and Sri Lanka
(Trouillet, 2012)

Guilmoto (1987) the Tamil diaspora should not be regarded as a homogeneous entity, notably because the worldwide dispersal of Tamils originates from two neighbouring territories (Illustration 3); Tamil country in South India, which is the Tamils' historic home (the *Tami;akam*, i.e., the 'Tamil homeland') and which in 1969 became one of the States/ provinces of the Republic of India under the name of Tamil Nadu ('Tamil country'). And on the other hand, Northern Sri Lanka, where the first Tamils from India settled during the 1st century AD and who are the original members of the 'Tamils of Jaffna' ethnic group, as opposed to other Tamil immigrants who settled in the middle of the island in the nineteenth century to work on colonial plantations.

The connect of the Tamils in India and the diaspora is something that can be considered as one of emotion. An emotion, that truly ignites the sense of oneness and the feeling of a connect. Whether it is India,

i.e., Bharat, the nation, or the language of Tamil, or Lord Murugan his temples and festivals, or Thiruvalluvar and the Kurral saga, they have been kept intact by the diaspora, and as the baton get passed on to the new generations, there is an element of continuity to the culture, the mores, the norms, the behaviour that one can see and cherish. The integration that the language and the culture of Tamil has brought about in the speakers and those who appreciate, is worth studying and understanding.

Epilogue

The role of the International Movement for Tamil Culture (IMTC) is impetus to promote Tamil culture all around the world. It is a non-profit, non-political, democratic, charity, Tamil Cultural Organization, run by volunteers, started functioning in Jaffna, Sri Lanka on 8th January 1974 and has been functioning for the last 50 years worldwide connecting Tamil people. The IMTC has so far, well connected in more than 42 countries and membership in other non-member countries across the world.

The IMTC's mission is to propagate, foster, develop, and maintain in use Tamil language, culture, education, and traditional dress code of all ages. Tamil cultural behaviour provides a platform for the wider and deeper understanding, use, appreciation, enjoyment, and spread the Tamil Culture to our younger generation, among the world-wide Tamil population, who are living in various countries, including India and Ceylon the original Tamils birthplaces (Panch. Ramalingam et al., 2023).

The IMTC has organized several International Conferences to protect and promote art and culture of Tamils around the world.

The Conference requests that the importance given to Tamil language in educational institutions should also be given prominence to promote the Art and Culture of Tamils. It will make an initiative to organize a special event in the United Nations Assembly to attract the attention of the world. It has to identify and document the problems faced by Tamils   in the countries where they live.

Every country should take appropriate measures to fully protect such promoters. Those who live with other religions should be helped with their will without any objection. We have to create belongingness among Tamils settled in various Nations. Tamil education will be promoted in all countries where it is required according to their custom and cultural settings to protect the Art and Culture of Tamils.

When one speaks of the diaspora of the Tamil world, it is their sincere contribution that evokes emotion to the cause of the language, the culture, the heritage, the art and architecture, and everything else that subsumes within itself. We can eulogize the work done by these foot soldiers who not only enthuse the populace but also leave a legacy behind for all to cherish and emulate for the future.

Dr. Arumugam Parasuraman, Tamil and Thirukkural

Arumugam Parasuraman, the former Minister of Education, Culture, and Science and Technology, Government of Mauritius, is one such personality, who has relentlessly strived for Tamil and its culture among the diaspora. During his tenure as the Minister, he had ensured the development of Tamil language in Mauritius and as the Director at UNESCO pushed for the development of Tamil and the incorporation of Saint Thiruvalluvar's Thirukkural and the values attached. Samayam Tamil (2022) notes, the speech of Dr. Parasuraman, wherein he states, "Thiruvalluvar's Thirukkural is a book not only for the Tamils but also for the world. The Government of India should immediately pass a unanimous resolution in Parliament and take steps to install the statue of Thiruvalluvar in front of the UNESCO building. UNESCO should take steps to institute an award in the name of Thiruvalluvar, it will make Tamils proud." During an interaction organized by the Tamil Foundation in Vellore, India, Dr. Parasuraman, spoke of, "Tamil as ancient literature, which contains rich values in social, economic, and political way of life. Such rich content in Tamil literature should be taught to children in every household. Parents should make the effort to teach one Kural (sacred verse) each day to their children and inculcate in them values, to turn the society into a reformist one (The Hindu, 2022)." Currently, as Founder of the World Thirukkural Foundation and the Chairman, Global Rainbow Foundation, Dr. Arumugam Parasuraman, continues his tryst with Tamil and the Culture, and constantly leaves a legacy for the diaspora to cherish and emulate.

Caldwel Velnambi, the Techpreneur

Caldwell Velnambi, a boy from a village near Salem, after his graduation pursued his dreams and migrated to America. Growing up, a thousand rupees was a luxury but he was soon earning thousands of dollars. Not satisfied with that, he set up his company in America which has turned into a billion-dollar global enterprise (Gopalakrishnan, 2019). As President of the Federation of Tamil Sangams of North America, and a member of the HTSC board, supported in the creation of an endowment

the Houston Tamil Studies Chair Inc. at the University of Houston, USA, which would enable the study of Tamil and its culture (Indiawest journal, n.d.,)

Government of Tamil Nadu and contribution to the diaspora

The Government of Tamil Nadu too to ensure a support mechanism established the Emigrant Tamils Welfare Board which has the Mauritius-based Arumugam Parasuraman, London-based Mohammed Faizal, the UAE-based Siddhiq Syed Miran, the US-based Caldwel Velnambi, Singapore-based Gopalakrishnan Venkataraman, Mumbai-based Miran and Chennai-based Pugazh Gandhi as members (TNN, 2022).

While explaining his Vision India@2047 through his innumerable speeches, Prime Minister Narendra Modi has mentioned time and again how Tamil Nadu has seen Saint Thiruvalluvar and Subramania Bharati creating immortal literature, as also the birth of scientific and technological geniuses like C V Raman. PM Modi has mentioned several times how India in its development with heritage goal, should take inspiration from Tamil Nadu.The installation of sacred Sengol in the new Parliament House was inspired by the model of good governance given to the country by Tamil Nadu and its global but humble culture.

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2

In Search of our Ancestors: The Saga of the Tamil Indians and Tamil Indo-Mauritians in Colonial Mauritius and After: A Three-Centuries-Old History of a Community's Struggle, Resilience, Diversity, Tolerance, Cultural, And Peaceful Contributions to the Nation-Building Process in Mauritius (1728-2022)

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The Indian Tamils in Mauritius and Mauritian Historiography

The Tamil Indians first reached Mauritian shores, or then known as Ile de France or French Mauritius, as slaves and skilled contracts workers in November 1728, therefore this year marks the 296th anniversary of their arrival. Their arrival forever altered the history, demography, economy, society, and politics of this small Indian Ocean island. In November 2028, the 300th anniversary of this historic event will be commemorated at the national level by the Government of Mauritius and its citizens of Tamil ancestry.

It is estimated that between 1728 and 1930, more than 150,000 Tamil Indian artisans, free passengers including merchants and traders, slaves, and indentured men, women, and children reached the shores of our small Indian ocean island paradise. Out of which the majority were the estimated more than 107,000 Tamil Indian indentured workers who arrived in British Mauritius between 1826 and 1910. This short study essentially takes a close look at the long, complex, and epic social history of their migration, settlement, and their descendants in the making of the Mauritian state and nation over a period of almost three centuries.

It is important to note that Aunuth Beejadhur published his work The Indians of Mauritius in 1935, during the following year, The Indian Centenary Book edited by Kissoonsing Hazareesingh and Kalla Ramaswami Pydayya's, Indians in Mauritius were published. Several years after, in

1950. Dr.K. Hazareesingh launched his famous A History of Indians in Mauritius, 1st Edition. Between the 1950 and the 1970s, several books and dissertations on the history of Mauritius were written, launched and published which contributed to enhancing our understanding of Mauritius, its history and its people.

However, the history, achievements, and importance of the Tamil Indians and Tamil Indo-Mauritians were only mentioned and briefly explored. It was only in 1977 that Ramoo Sooriamoorthy, a Tamil Indo-Mauritian writer and scholar published his now well-known and groundbreaking masterpiece The Tamils In Mauritius. Between the 1980s and the 2010s, several academic books in Mauritius and overseas by numerous local and overseas historians, scholars, academics, and writers have been produced. Numerous international conferences have also been held including the World Tamil Diaspora Conferences, indentured labour in Mauritius and the world, on the Indian Diaspora, and Migration studies.

But, the history of the Tamil Indians and Tamil Indo-Mauritians received very limited focus and analysis and got lost in the wider discourse over major topics such as slavery, maroonage , the sugar, demographic, and labour revolution, indentured labour, vagrancy, free passengers, European colonization, the Mauritian working class, protest, resistance, decolonization, and the advent of independence and its aftermath.

Even scholars and writers such as Dr. Satteeanund Peerthum, Sydney Selvon, Vijaya Teelock, Sada Reddi, J. Chan Low, Cader Kalla, Raj Boodhoo, Muslim Jumeer, CRIOS Study Group, Marina Carter, Richard Allen, Clare Anderson, Benjamin Moutou, Msgr Amedee Nagapen, and several others never produced a detailed work which concentrated on the historical and pictorial presentation of the Tamil Indian migration, settlement, and their descendants in Mauritius and different part of the world. This clearly led to a major lacunae or gap in modern Mauritian historiography.

Furthermore, more recently, in 2020, Dr. Peter Vethanayagamony, a Tamil Indian academic and writer, based in the USA published his major edited work entitled Tamil Diaspora: Intersectionality of Migration, Religion, Language, and Culture. While it is a laudable, academic, and multi-disciplinary study it was limited in terms of scope and breadth and the history of the Tamils in Mauritius was not covered in any of the 19 articles. Furthermore, over the past nine decades of more, in almost all of the aforementioned works, there were few pictures, lithographs, charts, and

maps to help shed new light on the Tamil Diaspora in Mauritius and in other parts of the world between the 1720s until the present day.

In 2013, with the advent of the World Tamil Diaspora Conference in Mauritius and in 2014, UNESCO's adoption of the Indentured Labour Route Project with the AGTF's and MGI's organization of a successful international conference based around the ILRP partially examined the contribution of the Tamil Indians and Tamil Mauritians in the making of this country's history. As a result of this lacunae in Mauritian and international historiography, in November 2022, **"In Search of our Ancestors": A Historical and Pictorial Presentation and Tribute to the Tamil Indian Migration and Settlement in Mauritius and their Descendants (1728 To Present Times) and in other Parts of the World'** by Professor Parsuramen, former Mauritian Minister of Education and UNESCO India Director, and Satyendra Peerthum, Mauritian Historian, Writer, and Lecturer, was published with the support and blessings of Professor Panch Ramalingum of Pondicherry University.

Through its more than 450 pages, 21 chapters, with a detailed introduction, annexes, a lengthy bibliography and more than 270 pictures, lithographs, charts, tables, and maps, it provides a unique, colorful, detailed, and epic narrative and insights into the social history of the migration, settlement, and the Tamils and their descendants as well as their role in the making of Mauritius and also in other parts of the former plantation world between the 1700s and the 1900s mainly. It was launched in Pondicherry in November 2022 by Professor Singh, Vice-Chancellor of Pondicherry University and presented to His Excellency Mr.Rungasamy, the Chief Minister of Puducherry thanks largely to Professor Panch Ramalingum. In August 2023, it was launched an an international indentured labour conference where a French version of the book was released in the presence of several VIPs.

The Indian Tamils in the Making of Mauritian History, Indentured Labour and the Aapravasi Ghat World Heritage Site

Mauritius is a nation that is comprised of immigrants who came to Mauritian shores from Europe, Asia and Africa. During the course of the seventeenth, eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, three different European colonial powers as well as European colonists have introduced free and unfree labourers from the Indian subcontinent including the Tamil-speaking districts. Between the 1630s and early 1700s, the Dutch introduced slaves and free workers from India, Madagascar and South-Eastern Asia.

From the 1720s to the early 1800s, the French colonial authorities and French colonists imported tens of thousands of slaves and some free labourers from Africa, China, and India with many coming from present-day greater Tamil Nadu. Between the 1830s and early 1900s, the Franco-Mauritian, British, Free Coloured, and Indians planters, including the Tamil Indian, merchants, traders, and negociants imported hundreds of thousands of indentured workers from India, Eastern Africa, South East Asia, Madagascar, Aden, Sri Lanka and China.

During the early British period, the indentured labour system existed on a small scale between 1826 and mid-1834, with the importation of around 2251 Indian and Chinese contract workers, with the majority of indentured workers coming from the Tamil-speaking districts of India. At the same time, it is important to note that between 1828 and 1832, Bourbon or Reunion Island imported 3351 Tamil and Telugu Indian indentured workers from southern India. It was only between November 1834 and May 1839 that the large scale importation of Indian workers began with an introduction of more than 25,000 Indian contract workers with more than one third being Tamil Indians. By 1843, it became state-controlled and state -sponsored under the aegis of the local British colonial government. The indentured labourers were recruited under a five-year labour contract.

Between 1843 and 1910, more than 430,000 indentured workers were brought to Mauritius shores with more than 25% of them being Tamil-speaking regions of the Subcontinent. Furthermore, more than 80% of the ancestors of the Mauritian population arrived as indentured immigrants and passed through the gates of the Immigration Depot or Immigration Department and known today as the Aapravasi Ghat World Heritage Site, including tens of thousands of Tamil indentured immigrants. The system contributed in the expansion of the sugar industry and in making Mauritius the most important exporter of sugar in the British Empire

Between 1826 and 1910, around 462,801 indentured workers, or 452,070 Indian and 10,731 other contract labourers, were recruited in India and other parts of the Indian Ocean World and brought on an estimated 1600 ships to Mauritian shores. This included more than 107,000 Tamil immigrants with most of them climbing the 16 steps the Aapravasi Ghat World Heritage Site and three days later passing its historic gateway to go toil on the local sugar plantations, other estates, Port Louis, and in the colony's emerging towns and villages. Furthermore, Mauritius was the first country to introduce indentured Indian labourers, including the Tamils, and Aapravasi Ghat was the first depot where indentured labourers were processed.

More than two-thirds of them remained and forever altered the island's social, demographic, economic, religious and political landscape and their descendants. In addition, the Tamil Indo-Mauritians formed an integral part of this complex social and economic process as they contributed to the emergence of a pluri-ethnic society. At the same time, it goes with saying that the Mauritian experience with indentured labour and the early history of the Aapravasi Ghat are unique because they provide important and well-documented insights into the nature and dynamics of post-emancipation societies which emerged in the European colonial plantation world during the 19th century.

After all, the indenture labour system created a distinctive multi-cultural society in Mauritius. Indentured immigration in British Mauritius symbolizes the successful interaction and peaceful co-existance of communities of Asian, African and European which has led to the emergence of a Mauritian pluri-ethnic society. It should be noted that between 1826 and 1946, there were more than 5.2 million Asians, Africans, Europeans, and Pacific islanders who were taken to work in around 68 different countries, former colonies, and territories around the world. There were indentured and contract workers including those under the kangani, maistry, credit-ticket system which included written and oral long-term and short-term contracts.

During the same period, another 1 million local-born individuals or those who formed part of an endogenous workforce were engaged under written and oral long-term and short-term contracts. Between 1826 and 1910, Mauritius received the 3rd high number of indentured or contract workers with one fourth being Tamil Indians as mentioned earlier. Between the 1870s and 1920s, around 25,000 and 30,000 Mauritians became engaged under 1-year contracts with some under 3-year contracts including some Tamil Indo-Mauritians.

In 1995, in his classic work 'Indentured Labor in the Age of Imperialism', David Northrup, American social historian, observed: "Despite the fact that indentured labor contracts usually guaranteed return passages, a great many indentured laborers settled permanently in their new homes after the expiration of their contracts, rather than return to their countries of origin….there is also evidence to suggest that most migrants found in their experience a sufficient measure of satisfaction of the dream that had driven them into indenture. Most migrants made the best of the difficult conditions they encountered, worked hard, lived frugally, and survived to the end of their indentures." As a result, this book highlights the historical

importance of the labour, toils, sacrifices, and achievements of these Tamil immigrants who completed their contracts, lived long and productive lives, and adopted our island as their new home.

We often forget that the Aapravasi Ghat World Heritage Site is a hallowed site and is considered by UNESCO, the Mauritian people, and the world to be: "directly or tangibly associated with events or living traditions, with ideas, or with beliefs, with artistic and literary works of outstanding universal significance." As it was listed under criterion (vi) of the UNESCO World Heritage Convention guidelines at the World Heritage Committee Meeting in Vilnius, Lithuania, on 16th July 2006.

The Indian Tamils and Tamil Mauritians as Preservers and Cultural Bearers of Indian Tamil Civilization and Culture

Our indentured ancestors were bold enough to leave Mother India and Tamil Nadu Presidency's shores and cross the so-called Kalapani. Their sacrifices, toil, and determination to preserve their cultural roots which dates back thousands of years to the Indus Civilization, the Vedic Age, and early Tamil culture, have helped them to fashion the life of succeeding generations of their descendants. In many ways, what the Indian Diaspora stands for all over the world today is because of what our forefathers, including the Tamil immigrants, were able to achieve despite all the obstacles that they had to surmount.

When our Indian grandfathers and great-grandfathers, including the Tamils, climbed the flight of 16 steps of the Aapravasi Ghat World Heritage Site, then known as the Immigration Depot, after landing in Port Louis harbour, they had a vision namely to pave the way for a better future for their descendants and to preserve their human values as well.Between the late 1820s and early 1900s, as our Indian ancestors, also Tamil ancestors, settled in this small Indian Ocean island in their hundreds of thousands, which they called Marich Desh.

They brought with them their ancient traditions and their sacred scriptures like the Tirukuraal, religious Tamil prayers and traditions, the Bhagavad Gita, the Vedas, the Upanishads, and the Ramayana. The human values that governed their lives were the lofty values of simple working people everywhere, such as the preservation of their religions, cultures, languages, and traditions, as they struggled for a better life for themselves and their families.

They were greatly inspired by the Ramayana, the Mahabharatha, and other great Hindu texts like the Tirukural which depict noble characters that we should aspire to be like, such as the ideal father, son, brother, wife, sage, guru, teacher, and leader who are willing to make sacrifices for their families, disciples, and people for the greater good. Our indentured ancestors and their children, including the Tamil community, not only preserved their religions, cultures, traditions, and languages, they also gave them new wings to flourish. Their sacrifices, toils, tears, and their sheer determination to preserve their cultural roots, and their will to succeed against all odds have shaped the generations of their descendants in Mauritius including the Tamil Indo-Mauritians.

The story of the Tamil slaves, indentured workers, free passengers, and artisans is one of immense struggle, resistance, sacrifices, and suffering. But, it is also one of the most inspirational chapters of Mauritian history. They struggled with dignity and perseverance, and through hard work and incredible sacrifices, they eventually triumphed, a true triumph of the human spirit in the face of terrible adversity.

When our Indian immigrant ancestors, including the Tamil, reached British Mauritius, they faced extreme poverty, racism, prejudice, and terrible hardships. Yet, they endured and kept going and it thanks largely because of their human values, cultures, traditions, religions, and languages. Historical records indicate that as far back as the mid to late 1800s, the Hindus observed Mahashivaratree, Cavadee, recited verses from the Tirukural and other Tamil religious texts, undertook the enactment of the Ram Leela, Ramayan chanting tradition, Holi, and Dival.

After all starting in 1897, it was a group of former Indian indentured workers who started the annual pilgrimage to Grand Bassin, now also known as Ganga Talao, especially around the time of Mahashivaratree when more than a half million Hindus converge on the sacred lake including tens of thousands of Tamil Indo-Mauritians and hundreds of Tamil Indian visitors. Today, Grand Bassin is recognized as an international site of pilgrimage for Hindus, including the Tamil Indo-Mauritians, and non-Hindus alike.

By the late 19th and early 20th centuries, towards the end of the Age of Indenture and after, the last Indians immigrants and the descendants of the Indian immigrants, including the Tamil Indians and Tamil Indo-Mauritians, had already established several kovils, temples, mosques, and churches in different parts of the island. Furthermore, they organized

themselves into religious groups like the Arya Samaj, the Sanathanists, the different Waqfs, and Christian Church groups. Ever since the 1850s and the 1870s, the Tamil community had already established their kovils, organized themselves into small religious societies, and established a few schools to educate their children and youth.

Today, the beauty of Hindi, Tamil, Telugu, Marathi, Bhojpuri, and Urdu languages continue to enrich the complex and rich fabric of Mauritian society. The wonderful colors of Holi, the religious commitment of Cavadee, other Tamil religious festivals, the marvelous lights of Divali, the practice of Pongal, and the festivities of Eid are not just the rainbow of Indian cultural traditions. They also symbolize the vibrant diversity of Mauritius. The saga of the indentured workers and their descendants in our nation may have been of poverty and oppression, but their legacy is one of resistance, resilience, sacrifice, pride, progress, and human dignity which is reflected in the Mauritian economic miracle and our country serving as a model to the rest of the world.

The values that governed their lives were the basic human values of simple working people like in many parts of the modern world, such as the preservation of their religions, family cohesion, cultures, languages, and traditions dating back thousands of years to the dawn of Indian and Tamil civilizations and cultures. They brought with them wrapped in their dhotis or in simple cloth their Ramayan, Tirukuraal, the Vedas, and the Gita.

Sri Rabindranath Tagore, the famous Indian writer and poet Nobel laureate of literature, has inspired us to dream of a land where the human mind is without fear and is held high and where human values are respected and cherished. It is that heaven of freedom that we are duty bound to create and preserve and pass onto our children. Our ancestors, including the Tamil slaves, free passengers, indentured workers, and artisans and their descendants despite all hardships and against all odds, have followed that dream by preserving their religions, cultures, traditions, and languages.

A Garland of Tribute to our Tamil Indian Ancestors as the Makers of Mauritian History

One of the most important concerns of the indentured labourers and their children was education which was also emphasized by Mahatma Gandhi during his Mauritian sojourn in 1901. He was the one who sent Manilal Doctor and between 1907 and 1911 during his stay in Mauritius did a lot to promote the education of the children of the Indian indentured

workers and of the Indo-Mauritians. Our indentured ancestors, including the Tamils, empowered succeeding generations through a determined pursuit of education though which human values can be also be disseminated through the Indo-Mauritian population including among the local Tamil community.

Over the decades, their efforts have been rewarded since many of their descendants have become the living symbols of the metamorphosis of an oppressed community to the leaders of Mauritian society in the space of a few generations like Renganaden Seeneevassen, Sir Veerasamy Ringadoo, Sir Seewoosagur Ramgoolam, father of the Mauritian nation, and Sir Anerood Jugnauth, father of the Mauritian economic miracle.

The Aapravasi Ghat World Heritage Site itself stands as a symbol of the perseverance and ambition of our forebears, including the Tamils, in the face of all odds. It reminds us of the immense courage and determination shown by our ancestors to make Mauritius a prosperous, peaceful, and tolerant country where human values and rights are respected and safeguarded.

Each year as we commemorate the arrival of the pioneers Indian indentured immigrants, including the Tamil immigrants, on 2nd November, it is also an opportune time for all of us to reflect on one of highest human values bestowed by our ancestors namely that regardless of our ethnicity, sex, caste, nationality, colour, class, or creed, we are equal in value and before God and the law. We must not let ourselves be divided, but must resolve to develop greater harmony in our relations with each other it only through such a practice that we will respect, protect, and promote our common human values as Tamil civilization and culture has done for thousands of years.

Many of our bold and valiant indentured ancestors who came to our wonderful shores were lured with the promise of a better life and tomorrow, but faced racism, prejudice, and considered as being aliens or the other on Mauritian soil. Today, we have come a long way as a nation and country and this is because of the hard work, sacrifices, and values of our forebears. It is, therefore, our duty to continue their efforts by working together for the betterment of our country. After all as Eric Hobsbawm, the famous British historian once wrote that: "The past history of a nation is of great significance in defining, in a large measure, its present and future."

Lastly, today, we are the proud descendants of both indentured and free Indian and Tamil Indian passengers who played an important role in the fashioning of modern Mauritian state and nation. It is also important to remember that as V.S.Naipaul, the well-known Indo-Trinidadian writer, nobel prize winner of literature, and descendant of indentured workers, reminds us that *"we carry the names of our immigrant ancestors, their blood flows through our veins, they form part of our identity, we reside on the land which they bought, and our history is a continuation of their history".*

In November 2028, the 300th anniversary of the arrival of the Tamil Indians will be commemorated at the national level by the Government of Mauritius and its citizens of Tamil ancestry. It will be a special occasion to pay homage to our forebears who have shaped Mauritian history and to show the intimate historical, genetic, and cultural link between Mother India and its child Mauritius. At the same time, it will be an auspicious event where members of the global Tamil Diaspora can come together and pay a garland of tribute and celebrate the history of the overseas Tamils and their contribution in the making of modern world history.

Bio-Data

Satyendra Peerthum is a Historian and responsible for the Documentation Unit who is permanently based in the Research Unit of the Aapravasi Ghat Trust Fund (AGTF) which manages the Aapravasi Ghat World Heritage Site [Landing Place of the Immigrants] in Port Louis, Republic of Mauritius. He is the former acting head of the technical unit of AGTF and a member of the International Scientific Committee and of the Secretariat of the Indenture Labour Route & Coordinator of the ILRP's Indian Ocean Regional Committee, the Nantes Indentured Labour History Project, and the La Reunion Indentured Labour Scientific Committee. He is also a part-time lecturer in history at the University of Mauritius, the Open University of Mauritius, and a Mauritian writer. Over the past twenty-two years, he has specialized in the study of indentured labour, south Indians, slavery, Liberated Africans, maroonage, vagrancy, non-Indian indentured workers, colonial prisons, comparative and quantitative history, sugar estates, wage labour, the Mauritian working class and cultural heritage issues in Mauritius. Mr. Peerthum has also published and co-authored on the above-mentioned themes in several academic articles and books in Mauritius, the United States, France, La Reunion, South Africa, India and Zanzibar, Tanzania.

Annexes One to Nine:

Annex One

Indians from Pondicherry in Colonial Mauritius

Pondicherry was a major area of labour recruitment for French and British Mauritius between the 1720s and the early 1900s. Between 1729 and 1790, around 1500 skilled and semi-skilled workers were brought by the French authorities and colonists to work in Mauritius out of which around one third or 500 workers came from Pondicherry. During the same era, around 15,000 Indian slaves were introduced into Mauritius out of which around 3000 slaves came from the greater Pondicherry area.

Fig 1. In 1777, Chamapaten, Master Stone Mason, led a group of 22 Pondicherrian stonemasons, carpenters and one cook to work in Ile de France under a 3-year contractual agreement and were paid for their work as skilled workers

(OA, French Colonial Administration Papers, National Archives Department)

During the 18th and early 19th centuries, another 300 Pondicherrian merchants, traders, negociants, free workers and immigrants reached Mauritians shores such as Denis Pitchen. He became a major landowner, trader, and leader of the local free coloured community between the 1770s and 1790s. They were based in Port Louis mostly in the camp des malabardsand also around the island. Between 1810s and the 1930s,

hundreds of Pondicherrian free passengers, traders, free workers, merchants and skilled workers reached Mauritian shores.

The largest group to arrive were the indentured workers with 13,000 to 15,000 indentured workers coming from Pondicherry between 1826 and 1910 or 3% to 3.5% of all the Indian indentured workers who reached Mauritian shores and 10% of all the south Indian indentured workers. They formed a small but important community in Port Louis and other parts of the island. One of the ancestors of Sir Gaetan Duval, former Minister, party leader, and famous lawyer, was an indentured immigrant called Tamby from Pondicherry who reached Mauritius in 1842. Lastly, one of the ancestors of Benjamin Moutou, former Senior Official at tbe Ministry of Fisheries, writer, and Truth and Justice Commissioner, was a free passenger, Immigrant Moutou, who reached Mauritius from Pondicherry in 1790.

Annex Two
Tamil Indian & Tamil Indo-Mauritian Traders, Merchants, & Negociants in Port Louis

Fig 2. Between the 1880s and the 1910s, Antoneemootoo, Vadamootoo, Pyneeandee, and Saverymootoo were some of the prominent And influential Tamil Indians merchants, traders, and negociants in Port Louis specifically around Port Louis Central Market, and the port&harbour area (Carnegie Library, Allister MacMillan, MacMillan Mauritius Illustrated (London, UK, 1916)
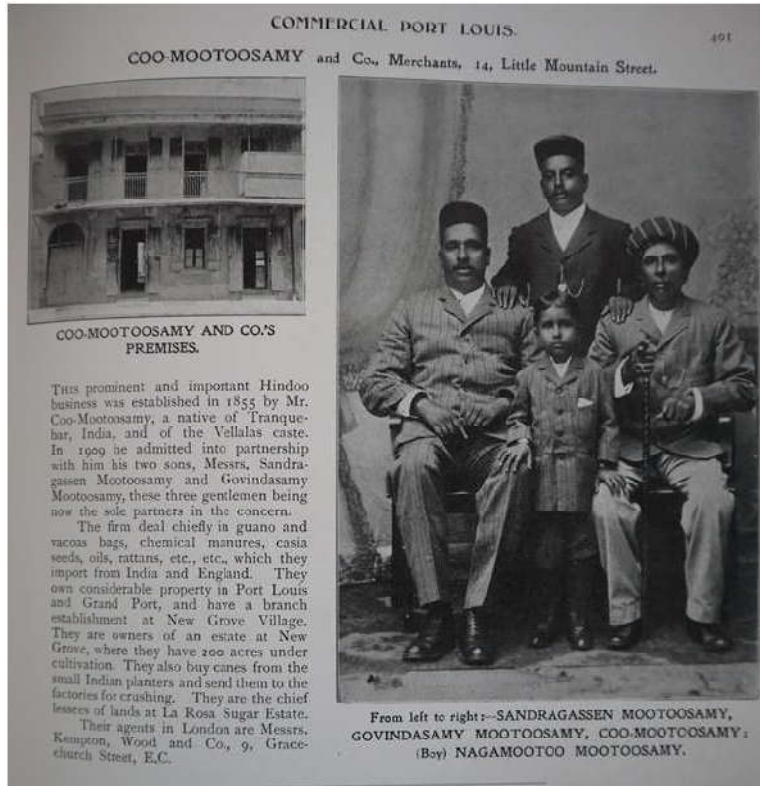
Fig 3a. Between the 1850 and the early 1900s, Mootoosamy, Coomootoosamy were some of the prominent Tamil Indians & Tamil Indo-Mauritian traders, merchants, and negociants in the town centre of Port Louis (Carnegie Library, Allister MacMillan, MacMillan Mauritius Illustrated (London, UK, 1916)

Annex Three

Indian Traders

Reddi[1] has distinguished three main groups among Indians who came to Mauritius. The first were those who has been brought under the French administration from Pondicherry and Bengal. Most of them had, by the nineteenth century been assimilated into the Creole population in Port-Louis and were no longer easily discernible as Indian. Most of them were either Catholics or Muslims. A second group came under the system of indentured immigration and formed the majority group. In 1851, they represented 43 percent of the population and in 1901, 67 percent of the population.

In the nineteenth century, 116,137 lived on sugar estates and 110,121 in the villages and towns. In Port-Louis, a little under half of the population was Indian. But ther were still only two Indian doctors in 1901. A third group was composed of the Indian merchants. Many were South Indian Hindus and they were later joined by Gujerati traders who were mostly Muslim. In 1870 they numbered about 1,430. They formed a rather transient community at first because as they had numerous contacts, they travelled widely within the Indian Ocean, particularly to Reunion and South Africa.

South Indian Traders and Merchants

Although most settled in Port-Louis[2], some settled in rural areas: the Socknanden, and Ramsamy in Riviere des Anguilles, MootoosamyGournaden in Flacq, Mootoosamy in Poudre d'Or in Rivere du Rempart, Sunnassee in l'Etoile in Coromandel in Plaines Wilhems, Appasamy in Wolmar in Flic-enFlac in Black River, and Pyneeandee in Mon Desir, Vacoas in Plaines Wilhems. Most were retail traders and others occupied stalls in the Port Louis Central Market. In 1845 all the cloth sellers were South Indian. Their shops were located at J. Riviere Street, Jummah Mosque, Louis Pasteur, Corderie, Bourbon, L'Eglise, La Reine, Farquhar, and La Rampe Streets. Only a few were import-export businesses. Their clientele was mainly Indian. Rice was one important profit makeras it was consumed in large quantities by Indian labourers.

Apart from rice, other food items were imported such as dholl, gram, lentils, maize, peas, spices, textiles, jewellery, and glass. Apart from these goods, a brisk trade went on in kitchen and religious utensils such as stone grinders, brass plates, ('tambalaon'), pots ('sombou'), earthen ustensils ('satti'). Apart from merchants who has come from India, there were also those who had arrived as indentured labourers and who after their term of indentureship and being promoted to the ranks of sirdars were able to save enough money to acquire property.

The history of the Sunnassee and Soondron families have been documented by Annasamy (1999). Sunnassee came from Tanjore as a laborer and was employed on Reunion sugar factory. He became a sirdar and also made several trips to India and brought back other members of his family. With a higher income, he became a sugar planter and also sold vegetables. He moved to Stanley where he bought a plot of land and grew sugar-cane. He also sold vegetables in Rose-Hill market. His path follows that of many other indentured labourers. His children became educated and worked in Port-Louis, saved and invested in their own business.

If some left their rural origins to move to the urban areas, other traders in Port-Louis invested in sugar estates: Midenaigum bought 'Grande Retraite' estate in 1916, Appasamy bought 'Cluny' in 1928, Paratian bought 'Chebel' in 1934, and 'Cailloux' in 1936. South Indians were the first to enter the Legislative Council: Dr. H. Sakir, Dr. Nalletamby, E. Sandapa, and Dr. Sinnatambou. Though the mass of Indians could not identify with them, their importance lies in their having paved the way for other Indians to enter the political arena.

There was not however, a complete break between the trading community and the labouring or planting class. From the beginning of its existence, the trading community provided all sorts of facilities for the rural Indians: when they visited Port-Louis, they found a place to stay, facilities to refresh themselves, and the opportunity to indulge in particular eating habits (such as vegetarian food) or obtaining help with administrative problems: getting a license, paying a debt etc. The regional and religious affinities also played an important role in bringing together in particular two rural communities into Port-Louis: the South Indians and Muslim communities. It is therefore no coincidence that among the population of Indian descent, these two groups predominated in Port Louis.

(An Extract from Vijaya Teelock's, Mauritian History: From its Beginnings to Modern Times, Revised Edition (MGI Press, MGI, Moka, 2009), pp.315-317 on the South Indian/Tamil Indian Community in Port Louis and the rural districts).

Annex Four

Heritage Sites and Religious/Cultural Practice Associated with the Tamil Indian Indentured Labourers and their Descendants the Tamil Indo-Mauritius

The Port Louis Central Market

Over the past 180 years, the Port Louis Central Market has served as the main market for the city of Port Louis. Its construction began in 1841, it was completed almost three years later and inaugurated by Governor Gomm in 1844. In 1981, part of the market was damaged by fire. During the late 1990s, it was once again seriously damaged because of fire and temporarily shut down. The market was renovated in the early 2000s through different stages.

Fig 4. The Port Louis Central Market Vegetable Section in 1949
(Photo Collection, Carnegie Library)

This historic market occupies an area less than half an acre and it is enclosed by stone walls which are mounted with iron works and the gates are made of iron and decorated with floral designs. The Port Louis Market consists of three sections: one for vegetables, one for meat, and one for fish where for three or even five generations some Tamil Indo-Mauritian traders and merchants have been earning their living in the same place. As early as 1845, within months of its opening, the market and its surroundings was dominated by Tamil Indian traders, merchants, and negociants.
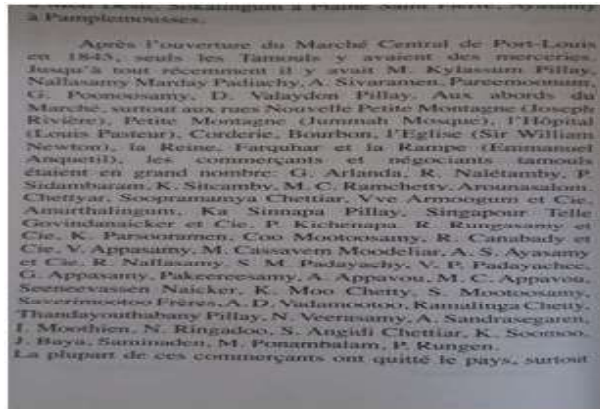
Fig 5a. A list of 52 prominent Tamil Indian traders, merchants, and negociants who were operating in Port Louis Central Market, its surroundings, and in the town centre of Port Louis
(RamooSooriamoorthy, Les Tamouls a l'ile Maurice, 1977)

It is the oldest market in Mauritius and until the mid-twentieth century it was also the largest one on the island. It is important to note that the Port Louis Central Market and its Iron and Stone Works and Gate are two separate national heritage and they both form an integral part of the urban colonial architectural heritage of Mauritius which dates from the early Victorian Age.

Fig 5b. The Port Louis Central Market With its Stone Gateway and Iron Works in 1937 (Photo Collection, Mauritius Museums Council)

The Central Market strikingly demarcates itself by the singularity of the architectural designs and motifs on its railings and gates. The three gates are canopied with arches made of stones and iron wrought floral designs and inscriptions, the Central Market of Port Louis or "*Bazaar*", is the most ancient market of Mauritius. It has also retained its function as the largest and most important market of the island. Among the first vendors, was the striking presence of merchants from Madras, Pondicherry and Tranquebar, who came to sell their goods in the colony.

Although renovated and partially rebuilt after the fires of 1981 and 1999, the market exudes /bears/ an authenticity of its own, unaffected by the surrounding modernity. Market vendors continue to offer fish, meat, vegetables, spices, medicinal plants, flowers, religious objects used in local rites and rituals, besides food, ready-made garments, and local and imported handicraft within its magnificent walls of stone and highly refined wrought ironwork.

Annex Five

Kaylasson Kovil in Pamplemousses District, Northern Mauritius
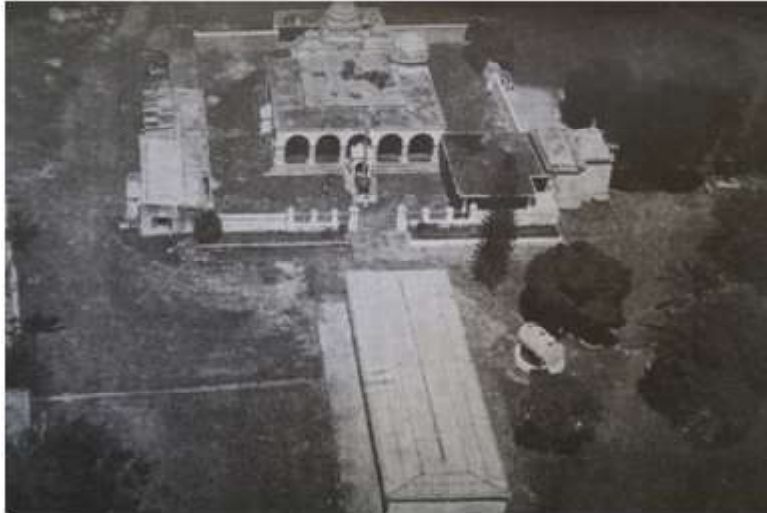
Fig 6. The ArulmiguSockalingumMeenatcheeAmmenTirukkovil, better known as the Kaylasson Temple during the 1970s before its major renovation (RamooSooriamoorthy, Les Tamouls a l'ile Maurice, 1977)

The ArulmiguSockalingumMeenatcheeAmmenTirukkovil, better known as the Kaylasson Temple, is an architectural wonder and one of the most famous and important kovils or Tamil temples in Mauritius. Located in St Croix in the northern suburbs of Port Louis, is one of the oldest temple in Mauritius. Its construction started in 1854 on land ceded by Emilien de Boucherville to the Madras Hindus of Mauritius. The kovil (temple) consecrated in 1860 is the most important place of worship for the Tamil community in Mauritius. This spiritual place has a beautiful traditional architecture with 6 stations symbolising the organs of the human body. The Kaylasson Temple is a place to visit and is a national heritage site in Mauritius. Visited by many tourists every year, you will be immersed in Indo-Mauritian spirituality and the pantheon of Hindu deities. As such, the Kaylasson is undoubtedly a true work of art.

Fig 7. The ArulmiguSockalingumMeenatcheeAmmenTirukkovil today
(Photo Collection, National Heritage Fund)

Annex Six

Arul MigouDhandayouthabani Swami Kovil at Clemencia

The Arul MigouDhandayouthabani Swami Kovil of Clémencia is believed to be the first Tamil Temple built in Mauritius. It was erected on a hill evoking PajhaniMalai between 1856 and 1859. On June 29, 1867, Sir Maurice Songhor and Lady Doya Kisto donated a plot of land to the Tamil community to construct the Kovil. Clémencia is the village where the Cavadee festival was celebrated for the first time in Mauritius. The first Cavadee that was performed there was called the MâchiCavadee, where a fish was cut into two for the ritual, and it was followed by the SitiraiCavadee. There is a small pond and a river adjacent to the temple where the Tamils used to perform their prayers and their ritual bathing.

The statue of Lord Muruga placed in the temple was brought from India during the Indentured period. The temple reveals a legacy of sculpture, architecture, styles and idioms. The Kovil is highly attached to the collective memory of the Tamil descendants and it consisted originally of three distinctive shrines. The three shrines are made up of basalt rocks and lime mortar. Renovation works were carried out by the owners in

2017. The dome has been altered majorly during the renovation works. The Arul MigouDhandayouthabani Swami Kovil of Clémencia was listed as a National Heritage in 2016.

Fig 8. The Arul MigouDhandayouthabani Swami Kovil of Clémenciatoday (Photo Collection, National Heritage Fund)

Annex Seven

Grand-Bassin or Ganga Talao, Sacred Lake of Mauritius

The Sacred Lake, also known as Ganga Talao, represents the mighty Ganges River in India. You will find it hidden in the southwest mountains, surrounded by colorful temples and Hindu gods. Ganga Talao attracts a lot of people to Mauritius. Many people visit the site to pray, meditate and enjoy the beautiful surrounding view. The lake of Ganga Talao has a depth of about 18 meters Grand Bassin was discovered by the Pandit JhummonGiriGossagne Nepal who lived in a village north of the island called Triolet.

The Hindu priest had a dream and, in his dream, he saw a sacred lake connected to the sacred Ganges River in India. In the year 1897, the roads were scarce and far away. The priest, Gossagne searched for the sacred lake and finally arrived at Grand Bassin where he found a lake which he recognized thanks to his dream. During the late 1890s and early 1900s, news of the Divine Lake spread rapidly and pilgrims of the whole island began to walk to the Ganga Talao including many Tamil Indian indentured and ex-indentured labourers and some Tamil Indo-Mauritians.

Grand Bassin in Mauritius is now one of the most important Hindu pilgrimage places outside India. The MahaShivratri, which is one of the most popular Hindu festival in Mauritius is greatly celebrated at Ganga Talao. Today, it is the most important site for the Tamil Indo-Mauritian community as a holy place of pilgrimage which reminds them of the holy sites in Tamil Nadu and southern India. Grand Bassin is a unique overseas Hindu religious site which draws pilgrims from different parts of the Indian Ocean region and the world at large.

Fig 9. The Arul MigouDhandayouthabani Swami Kovil of Clémencia today (Photo Collection, National Heritage Fund)

Annex Eight

Corps de Garde Kovil in Quatre Bornes

During the late 19th century, a small and primitive kovil was established on the slopes of Corps de Garde near Palma Sugar Estate and the emerging village of Quatre Bornes in Plaines Wilhems district by Tamil

indentured and ex-indentured workers. By the mid-20th century, the Tamil Indo-Mauritians built a more elaborate and modern structure was erected in honor of Lord Muruga and other south Indian deities with stone steps leading to the temple. By then, a board of trustees had been established to run and maintain the kovil.

The temple's main stone structure underwent 3 major renovations and even reconstructions. The last one dating to the early 2000s when the concrete platform was reinforced and the kovil almost completely rebuilt and modernised in order to accommodate more devotees. There is also a large social hall at its base and peacocks are also kept close to the kovil and a representation of Lord Muruga's mount and favourite creature. It is one of the most famous and attended kovils in the country drawing Tamil Indo-Mauritians from the four corners of the island and republic and beyond.

Fig 10. The Corps de Garde Kovil with its main entrance. Social hall, and steps leading to the temple (S.Peerthum Photo Collection)

Fig 11. The Corps de Garde Kovil with the main temple
entrance(S.Peerthum Photo Collection)

Annex Nine

Thaipoosam Cavadee

Fig 12. Thaipoosam Cavadee procession in Port Louis during the mid-
1970s (RamooSooriamoorthy, Les Tamouls a l'ile Maurice, 1977)

The ThaipoosamCavadee is celebrated by the Tamil Community in Mauritius to pay tribute to the God Muruga.Cavadee is celebration of the full moon in the month of Thai and in honour of Muruga-the son of Lord Shiva. The cavadees are structures made of wooden planks which are beautifully decorated with green leaves, flowers, tender shoots of the coconut and lemons. Peacock feathers are also used to adorn the cavadee. The cavadees are carried on shoulders by the devotees. Brass bells are tied to cavadees to announce the approach of the cavadee carriers who observe the vow of silence during the procession.

(ExtractsfromSatyendraPeerthum, *'The Tangible Treasures of Port Louis, An IndianOcean Tropical City The Historic and Heritage Value of the National Heritage of Port Louis'* (AGTF, 2021 for the Dubai World Expo); The National HeritageFund, *'The Carnet Culturel of Mauritius 2022'*)

Footnotes

1   Dr.SadaReddi, Indo-Mauritian Tamil historian and writer and former Senior Lecturer at the MIE and Associate Professor from the University of Mauritius who retired several years ago.

2   During the second half of the 19th century and first half of the 20th century, the Chettiars, the Reddis among several Tamil families were important merchants and traders in Port Louis.

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3

Saiva Siddhanta is the Philosophy of the Tamils:
A Critical Analysis

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Introduction

It is said that Saivism is a religion which is followed by Dravidian origin people who worship the lord Siva as the prime God. Scholars see and understand it is a branch of Hindu religion. The word "Hindu" comes from a Greek mispronunciation of the name of River Sindhu, which also gave its name to the Indhus velley civilization that flourished in the North-West of India between 2500 and 15A00 B.C. Later the association of Aryan, the orally preserved sacred literature began to exist which are "Veda "which consist of hymns, sacrificial text, musings and worldly life as well. This religion and its practices have been called as "Vaidika Nery" meaning the religious and philosophical paths based on Veda.

Hinduism, unlike Christianity or Islam is a non-proselytizing religion which says the reality is one and people speak of it different. According to Sivaratnam, Hinduism is a collective force of seer institution, ocean of mystic knowledge into which all religious ideas flow, confluence of many thoughts' currents (Sivaratnam. C, 1978). Hinduism was mother of all religions. Hence Hinduism composite integration of two different sets at beliefs belonging to two different races viz: Dravidian and Aryans. The first one belongs to Saivism which arose out of primitive Dravadian religion based on faith and Worship. And the second race followed Vedic religion which is based on Vedam and Vedanta thought as its philosophy.

Apart, the Saivism is a sect of Hindu religion does not mean that is a branch of the Hindu religion. Saivism is also a separate religion which has separate identity and history. Mostly the Dravidians believe and practice the religious habits. There believes are continued based on two entities in the early period of Saivism. They are benign (Animism) and Evil Spirits

(Shamanism). In this, the Lord Siva and Goddess Parvadhi assumed malignant or benign forms. Based on that we can draw a historical background and a chronology can be drawn. Even though, it is said that the beginning of worship of Lord Siva cannot be assurgent. As a whole Lord Siva is considered as the Lord of the Universe.

According the Emigrant Theory, Saivism is not static religion confined to a particular area or particular region. It is a drive from Proto-Dravidian Origin. The Saivites use to stay in a particular place and began to cultivate rice and other crops make them as a clan for society. As consequence of cultivation, they used to worship agricultural instruments and other planets which supports for their cultivation. This Dravidian society in India was called as Dramila then the term denotes the whole society as Tamil. In that period, their main deity was mother-earth who gave them everything including food and other needs. Later on, by joining with the Parvadhi with the male god was called Siva. Hence Siva and Barvadhi were worshiped together hence Saivism is a joint fusion of the two entities.

In the later period of religious history, Saivism was flourished though out the India , mainly in Tamil Nadu. Special growth came in the period of Pallava. There were many revolutionary movements initiated in this period and work with the society to imbed Saiva beliefs and practices. During this period the Bhakthi movements and individuals worked to create environment of religious beliefs and practices. The Nayanmaar sang Tevaram and other psalms towards the gods and goddesses of Saivism. At the end of this this period people of Saivism bored Bhakthi songs they intended to seek other alternative to pay their Bhakthi on Ultimate Reality. As a consequence, the philosophical Sect called Saiva Siddhantha came into being.

Saiva Sidhanta is a philosophical sect of Saivism. Meykanda Thevar is considering as a founder of Saiva Siddhanta. Arunanthi Sivachcharioyar, Maraignana Sampanthar and Umapathi Sivachchariyar followed by him who professed this philosophical sect. Saiva Siddhantha philosophy is concentered philosophy Saivism which is the religion of the Tamils. There are discourses, arguments on whether the Saiva Siddhantha philosophy is of Tamil or Not. This study attempts to insulate and systematical analysis the content of the disputable topic.

Research Problem

The scholars commonly intend to talk about philosophy based on western tradition as it has historical growth. Considering in India,

philosophical thoughts are analysed based on the philosophy emerged in Sanskrit. Even there is a philosophical tradition called Saiva Siddhanta, it has not been focused separately. Some scholars consider it as a philosophy which was borrowed from Sanskrit tradition. The confusion remains on the issue is the research problem of the study.

Objectives:

The study is to be carried out to cover four main objectives viz;

1.   To analyze the Philosophical Background of Tamil Nadu

2.   To state the Nature of Saiva Siddhanta Philosophy

3.   To compare and contrast the Tamil and Sanskrit influence in Saiva Siddhanta Philosophy

4.   To critically analyze and prove the Tamil identity in Saiva Siddhanta

Methodology

Since this is a critical evaluation of philosophical school and its originality from sources, exploratory research method is to be applied. Whenever theoretical ideas are applied, descriptive analysis will be employed. Hence, it is totally, a qualitative research design was used do the research. Gathered data are qualitatively analyzed using critical evaluation method.

Tamil Nadu is the place of Philosophical Thinkers

Before analyzing whether the Saiva Siddhanta is the school of thought of Tamil or Tamil Nadu, it vital to scrutinize who were the philosophers in Tamil Nadu. Not only Siddhantins lived in Tamil Nadu, but also others as well used to live. During Pallava and Chola period many Buddhist Thinkers lived in Tamil Nadu. Popularly known Dinnagar and Darmapala were from Tamil Nadu (Veluppilai, A 1999). Veluppillai indicated there were many arguments between Buddhist thinkers and Tamil thinkers including Nayamnmars during the Palava period (Veluppillai, 1999, 135). The popular Vedanti, Shankara was influenced by Buddhism mainly Mahayana Buddhist philosophy (Sharma.C, 2997). He was from Kaladi in Tamil Nadu. Ramanuja and Mathuva also from Tamil Nadu. They interpreted Alvar's Thought. Alvar means the people who has mystic intuitive knowledge of God. Their Naalayira Divya Prabandham was placed

side by side with Veda. Hence it is true that the land of the Tamils gave space to emerge schools of philosophical thinking.

Saiva Siddhantam and Sanskrit.

In spite of the proofs that Saiva Siddhantam is originally created in Tamil, there have been arguments which attempted to prove that it is an interpretation from Sanskrit. The first text Sivajnana Bodham of Meikandar is regarded as an expansion of twelve versus of the Raurava Agama (Radhakrishnan.S, 1948). A Sanskrit professor Sundramoorthy did a survey to show the available thoughts of Saiva Siddhantam in Saknskrit. Among the texts, he focused on Thatva Pragasikai which has fully the Saiva Siddhanta philosophy. Anyhow, after a detailed study, he concluded that Saiva Siddhantam is the property of the Tamils (Sundramoorthy.G, 1977). According to Veluppillai, the devotional trends in Saiva Siddhantam is not available in Sanskrit. There have a generation of Saiva Siddhantins in Tamil whereas no such generation in Sanskrit (Veluppillai.A, 1977). Hence, he concretely comes to a conclusion that Saiva Siddhantam is a Philosophy of the Tamils.

Conclusion

The language of the Tamils has a long history. But, as evidence of proofs, Tamils have Sangam literatures are only available. Even there are other texts viz; epics, grammar, Bhakthy scripts and text are sufficiently emerged in Tamil, philosophical texts are very less. Philosophical ideas are available in other texts, but there was no text was created for the philosophy's sake. The one and only the Saiva Siddhantam is considered as philosophical texts of the Tamils. Fourteen texts have expressed the philosophy of Saiva Siddhantam. There have been discourses and discussions which attempted to interpret it has come from Sanskrit. Scholars did a thorough survey and concluded that it is philosophy of the Tamils. They have shown numerous evidences to prove it. The study reveals the same stand that Saiva Siddhantam is the Philosophy of the Tamils.

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4

Features of Stylistic Devices Make the Translation of Literary Works as a challengeable Task: A Study on selected Short Story

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Introduction

Translation has become more important as human culture and society have evolved. Simultaneously, translation serves as both a companion and the most skilled interpreter of literature and literary works in society. Stylistics is a branch of linguistics and the style is an object of linguistic study. The (linguistic) study of style is known as stylistics, and it is rarely pursued for its own sake rather, stylistics is only an exercise in characterizing how language is used. Typically, the reason we study style is to explain something, and literary stylistics aims to do just that either overtly or covertly by illuminating the relationship between language and artistic function. The purpose of this study is to identify the stylistic devices used in the literary works and how it possess a serious issue for the translators in the process of translation.

Objectives

The aim of the study is to identify the stylistic devices used in the literary works and how it possess challenges in the translation from Tamil to English. Literary translation is one of the most difficult translations which leads to a great challenge and one requires excellent knowledge to overcome the barriers. Therefore, the objectives of this research are: -

1.   To identify the stylistic features used in literary works

2.   To apply appropriate procedures to overcome the problems.

Research Question

what are the procedures apply by the translators while conveying the stylistic devices used in literary works?

Literature Review

Xiaocong huang in his thesis "Stylistic approaches to literary translation" states that a good literary translation must reproduce something of the source text's style otherwise the distinguishing literariness in the original will not be conveyed in the target language.

Peter Newmark in his book "A Text Book of Translation" states that componential analysis that excludes the culture and highlights the message than transference because it gives "local colour" (1988:96)

Methodology

This study applied a qualitative research approach. It has been done based on the method of Content analysis. The first phase in a qualitative content analysis process is selecting a short story "«è£ê¬ô" written by Thamilpriya and translated the short story and compare it with the target language and analyze the procedures to over come the problems in the process of translation.

Results and Discussions

As Newmark states (1988:162) that literary translation is the most testing type of the translation. It is known that it is harder than the translation of other type of translation. The problems were categorized as in the following manner: Translating Colloquial and Dialectical variation, Translating Figurative language (Onomatopoeia and Alliteration),Translating Cultural Words and Translating Metaphors.

Translating Colloquial and Dialectical variation

Dialectical variation refers to the ways in which languages change and develop, due to a variety of influences both social and physical, located within group of people. This deviations makes the process of translation as the most difficult part.

Example

Source Text:-

அம்மா வழியில் துரவில் உடம்பை கழுவிக்கொள்ள முருகன் கோயில் மணி சிணுங்கி அழைக்கும்.

Target Text:-

Amma would have a wash at the Thuravu just then the whining bell of the Murugan temple would invite her in.

Revised Target Text

Amma would have a wash at the Thuravu (a large deep well for irrigation purposes) just then the faint tintinnabulation of the Murugan temple bell would invite her in.

Here in the above example the word துரவு is a Tamil dialect which can be used among farmers in the first translated version the word is transliterated but which can not be understood by non native speakers or even the native speakers those who are not familiar with the particular word from different community. There for in the revised target text it has been replaced by paraphrasing the term and given the explanation within the brackets. According to John Dryden he favored the strategy of paraphrase by which he meant a translation that allowed for the creativity of the translator without being too distant from the original ("Paraphrase", Routledge Encyclopedia of Translation Studies, 167). Supported by Bailey (2014) describe paraphrasing involves rewriting a text so that the language is different while the content stays the same.

Another important aspects that colloquial words as a features in literary works makes the task of the translators more difficult. He re in the above example the word 'சிணுங்கி' is a common colloquial word used among particular Tamil community people for several reasons in order to express the emotion of the people. In the first translated version the translator gives the equivalent as whining is a direct translation for the particular word which means give or make a long, high-pitched complaining cry or sound but as per the context it has to reflect the temple bell sound therefore that the source text gives the contextual meaning as that bell sound gently invite her into the temple. Therefore it is translated with the word 'faint tintinnabulation' which can be understood by the English speakers as the ringing or sounding of bells in church. There for the translator seek for sense-sense translation as St Jerome stated. Stressing the equal importance of both content and form, Peter Newmark (1988:163-169) argues that "semantic" translation is more appropriate than "communicative" translation for poetry translation but as per the purpose of target audience the translator can opt for communicative approach.

Translating Onomatopoeia and Alliteration

One of the biggest challenges in this arena of literary translation is the balance to remain true to the original work while creating an entirely unique piece that evokes the same responses as the original piece. Figurative

language becomes difficult in translating process because of containing collective words that have different interpretation and meaning.

Example

Source text:-

'மாடுகள் கழுத்து மண்கள் கிணுகிணுக்க புல்லை அரைக்கின்ற சத்தம் கேட்கும். கூடவே மாடுகள் பலத்து மூசி மூச்சுவிடுவதும் வாலைத்தூக்கி ஈக்களை விளாசி விரட்டுவதும் கேட்கும். சாணியின் மணத்துடன் பசும்புல்லின் வாசனை நாசியில் உறைக்கும். கோழிகள் எல்லாம் ஏற்கனவே கூடுகளில் அடைக்கப்பட்டிருக்கும். குறு குறுவென கொக்கரிக்கும். பட பட வென சிறகுகள் உல்லாசமாக அடிப்பது கேட்கும்';.

Target text:-

"The bells round their necks tinkling, the cows would be heard crunching grass, breathing heavily, swishing their tails to drive away flies. The smell of cow dung and the scent of grass would hit the nostrils sharply. The cooped-up fowls would be cackling, noisily beating their wings".

Here in the above example the words such as:-

கிணுகிணுக்க - tinkling

குறு குறுவென கொக்கரிக்கும் - cackling

They are called in Tamil as இரட்டைக் கிளவி consists of two words paired with one another which does not give a stand alone meaning when separated and in English this stylistic device is called as onomatopoeia is difficult to translate due to the lack of equivalence. According to Reiss (1976) literary texts have expressive function. Casas-Tost argues (2014, p. 41): "as words which imitate a sound in the real world, onomatopoeias perform a referential function but, in addition to referring to a sound, onomatopoeias are highly expressive words which also have tremendous allegorical potential, because they can evoke images and arouse feelings in the recipient, thereby performing an expressive function at the same time."

Another concern is alliteration is a literary device that involves two or more words that appear close together and have the same initial stressed consonant syllable. The விளாசி விரட்டுவதும் is translated as drive away and மூசி மூச்சுவிடுவதும்; as breathing heavily here the stylistic devices such as onomatopoeia and alliteration are not conveyed as per the style of

the original text but the idea is conveyed according to Newmark (1988) believes that sound-effects consist of onomatopoeia, alliteration, assonance, rhyme; metre, intonation, and stress have aesthetic function. As he states the translator has to be aware of the various sound-effects all sound has meaning in the SL text but he usually does not do much about it, as it would require metalingual additions, which is a translation procedure. Supported with Venuti in his "Principles of Correspondence" mentioned that Ideally, the translator should reproduce both form and content of the original artifact, but since form and content can rarely be reproduced in the translated version, form is usually sacrificed for the sake of the content.(2000:127-129)

Translating   Cultural Words

If the translator faces any problems in culturally bound text the best option is to get the cultural equivalent otherwise only he or she can use descriptive equivalent. Dr.Syamala Ghantasala in her journal "Issues And Challenges In Translating Literary Works" The translator requires making changes in structure which is in no way inferior to meaning.

Example

Source Text:-

'உள்ளங்கையில் பொத்தியபடி விபூதியும் சந்தனமுமாக திரும்பி வரும் போது சீலன் வீட்டில் பளிச்செ‌ன விளக்கேற்றி இருப்பான்'.

Target text:-

"when she returned home with the viputhi and santhadam in the closed palm of her hand, seelan would have lit all the lamps , making the house glow".

Here the words விபூதியும் சந்தனமும்; is transliterated in the target text which does not make any sense to the non- native speakers therefore it should be replaced by the cultural equivalent as "holy ash and sandal paste" and the translation would be followed as:-

"when she returned home with the holy ash and sandal paste in the closed palm of her hand, seelan would have lit all the lamps , making the house glow".

Here translator also used the strategy of addition that rather state ê‰îù‹ as sandal he adds the word paste and then only the non- native people would understand for what purpose it has been provide in Hindu

temple. The technique of adjustment, according to Nida (1964, p. 228), is obligatory specification, in which the addition of a specified word is required for one of the following reasons: to eliminate ambiguity in the TT caused by unclear words, or to add additional specification when words in the receptor language have a general meaning.

Translating Metaphors

A metaphor makes the comparison directly, substituting one thing for another. Metaphor translation, on the whole, should be performed on semantic level for all figurative language is typically rich with aesthetic and expressive values. The translator has to work against lots of odds. These are manifest in linguistic, literary, aesthetic, and socio-cultural problems.

Example

Source Text:-

'மகள் அழகிய மொட்டு மிகவும் சின்னவள் தான் ஆயினும் குசினியில் தேநீர் தயாரிக்க ஆயத்தமாகிகொண்டிருப்பாள்'.

Target text:-

"The daughter was a beautiful bud though she was small she would be in the kitchen preparing a cup of tea".

Here "மகள் அழகிய மொட்டு" is a metaphor and directly translates in the target language as "daughter was a beautiful bud" According to Newmark (1981: 88-91) suggests seven procedures to translate metaphors in general. The first one is reproducing the same image in the TL if the image has comparable frequency and currency in the appropriate register. Rather an omission is a redundant metaphor if the text is not authoritative or expressive. The translator can follow this procedure only when the metaphor is repeated and fulfilled elsewhere in the text. The translator can merely translate it as "the daughter was very beautiful"

According to Newmark (1988: 106), an original metaphor is one that the SL writer creates or quotes to make the text more interesting. The original metaphor should be translated to the greatest extent possible. If, on the other hand, a metaphor is obscure and its absence will not affect the target reader's comprehension of the ST, the translator should replace it with a descriptive metaphor or transfer its meaning into a sense.

Conclusion

This study has tries to explore, Of all types of translation, literary translation is perhaps the most demanding and the most difficult. The reason behind this is that the language of literature is different from ordinary language and involves a variety of challenges on stylistic devices such as simile, metaphor, alliteration, assonance, rhythm, idioms, proverbs, exaggeration and so on. Given the many challenges and obstacles facing literary translation, it is imperative to take the necessary steps to improve the situation for both literary translation and literary translators. Translation of any fiction to foreign language should create the same emotions, impressiveness and conduction, that native language readers can involve them. The translator should be aware of the author's style, while background knowledge is very important for recognizing the culture specific words, history and traditions of the origin text units. On other hand, the translation is a difficult process, where demands all language units, including source language and their equivalent units in target language. In most cases, the translation of stylistic units and expressive means into target language refers the challenge for translators, how to convey the perception of them and preserving the semantic and structural meanings of the phenomenon. Even the aim of translation is to preserve the content, style, stylistic, communicative and literary values of the original in some cases the translator has to be faithful to the content or idea of the original.

Recommendations

A major factor in assisting readers in forming their perception of the world is literary translation. Literary translators use literature to bridge cultural gaps by facilitating the exchange of knowledge and experiences between other cultures. To be a literary translator, aspirants must have excellent writing abilities. A translator with average writing skills will not be able to do a good job of effectively translating content. With excellent cultural knowledge, a literary translator can work to ensure that meaning is communicated as effectively and originally as possible. Therefore, a thorough awareness and understanding of specific cultures, traditions, rites, etc. can ensure that translations bridge the communication gap between people from different backgrounds. A literary translator should be able to analyze the work artistically and rhetorically, but also understand the deeper meaning that hides behind a text, with the author's style, tone, culture, and originality intact.

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5

Manifestation Of Planet Mercury (Budhan) In Tamil Nadu Through Astrolatry Standpoint

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Introduction:

Most of the Indians believe with planetary deities and its effects on lives of each and every individual. The tangible and intangible expression of the planetary deities arises because of this fear factor. Indian Astrology is ancient and its origin dates back to Vedic period. The first textual reference related to planetary deities is revered during later Vedic period. According to Indian Astrology, there are seven planetary deities whereas Rahu and Ketu are later additions. In present context, due to cultural shift the old tradition is either forgotten or not valued. So, in this research paper, one of the planetary deities namely Mercury and its manifestation in Tamil Nadu are explored in detail through case example. This paper explores its value and challenges faced by the astrolatry tradition in present context and to establish it as intangible cultural heritage of India.

Budhan is the Sanskrit word which represents Planet Mercury. According to Hindu calendar, seven days of week correspond to seven classical planets. Mercury (Budhan) corresponds to Wednesday. In Indian Astrology, it is a common belief that doing rituals on Wednesday will please Lord Budhan and considered to bestow wisdom and intellect. The different dimensions of the Planet Mercury (Budhan) manifestation are examined in this research paper.

Aim:

The aim is to explore the manifestation of planet Mercury in Tamil Nadu through astrolatry standpoint. In this research paper, Sri Swetharanyeshwar temple complex (Budhan Temple), Thiruvenkadu is taken as case example as it is considered to be abode of planet Mercury.

Objective:

- To study the history of Planet Mercury in Indian Astrology

- To analyze the space science and Astrology in terms of Planet Mercury

- To study the evolution of Planet Mercury in Religious aspect

- To decipher the manifestation of Planet Mercury in tangible and intangible manner through case example

Scope:

- To establish the values associated with manifestation of Planet Mercury in astrolatry

- To analyze the Budhan Temple in Thiruvenkadu through Astrolatry standpoint

- To establish Mercury worship as intangible cultural heritage of India

- To identify the research gap and list the topics for further exploration

Limitation:

Research on Planet Mercury through astrolatry is very minimal. Most of the data are collected using primary sources such as site visit, conversing with priests, officers, and pilgrims. The study area is limited to Budhan temple in Cauvery delta region due to time constraints.

Research question:

- How is Planet Mercury described in Indian Astrology?

- How do Planet Mercury and Religion intersect?

- How old is the tradition (to study its evolution)?

- How is Planet Mercury manifested in Temples?

- What are the challenges faced by this old tradition?

Methodology:

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                        │  Data Acquisition   │
                        └─────────────────────┘
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Primary Source	Secondary Source
• Site Visit • Interviews/ Discussion with priests and pilgrims • Sketches • Photo Documentation	• Research papers • Archival records • Books • Temple websites

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                        ┌─────────────────────┐
                        │   Data Analysis     │
                        └─────────────────────┘
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Astronomical knowledge of Planet Mercury	Planet Mercury manifestations	Planet Mercury in Thiruvenkadu Budhan Temple, Tamil Nadu

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                        ┌─────────────────────┐
                        │ Interpretation of Data │
                        └─────────────────────┘

                        ┌─────────────────────┐
                        │     Conclusion      │
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Literature review:

Markel (1987) in his conference paper "Heavenly bodies and divine images: the origin and early development of representations of the nine planets" discussed about the Planets in Vedic literature, Jyotisha Vedanga and Yavanajataa which help to decipher the evolution of Planet Mercury in Indian astronomy. The findings are illustrated in historical manifestation.

Hemalatha (2022) in her research work "Astronomical knowledge of Sangam Tamils through Sangam Literature" as proof that planet and star references can be found in Sangam literature. The findings are illustrated in literature manifestation.

Rajarajan (2015) in his paper "Navagrahas in Indian Thought and Nayaka Temples of Tamil Nadu" discussed about the nine planets and its tangible expression through examples. This work helps in deciphering the nine planetary deities in anthropomorphically with clear iconography.

Mevissen (2012) in his research paper "Figurations of Time and Protection: Sun, Moon, Planets and other astral Phenomena in South Asian Art", examined the planetary deities and its evolution through evidences. The Temple Architectures from different regions of India are explored in detailed manner which are illustrated in historical and architectural manifestations.

Manifestation of Planet Mercury (Budhan):

Astronomical knowledge of Planet Mercury can be gleaned from literary references, Stone tablets, Temple inscriptions, manuscripts, etc. The manifestation is explored with literature, historical, geographical, mythological, architectural, and astrological references.

Cauvery delta region has nine temples dedicated to Navagraha (nine planets). Each temple is believed to be cult of nine different graha (Planet). These temple forms a pilgrim network and spread along present day Tanjore, Mayiladuthurai, and Nagapattinam districts of Tamil Nadu and Karaikal of Puducherry. Out of nine temples, only Sun temple has main deity as Surya and other eight temples are dedicated to Lord Shiva and the graha (Planet) as attendant deity. These temples are part of Navagraha Pilgrimage of Tamil Nadu.

Site Context of Thiruvenkadu Temple:

Sri Swetharanyeshwar temple complex is located in Thiruvenkadu village of Mayiladuthurai district, Tamil Nadu. It is a part of Navagraha temple cluster dedicated to Budhan (Planet Mercury). Thiruvenkadu temple is one of the "paadalpetrasthalam" i.e., referred to in Bhakti literature (6th to 9th century CE) which is 11th temple located on the northern banks of River Cauvery. Thiruvenkadu is surrounded by the river Cauvery, which is 3 km to the south, and river Manikarnika, which is 1 km to the north. Kaveri Poompattinam present day Poompuhar is one of the oldest port towns referred to in Sangam literature is situated at 6km, east of Thiruvenkadu.

Intangible Cultural Heritage:

"Intangible Cultural Heritage includes traditions or living expressions inherited from our ancestors and passed on to our descendants, such as

oral traditions, performing arts, social practices, rituals, festive events, knowledge and practices concerning nature and the universe or the knowledge, and skills to produce traditional crafts. (UNESCO, 2003)

Astral worship of Planet Mercury (Budhan) is one of the intangible cultural heritages which is passed on from generation to generation. In this case, the astronomical knowledge and practices concerning nature and the universe have been transmitted. This system of practice is unique and living heritage specific to Tamil Nadu. Navagraha Sacred landscape in Cauvery Delta region has potential to become an intangible cultural heritage in near future.

Conclusion:

Astrolatry specific to Planet Mercury is unique and practised in different parts of the world by various religion. In this research paper, manifestation of planet Mercury in Hinduism is illustrated in detailed manner. The manifestation of planet Mercury (Budhan) is deciphered through literature, historical, geographical, mythological, architectural, and astrological references. Astrological knowledge of Planet Mercury is explored to establish its significance. There is a research gap in interpreting the evolution of Navagraha worship in Tamil Nadu. The temple architecture, literature reference, and iconography of planetary deities need to be construed to conclude the evolution of planetary deities in Tamil Nadu. The astral worship of planet Mercury (Budhan) in Thiruvenkadu temple which is a living heritage has potential to become a UNESCO intangible cultural heritage. More detailed study on Navagraha temple cluster in Cauvery delta region should be made to establish its uniqueness and its potential to become an intangible cultural heritage.

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6

Digital Divide or Cultural Divide? Assessing The Impact of Modern Technology on Traditional Communication Systems among the Community: Special Reference Pesalai Village under the Mannar District

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Introduction:

In an era characterized by rapid technological advancement and globalization, traditional communication systems within communities face a dual challenge-embracing the opportunities afforded by modern technology while safeguarding centuries-old cultural practices and values. This dichotomy gives rise to the complex interplay between digital and cultural divides, posing profound implications for community cohesion, identity, and cultural preservation.

The convergence of modern technology and traditional communication systems presents both promises and perils. On one hand, digital tools offer unprecedented avenues for communication, connectivity, and knowledge dissemination, transcending geographical barriers and facilitating cross-cultural exchange. On the other hand, the relentless march of technological progress threatens to erode the fabric of traditional communication, potentially leading to the loss of linguistic diversity, oral traditions, and intergenerational knowledge transmission.

Against this backdrop, this research aims to explore the impact of modern technology on traditional communication systems within diverse communities. By employing a qualitative research approach, this study seeks to uncover the lived experiences, perceptions, and challenges faced by community members as they navigate the digital-cultural divide. Through empirical analysis, this research endeavors to inform policy and practice aimed at bridging the digital-cultural gap and fostering inclusive, culturally sensitive approaches to technological integration within communities.

General Objective:

The overarching objective of this research is to comprehensively assess the impact of modern technology on traditional communication systems within communities, with a specific focus on unraveling the dynamics of the digital divide versus the cultural divide.

Specific objectives of the research:

1.   To identify and analyze the extent of the digital divide within the selected community, delineating disparities in access, usage, and proficiency of modern communication technologies among different demographic groups.

2.   To investigate the cultural ramifications of the integration of modern technology into traditional communication systems within the community, elucidating how digital innovations influence language preservation, oral traditions, and intergenerational knowledge transmission.

3.   To assess the socio-economic factors shaping the digital-cultural divide, examining the role of education, income levels, geographic location, and social networks in mediating access to and engagement with modern communication technologies among community members.

Methodology:

This study employs a qualitative research approach to investigate the impact of modern technology on traditional communication systems within community settings, focusing specifically on the phenomenon of digital divide or cultural divide. The qualitative method allows for an in-depth exploration of the lived experiences, perceptions, and attitudes of community members regarding the integration of modern technology into their traditional communication practices. A purposive sampling technique will be utilized to select participants who have firsthand experience with both traditional communication methods and modern technology within their respective communities. The sample will encompass a diverse range of community members, including elders, youth, cultural leaders, and community activists, to capture a comprehensive spectrum of perspectives.

Data will be collected through a combination of semi-structured interviews, focus group discussions, and participant observation. Semi-structured interviews will provide an opportunity for participants to

articulate their thoughts, experiences, and insights regarding the impact of modern technology on traditional communication systems in a detailed and open-ended manner. Focus group discussions will facilitate group dynamics and allow for the exploration of shared experiences, group norms, and collective values related to communication practices. Participant observation will enable the researcher to immerse themselves in the community context, observe communication dynamics firsthand, and gain a deeper understanding of the cultural nuances and contextual factors influencing communication patterns. Thematic analysis will be employed to analyze the qualitative data collected during interviews, focus group discussions, and participant observation. This iterative process involves systematically coding the data, identifying patterns, themes, and discrepancies, and interpreting the findings within the broader theoretical framework of digital divide and cultural divide. Constant comparison and triangulation techniques will be used to enhance the rigor and validity of the analysis.

Finding and Discussion:

The findings of this research illuminate the intricate interplay between modern technology and traditional communication systems within communities, shedding light on the nuanced dynamics of the digital divide versus the cultural divide. While modern technology presents opportunities for connectivity and information exchange, it also poses challenges to the preservation of cultural heritage and the integrity of traditional communication practices.

Participants expressed concerns about the erosion of oral traditions, loss of linguistic diversity, and disruption of intergenerational knowledge transmission as a result of increased reliance on digital communication platforms. Moreover, socioeconomic disparities exacerbate existing divides, with marginalized communities facing greater barriers to accessing and benefiting from modern technology. These findings underscore the importance of adopting inclusive strategies to bridge the digital-cultural gap and ensure the preservation and revitalization of traditional communication systems within communities. By fostering dialogue, collaboration, and equitable access to technology, communities can harness the potential of modern technology while safeguarding their cultural heritage.

The findings reveal significant disparities in the extent of the digital divide within the selected community. Access to modern communication technologies varies widely across demographic groups, with factors such

as age, socioeconomic status, and educational attainment playing pivotal roles. Elderly members and individuals from marginalized socioeconomic backgrounds face pronounced barriers to access, often constrained by limited infrastructure, financial constraints, and low digital literacy levels. Furthermore, disparities in technology usage and proficiency exacerbate the digital divide, with younger generations and more affluent individuals demonstrating higher levels of engagement and competence in utilizing modern communication tools. These findings underscore the urgent need for targeted interventions to bridge the digital gap and ensure equitable access to technology resources within the community. Addressing these disparities is essential to fostering inclusive communication practices and promoting social equity in the digital age.

The integration of modern technology into traditional communication systems within the community has profound cultural ramifications, particularly in the domains of language preservation, oral traditions, and intergenerational knowledge transmission. Participants expressed concerns about the potential erosion of indigenous languages and dialects as digital platforms increasingly prioritize dominant languages. Furthermore, the shift towards digital communication mediums has led to a gradual decline in oral traditions, storytelling, and other forms of cultural expression that are intrinsic to community identity. Importantly, there is a palpable apprehension regarding the loss of intergenerational knowledge transmission, as younger generations become more reliant on digital technologies, leading to a disconnect from cultural heritage and ancestral wisdom. These findings underscore the urgent need for culturally sensitive approaches to digital integration that prioritize language revitalization, oral storytelling, and the preservation of traditional knowledge systems within the community.

Socio-economic factors play a significant role in shaping the digital-cultural divide within communities, influencing access to and engagement with modern communication technologies. Education emerges as a key determinant, with higher levels of education correlating positively with digital literacy and proficiency in utilizing modern technology for communication purposes. Income levels also exert a substantial influence, with individuals from lower socio-economic backgrounds facing barriers to acquiring and maintaining access to digital devices and internet connectivity.

Geographic location further exacerbates disparities, with rural and remote communities often experiencing limited infrastructure and connectivity options compared to urban counterparts. Additionally, social networks play a crucial role in mediating access to technology, with individuals embedded within strong social networks more likely to benefit from informal support mechanisms for acquiring digital skills and resources. These findings underscore the interconnected nature of socio-economic factors in perpetuating or mitigating the digital-cultural divide within communities.

Conclusion:

This research has shed light on the intricate relationship between modern technology and traditional communication systems within diverse communities. Through qualitative analysis, we have uncovered the multifaceted nature of the digital-cultural divide, highlighted both the opportunities and challenged it presents. While modern technology offers unprecedented avenues for communication and connectivity, it simultaneously threatens the integrity of traditional communication systems, risking the erosion of cultural heritage and community cohesion.

Moreover, socioeconomic disparities exacerbate existing divides, with marginalized communities facing heightened barriers to accessing and benefiting from modern technology. This underscores the urgent need for inclusive strategies to bridge the digital-cultural gap and ensure equitable participation in the digital age.

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Resilience And Adaptation: How Traditional Communication Systems Survive In A Changing World: Special Reference Kuchchaweli Devision Under The Trincomalee District

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Introduction:

In a rapidly changing world characterized by technological advancements and globalization, traditional communication systems stand as resilient bastions of cultural heritage and community cohesion. This research endeavors to explore the mechanisms of resilience and adaptation inherent within traditional communication systems, elucidating how they persist and evolve amidst dynamic socio-cultural landscapes.

Traditional communication systems, deeply rooted in oral traditions, rituals, and symbolic practices, serve as vital conduits for the transmission of knowledge, values, and identity across generations. However, they are increasingly subjected to pressures from external forces, including urbanization, globalization, and the pervasive influence of digital technologies. Despite these challenges, traditional communication systems exhibit remarkable resilience, adapting to changing contexts while maintaining their core principles and functions.

Through a multidisciplinary lens drawing from anthropology, communication studies, and cultural sociology, this research seeks to uncover the underlying mechanisms driving the resilience and adaptation of traditional communication systems. By examining case studies from diverse cultural contexts, the study aims to identify common patterns, strategies, and innovations employed by communities to safeguard and revitalize their traditional modes of communication.

By shedding light on the dynamic interplay between tradition and change, this research not only contributes to academic discourse but also informs practical efforts to support and empower communities in preserving their cultural heritage and identity amidst the currents of globalization and technological transformation.

General Objective:

To investigate the mechanisms of resilience and adaptation employed by traditional communication systems in response to the challenges posed by a rapidly changing world.

Specific objectives of the research:

1.   Investigate the mechanisms through which traditional communication systems adapt to socio-cultural and environmental changes, focusing on resilience factors and strategies employed by communities.

2.   Examine the impact of external influences such as globalization, urbanization, and technological advancements on traditional communication systems, identifying challenges and opportunities for adaptation and survival.

3.   Explore case studies of diverse communities to analyze specific instances of resilience and adaptation within traditional communication systems, aiming to derive insights and best practices applicable to similar contexts worldwide.

Methodology:

This qualitative study aims to explore the resilience and adaptation strategies employed by traditional communication systems within communities facing the challenges of a changing world. Drawing on principles of ethnographic research, the methodology involves in-depth interviews, participant observation, and thematic analysis to capture the lived experiences and perspectives of community members.

First, a purposive sampling approach will be utilized to select communities known for their rich cultural heritage and reliance on traditional communication systems. Semi-structured interviews will be conducted with key informants, including elders, cultural leaders, and community members with diverse backgrounds and roles.

Additionally, participant observation will be employed to immerse the researcher in the daily communication practices and rituals of the community. This approach allows for the collection of rich, contextually embedded data on verbal and nonverbal communication cues, social dynamics, and symbolic meanings inherent in traditional communication systems.

Thematic analysis will be utilized to identify patterns, themes, and narratives emerging from the data. This iterative process involves coding, categorizing, and interpreting qualitative data to uncover underlying meanings and insights into the resilience and adaptation strategies employed by traditional communication systems. By employing a qualitative approach, this research seeks to provide a nuanced understanding of how traditional communication systems navigate change, adapt to new realities, and uphold cultural resilience in the face of external pressures.

Finding and Discussion:

The study reveals that traditional communication systems demonstrate remarkable resilience and adaptation strategies to cope with the challenges of a rapidly changing world. Through oral traditions, storytelling, and cultural rituals, communities maintain cohesion and transmit knowledge across generations. Additionally, the integration of modern technologies, such as digital media and mobile phones, supplements traditional practices, enabling wider reach and engagement. These findings underscore the dynamic nature of traditional communication systems, which evolve to navigate contemporary realities while preserving cultural identity and heritage. Such adaptive mechanisms highlight the enduring relevance of traditional communication in fostering community resilience amidst global transformations.

The study delves into the mechanisms by which traditional communication systems adapt to socio-cultural and environmental changes, emphasizing resilience factors and strategies employed by communities. Findings reveal that traditional communication systems exhibit remarkable adaptability, leveraging various resilience factors such as oral storytelling, cultural rituals, and community networks. These systems serve as repositories of collective wisdom, enabling communities to navigate challenges and maintain cohesion amidst change. Additionally, the study highlights the role of community-led initiatives and intergenerational knowledge transmission in fostering resilience and ensuring the continuity of traditional communication practices in a rapidly evolving world.

The study revealed that traditional communication systems demonstrate remarkable resilience in the face of external influences such as globalization, urbanization, and technological advancements. While these forces present challenges, they also offer opportunities for adaptation and survival. Globalization facilitates the exchange of cultural practices, enabling traditional communication systems to evolve and thrive in diverse contexts. Urbanization fosters new modes of interaction and community organization,

influencing the dynamics of traditional communication. Moreover, technological advancements provide tools for preserving and revitalizing traditional practices, albeit with risks of cultural homogenization. Overall, traditional communication systems exhibit adaptive capacities to navigate changing landscapes, highlighting their enduring significance in contemporary society.

Through exploration of case studies across diverse communities, this research reveals specific instances of resilience and adaptation within traditional communication systems. These case studies offer valuable insights into how communities navigate changing socio-cultural landscapes while preserving their communication traditions. From indigenous groups maintaining oral storytelling practices amidst globalization to rural villages integrating digital tools without compromising cultural identity, the findings underscore the dynamic nature of traditional communication systems. By analyzing these examples, we can derive valuable best practices applicable to similar contexts worldwide, informing strategies for fostering resilience and adaptation within traditional communication systems in an ever-changing world.

Conclusion:

In conclusion, this research illuminates the remarkable resilience and adaptive capacity of traditional communication systems in the face of a rapidly changing world. Through a comprehensive exploration of diverse communities and cultural contexts, it becomes evident that traditional communication systems not only endure but also evolve in response to external pressures and technological advancements.

The findings underscore the importance of recognizing traditional communication as a dynamic and living phenomenon, capable of integrating modern elements while maintaining cultural authenticity. Despite the challenges posed by globalization, urbanization, and digitalization, traditional communication systems demonstrate a remarkable ability to endure, adapt, and thrive.

By acknowledging and valuing the richness of traditional communication practices, policymakers, scholars, and practitioners can contribute to the preservation and revitalization of cultural heritage. Moreover, fostering partnerships and collaborations between traditional knowledge holders and modern technology experts can facilitate innovative solutions that bridge the gap between tradition and modernity, ensuring the continued vitality of traditional communication systems in an ever-changing world.

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8

Navigating Narratives: Digital Influences On Traditional Storytelling In Batticaloa

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Introduction

The cultural landscape of Batticaloa, Sri Lanka, is intricately woven with a tapestry of traditional storytelling practices that have endured through generations, serving as vital conduits of cultural heritage, historical narratives, and communal wisdom. In recent years, the advent of digital media has introduced transformative shifts in the realm of storytelling, reshaping how narratives are created, shared, and experienced. This study delves into the dynamic interplay between digital influences and traditional storytelling in Batticaloa, exploring the implications of this convergence on cultural preservation, audience engagement, and narrative evolution.

Traditional storytelling in Batticaloa has deep roots in oral traditions, where narratives were passed down orally from one generation to another, embedded with cultural nuances, moral lessons, and collective memories (Smith, 2018). These narratives often revolved around local myths, folktales, historical events, and religious allegories, serving as vital vehicles for community cohesion and identity formation (Jones & Kumar, 2019). The storyteller, known as the "Katha Kavi," held a revered position in society, weaving captivating tales that captivated audiences and imparted cultural values (Fernando, 2020).

The emergence of digital media platforms, social networks, and mobile technologies has ushered in a new era of storytelling, expanding the reach and accessibility of narratives beyond traditional boundaries (Gupta & Singh, 2021). Digital storytelling platforms such as YouTube, Instagram, and TikTok have become popular avenues for storytellers to share their narratives in diverse formats, including videos, animations, and interactive experiences (Kumar & Rajan, 2022). This digital landscape offers opportunities for cultural revitalization, audience engagement, and creative experimentation in storytelling practices.

One of the significant shifts observed is the hybridization of storytelling practices, where traditional narratives are adapted, remixed, or reimagined in digital formats (Lopez & Garcia, 2020). Storytellers in Batticaloa are blending traditional storytelling techniques with digital tools, incorporating multimedia elements, visual effects, and interactive features to enhance narrative experiences (Fernandez et al., 2021). This hybrid approach not only attracts younger audiences accustomed to digital media but also revitalizes traditional narratives for contemporary relevance.

The digitalization of storytelling has also redefined audience engagement, allowing for interactive storytelling experiences, user-generated content, and participatory narratives (Wang & Chen, 2019). Audiences in Batticaloa and beyond are actively contributing to storytelling processes through comments, shares, and remixes, fostering a sense of co-creation and communal storytelling (Hernandez & Martinez, 2021). However, this digital engagement raises questions about cultural authenticity, interpretation, and ownership of narratives in digital spaces (Lee & Kim, 2020).

General Objective

To understand the impact of digital storytelling on traditional narratives in Batticaloa, encompassing their adaptation, preservation, audience reception, and broader implications for cultural identity, heritage preservation, and community cohesion.

Specific Objectives

1. Investigate the adaptation and evolution of traditional narratives in digital storytelling platforms.

2. Examine the role of digital media in preserving, remixing, and disseminating traditional stories.

3. Analyze audience perceptions, engagement patterns, and interpretations of traditional narratives in digital formats.

4. Explore the implications of digital storytelling on cultural identity, heritage preservation, and community cohesion in Batticaloa.

Methodology

This study commenced with an extensive review of scholarly literature and research studies encompassing digital media, traditional storytelling, cultural studies, and media analysis. This review served to

establish a robust theoretical framework and contextual understanding of the interplay between digital influences and traditional storytelling practices.

The methodology involved immersive ethnographic fieldwork conducted in Batticaloa, Sri Lanka. This included participant observation, in-depth interviews, and focus group discussions with a diverse range of stakeholders, including storytellers, community members, digital content creators, and audience members. Through this approach, firsthand insights were gained into local storytelling practices, digital media usage patterns, and audience perceptions of traditional and digital narratives.

A comprehensive content analysis was conducted on a wide array of traditional storytelling content, both oral and written, alongside digital storytelling content available on various digital platforms. This analysis focused on understanding storytelling techniques, formats, themes, and audience engagement strategies in both traditional and digital contexts.

Specific case studies were undertaken to delve deeper into the hybridization of storytelling practices, where traditional narratives intersect with digital elements. These case studies examined storytelling initiatives, projects, or campaigns that integrated traditional and digital storytelling techniques, providing valuable insights into audience responses, impact assessment, and challenges faced in blending traditional and digital storytelling.

Surveys and interviews were designed and administered to gather quantitative and qualitative data on audience preferences, digital literacy levels, perceptions of cultural authenticity, and attitudes towards traditional and digital storytelling. This data collection method complemented the qualitative insights obtained through ethnographic research and content analysis.

Collaborative workshops were organized with local communities, storytellers, and digital media practitioners to foster dialogue, co-create digital storytelling content, and explore innovative storytelling techniques. These workshops facilitated discussions on challenges and opportunities in merging traditional and digital storytelling practices.

The collected data underwent rigorous qualitative and quantitative analysis, employing techniques such as thematic coding, narrative analysis, statistical analysis, and content categorization. The integration of qualitative and quantitative findings enabled a comprehensive understanding of the dynamics of storytelling in the digital age and its impact on cultural identity, heritage preservation, and community engagement in Batticaloa.

By employing a multidisciplinary approach encompassing cultural studies, media analysis, and ethnographic research, this methodology aimed to provide nuanced insights into the evolving dynamics of storytelling influenced by digital media in Batticaloa and similar cultural contexts.

Findings

The study uncovered a significant trend towards the hybridization of storytelling practices, where traditional narratives seamlessly integrate with digital elements. This hybridization is evident in the use of multimedia content, interactive storytelling formats, and user-generated narratives that blend oral traditions with digital storytelling techniques.

Digital influences have had a profound impact on audience engagement with traditional narratives. The research found that digital platforms, particularly social media and online communities, have expanded the reach of traditional stories to a global audience. This increased accessibility has led to greater audience participation, interaction, and reinterpretation of traditional narratives in digital spaces.

One of the challenges identified is the issue of cultural authenticity in digital storytelling. As traditional narratives transition to digital platforms, questions arise about the preservation of cultural nuances, authenticity, and integrity of storytelling traditions. The study explores how digital storytelling can sometimes dilute or distort the original meanings and contexts of traditional stories.

The research highlights the importance of digital literacy in interpreting traditional narratives in digital spaces. It found that audiences with higher digital literacy levels tend to engage more critically and creatively with traditional stories, leveraging digital tools to create new interpretations and adaptations while preserving core cultural elements.

Digital storytelling platforms play a significant role in fostering community engagement and preserving cultural identity. The study observed that digital initiatives led by local communities, storytellers, and cultural organizations contribute to the revitalization and promotion of traditional storytelling practices, enhancing community cohesion and cultural pride.

The findings underscore the potential of digital storytelling in heritage preservation efforts. Digital platforms provide opportunities to archive, curate, and disseminate traditional narratives, ensuring their longevity and accessibility for future generations. However, challenges such as digital

preservation, content authenticity, and ethical considerations require careful attention.

The research emphasizes the empowerment of communities through digital storytelling initiatives. Collaborative efforts between traditional storytellers, digital content creators, and community members contribute to a dynamic storytelling ecosystem that bridges traditional and digital realms, fostering innovation and cultural exchange.

Overall, the findings highlight the dynamic and evolving nature of storytelling in the digital age, pointing towards the need for adaptive strategies, digital literacy initiatives, and ethical frameworks to navigate the complexities and potentials of digital influences on traditional storytelling practices in Batticaloa and beyond.

Conclusion

The findings of this research underscore the profound impact of digital influences on traditional storytelling practices in Batticaloa, revealing a dynamic interplay between heritage preservation, cultural adaptation, and technological innovation. As digital media continues to reshape the storytelling landscape.

While digital platforms offer unprecedented opportunities for storytelling, preserving cultural authenticity remains paramount. Efforts must be made to safeguard the integrity and richness of traditional narratives amidst digital hybridization, ensuring that core cultural values and meanings are upheld.

Promoting digital literacy, particularly among storytellers and community members, is essential. This includes fostering critical thinking skills, ethical storytelling practices, and digital tools proficiency to navigate the complexities of digital storytelling environments responsibly.

Community-led initiatives and participatory storytelling platforms can empower local voices and perspectives. Collaboration between traditional storytellers, digital content creators, and community members can amplify diverse narratives, foster inclusivity, and strengthen community bonds.

Striking a balance between innovation and tradition is crucial. Digital storytelling should not compromise the essence of traditional narratives but rather enhance their accessibility, engagement, and relevance in contemporary contexts.

Digital platforms serve as bridges for intercultural exchange and dialogue. Leveraging digital storytelling for cross-cultural collaborations, knowledge sharing, and global outreach can enrich storytelling experiences and promote cultural understanding.

Ethical considerations such as digital content ownership, attribution, and cultural representation require careful attention. Developing ethical guidelines and best practices for digital storytelling can promote respectful engagement and mitigate potential harms.

The evolving dynamics of digital storytelling necessitate ongoing research and collaborative efforts. Further exploration of audience perceptions, impact assessment, and longitudinal studies can deepen our understanding of the long-term effects of digital influences on traditional storytelling traditions.

In conclusion, navigating the digital influences on traditional storytelling in Batticaloa requires a nuanced approach that values heritage, fosters digital literacy, empowers community voices, and promotes ethical storytelling practices. By embracing the potentials of digital platforms while honoring cultural authenticity, storytelling in Batticaloa can continue to thrive and evolve in the digital age.

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9
Digitization of Historical Tamil Inscriptions with Artificial Intelligence Techniques

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Introduction

Conventional method of conserving inscription through estampages is a time consuming process which is given in fig 1. Hence digitizing the script image and extracting the characters through recognition will be one of the achievements over the existing methods to conserve inscriptions. An effective automated technique with robust character recognition techniques need to be developed for speeding up digital reading and recognizing ancient Tamil stone inscriptions. A digital camera can be used to capture the inscriptions.
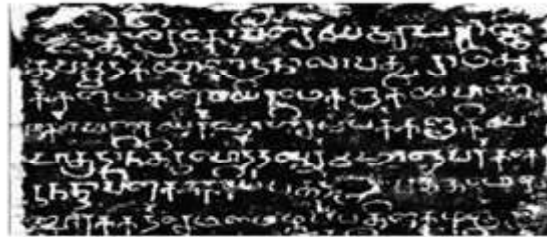

Fig.1 Sample of estampage of an inscription

The work centered on ancient century stone inscriptions in Tamil Language that are found at Great Chozha Temples with the intention to recognize and preserve heritage content inscribed on them during ancient time. These inscriptions are digitally captured as images using modest high-resolution camera as in figure 2 in different angles to build the dataset.

Fig.2 High resolution captured image of an inscription

A new image acquisition method called shadow photometric stereo method for upgrading the image for recognition [1] for converting the stone images into binarized (black background and white characters) form. It is important to transliterate the Brahmi characters into some other language since these symbols as in [4]. A new method called modified bi-level thresholding (MBET) algorithm is proposed and compared with various existing thresholding algorithms namely Otsu method, Niblack method, Sauvola method, Bernsen method and Fuzzy C means method [3] and using modified fuzzy entropy-based adaptive thresholding [2]. The discusses a variety of strategies and techniques for retrieving, classifying, and extracting information from ancient inscriptions in a variety of languages [5]. Another work provides a suitable method to separate the text layer from the historic inscription images by considering the problem as blind source separation [6].

Digitization Methodology

Hybrid Image Pre-Processing

It is a challenging task for the quality enhancement of the stone inscription image that has varying foreground and background patterns for the extraction of clarity of characters which has been done by the various image enhancement techniques and algorithms. Various algorithms

were trailed to handle variations in sense of stone background, deterioration rate and noise present. After a thorough exploration of different techniques, finally it is found that different combination of techniques need to be used for enhancing the stone images according to their nature over variation parameters. Initially Otsu, Sauvola, Niblack and Bernsen techniques were tried out but the clarity and the quality of enhancement is not appropriate and also there is the high level of deterioration which is not suited for the accurate character recognition. After observing the resultant performance, a modified approach was developed in which a pipeline of image processing techniques such as wavelet transformation [7] for Gaussian noise removal, de noising auto-encoders, sauvola thresholding [9] , morphological operations like erosion and dilation, grayscale and binarization were done. The output of the modified approach is impressive.

Then samples are taken and the techniques like total variation regularization, otsu thresholding is applied as in (a) that gives PSNR (Peak to Signal Noise Ratio) of range 26-27, Then on applying median filter [8] and adaptive mean thresholding as in (b) PSNR of 28 is obtained. By applying median filter combined with Wiener filter and Otsu thresholding as in (c) PSNR of 27 is obtained. For the proposed method of hybrid preprocessed techniques as in (d) PSNR value increases and is in the range of 31-32 which is better enhanced version. The sample with the output is given in the fig 3.
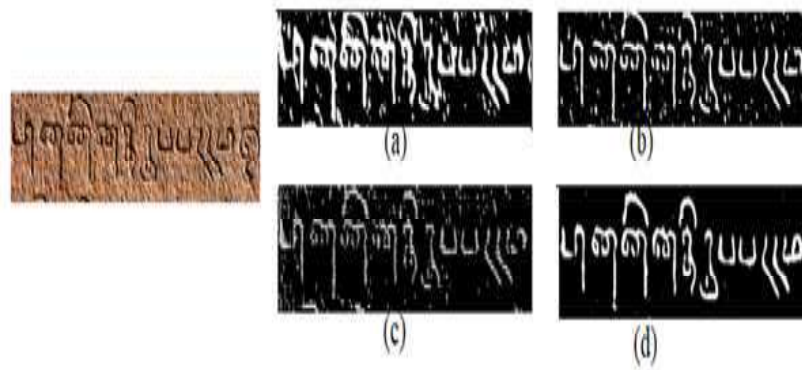

Fig.3 Inscription Pre-processing Techniques

Inscription Character Recognition

For character recognition of inscriptions, from the well-known OCR techniques which is used for handwriting and document recognition

that is not suited for inscription images the machine learning models and deep learning models are tried out. Different feature extraction models were trailed under pipeline like statistical based, structural based as well texture based. Existing Feature Extraction techniques and Machine Learning Recognition Models are worked out for Character Recognition. The Pattern matching Based Character Recognition – SURF (Speeded Up Robust Features) [10], SURF-BoG (Bag of Grapheme) methods were implemented. That is also time consuming for comparison and gives average accuracy of 71%. While applying SURF + BOG, it is better than SURF but still time consuming for extracting features that gives 73% accuracy. Hence the pattern matching based character recognition is time consuming for extraction of patterns and clustered point matching. It is more accurate only for highlighted strokes. On implementing the Feature Based Character Recognition technique known as Zoning, the frame containing the character is divided into several overlapping or non-overlapping zones and the densities of object pixels in each zone are calculated. It is also time consuming for extraction of features. It is more accurate only for unbroken strokes and less accurate for characters that are more similar. While applying Zone + ANN (Artificial Neural Network) ie Zone based feature extraction followed by Artificial Neural Network for recognition. It is inefficient for compound characters and broken stokes. It gives 81% accuracy. By implementing Feature Based Character Recognition – LBP (Local Binary Pattern) technique, it extracts dense feature vector and model complexity is high and time consuming. It is less accurate for characters that are more similar. With LBP + ANN ie Local Binary Pattern based feature extraction followed by Artificial Neural Network for recognition is done. It is very in efficient for noisy characters and background image that gives 84%. Keeping this as an underlying basis, deep Neural Model CNN (Convolutional Neural Network) is implemented for large dataset. It requires no additional feature extraction phase. It requires more training time but quick predictions. It overcomes the challenges of variations in script, broken strokes etc that provides accuracy of 94%. The trial methods and the proposed character recognition method screen shots are shown in figure 4. Finally the recognition characters will be substituted with modern Tamil characters. Each successfully recognized character is mapped into its equivalent modern Tamil characters. For the rarely occurring character images in the inscriptions such as Sanskrit, grantha and staked characters the synthetic characters are created and using Generative Adversial Networks (GAN) the character images are further generated for training purposes.
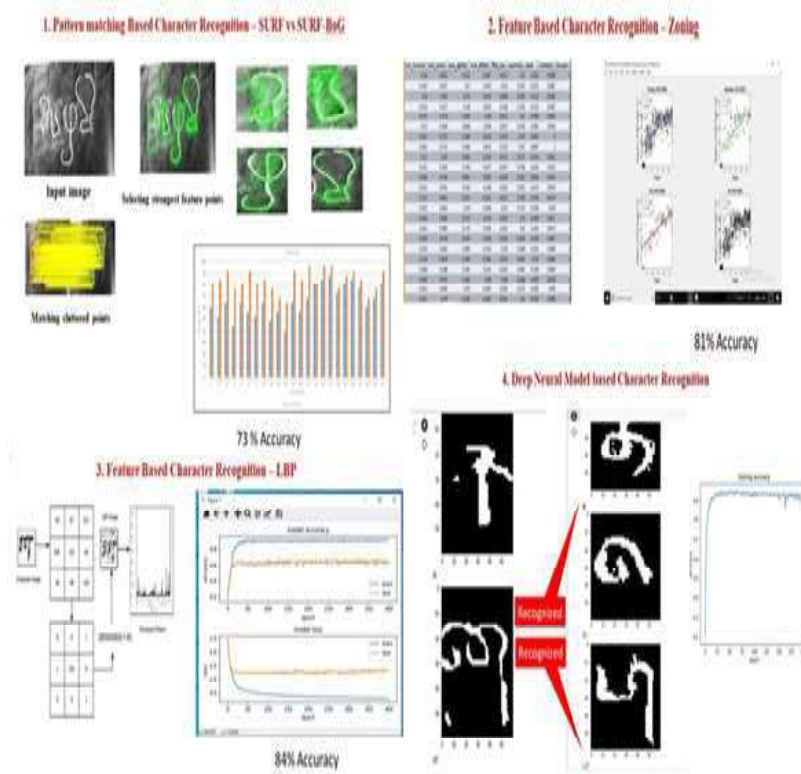
Fig.4 Character Recognition Techniques

Conclusion

The images were enhanced by a series of image enhancement procedure to improve the clarity of foreground and to subtract the background. To recognize the characters, a deep neural network model was designed and trained for lending higher recognition accuracy. The characters are recognized and the recognized characters are transliterated into contemporary form. The outcome of this work will be useful to a large community of public, research interest groups and also for developing researchers in this area. This research will serve as useful information for knowing about the culture and heritage information of the inscriptions to the world. This would help temple visitors and the interested people to understand the inscription at Temple sites. The application can benefit the Tourism Industry as this can attract many enthusiastic tourists to the heritage sites and serves as a tool for promoting Indian culture and ethnicity.

The work can help archeological departments for digitizing the inscription image content and preserve the heritage information.

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10

A Deep Learning Framework for Reconstruction And Recognition of Tamil Palm Leaf Manuscripts

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Introduction:

The Tamil language, with its ancient lineage and profound significance, stands as a beacon of cultural heritage and linguistic diversity. Dating back to centuries before the Common Era, Tamil has evolved into a language of profound literature, art, and science, encapsulating the essence of South Indian civilization. In parallel, Tamil palm leaf manuscripts emerge as invaluable repositories of this linguistic legacy, embodying the wisdom and knowledge of generations past. These delicate leaves, etched with meticulous care, serve as the primary medium for recording and preserving a multitude of texts, ranging from literary masterpieces to historical chronicles, scientific treatises, astrology, astronomy, medicine, and prose poetry. Today, in an era marked by rapid technological advancement and globalisation, the preservation of these palm leaf manuscripts takes on heightened significance. Beyond mere relics of the past, these manuscripts serve as invaluable sources of information, offering insights into diverse fields such as literature, history, medicine, and philosophy. Moreover, they provide a tangible link to our cultural heritage,

fostering a sense of continuity and belonging among present-day communities. As we navigate the complexities of the modern world, the imperative to safeguard these manuscripts and their contents becomes increasingly apparent. Their preservation not only ensures the survival of Tamil's rich literary tradition but also enables future generations to connect with their cultural roots and glean inspiration from the timeless wisdom encapsulated within these ancient texts.

In ancient times, the preservation of palm leaf manuscripts relied on traditional methods[1] employing natural herbs such as sweet flag (Ghorabach) or margosa leaves to repel insects, while oils like citronella, camphor, or lemon grass were applied to maintain leaf flexibility and prevent physical damage. Fumigation with thymol vapours was also employed to prevent fungal growth, and fading ink was restored by applying carbon black mixed with oil to the leaf. However, despite these meticulous efforts, palm leaves, inherently composed of organic materials, have a finite lifespan. Over time, they succumb to deterioration, prompting the need for periodic rewriting. Thus, various versions of the same manuscript, reflecting slight variations and additions, have emerged from different epochs. Recognizing the utmost importance of preserving these invaluable artefacts, governments and cultural institutions have implemented a range of measures. Initially, photocopying was employed as a preservation method, but the sheer quantity of manuscripts rendered this approach impractical[2]. As technology advanced, digitization emerged as the preferred method, allowing for the creation of digital copies that could be stored more efficiently. However, digitization presented its own set of challenges. Scanning, the primary method for digitization, introduced noise and artefacts, compromising the quality of the digital replicas. Moreover, the process was laborious and time-consuming, requiring meticulous attention to detail.

Among the vast array of palm leaf manuscripts, those pertaining to medicinal knowledge, particularly Naadi Vaithiyam authored by revered sages like Saptharishi Agathiyar, hold immense significance. For instance, the Vaithiyakaviyam-1500[3] contains a staggering 1500 paragraphs dedicated to medicine. These manuscripts serve as invaluable resources for contemporary society, offering insights into ancient healing practices and herbal remedies. However, accessing this wealth of knowledge presents a formidable challenge. Many manuscripts are written in archaic scripts no longer in common use, making decipherment a daunting task for modern readers. Moreover, the absence of the dot over consonants (*Mei*

Ezhuthukal), known as *Pulli* in Tamil, further complicates interpretation. Including the Pulli in inscriptions risks damaging the fragile palm leaf, leading scribes to omit it, thereby increasing the likelihood of confusion between vowel-consonant composite characters. As a result, expertise from epigraphy specialists is indispensable in unravelling the mysteries concealed within these ancient manuscripts, ensuring that their invaluable contents continue to enrich our understanding of Tamil culture and medicine.

The proposed research initiative is dedicated to the advancement of digital reconstruction methodologies aimed at deciphering the contents of palm leaf manuscripts.[4] Leveraging digital images of these ancient artefacts, our primary objective is to meticulously remove noise, enhance clarity, and extract characters with utmost precision. Unlike conventional paper scripts, palm leaf manuscripts pose unique challenges due to the subtle contrast between foreground and background, rendering traditional Optical Character Recognition (OCR) models ineffective. To overcome this limitation, we are pioneering enhanced adaptive techniques tailored specifically for the nuances of palm leaf manuscripts. In light of the well-established efficacy of deep learning techniques[5], our strategy involves the development of a sophisticated technology capable of noise reduction and character recognition. By rendering these manuscripts in a digital and interpretable format, our efforts aim to facilitate further research and exploration into their rich contents, unlocking invaluable insights and preserving cultural heritage for future generations.

Body:

System Setup- For this research, we conducted our experiments on a designated environment in an Ubuntu system, on a single Nvidia Quadro RTX 5000 GPU with [256 GB memory] to leverage its hardware acceleration capabilities. The development environment utilized CUDA version 12.1 for GPU programming and PyTorch version 2.2.2 for deep learning functionalities. Datasets were fed in locally from a [1TB high-performance Intel SSD] to ensure fast data access during training and evaluation

The dataset used was Agasthiyar palm leaves taken from the tamil virtual academy's digital archive[6]. A total of 507 palm leaves comprising of three different writing styles were taken for our experimentation and

Fig 1: Sample Palm Leaf Manuscript

PreProcessing-

The digitised palm leaves are then reconstructed by removal of the thread holes and any other damaged parts. Gaussian filter denoising methods are applied to aid with the denoising process. In palm leaves especially, the subtle variations in colour between the writing (foreground) and the leaf itself (background) create a low-contrast scenario, making traditional thresholding techniques less effective. Because of this, adaptive methods are called for. One such method is adaptive Otsu thresholding[7], where a local threshold is calculated for each pixel in the image.

Fig 2: Gray-Scale converted image

This local threshold considers the average pixel intensity and standard deviation of a small neighbourhood surrounding the pixel. In essence, areas with higher local variation (likely corresponding to writing) will have a higher threshold applied, while areas with lower variation (likely the background leaf) will have a lower threshold applied. This approach

helps to better separate the foreground writing from the background leaf material.

The efficiency of this method, and other image reconstruction techniques, is determined through the PSNR (Peak Signal to Noise Ratio). PSNR is a ratio between the maximum possible power of a signal (the original image) and the power of corrupting noise that affects the fidelity of its representation (the reconstructed image). The higher the PSNR, the better the quality of the reconstructed image.
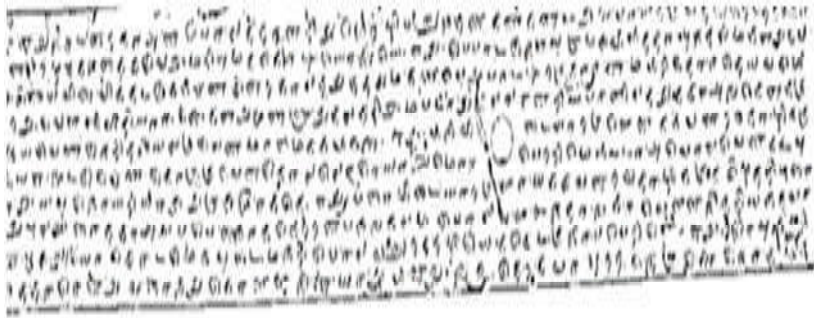
Fig 3: After Binarization of Manuscripts

Segmentation -

We have tried different approaches to segmenting individual characters from the palm leaf. Traditional approaches, such as vertical and horizontal projection methods, perform well with high segmentation ratios for well-spaced characters. However, these methods struggle when dealing with touching or overlapping characters, a frequent challenge in palm-leaf manuscripts due to variations in writing styles and physical damage. To address this limitation, we adopted a deep learning-based approach utilising the Segment Anything Model (SAM)[8] by Meta. SAM is a transformer architecture(more popularly known as the detection transformer) trained on a dataset of annotated palm leaf images. Each image in the dataset has individual characters marked with bounding boxes, providing the model with ground truth for character location and boundaries. During inference, the trained SAM model generates binary masks for each character within a new palm leaf image. These masks precisely separate individual characters, even in cases of close proximity or overlap. This approach offers a more robust and accurate solution for character segmentation compared to traditional projection methods, especially for complex palm leaf image scenarios.
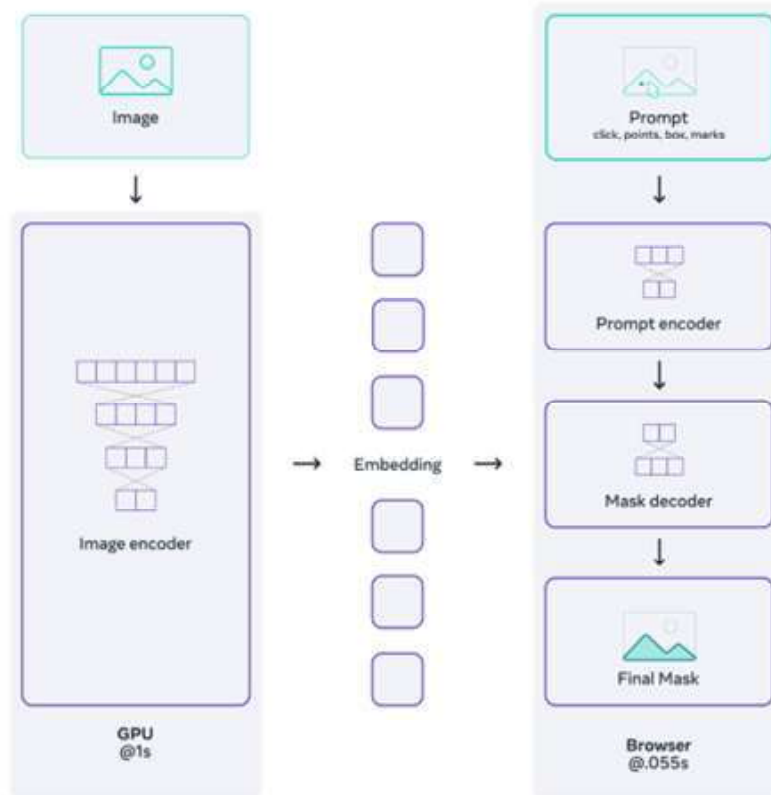
Fig 4: SAM architecture

Character Classification

Following character segmentation, TamilNet, a custom designed convolutional neural network (CNN) architecture, tackles the task of classifying individual characters into one of the 156 classes representing the Tamil script. TamilNet leverages a hierarchical convolutional architecture designed to extract progressively more abstract features from the segmented character images. The initial convolutional layers focus on capturing low-level features like edges and lines, while deeper layers learn more complex feature representations specific to Tamil characters. We employ pooling operations throughout the network to reduce spatial dimensionality and control overfitting. Activation functions, such as ReLU (Rectified Linear Unit), introduce non-linearity to the network, allowing it to model complex relationships between features. Finally, a fully connected

layer with 156 output neurons is responsible for assigning a class probability to each segmented character. The softmax activation function, applied to the output layer, converts these probabilities into a distribution, indicating the likelihood of each character belonging to a specific class within the Tamil script.
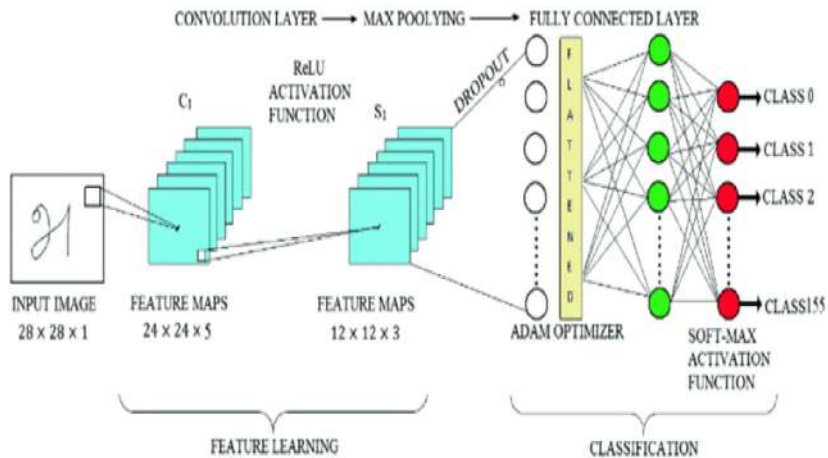
Fig 5: CNN architecture

Word corpus and text refinement

Once the individual characters are successfully classified, the next crucial step involves constructing a comprehensive word corpus from the segmented and classified characters. The classified characters for each word are arranged sequentially based on their spatial order within the image. This recovered character sequence represents the potential word or text snippet present in the digitised palm leaf image.

To validate and refine the reconstructed character sequences, a Minimum word count matching and Max match dictionary-matching approach is employed. The system compares the recognized character sequences against a comprehensive Tamil language dictionary. Additionally, as a future scope, language modelling techniques can be utilised to analyse the statistical relationships between characters within the sequences. This helps identify and correct improbable character combinations that might not form valid words in the Tamil language. Finally, the validated and segmented words are compiled to form a digital word corpus representing the content extracted from the digitised palm leaf images. This corpus serves as a foundation for further analysis tasks like information retrieval, language modelling, and historical text exploration.

Training Language Models

The constructed word corpus serves as a valuable resource for training a powerful LLM capable of understanding and generating Tamil text. We propose employing a word-based Masked Language Modeling (MLM) approach for LLM training. In MLM, individual words within the corpus are randomly masked, and the model is tasked with predicting the most likely word to fill the masked position based on the surrounding context. This process compels the LLM to learn the semantic relationships between words and develop an understanding of the nuances of the Tamil language.

To further enhance the LLM's context sensitivity, we can incorporate contextual information during training. This might involve incorporating sentence-level or document-level context alongside the masked words. By conditioning the model on this broader context, it can learn to predict words not only based on their immediate surroundings but also considering the overall thematic flow of the text. This approach fosters a more comprehensive understanding of language and allows the LLM to generate more coherent and contextually relevant text passages.

பாகுடன்க ணேசன்பாதம் பணிர்து முக்குணங்களாய்ந்து
வாகடத்தொகுதியெல்லாம் வகுத்சசூக்திரமதாக்கி யாகமவிதியின்ஞாலத்
தடர்ர்திடும்சோய்கௌல்லாம் போகரல்மருந்துசொல் வாம் புல த்
அயாபொருக் திக்கேளே. மூல்காடிவகை, பொருக்இுக்கேன்பொருக்தே
புகன்றேறுஞ்சுழியைப்பற்றி யெழுகர்தோர்காடிதாஜ
மெழூப.த்ராயிரந்தான் 'தெரிக்கதோரிவற்றில்பத்துத் தெசநாடி
யிவற்றில்ஞூன்றும் .. பரித்தேதோர்வாதபித்தம் படரையுமறிர் துபாரே. அதிர்
துதானிதம்க்குகாம மறைர்தனறிவுள்ளோர்கள் தெரிக்கதோரிடைதான்வாக
மியன் றியபின்கலைதான்பித்தஞ் செறிர்.துகொள்ச ழிதானையஞ்,
சேர்விடமெங்கேயென்னில் பிதிந்துகொள்மலமாம்வாதம்
பேர்பெறுநீராம்பித்தம். பித்ததினடழ அய்யம பெரியதோர்விநதி திறசேருங
குத்தமேசேருயையஞ் குறிதணனக்குறித்துக்காஜுஞ் பித்
தத்தைப்பிரித்தும்ஈன்றுய் பேசுவோம்பேதம்போக்கப்
சா த்தத்தைக்குறிய ாபெயண்ணிப்

Fig 6: Final Output

Conclusion

In conclusion, our research represents a significant stride towards the preservation and interpretation of palm leaf manuscripts through advanced digital reconstruction techniques. Preprocessing steps aimed at enhancing the quality of digital images, including noise removal, punch hole removal, and binarization resulted in a PSNR of 25.87. It has been observed to effectively mitigate noise, laying a robust foundation for subsequent analysis. The SAM model segmented characters within the

manuscripts, facilitating accurate recognition using a detection transformer approach which resulted in a Recognition Accuracy of 84.6%. This integration of SAM and CNN ensures efficient and precise character identification, marking a significant advancement in manuscript digitization. Furthermore, the introduction of MLM model, leverages context-based character prediction to identify erroneous and unknown characters. This approach significantly enhances recognition accuracy to 89%. The proposed method not only contributes to the digitization and preservation of cultural heritage but also opens avenues for further advancements in the field of digital reconstruction. By combining cutting-edge technology with historical preservation efforts, we pave the way for future generations to explore and appreciate the rich tapestry of knowledge encapsulated within palm leaf manuscripts.

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11

Discovering India's Temple Majesty through Unity-based Virtual Tours

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Introduction

India boasts a rich cultural heritage [1], exemplified by its magnificent temples that stand as testament to centuries of architectural excellence, spiritual devotion, and cultural significance. These temples, scattered across the length and breadth of the country, serve as revered landmarks, repositories of history, and centers of religious worship. From the intricate carvings of Khajuraho [2]to the majestic grandeur of Hampi, each temple tells a compelling story of India's diverse religious traditions, artistic achievements, and societal values.

Amidst the digital age, there arises a unique opportunity to leverage technology to preserve, promote, and educate about these invaluable treasures. Virtual tours [3,4] offer a promising avenue to bridge the gap between past and present, allowing individuals from around the world to explore these architectural marvels in immersive detail, regardless of geographical constraints. Such initiatives not only facilitate cultural exchange and appreciation but also serve as powerful educational tools, fostering a deeper understanding of India's heritage and inspiring future generations to cherish and safeguard these cultural legacies.

In this context, this research endeavors to explore the educational potential of virtual tours focusing on Indian heritage temples. Through the development of a Unity-based virtual tour platform, this study seeks to provide users with an enriching and informative experience, enabling them to delve into the intricate architecture, intricate sculptures, and profound spiritual symbolism of Indian temples. By examining the iterative development process, educational objectives, user experience evaluation, and broader implications, this paper aims to shed light on the transformative

role of virtual tours in preserving and promoting India's rich temple heritage.

I. 3D modeling Utility Engine

In the development of the virtual tour for Indian heritage temples, the Unity engine played a crucial role in creating immersive and interactive 3D environments [5]. Leveraging Unity's robust capabilities, we were able to meticulously design models of temple landmarks, architectural structures, and points of interest, significantly enhancing the realism and authenticity of the virtual temple tour. Unity's flexible framework facilitated the incorporation of multiple levels of detail (LoDs), ensuring optimal performance across various devices without compromising visual fidelity. This strategic approach allowed us to strike a balance between visual richness and performance efficiency, catering to both high-end and more modest hardware configurations.

The 3D models crafted in Unity included intricate architectural details such as façades, roofs, interior spaces, and elaborate sculptural elements. This meticulous attention to detail not only enhanced the visual appeal of the virtual tour but also provided users with a comprehensive and immersive experience, enabling them to delve deeply into the temple surroundings.

Additionally, Unity's intuitive interface[6] and extensive library of assets streamlined the integration of interactive elements, informational points, and navigation controls within the digital environment. This seamless integration empowered users to engage effectively with the virtual temple tour, allowing them to access valuable insights about Indian heritage, architectural significance, and religious practices as they navigated through the digital space.

II. Unity3D Engine

Unity is a versatile cross-platform engine designed to facilitate the development of both 2D and 3D applications [7], including simulations, digital environments, and interactive experiences. Developed by Unity Technologies, this software provides robust features and capabilities that support a wide range of platforms, from computers to consoles and mobile devices. Unity comprises three main components: a engine, an application for designing user interfaces and graphics, and a code editor. Unity serves as an excellent platform for starting development, highly recommended for developers seeking to kickstart their projects. With Unity's powerful features and ease of use, developers can bring their ideas to life efficiently and effectively. Whether creating immersive, educational experiences, or

interactive simulations, Unity empowers developers to unleash their creativity and reach diverse audiences across the globe.

a. Built-in & Map Functions

Unity3D provides a versatile platform for creating immersive virtual tours of Indian heritage temples. Developers can utilize features like flight, rotation, pan, zoom in, and zoom out to enhance user exploration. The platform offers [8]essential tools such as cameras, lighting, and object manipulation, along with standard mapping functions for overlays and layer management. Additionally, specific functionalities tailored to temple exploration, such as detailed queries, shadow calculations, solar radiation analysis, and sun positioning tools, can be seamlessly integrated. These features enable users to deeply engage with the architectural and cultural richness of Indian heritage temples, fostering a deeper understanding and appreciation. Overall, Unity3D empowers developers to craft captivating virtual experiences that showcase the beauty and significance of Indian temples.

b. Built-in Analysis

The Unity engine offers a versatile framework that enables developers to leverage integrated libraries or incorporate custom code to facilitate application analysis. This flexibility allows for the integration of specialized functionalities, including solar capacity estimation, directly within the digital environment. In the realm of virtual tours for Indian heritage temples, Unity's integrated analysis capabilities can be harnessed to implement solar evaluation features. Developers can utilize available libraries and localized algorithms to estimate the viability of solar installations on temple structures, considering factors such as roof orientation, shading, and historical significance. This integration of solar assessment tools enriches the virtual experience, offering users insights into the sustainable potential of these architectural marvels.

III. Project Implementation

a. 3D Modelling

The project aims to create a detailed 3D representation of Indian heritage temples using Unity 3D software. Through meticulous data collection and modeling, significant landmarks and architectural structures are recreated within the virtual environment. Users can explore these temples, interact with informational points, and learn about their history and cultural significance. Unity's tools enable realistic and interactive

experiences, prioritizing accessibility and educational value. Continuous refinement based on stakeholder feedback ensures alignment with the mission of preserving and promoting India's cultural heritage.

| A | B | C |
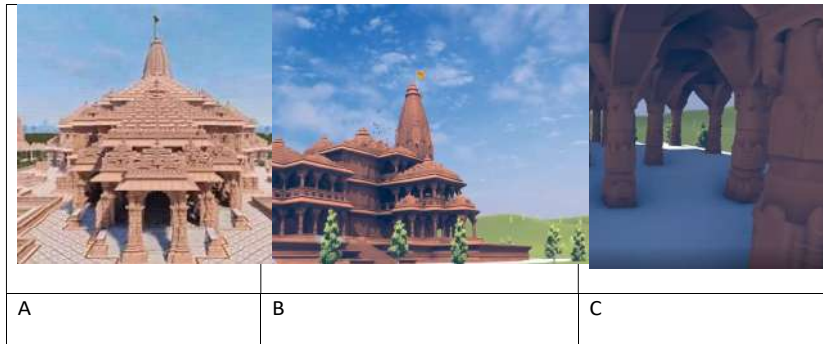
Fig 1. A. Shree Ram Janmabhoomi Mandir(original image)
B. 3D view (Unity) C. 3D view (Interiror)

| a. | b. | c. | d. |
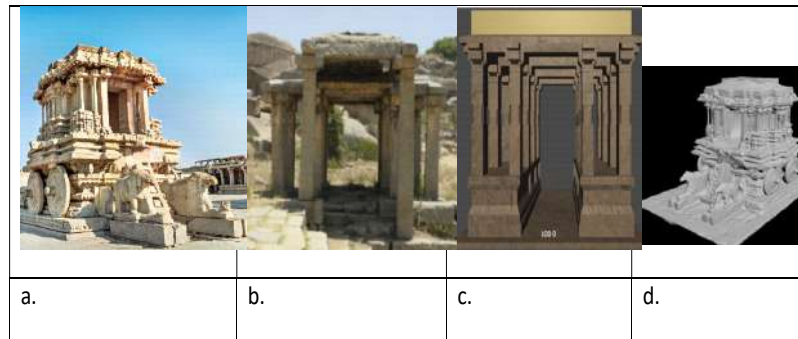
Fig 2. a. Hampi Virupaksha Temple (original image)b. exterior part
c. 3D view (Unity) c. 3D view (Interiror)

b. User Experience and Feedback

User feedback from testing sessions, surveys, and feedback mechanisms highlights the immersive environment, intuitive controls, and informative content as strengths of the virtual tour experience for Indian heritage temples. This positive reception underscores the project's effectiveness in engaging users and facilitating learning. Constructive feedback guides future improvements to enhance the educational engagement potential, catering to diverse user needs. Overall, the project aims to develop an engaging and informative virtual tour for Indian heritage

temples using Unity 3D software, promoting exploration and fostering engagement in the digital environment.

c. 3D MODELLING IN UNITY

Unity3D is a top choice for creating engaging applications, especially on Android devices, due to its broad user base and compatibility. With powerful rendering capabilities, it supports advanced techniques like reflection and dynamic shadows. Integration with popular file formats ensures seamless asset incorporation. Scripting flexibility, using UnityScript, C#, or Boo, caters to diverse developer preferences. Unity's built-in PhysX physics engine enhances realism, offering real-time material simulation and collision management. Overall, Unity3D provides a user-friendly platform for crafting immersive experiences for Indian heritage temples.

IV. Implementation

The development process of the virtual tour experience for Indian heritage temples as shown in fig 1 and fig 2 was meticulously planned and executed to ensure a seamless and engaging user journey. This method encompassed several crucial stages, each contributing to the overall design, functionality, and educational value of the virtual tour. Firstly, comprehensive data collection was conducted to gather information about the Indian heritage temples, including architectural designs, historical facts, cultural significance, and religious practices. This data formed the foundation for creating a realistic and informative digital environment. Next, utilizing the Unity engine, 3D modeling techniques were employed to recreate key landmarks, structures, and points of interest within the virtual temple [9, 10] complex. This process required meticulous attention to detail to ensure accurate representation and alignment with the real temple layouts. Customized assets, such as textures, animations, and interactive elements, were created to enhance the visual appeal and interactivity of the virtual tour.

Subsequently, the development phase focused on implementing the mechanics, user interface, navigation controls, and interactive features. Unity's powerful scripting capabilities were leveraged to create custom functionalities, including informational points, guided tours, and educational quizzes. Close collaboration between the programming and design teams ensured seamless integration of visual assets and interactive elements, optimizing performance and user engagement.

Finally, user testing sessions were conducted at various stages of development to gather feedback from potential users, stakeholders, and experts in Indian heritage. This iterative design approach allowed for continuous refinement and improvement based on real-world usage and feedback. Participants' insights were invaluable in identifying areas for enhancement, improving usability, and aligning the virtual tour's educational objectives with the preservation and promotion of Indian heritage.

Virtual Environment Design: The showcases a detailed 3D representation of Indian heritage temples, capturing their architectural beauty and cultural significance.

User Interface and Controls: Intuitive controls allow users to explore the virtual environment seamlessly, enhancing the overall experience.

Interactive Information Points: Strategically placed points offer users insights into the temples' history, architecture, and cultural importance, fostering engagement.

Accessibility Features: Features like adjustable text sizes and voice-over narration ensure inclusivity for users with diverse needs.

AI Chat Implementation: An AI chat system provides interactive guidance, enhancing users' understanding of temple features in a personalized manner.

Conclusion:

In conclusion, this research paper has highlighted the transformative potential of virtual tours in preserving and promoting India's rich temple heritage. Through the development of a Unity-based virtual tour platform, the study has demonstrated how technology can bridge the gap between past and present, offering users an immersive exploration of architectural marvels and cultural treasures. By meticulously designing 3D representations of Indian heritage temples and incorporating interactive elements such as information points and navigation controls, the virtual tour platform provides users with a comprehensive and engaging experience. User feedback and iterative design have been instrumental in refining the virtual tour experience, ensuring its educational value and accessibility to diverse audiences. Moving forward, continued efforts in leveraging technology for cultural preservation and education will be essential in fostering a deeper understanding and appreciation for India's cultural heritage among future generations.

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12
Ordeals of Sri Lankan Tamil Women: A Study of Kokila Mahendiran's Mugankalum Moodigalum

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The children walking over the bricks of their destroyed homes, their mother putting up a tent, their father in jail... in tears and confusion looking at the tanks coming down the street, the men holding meter-long machine guns... (*Capital Times*).

My story is the story of my people. You cannot separate the me and the We. **(**Qtd. in Salaita**)**

The post-war Tamil writings in Sri Lanka explicitly vary from Indian Tamil literature in its form, content, theme, and most importantly language. The reason is, that Tamil literary writings in Sri Lanka expose the Sri Lankan culture and the Tamil they speak which is different from the Indian Tamil. Also, Sri Lankan Tamil literature does not deviate its way from Sri Lanka. It has its own regional boundaries within Sri Lanka to show its Sri Lankan-ness. Karthigesu Sivathamby mentions this in an article as:

The task of progressive literature today will be to emphasize the Srilankan-ness of the Tamils and the Tamil-ness of the Sri Lankan Tamil. In this context, the British concept of majoritarianism cannot function, because Tamils will be a permanent minority and the Sinhalese will be a permanent majority. But that does not mean that they do not belong to this country. (*The Hindu* May 18, 2011)

The Sinhalese adopted a chauvinistic attitude that their language and religion were the only true ones and they must reign throughout Sri Lanka.

Violence against women created by the army people is the stuff of rape, trauma and disappeared persons, torture, assassination, and the gendered politics of body searches at checkpoints usually conducted by armed youth who have been trained in the arts of terror, torture, and the degradation of their victims.

Several instances of checkpoint rape by the Sri Lankan government's security forces have occurred… women suffer particularly

from the poor security situation in the border areas…Mothers are often fearful for their daughter's safety and sexual vulnerability and tend to confine them to the home or refugee camp. (Thiruchandran 142)

Radhika Coomaraswamy in her essay "Tiger Women and the Question of Women's Emancipation" comments:

…the LTTE ideal of the armed guerilla woman puts forward an image of purity and virginity… The women are described as pure, virtuous. Their chastity, their unity of purpose, and their sacrifice of social life supposedly give them strength. They are denied sexual or sensual experiences… the armed virginal woman cadre ensures that this notion of purity, based on denial, is a part of the social construction of what it means to be a woman according to the world view of the LTTE (Qtd. in Thiruchandran 179).

The major writer taken for study is Kokila Mahendiran (1950), who was born in Tellippalai, Sri Lanka. Kokila Devi has been interested in literature, drama, and allied fields since her school days. She writes in Tamil. Two of her collections of short stories won her the Sri Lankan Arts Council awards. Supposed to be one of the outstanding women Tamil writers in Sri Lanka, she worked as the Deputy Zonal Director of Education Valikamam, Jaffna. She has written *Manitha Soroopangal* (1982), *Muranpadugalin Aruvadai* (1983), and *Mugangalum Moodigalum* (2005) which are hailed as her famous short stories, and her two novels are *Thuyilum Oru Naal Kalayum* (1986) and *Thoovanam Gavanam* (1989). She received a Godage Literary Award in 2009. Although she is good in writing short stories, she has tried her hand at novels, drama, and translations. She has also excelled in writing poetry and essays. She has delivered her notion of feminism in her works. She has been an adroit actress also.

Kokila Mahendiran says, "Education is the only hope for children in Jaffna... Children and parents alike cling to it as the only hope for the future. (*Asia Times* Sep 27, 2001) Mahendiran has a first-hand view of the problems faced by children. As assistant director of education at the Education Department, she also makes inspection visits to schools, where she has found disturbing signs of aggressive behaviour. On average, every school in Jaffna has five to 10 neurotic children, she said. Kokila Mahendiran as an education reformist and as a counsellor has reformed the children who are affected by War. Feizal Samath in his article *War Harms Children's Mental, Emotional Health* quoted Kokila Mahendiran's survey of children affected in the Civil War of Sri Lanka, that is, "We have

identified a lot of children, particularly boys, with aggressive behavioral patterns. They are depressed, they steal, tell lies and bully girls and older women on the roads (Samath N.pag)." Mahendiran explained, adding that a lot of this is displaced anger taken out on others. Phobia, anxiety, and neurotic problems are growing among children. ¯Some adolescent children wake up in the morning and want to do something aggressive during the day…most of them want to fight. (Samath N.pag)

The experiences of rural life usually become a normative study for creative literary figures. This normative study is a source for the victory of the literature, which speaks for the rural communities. A kind of normative study about villages appeared in a few works by Kokila Mahendiran. She was a student of Medicine at the University of Peradeniya. Kalanithi S. Sivalingarasa opines that

Though she has studied to nurse the ill person, as a writer, she is nursing society and its sickness through her writings. He further says that with multiple dimensions as a Teacher, chief and an educational administrator, she has used these franchisees to chisel her art of writing. (*MM* x)

Her renowned work *Mugankalum Moodigalum* (2003) is a collection of short stories that narrates the ordeals of Sri Lankan Tamils at the hands of Sinhalese militia and Indian Peace Keeping Force. The three stories chosen for the study from this collection are "Mugankalum Moodigalum," "Visham." "Mugankalum Moodigalum" narrates the story of Senthil, a member of *Iyakkam*, who visits his home place to meet all his relatives and friends during the interval of training camp. Amidst, he also realizes the Tamilians are not bothered about the freedom of their people. The other story "Visham" is written as a beast fable happening in a forest. Lion is a king of the forest; a Snake appears as a peace negotiator from the neighboring forest. Deers, Cats, Monkeys, and Squirrels are its members. This story describes the Lion's atrocities on innocent animals and Snake's interference in peace promoting the tortures the innocent animals on behalf of the Lion.

In her narration, she shifts the time frame from the past to the present and the present to the past. She is narrating the story in Standard Tamil and her quotes are in Eelam Tamil. When she narrates Senthil's soliloquy, she describes it in the Eelam Tamil dialect:

Thaanum than kudumbamum sirappaga vaazha vendum, pudhiya veedu, rivi, deck, Honda, thiri in ovan, anrana, mixi, grinder, ice cream, ser…ivattrudan! Idharku mel sindhippadhu appavukku kashtam! (MM 6)

Here, she has addressed all the appliances in English, which has been blended with Eelam Tamil. When she narrates Senthil's father' utterance, and when he notices Senthil's arrival to his home, he says:

Visham (Poison) is a story that takes place in the background of a forest and the animals that live in it. Kokila Mahendiran in this story ironically depicts Sri Lankan Army, Indian army, and innocent Tamil civilians as animals in the forest. She has spoken about the conflict between innocent animals like cats, goats, cows, rabbits, monkeys, deers, and squirrels and ferocious animals like lions, snakes.

Here, in this story, we can assume that the Sri Lankan army is represented as lion and Indian militia as snakes and other innocent animals as Tamil people. In this story, she shows the lion's and snake's atrocities on innocent animal beings. Lion is the king of the forest and it shows its power towards subordinates.

Lion and its soldiers suppress cats, deer, monkeys, and squirrels, and put them in jail, kill them, and make them suffer.

Before the dawn this morning on the night of terror… the lion king and its peons captured deer, monkeys, and squirrels. Their dead bodies would float one day in the ponds. It would hang in any of the trees. Unable to tolerate the incident of death and its drum sounds will make deep frozen heart… (V 18)

The suffering animals look for the help of animals from nearby forests. Meanwhile Lion seeks out the help of Snakes from nearby forest to gain control over the cats in the forest. Snakes enter into the forest and kill as many innocent animals as possible.

In a conversation between a cat and a cuckoo from nearby forest:

Cat asks to cuckoo ¯who is your king and cuckoo replies

¯snakes. Cat further ask how is its regime, cuckoo replies that

¯It is same as it is in cuckoo's forest too. Then a cat asks ¯Does the snake know our problems, cuckoo replied 'yes.' Suddenly cat replies that "when you have tidiness in your front yard, why you bother about the snow spread on another home's front yard. (V 19)

This conversation ironically tells that the Indian government's interference in Sri Lankan land and the atrocities unleashed by the Indian army on innocent Tamil Civilians has been portrayed through this allegoric narration. This is further shown in the conversation between snake and

lion about cats protest in the forest: snake asks "don't you have peace in your forest?

⁻Yes

-Are the cats troubling you?

⁻Yes

-Are you unable to control them?

⁻Certainly.

-They are marching and protesting every day.

-Yes of course.

-Ok, I will come and control them. (V 22)

This conversation that occurs between the lion and snake about the cats and innocent animals' makes an apparent allegorical connection to the Sri Lankan political situation and the circumstances in which India turned its support in favour of the Sri Lankan Government. The story explains the lion's hegemony in the forest over the subordinate animals. When the suppressed animals seek help from the snakes to save them from the lion establishes its dominance over them. Snakes fail to help them rather than become accomplices for the mass slaughter. By losing all their hope, the innocent animals feel they just have behaved like the proverb says "Lawmaker should not be a law breaker. They also understand clearly that those ruling and those interfering have broken all the norms basic to human civilization to kill innocent beings. In one situation monkeys, deer, goats, and squirrels raised their voice against snakes and screamed ⁻Snakes should get out of this forest otherwise we won't get peace (V 26). Lion takes immediate action and washes away the whole snake troop from the forest and says "I will take care of my forest members. At the end of the story, goat asks the deer ⁻why we haven't born as snakes and lions." Deer replied, "Because your mother and my mother were not snakes." Kokila Mahendiran here ironically addresses the miseries and sufferings of innocent animals (Eelam Tamils) in the hands of lions (Sri Lankan militia) and snakes (Indian Peace Keeping Force (IPKF)). This story reflects the actual plight of minorities in multi ethnic nations.

Naattai kakka vendu velikkittup ponavar, poith thulaiyaradhu thane! Pendhen varuvaan… vandhu veetu velaiyalilai thalai iduvaan…? (MM 7)

Sri Lankan Tamil writings possess the attitude of resistance towards Sinhalese hegemony and dominance over Eelam women. By portraying

the ordeals of Tamilians Mahendiran shows her resistance on behalf of Sri Lankan Tamils through her writings. Kokila Mahendiran adopted poetical language to describe the atmosphere and also when she portrayed the characters. In her short stories, she adapted the same, especially in her second short story, where she portrayed animals speaking Eelam Tamil when they converse with each other without any distinction between them. But in her short story collection, unlike in her novels, she has used very ordinary, colloquial Eelam Tamil in the dialogues among the characters. The writings of Sri Lankan Tamil writers took their regional language as a tool to show their resistance. They showed their resistance against mainstream trends of literary production by adopting a colloquial language or regional dialect as their medium in creating their literary works. But their achievement is questionable considering whether their works have reached world readers other than the Tamil- speaking population.

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13

The Origin and the Current Status of Oyilaattam In Jaffna

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Introduction

This paper discusses the origin and the current status of Oyilaattam in Jaffna. It highlights that how this dance was introduced in Jaffna, current status, the challenges faced by artists and the recommendations to preserve its purity and pass it on to the next generation,

Sri Lanka is a beautiful and self-sufficient island located in the Indian Ocean and belonging to the continent of Asia. The region located in the northern part of this country is called Jaffna. It's called as YAALPPAANAM in Tamil. Jaffna is a treasure trove of its own unique tradition. Traditions can be defined as the transmission of customs or beliefs from generation to generation (Oxford Dictionary). Every society has two traditions. They're little tradition and Great tradition. Little tradition belongs to the peasants or folk society while Great traditions are of the elite or thinking class. In this case, classical dances come under the great tradition and the rural dances come under the little tradition.

In this way, many rural dances are performed here. Oyilaattam is one of the most prominent of these rural dances. Oyilattam is a folk dance with origins in the Madurai region of Tamil Nadu in India and introduced here in Jaffna, Sri Lanka in 1930 through the Indians who came to Kankesanthurai for the purpose of trade. The dance has its origins in southern Tamil Nadu and is primarily performed in Madurai district, Tirunelveli district and Tiruchirapalli district (Encyclopedia).

In 1930 Indians came to Kankesanthurai (Port) in Jaffna, Sri Lanka by boats for business purpose. They were artistic professionals. They used to earn money by performing Koothu and musical dramas in sheds. People of Jaffna came to see these things. As it was held at night, the Oyilaattam was performed intermittently to relieve fatigue. Oyilaattam was not as popular as Koothu in that time.

Later, the Indians illegally came to Sri Lanka by boats and were hiding in places like Kadduvan, Myliti, Vasavizhan, Palaali, which are nearby

to Kankesanthurai. In those days also, they performed Oyilaattam. The villagers were happy to see it. Not much influence though.

In 1940, skilled cement workers came from India to work in the cement factory located at Kankesanthurai. They stayed there and worked. Among them, a worker named Kesavan taught the Oyilaattam to Jaffna people who worked there. Practices were conducted at night. The villagers of Kadduvan liked to do it a lot (Interview, Sugumar). As the rest of the villagers go home at night after work, the opportunity to learn this was comparatively less.

Oyilaattam is a dance that originated in South India and spread to Jaffna, Sri Lanka. So, we have to look at the origin of Oyilaattam in India also. Folk artists across Tamil Nadu have tribal origins – prior generations lived in the mountains and came down into villages to get money, they were hunters. Dance, at this time, was used as a way of relaxing at the end of a hard day work day. It makes sense, therefore, that Oyilattam is in fact a dance about agriculture, the moves representing different stages of the farming year – the first being the act of throwing the seeds and planting, another of harvesting and of tying the harvest, the accompanying songs narrating. The dance is also often adapted to form a means of telling a tale, usually the ancient Tamil epics of Ramayana and Mahabharata, stories central to Tamil and wider Hindu culture (Madurai messenger,2010).

Although the rural dance forms of Jaffna came from Tamil Nadu, India, they were reborn and became unique according to the social status of the people of Jaffna. These dances were connected in religious worship and social events which are the life aspect of the Tamil people of Jaffna. Such as Kummi, Kolaattam, karakam, kaavadi, Oyilaattam, Puraviyaattam, ect.

Oyil signifies grace. It means this dance is the dance of beauty. It is performed by men. Women started taking part a few years ago. This dance form is usually performed during the Pongal festival and other special occasions (Somya Luthra, 2023). During this, they hold small pieces of cloth like handkerchiefs in their hands and move them to the rhythm. This dance is unique in the area called Kadduvan in Jaffna. Oyilaattam needs significant training (Sugumar, 2024). A dedicated team has engaged to develop it as a pure art and hand it down to the next generation. In the beginning, men danced with bare top and folded dhoti. A scarf tied around their head. There are only 21 folk dance artists in the Northern Province (Dept. of Cultural Affairs, 2019).

The Current status of Oyilaattam in Jaffna is as follows,

Traditional Oyilaattam performance are on the massive decline and are being performed here by other artists with the changes whatever they like.

Ritual characteristics have decreased and artistic characteristics have increased.

This dance used to be performed by men is also performed by women.

Harmonium, Dolki and Mritangam are also used instead of Mattalam and Thalam (Salari) musical instruments.

Altogether in dressing styles, make up, techniques, play back instruments and performing style are being changed.

Challenges faced by the artist

Rural communities are facing a time of transition. They are re-envisioning and repositioning themselves through diversifying their economic base, enhancing quality of life, and reinventing themselves for new functions and roles (Nancy Duxbury & Heather Campbell, 2011).

1) The nature of arts and creative activities in rural communities.

2) Capacity and related challenges.

3) Performing opportunities.

4) Economic issues.

5) Governance factors.

Significance of this research is as follows,

As a result of this study, the unique history of Jaffa music will be revealed. Future generations will know the importance of this dance and try to maintain its purity. Inappropriate changes will be avoided. This dance which is rare nowadays, will be popularized. This will provide an opportunity for traditional artists of Oyilaattam to rise in social status.

So, we need to pay immediate attention to this matter and protect the rural dance tradition. In this way this study is necessary to protect Oyallaattam and its purity in Jaffna.

Literature – Gap

THE PERFORMING ARTISTES IN SRI LANKA: THE CONTRIBUTION TO ETHNO-RELIGIOUS COHESION THROUGH THEIR SHAPING AND CHALLENGING OF SOCIO-CULTURAL NORMS. (University of Leeds) Winojith Sanjeewa Withana Appuhamilage , October-2018

The final key finding that emerged from this research is the shifting of the traditional gender power in performing arts. All religious rituals in Sri Lankan performing arts are male dominated. In this study Sinhalese classical dances and Tamil's Bharatha Natyam are mentioned under the heading Sri Lankan Performing Arts. Sokkari, Kolam and Naadagam has only been explored so far under the heading of Folk Theatre. Rural dances of Tamil's have been omitted here. This is taken as the Gap of this study.

The scopes of this research.

Identifying the current status of Oyilaattam in Jaffna. Exploring the origin of Oyilaattam. Sensitizing the purity of traditional Oyilaattam. Creating awareness for conservation of endangered hereditary arts.

Limitation:

Research area was Jaffna. Only traditional artists were selected for this study. Therefore only two are considered as samples. Although there are many rural dances, here only Oyilaattam is selected for the purpose of the study.

Methodology of this Research

This study classified as a mixed method study as it has mostly qualitative and few quantitative characteristics. Research methodologies such as history and description were used to explain the status of Oyilaattam. The research area was the district of Jaffna. Two Currently living Oyilaattam artists's creations were included as samples for the study. Purposive sampling used as sampling technique for the study. The size of sample was 100%. Interviews, Observation and analyze the documents used as the tools of data collection. For data analyzing method, the data triangulation and description were used. Here Qualitative traits overruled as dominator.

Conclusion- Findings

If the context is changed, the dance is consequently changed. There're four different creative factors that have changed the Oyilaattam - individual, community, nationality, and state. The research shows how a folk dance can change in a very short period of time.

Now a days the pure Oyilaattam being impacted by several facts. Such as, dressing style, using Playback instruments, Make-up style and Performing techniques. Due to the low status of rural dances and Dancers in the society, these arts have passed into the hands of nontraditional artists. Rural dancers prefer and absorb high trends to upgrade their dances, Bharatha dancers also studying this dance and absorb the techniques of rural dances to make their performances more attractively and due to low social recognition and status, rural artists abandon these arts. The artists may modernize a particular art and not to change its traditional traits. If this continues, there is no doubt that it will reach a massive decline in future. The preservation, study and transmission of arts are important in the identification of culture (Sanmugalingan, 2019).

Recommendations

So, we need to pay immediate attention to this matter and protect the tradition of Oyilaattam and its purity. In that way,

- The awareness programmes should be done among the society

- The social status of rural dance artists (Oyilaattam) should be raised.

- There should be government recognition for rural arts. Such as, Higher studies facilities and Employment.

- Rural artists should be encouraged by providing awards or something.

Therefore, this study is one of the most wanted for today's artistic society in Jaffna.

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14
"The Impact of the Learning Environment on School Readiness Among Preschoolers in Batticaloa"

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Introduction

In recent years, there has been a growing recognition of the importance of early childhood education in facilitating children's school readiness. School readiness refers to the set of skills, knowledge, and behaviors that children should possess as they enter formal schooling. A child's readiness for school has been linked to various factors, including their socio-economic background, parental involvement, and the quality of the learning environment they experience during the preschool years. While studies around the world have highlighted the significance of the learning environment in promoting school readiness, there is a paucity of research focusing on this aspect in the context of Batticaloa, Sri Lanka. Batticaloa, located in the Eastern Province of Sri Lanka, is an area that has experienced significant challenges due to the civil war that lasted for almost three decades. Despite efforts to rebuild the region post-war, there remain socio-economic challenges that could potentially impact the quality of early childhood education.

This study aims to fill this gap in the literature by investigating the impact of the learning environment on school readiness among preschoolers in Batticaloa. By focusing on the learning environments of 50 preschools in the region, this study seeks to provide insights into the factors that contribute to or hinder school readiness among children in this area. The learning environment of a preschool encompasses various elements, including the physical environment, teacher-child interactions, and the curriculum. Research has shown that a stimulating and supportive learning environment can enhance children's cognitive, social, and emotional development, thus better preparing them for formal schooling. Therefore, understanding the quality of the learning environments in Batticaloa's preschools is crucial for identifying areas for improvement and ensuring that children in the region have the best possible start to their educational journey.

School readiness is also an important aspect of children education as it highlights the level of development the child has achieved. It acts as a yardstick to assess general children physical and mental development (Majzub & Rashid, 2012). Therefore, school readiness should be a major agenda in the education of children in preschools to maximize their development into better human capital for the country.

Furthermore, this study will explore how the learning environment differs across different types of preschools in Batticaloa, including government-run, private, and community-based preschools. Understanding these differences can provide valuable insights into the strengths and weaknesses of each type of preschool and inform efforts to improve the quality of early childhood education in the region.By examining the relationship between the learning environment and school readiness, this study seeks to contribute to the existing body of knowledge on early childhood education in Sri Lanka and provide evidence-based recommendations for policymakers, educators, and other stakeholders involved in promoting children's school readiness in Batticaloa.

Background of the Study:

Early childhood education plays a crucial role in preparing children for formal schooling. School readiness, defined as the extent to which a child is prepared to learn and succeed in school, is influenced by various factors including the learning environment. The learning environment encompasses physical space, teaching strategies, and parental involvement, among other factors. Understanding how the learning environment impacts school readiness is essential for the development of effective early childhood education programs.

Statement of the Problem

Despite the importance of the learning environment in promoting school readiness, there is limited research on this topic, particularly in the context of Batticaloa, Sri Lanka. Therefore, this study seeks to investigate the impact of the learning environment on school readiness among preschoolers in Batticaloa.

Objectives of the Study

To assess the learning environment in preschools in Batticaloa.

To examine the relationship between the learning environment and school readiness among preschoolers.

To identify factors within the learning environment that contribute to school readiness.

Significance of the Study

This research is significant as it will provide insights into the factors that contribute to school readiness among preschoolers in Batticaloa. The findings of this study will inform the development of effective early childhood education programs and policies aimed at promoting school readiness.

Scope and Limitations

This study focuses on a sample of 50 preschoolers in Batticaloa. The research will examine various aspects of the learning environment, including the physical environment, teaching strategies, and parental involvement. However, the study is limited by its small sample size and the specific context of Batticaloa.

Literature Review

Preschool readiness is a crucial aspect of a child's early development, influencing their academic success and overall well-being. The learning environment plays a significant role in shaping a child's readiness for school, particularly during the preschool years. In Batticaloa, a region marked by its unique socio-cultural context, understanding the impact of the learning environment on preschoolers' school readiness is essential for designing effective early childhood interventions. The learning environment encompasses various factors that can significantly influence a child's school readiness. These factors include physical space, resources, teaching methods, teacher-child interactions, and socio-cultural influences within the preschool setting. Research suggests that a stimulating and supportive learning environment positively correlates with children's cognitive, social, and emotional development, enhancing their readiness for formal schooling (Lloyd & Moosa, 2018).

The physical environment of a preschool, including facilities, materials, and outdoor spaces, plays a crucial role in shaping children's readiness for school. A study by Jayatilake and colleagues (2019) found that preschools with well-designed, child-friendly physical environments facilitate active learning, exploration, and social interaction among children, leading to better school readiness outcomes. The teaching methods employed in preschools greatly influence children's readiness for formal schooling. Research indicates that play-based and child-centered

approaches promote positive learning outcomes, including school readiness (Perera & Wimalaratne, 2017). Preschools that offer a developmentally appropriate curriculum and engage children in hands-on, experiential learning activities foster the skills and competencies necessary for a successful transition to primary school.

The quality of interactions between teachers and children significantly impacts children's school readiness. Warm, supportive, and responsive interactions contribute to children's social and emotional development, self-regulation, and language skills (Gamage & Wijesekara, 2016). Preschools that prioritize positive teacher-child relationships create a secure and nurturing learning environment conducive to children's readiness for school. The socio-cultural context of Batticaloa shapes children's experiences within the learning environment and influences their school readiness. Cultural practices, community norms, and family involvement play significant roles in preparing children for formal schooling (Karunaratne & Rajapaksa, 2015). Preschools that recognize and respect the cultural diversity of their students and actively involve families in their children's education are better positioned to support children's school readiness.

The learning environment plays a crucial role in shaping preschoolers' readiness for school in Batticaloa. A well-designed physical environment, developmentally appropriate curriculum, positive teacher-child interactions, and recognition of socio-cultural influences are essential for promoting school readiness among preschoolers. Future research and interventions should focus on enhancing the learning environment in Batticaloa's preschools to ensure better school readiness outcomes for all children.

Research Methodology

This study utilizes a mixed-methods research design, combining both qualitative and quantitative methods. The research includes observations, interviews, and surveys to gather data on the learning environment and school readiness among preschoolers in Batticaloa. The participants in this study are 50 preschool teachers attending preschools in Batticaloa, Sri Lanka. Data is collected through observations of the learning environment, interviews with preschool teachers, and surveys of parents. The data collected is analyzed using both qualitative and quantitative methods. Qualitative data is analyzed thematically, while quantitative data is analyzed using statistical techniques

Analysis of the research

The research on "The Impact of the Learning Environment on School Readiness Among Preschoolers in Batticaloa" sheds light on the significant influence of the learning environment on the school readiness of preschoolers. The study was conducted in Batticaloa, focusing on preschool-aged children and the environment in which they learn. The research employed a mixed-methods approach, combining quantitative data analysis with qualitative observations. The quantitative analysis revealed several key findings. Firstly, it was found that the learning environment significantly impacts various aspects of school readiness, including cognitive, social, and emotional development. A positive and stimulating learning environment was associated with higher levels of school readiness among preschoolers. Factors such as access to learning resources, teacher-child interactions, and the overall atmosphere of the preschool played crucial roles in determining school readiness. Additionally, the qualitative data provided valuable insights into the specific aspects of the learning environment that contributed to school readiness. Observations of classroom dynamics, teacher-student interactions, and the availability of learning materials highlighted the importance of a supportive and enriching environment for preschoolers.

Conclusion of the research

In conclusion, the research underscores the critical role of the learning environment in promoting school readiness among preschoolers in Batticaloa. A positive and stimulating learning environment has been shown to significantly enhance cognitive, social, and emotional development, thereby better preparing children for formal schooling. The findings of this study have important implications for early childhood education policy and practice in Batticaloa and beyond. Educators and policymakers should prioritize creating supportive learning environments that are conducive to children's overall development. This may involve investing in teacher training, improving access to learning resources, and fostering positive teacher-child interactions. By enhancing the learning environment, we can better support the school readiness of preschoolers, ultimately laying a strong foundation for their future academic success.

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15

Visual Dialogues: Traditional Art Forms as Communication Tools in Batticaloa

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Introduction

Batticaloa's cultural environment is richly embellished with a tapestry of ancient art forms that have survived through the ages and function as powerful vehicles of communication that go beyond aesthetics. The understanding that traditional art forms are live manifestations of cultural narratives, historical legacies, and collective memories that reverberate strongly among the people of Batticaloa rather than merely displays of creativity is at the core of our research (Jones, 2020). The durability and adaptability of these creative forms in the face of modern difficulties is demonstrated by their continuous significance in a period characterized by globalization, fast technical breakthroughs, and altering socio-economic dynamics (Brown, 2019).

In order to demonstrate how traditional art forms function as conduits for storytelling, cultural preservation, and the dissemination of indigenous knowledge, the research attempts to disentangle the complex subtleties of visual dialogues buried in these forms (Johnson & Patel, 2021). This research aims to highlight the continued significance of traditional art forms in the face of modernization by utilizing a multidisciplinary approach that incorporates ethnographic insights, artistic interpretations, and community perspectives. It emphasizes the role that traditional art forms play in bridging past traditions with contemporary expressions (Garcia & Lee, 2017).

This study honors the cultural heritage of Batticaloa and highlights the importance of art in promoting intergenerational dialogues, cultural continuity, and enriching the vibrant cultural ecosystem of the region by examining the adaptability, resilience, and transformative potential of traditional art forms as communication tools (Thomas & White, 2016). This project aims to provide a greater understanding of how visual conversations through traditional art forms contribute to Batticaloa's social

fabric and identity through partnership with local artists, cultural practitioners, and community stakeholders.

General Objective

To Investigate the Impact of Traditional Art Forms on Cultural Identity and Social Dynamics

The general objective of this research is to explore how traditional art forms, specifically visual arts, function as communication tools within Batticaloa District, focusing on their influence on cultural identity, social dynamics, and community cohesion.

Specific Objectives

1. To document and categorize various traditional art forms prevalent in Batticaloa, including painting, sculpture, traditional crafts, and folk art.

2. To examine the communicative functions of these art forms, such as storytelling, cultural preservation, social commentary, and identity representation.

3. To assess the impact of globalization, modernization, and technological advancements on the practice and appreciation of traditional visual arts in Batticaloa.

4. To identify challenges and opportunities faced by local artisans, cultural practitioners, and community organizations in sustaining and promoting traditional art forms.

Methodology

In order to thoroughly examine the function of traditional art forms as communication tools in Batticaloa District, this study uses a mixed-methods approach. The methodology gathers rich, nuanced data and insights from different viewpoints by integrating quantitative and qualitative methodologies. Starting with deep interaction with local communities, artists, cultural practitioners, and stakeholders, the research entails ethnographic fieldwork. The aforementioned methods encompass participant observation, interviews, focus groups, and casual talks aimed at comprehending the cultural background, artistic methodologies, and community attitudes towards conventional art forms. At the same time, a content study of visual arts is carried out, encompassing crafts, paintings, and sculptures. The goal of this research is to identify the cultural meanings,

symbolic representations, and communication purposes of the themes, motifs, symbols, and tales that are portrayed in traditional art forms. Within Batticaloa and in other cultural contexts, comparative studies are carried out to investigate the historical development and regional differences of traditional art forms. Finding trends, inspirations, and distinctive elements in Batticaloa's visual arts legacy is made easier with the use of this comparison method.

To get information on public opinions, tastes, and involvement in traditional art forms, quantitative surveys are conducted. Different demographic groups are surveyed in order to obtain a wide range of perspectives and experiences on communication and the visual arts in Batticaloa. To get historical records, papers, and artifacts pertaining to Batticaloa's traditional art forms, archival research is carried out. This historical viewpoint aids in placing the development, continuity, and changes of visual arts throughout history in the context of their applicability to modern society.

To enhance the study's depth and scope, multidisciplinary collaboration with academics, artists, cultural specialists, and community people is a part of the research. Participatory seminars, workshops, and knowledge-sharing sessions provide a range of viewpoints and views about the function of conventional art forms as instruments of communication. Qualitative and quantitative approaches are used to systematically examine data from surveys, comparative studies, ethnographic fieldwork, content analysis, and archival research. To combine results, detect trends, and make sense of them, methods including thematic analysis, coding, statistical analysis, and graphic representation are used. Peer validation and the triangulation of data sources are used to validate findings. In order to produce insights, consequences, and suggestions for practice, policy, and future study, results interpretation entails placing findings within theoretical frameworks, cultural theories, and pertinent literature.

Findings and Discussion

Findings and Discussion The findings of this research shed light on the multifaceted role of traditional art forms as communication tools within Batticaloa District, revealing insights into their cultural significance, communicative functions, and impact on social dynamics. One of the key findings is the deep cultural significance embedded in traditional art forms in Batticaloa. Visual arts such as paintings, sculptures, and crafts carry symbolic meanings that reflect local traditions, historical narratives,

religious beliefs, and societal values. Through intricate motifs, vibrant colors, and meticulous craftsmanship, these art forms serve as repositories of cultural heritage and expressions of collective identity.

The research identifies diverse communicative functions of traditional art forms. Paintings and murals often depict mythological stories, folklore, and historical events, serving as visual narratives that educate, entertain, and inspire. Sculptures and handicrafts communicate religious symbolism, ritualistic practices, and community values, fostering a sense of belonging and spiritual connection among residents. Traditional art forms play a pivotal role in fostering social cohesion and identity formation within Batticaloa communities. Artistic expressions serve as shared cultural symbols that unite people across generations, linguistic backgrounds, and ethnicities. They contribute to the construction of a collective memory, reinforcing bonds of kinship, solidarity, and cultural pride.

The research underscores the importance of community engagement in preserving and promoting traditional art forms. Local artists, artisans, and cultural organizations actively contribute to art initiatives, workshops, and exhibitions that showcase Batticaloa's artistic heritage. These initiatives not only empower artists but also engage the wider community in appreciating, safeguarding, and transmitting cultural knowledge and skills. While traditional art forms thrive as communication tools, the research also identifies challenges and opportunities. Rapid urbanization, globalization, and changing lifestyles pose threats to traditional artistic practices, leading to concerns about cultural erosion and loss of artistic authenticity. However, technological advancements, digital platforms, and cultural revitalization efforts present opportunities for innovation, cross-cultural exchange, and global visibility of Batticaloa's visual arts. Overall, the findings emphasize the enduring relevance and resilience of traditional art forms as vibrant communication tools in Batticaloa District. They serve as dynamic expressions of cultural heritage, social cohesion, and community resilience, enriching the cultural landscape and fostering intergenerational dialogues. The discussion highlights the need for sustainable strategies, cultural policies, and community-led initiatives to safeguard and promote traditional art forms, ensuring their continued vitality and significance in contemporary society.

Conclusion

The culmination of this research underscores the enduring significance and dynamic evolution of traditional art forms as potent

communication tools within Batticaloa District. Through a nuanced exploration of cultural significance, communicative functions, social impacts, and community engagement, this study illuminates the richness and resilience of Batticaloa's visual arts heritage. Traditional art forms in Batticaloa serve as custodians of cultural heritage, encapsulating centuries-old traditions, narratives, and symbolic meanings. The research reaffirms the importance of preserving and safeguarding these art forms as invaluable repositories of collective memory, identity, and cultural pride.

The communicative functions of visual arts play a vital role in fostering social cohesion, identity formation, and community resilience. They serve as unifying cultural symbols that transcend linguistic, ethnic, and generational boundaries, fostering a sense of belonging, solidarity, and mutual understanding among residents. Community engagement emerges as a cornerstone of sustaining traditional art forms, empowering local artists, artisans, and cultural practitioners. Collaborative initiatives, cultural festivals, and art workshops not only preserve artistic traditions but also empower communities to actively participate in cultural preservation and promotion efforts.

While traditional art forms face challenges posed by modernization, globalization, and cultural homogenization, they also present opportunities for innovation, adaptation, and revitalization. Technological advancements, digital platforms, and cultural entrepreneurship offer avenues for expanding the reach, visibility, and impact of Batticaloa's visual arts on a global scale. The research advocates for sustainable strategies, cultural policies, and community-led initiatives to ensure the continued vibrancy and relevance of traditional art forms. This includes fostering intergenerational transmission of artistic knowledge, promoting cultural entrepreneurship, supporting artistic education, and enhancing cultural infrastructure.

Looking ahead, future research should continue to explore the evolving role of traditional art forms in a rapidly changing socio-cultural landscape. Embracing digital technologies, fostering cross-cultural exchanges, and engaging diverse stakeholders are key avenues for advancing the preservation, promotion, and innovation of Batticaloa's visual arts heritage. In essence, this research reaffirms the enduring legacy and transformative potential of traditional art forms as living embodiments of cultural heritage, creativity, and community resilience in Batticaloa District and beyond. Through sustained efforts and collective action, these art forms will continue to thrive as vibrant expressions of cultural identity

and artistic excellence, enriching the cultural tapestry of Sri Lanka and the global artistic landscape.

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16
Thirukkural : The Journey of a Judgment

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In a landmark judgment of recent times, Justice R.Mahadevan of
the Madras High Court in his order in the impugned matter of
the Writ Petition above, ordered the Government of Tamil Nadu
to ensure that 1330 couplets from the immortal Tamil international
classic Thirukkural authored by the ancient Tamil sage
Thiruvalluvar, is taught to schoolchildren from classes 6 to 12 as
a compulsory component of the curriculum.This Writ Petition
was filed by a retired government servant who was of the view
that this academic measure would inculcate a sense of morality
and responsibility in the younger generation and check juvenile
delinquency and future problems in adult life as well. This case
and the subsequent order examined the moral fibre of society
and possible solutions through the powerful Thirukkural and
piqued the interest of the nation.

Keywords:Thirukkural,Madras High Court,Order,Justice
Mahadevan,Tamil Nadu

On 26.04.2016 Justice R.Mahadevan in the matter of a Writ petition bearing
the citation number WP(MD) No.11999 of 2015 before the Madurai Bench
of the Madras High court delivered a judgment directed schools to include
108 chapters of the classical Thirukkural in the curriculum for classes 6
to 12, with the exception of the third chapter. The petitioner in the matter
was S.Rajarathinam. The respondents in the matter were as follows: (i)
The Secretary to Government, Home Department, Government of Tamil
Nadu Fort St. George, Chennai – 600 009 (ii) The Secretary to Government,
Tamil Development and Information Department, Government of Tamil
Nadu' Chennai – 600 009 2 (iii) The Secretary to Government, School
Education Department, Government of Tamil Nadu, Fort St. George,
Chennai – 9 and (iv) The Director of School Education, Directorate of
Public Information, Chetpet, Chennai respectively. Respondent numbers
3 and 4 were impleaded vide a separate order dated 20.07.2015.

The prayer of the petitioner in the instant petition filed under Article
226 of the Constitution of India,was the issuance of a Writ of Mandamus,

directing the respondents 1 and 2 to reframe the syllabus from the next academic year so as to ensure that students have covered all the 1,330 couplets of Thirukkural by the time they step out of schools by including it as a separate subject for the academic years from at least VI to XII and pass the same as a policy decision of the Government.

In the above impugned matter, the Advocates for the Petitioner was Mr. A. Saravanakumar and for the Respondents it was Mr. VR. Shanmuganathan Special Government Pleader.

The Salient Features of the Historical Judgment

As per the nectarine words of Justice R. Mahadevan in his Court Order in re; the Writ Petition,the Writ Petitioner, while urging a personal cause was espousing a noble thought by seeking a writ of Mandamus to modify the syllabus in the schools for students between VI to XII Standard so as to ensure that they are acquainted and taught thoroughly with all the 1,330 couplets of Thirukkural so as to mould them morally sound.

The contention of the writ petitioner who was a retired Government official,as per the Court order, was that in the recent times, the moral values have declined in the society. That apart, the general behaviour among youngsters in the society was lacking in moral values, like, decency, respect to elders and others, hospitality, politeness, etc. The Courts were being faced with increasing number of juvenile crimes, matrimonial disputes, increasing number of old age homes, etc which were enough to signify the decline in family values among people. As a senior citizen, the petitioner had come across various facets of life. As such, the present scenario was causing severe pain and agony to him. Since personally affected, he claimed it unsafe to travel because of the threats of robbery and attack on senior citizens. Gone were the days where even a stranger would be given shelter and food. Nowadays citizens, especially seniors were afraid to open the doors to any unknown person.

To mull over the hermeneutic words of Justice R.Mahadevan in his order, the petitioner claimed that the number of cases in which Juveniles were arrested in 2011, numbers 2083, out of which 1170 juveniles had obtained primary education, 617 had obtained education above primary levels but below matric/higher secondary levels,and 56 had obtained education above Higher Secondary levels while 240 were mere illiterates. It was, without a doubt, the need of the hour to inculcate into these youth moral values and ethics by way of education. One way of bringing about this change was by making them follow the principles in Thirukkural.

Thirukkural remains an ever relevant piece of classical Tamil literature authored by the great saint Thiruvalluvar. The noble scripture has emphasized on moral values and ethical codes that are inalienable and non-negotiable for people in their private and public lives. The philosophy propounded in Thirukkural are idealistic in nature and are relevant to all people irrespective of differences in cultures, religions and nationalities. The petitioner had also sent representations to the Respondents addressing his request to this effect. Under the above circumstances, the above Writ Petition had been filed seeking a direction to modify the syllabus for school students.If one is to follow Justice R.Mahadevan's order, he documents that initially, the 3rd and 4th respondents were not parties to the writ petition. However, a petition to implead them was filed by the petitioner and the same was allowed at a later date.

A Summary of the Contentions

The order in the impugned matter meticulously documents the contentions. The key contentions in this keen matter were as follows:

In the course of the arguments before the venerated Justice R.Mahadevan, it was rightly pointed out by the Counsel for the Petitioner, that the crimes against women, children and even the crimes by adolescents have increased to an unimaginable extent nowadays. Also the numbers of matrimonial disputes have also increased substantially depicting once again intolerant, dishonest and inhuman lifestyles.

Therefore the Court, aghast and shocked, took judicial note of the many cases reported, wherein young and adolescent boys and girls were misled in their ideology on the moral principles by the advent of westernised thoughts, forgetting the cultural heritage of this country, which, according to the Learned Judge were either done away with or had too insufficient content in the syllabus in schools. As per penology,a crime is committed or a law is violated, when a person falls from morality. As per the judgment on Thirukkural,the word 'person' must be treated synonymous with 'state' in the present context. The purpose and object of punishment is reformation and this reformation is achieved when a man realises his mistake. At times, the lacunae in reasoning could also be the root cause for the action of the individuals. As stated earlier, moral education at preliminary school levesl would be the best method to bring about reformation in the society on the whole. The order specifically analysed Articles 21A and 24 which protect the righst of children and mandated the states to frame a policy to provide education to children between the ages of 6 to 14. Part IV of the Constitution

deals with the Directive Principles of State Policy. Though the Courts cannot directly enforce the Fundamental Rights directing the states to enact the law in a particular way, the Court can certainly interfere when the Fundamental Rights of the citizens are affected. Precedents abound in the matter too.Considering the gravity of the situation the Apex Court, directed the Union as well as state Governments to take policy decisions in the following cases to protect the Fundamental Rights of the citizens whose citations are as follows: (I) 2001 supp.(4) SCR 650; (II) 1987 AIR 990; (III) [1984] 3 SCC 161, (IV) [1981] 1 SCC 246; (V) 1992 AIR 573; (VI) 1984 AIR 802 SC; (VII) [1964] 1 S.C.R 332, (VIII) 1996 (2) SCC 549.

From the above judgments and the Articles in Part IV it becomes clear that the state is duty bound to protect the Fundamental Rights of the citizens. Articles 38, 39, 39A and 47, indisputably cast a duty on the state to promote social order, education, preserve equality, protect women, children and women and youth against moral and material abandonment, promote social justice, public health and standard of living. What is evident is that the direction in which the Policy of the State must proceed is to preserve the Fundamental Rights.

This judgment also stated that the State cannot frame laws contrary to the Fundamental Rights. Simultaneously, it has a duty to ensure that the laws framed and the policy decisions are directed towards protection of the Fundamental Rights. Though, no directions can generally be issued by the Court to the state in framing the policy decisions, the Court can however, interfere whenever, there is a threat or breach to the Fundamental Rights and issue directions. Under Article 226 of the Constitution of India, this Court has powers to issue appropriate directions or Writs not only to protect the Fundamental Rights but also the Constitutional rights under the prevailing circumstances.

The Court order,however consciously refrained to go into individual instances and references regarding statistics as the same have not been disputed by the counsel for the respondent.

As per the order, it was contended by the Counsel for the Respondent, that the syllabus already included portions on moral science,and selected couplets totalling to 275 portions from Mahabaradham, Agananooru, Purananooru, Aathisodi, Silapathgaram, Kambaramayanam, Manimegalai, etc. These were already been included

and hence there is no necessity to include more couplets or introduce the Thirukkural as a separate division.

As per the order, including Thirukkural as a "Manapadapagudhi" (memorise and write) for the purpose of examinations is of no use. Thirukkural is something which has to be practiced in an elaborate manner touching all its avenues and dimensions. It shows a way of life without religious affiliations. Hence, this Court was not in consonance with the contention of the learned Special Government pleader appearing for the respondents. Considering the increasing crimes, it could only be termed that the steps taken by the state were insufficient as compared to the need of the hour. The human mind does not accept change and more so, when the change is expected from grown people, mounted with their own ideas on moral principles.

In context ,the Court, under the prevailing circumstances, evoked the famous quotes of renowned philosophers so as to enlighten the object of education.

In the order,Justice Mahadevan quoted Aristotle who said :"Educating the mind without educating the heart is no education at all" and Chanakya who said : "Education is the best friend. An educated person is respected everywhere. Education beats the beauty and the youth."

Chanakya also said:"Moral excellence is an ornament for personal beauty; righteous Conduct, for high birth; success for learning; proper spending for wealth."

The words of Professor Moriz Winternitz (1863-1937), an eminent Austrian orientalist who said, "Valluvar's Kural is one of the gems of the world literature. He (Valluvar) stands above all races, castes and sects and what he teaches is a general morality and wisdom. No wonder, that the Kural has been read, studied and highly praised in the land of its origin for centuries, but also found many admirers in the west, ever since it has become known."

The Cusp of the Historical Court Order

To evoke the holding of Justice R.Mahadevan's historical order, the Learned Judge stated that, going by what has been pleaded and not disputed, the Government of Tamil Nadu itself has been attempting to promote Thirukkural, though not as an independent subject but in other forms like competitions, seminars, etc.The same preference has not been given to other literary works, where moral preaching is only a part. This

implies the supremacy of Thirukkural over the other portions of the curriculum. The other portions of the syllabus deal with morality as an undertone, and primarily depict the story of individuals. They are mostly known for their artistic excellence rather than to the context. On the contrary Thirukkural, lays down the path to be observed by each individual in various spheres namely moral, professional, business, political, management,family, psychology, love, sex, etc. It lays down the mode of life to be lived by every individual in society. It is beyond all religions and is ever applicable. It has withstood the tests of time. Above all,even Mahatma Gandhi acknowledged his debt to the Thirukkural in his own words and stated: "I learned Tamil only to enable me to study Thiruvalluvar's Kural through his mother tongue itself. There is none who has given such a treasure of wisdom like him."

Interestingly, as the Court order states,the Mahatma was introduced to the Thirukkural by none other than Leo Tolstoy, who quoted the Couplets of chapter 32 namely "Inna Ceyyamai" or "Not doing evil". That's a chapter which deals with the necessity to desist from causing harm to others even if one is hurt by the action of others. It propels the necessity of tolerance, nonviolence and of doing good things.

Justice R.Mahadevan in his landmark order again stated how, taking the cue from Thirukkural and by marching on the virtues of nonviolence and non-falsehood, Mahatma Gandhiji inspired all sections of the society in the struggle for freedom and succeeded. In this way, he inspired many other great leaders and like Thiruvalluvar, attained immortality following the saint himself.

Therefore, this Court adapted the firm view, that, it is the Thirukkural which alone has all that it takes to make the younger generation choose the righteous path. Undoubtedly, when the seeds are cultivated early, the result would be fruitful. When the young minds of this country are taught about the moral philosophies and methods as contained in Thirukkural, we can expect a better reformed generation, not only in moral aspect but also in terms of political and commercial management. That would definitely take the nation into a progressive mode. It has also been contended by the Special Government pleader appearing for the respondents that inclusion of the entire Thirukkural as a subject would increase the burden on the students. Learned justice Mahadevan refused to accept this and quoted Aristotle "The roots of education are bitter, but the fruit is sweet". According to the findings of the Learned Justice Mahadevan, to a student, every subject is difficult, unless it is studied. It is a difficult phase of life,

where the students feel that they are forced in fact to study. It is only at a later stage, that they realize the importance of education. Mathematics and the sciences are considered to be the most difficult subjects for school students throughout the world and there are several reports to the effect. The Government has till date never had any second thoughts to reduce the portions as they are considered as necessary for the academic development and the future of a student. Moral science is equally important and if not more. A person without moral aptitude can ruin the society more than an unintelligent person with morals. The plea is not to increase the working hours. Rather it is only to teach Thirukkural as a separate subject/division in subject. Hence, this Court is unable to accept the contention of the respondents that increasing the number of kurals would cast a burden on the students.

The order stated that, when the object is to create a better society and to safeguard the Fundamental rights, it is for the respondents to device a mechanism to achieve the object. The learned Court further stated that, the works of William Shakespeare have invariably been included as a portion throughout the world and also in India. Whereas, a philosophy, accepted throughout the world to be of highest value must be taught entirely at the school level itself. It is pertinent to mention here that the Government had already made Tamil a compulsory subject and it had been implemented in a phased manner. Similar, steps were also taken for Central and other boards in the state. In view of the fact, that Thirukkural has already been translated in English, French, Hindi, German, Kannada, Malayalam and many other regional languages, it could be taught as a whole. But the contention of the learned Special Government pleader appearing for the respondents that in so far as the 3rd chapter which was based on the relations between a husband and a wife, considering the sensitivity of the subject, the same need not be included in the syllabus. However, the first two chapters containing 108 Adhigarams must be included in the syllabus preferably from the next academic year and implemented in a phased manner.

The Court Order took cognizance of the fact that it was brought to the knowledge of this Court that the syllabus is determined by the Committee appointed by the Government. It is pertinent to mention here, that all policies are framed by the Government in consonance with and to preserve the Fundamental Rights enshrined under part III of the Indian Constitution. In fact, at this point, the Court specifically commented in the judgment that, if there is a will, there would be a way. It will be the greatest contribution to the society and to the language itself by the

government. There are various adaptations and stories associated with Thirukkural in the form of "Thirukkural Kathaigal". Therefore, it can be taught to the students without causing an additional burden. Moral values are more important than other values. Once, the moral values are lost, it is only a matter of time, before the person falls, despite possessing all other qualities, which may have earned him name, fame, power and money. If Thirukkural is taught with all its avenues and dimensions elaborately, the students would be equipped with all the facets of life, and the strength to grapple with the probable problems in life and the solutions. The couplets about friendship, hard work, good character, patience, tolerance and confidence will guide them through, even the most difficult of times. Thirukkural will give them the inner strength to withstand any storm.(*S. Rajarathinam vs The Secretary to Government, Home Department, Government of Tamil Nadu & Ors,2015)*

Therefore, this court commended that appropriate action must be taken by the government through the Committee which decides the syllabus, considering the noble objective and finalise the syllabus for the next academic year by including 108 chapters/ Adhigarams of Thirukkural (Arathupal and Porutpal) in the curriculum of students studying between VI Standard to XII Standard, keeping in mind that the purpose of education must be to build a nation with moral values. With the above directions, this writ petition was allowed as above with no directions as to costs. This is how Justice R. Mahadevan observed that inclusion of this classic literature would help to build a nation with moral values.

References

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Project Madurai (1998-2021)*Tirukkural of Tiruvalluvar,English Translation and Commentary by Rev. Dr.G.U.Pope, Rev W.H.Drew,Rev, John Lazarus and Mr F.W.Ellis* திருவள்ளுவர் எழுதிய திருக்குறள் ஆங்கில மொழிபெயர்ப்பு – ஜி.யூ.போப் (URL: https://www.projectmadurai.org/pm_etexts/utf8/ pmuni0153.html)

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17

Tamil Rituals and Festivals

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Valipadu emerged from the word valipadu. Valipadu means following, worshipping, conducting pooja all gives the meaning religious principles. Valipadu can be classified as pura valipadu and Aga valipadu. Aga valipadu is based on the wish of an individual. When a group of people make the valipadu as a joining together, it is called as joined prayer or kootu valipadu. Thinking about God in our mind and focusing our thoughts on God known as mind worship (valipadu). In Tamil language we had so many mantras and songs to worship God. For example, we can Quote Arunagiri Nather's "Muthai Tharum Bhakthi Thirunakai" song. Gomatha Valipadu, Go pooja, Naga valipadu, Nagar valipadu, Siddhargal valipadu, Thiruvilaku valipadu, Jothi valipadu. Various kind of people worship God in different methods. According to customs, knowledge and religion, valipadu takes different types.

We praise worshipping the God for ages. In the Temples of Tamilnadu we worship God in Tamil. Tamil language is the worshipping language. Not only in literature but in Tamil language also there are numerous prayers. In prayer songs they praise highly the Almighty and admired him to the sky to get the grace of God. By worshipping God in Tamil we are praising our Tamil annai. Among the world literature in Tamil only, we have Bhakthi Ilakiyam and a lot of devotional songs are also here in Tamil, Tamil language is better than our mother.

In Bhakthi songs we aplause and Praise God. In Greek mythology. Apollo is the God of wisdom like that in Tamil we adore Goddess Saraswathi for knowledge, Kuberan for wealth and to reduce our sorrows we honour Amman, Sivan and Thirumal and Ramar. It is human nature to be obidient to god and speaking about his glories and surrender himself to God. This paper throws light on some of the rituals and festivals of Tamilnadu.

Rituals are performed by human race all over the world when the belief of men became an action it evolves as a ritual. From the birth of man till to his death various types of rituals are performed these rituals are registered and craved in our Tamil literature which is the ancient and classical literature of the world. In this paper we can see some of the rituals and festivals of Tamil people.

Sacrificing to God

Tamilians sacrifice sheep hen and cock to Lord Murugan and Goddess kotravai the same ringmorole was followed by American folk also in William Faulkner's 'uncle willy' we can see the same rite. "It was like one of those sheep they would sacrifice back in the Bible". (William Faulkner, Uncle willy).

Arrival of comet

The arrival of comet in the sky announce the death of a king, is the belief of ancient Tamil people. Cheraman kannaikal irumporai died on the 7th day of the arrival of Comet.

("Pulunanthurai muttria coodalur kilar, Puram-229")

Similar to this we can see another incident in the life of the Great American Novelist Mark Twain.

Mark Twain told his biographer Albert Bigelow paine,"I came in with halley's comet it is coming again on the expect to out with it."

When Twain died of a heart attack on April 21, 1910 halley's was back making it way past the earth for the first time in 75 years the first time since Twains birth.

Ghost

Tamil literature and English literature had registered that ghosts are also living in is Earth.

In Shakespeare's play Hamlet after his death, Hamlet appears as a ghost to take revenge on his murderers

The arrival of the ghost is explained in the below lines "Let us impart what we have seen tonight,

Unto Young Hamlet for upon my life this spirit dump to as will speak to him" (Hamlet, ACT I, Scene I)

In that manner in our Tamil literature they had recorded that ghosts live in the forest.

"பேய் ஆயமொடு பெட்டாங்கு வழங்கும் காடு
முன்னினனே கட்காமுறு நன்" - புறநானூறு

Crow belief

If a crow cawed on the roof of your house Tamil people considered it as a sound for the arrival of visitors to the house "kakai pa diniyar nachle yaar" is called by the name because she wrote poetry about the crow

Edgar Allan Poe an American poet in his poem 'Raven' in the doubt whether there is a visitor with the arrival of the bird raven which is similar to our crow.

"As of someone gently rapping at my chamber doors" "This some visitor, "I matered", tapping at my Champer door" (Raven – lines 4 and 5)

The age old culture of Tamilnadu had a lot of functions in its tradition let us see a some of them in this paper

Birthday function

Today every one all over the world without any discrimination poor or rich celebrate the birthday in the style but in ancient Tamilnadu people celebrated the born day of their kings.

'Madurai Kanchi' recorderd that the birthday of Nannan was celebrated by his people. 'Silappadikaram' speaks about the birthday celebration of cheran chenguttuvan.

Onam festival

Onam festival is celebrated to recognize the success of lord Tirumal and the surrender of King Mahabali to Lord Tirumal. During this festival periyalvar told that Onam is the birthday of Thirumal

"மாயோன் மேய ஓன நன்னாள்" (மதுரைக்காஞ்சி, 590)

The above line makes it clear that Onam is the day for Thirumal

Indra festival

Indra is the God of rain Ancient Tamil people worship Indira to get adequate rain and celebrate the Indira festival as a thanks giving occasion to Indra and this function is mentioned 'Inguru nooru'.

"இந்திர விழாவிற் பூவின் அண்ணே" (ஐங்குறுநூறு, 62)

Thai Bath taking function

Young ladies to get good husband with Noble characteristics participate in this bath taking function and take a bath in the village pool

"நிறுவி எம்பான் மகளிர் ராடும் தைத் தன்கயம் போல பலர் படிந்துள்ள நின் பரத்தை மார்பே" (ஐங்குறுநூறு, 84)

Pongal festival

On the first day of the month of Thai Pongal festival is celebrated as a Thanks Giving festival for those who help the farmers to get a good yield of paddy in their fields

Mattupongal is also recognized by the farmers to show that gratitude for the cattle who helped them in their fields.

Hospitality

Tamilians welcome their visitors or guests with pleasure. They serve them the dishes which they like and they give a send-off by walking out of house at least some distance along with them.

Tamilians are the best people in hospitality all over the world.

First entry to the temple

A new born child must be carried to the temple of their kulathaivam to get the blessings to led a prosperous and peaceful life.

Ear piercing ceremony

The child's ear is pierced and the tamil people put a stud in its ear whether it is a girl child or a boy child.

Hair removing ceremony

The child's hair must be removed first at their kulatheivam temple. It is celebrated as hair removing ceremony.

Marriage ceremony

Tamilians celebrate marriage as a big festival, their relatives and friends are invited for the ceremony. The rituals will be changed according to their caste. They celebrate it either in a high budget or low budget according to their financial status.

Death ritual

In death also certain rituals are followed.

In conclusion as an ancient tradition the Tamilians has a rich heritage, customs and rituals but this paper has explained only few of them.

18
சங்க காலக் கிழார் புலவர்கள்

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சங்க காலப் பாணர்கள் ஓர் இடத்தில் தங்கி வாழாத, இடம்விட்டு இடம் பெயர்ந்து செல்லும் நாடோடி வாழ்வை மேற்கொண்டவர்களாக இருந்துள்ளனர். உணவு உற்பத்தியுடன் நேரடித் தொடர்பற்றவர்களாக, கலைஞர்களாக இருந்ததனால் உணவுக்காகப் பிறரை எதிர்பார்த்து வாழும் வாழ்வை வாழ்ந்துள்ளனர். இனக்குழு மக்கள் தங்கள் வாழ்வுக்காகச் சேகரித்து வைத்திருக்கும் பொருள்களிலிருந்து இக்கலைஞர்களுக்கும் உணவு அளித்துள்ளனர். அவர்கள் தங்கள் வாழ்க்கைத் தேவையை நிறைவுசெய்துகொண்டு கலைஞர்களுக்கும் உணவளிப்பதைத் தங்கள் கடமைகளில் ஒன்றாகக் கருதியுள்ளனர். கலைஞர்களைப் பாதுகாத்தலும் உணவளித்தலும் சமூகக் கடமையாக, சமூக உறுப்பினர்கள் கடைபிடிக்கவேண்டிய உயர் மதிப்பீடாக இருந்ததனால், ஒப்பீட்டு நிலையில் பிறரைவிடப் பொருளாதார வளம் மிக்கவர்களாகத் திகழ்ந்த இனக்குழுத்தலைவர் கலைஞர்களைப் பாதுகாப்பதைத் தங்கள் கடமைகளில் ஒன்றாகக் கருதியுள்ளனர்.

பாணர்கள் தங்கள் குழாத்துடன் வள்ளல்களையும் இனக்குழுத்தலைவர்களையும் நாடிச்சென்று, அவர்களை வாழ்த்திப் பாடி, கலைகளை நிகழ்த்தி அவர்கள் அளிக்கும் பொருள்களைப் பெற்று வாழ்ந்துள்ளனர். சங்க இலக்கியங்களைப் பார்க்கும்போது, பாணர்களின் நாடோடி வாழ்க்கை, வள்ளல்களையும் இனக்குழுத் தலைவர்களையும் நோக்கியதாகவே இருப்பதைக் காண முடிகின்றது.

பாணர்களைப் போலவே புலவர்களும் வறுமை வயப்பட்டவர்களாக, சுற்றத்தினருடன் வள்ளல்களை நோக்கி இடம் பெயர்ந்து செல்பவர்களாக இருந்துள்ளமையைக் காணமுடிகின்றது.

இதனை, "தங்கினிர் சென்மோ புலவிர் நன்றும்" (புறம். 333-7) என்ற புறப்பாடல் காட்டுகின்றது. புலவர்கள் பாணர் குழுவில் ஒருவராக இல்லாமல் அவர்களிடமிருந்து சற்று வேறுபட்டவர்களாக இருந்தாலும் பாணர்களைப் போலவே வறுமைவயப்பட்டவர்களாக இருந்துள்ளமையைக் காணமுடிகின்றது. இச் சூழலில் கிழார் என்ற அடையை உடைய புலவர்கள் பலர் சங்கப்பாடல்களைப் பாடியுள்ளமையைக் காணமுடிகின்றது. சங்கப் புலவர் பட்டியல், கிழார் என்ற அடையைக் கொண்டிருந்த புலவர்களாக 35 புலவர்களைச் சுட்டுகின்றது. கிழார் எனும் சொல் உடைமையாளர்களைக் குறிக்கும் சொல்லாக அமைந்திருந்தமையைக் காணமுடிகின்றது. இதனால் கிழார் என்ற அடையைக் கொண்ட புலவர்களின் சமூகத் தகுதியை ஆராய இக்கட்டுரை முயல்கின்றது. இவர்கள் பிற புலவர்களைப் போல வறுமை வயப்பட்டவர்களாக வள்ளல்களை நாடிச் சென்று பரிசில் பெறுபவர்களாக இருந்திருந்தனரா என்பது ஆய்வுச் சிக்கலாக அமைகின்றது.

சங்கச் சமூகத்தின் அரசியல் வலுவுடைய தலைவர்களைப் பற்றிப் பேசும் கா. இந்திரபாலா(2020,11),

இச்சமூகத்தில் மூன்று வகைப்பட்ட அரசியல்வலுப் பெற்ற தலைவர்கள் இருந்தனர். கிழார் (ஊர்த்தலைவர்), வேளிர் (மலைப்பிரதேசத் தலைவர்), மற்றும் வேந்தர் (தாழ்நிலப் பிரதேசத் தலைவர்). தொடக்கத்தில் ஊர்க்கிழான் நிலையில் இருந்தவர் ஒரு குலத்தைச் சேர்ந்தோருடைய தலைவராக இருந்தார். வேளிர் என்பார் மலைப் பிரதேசத் தலைவர்களாய்ச் சில சந்தர்ப்பங்களில் அயலில் இருந்த ஊர்க் கிழார்களைத் தாக்கி அவர்கள் சொத்துக்களைக் கவர்ந்தாலும் தங்கள் மலைப் பிரதேசத்துக்குள் இருந்த மக்களுடைய உறவினராகவும் இருந்தனர். மிகப் பெரிய தலைவர்களாக இருந்தவர்கள் வேந்தர்கள். கிழார்களை அடக்கி, பெரும் நிலப்பகுதியைத் தங்கள் கட்டுப்பாட்டுக்குள் வைத்திருந்தனர். கிழார்களாக இருந்தோர் வேந்தர்களுக்காகப் போராடி, போரில் கவரப்பட்ட பொருட்களை வேந்தருடன் பகிர்ந்துகொண்டனர் எனச் சுட்டுகின்றார். இம்மூன்று தலைமை வடிவங்களில் பழமையானதாக மலைப்பகுதியைச் சார்ந்த வேளிரைக் குறிக்கலாம். வேளிர் குறிஞ்சி நிலத்தலைவர்களாக

இருந்து பின் முல்லை நிலத் தலைவர்களாக வளர்ச்சி பெற்று ஆக்களைச் செல்வமாகக் கொண்டுள்ளனர். ஆ கவர்தலுக்காகத் தொறுபூசல்களை நிகழ்த்தியுள்ளர். வேளிர்களுக்கு அடுத்த நிலையில் வளர்ச்சியடைந்தவர்களாக கிழார்களைக் காணமுடிகின்றது. பொதுவாகக் கிழான் என்பதற்கு உரிமையுடையவன் என்று பொருள் கொள்ளப்படுகின்றது. குறிப்பாக மருதநில நாகரிகத்தினைச் சார்ந்து இச்சொல் புழக்கத்தில் இருந்ததனால் மருத நிலத்துக்கு உரிமையுடையவர்களையே இச்சொல் குறித்துள்ளது எனலாம். குறிப்பாக மருத நிலத்துக் கழனிகளை உடையவர்களாகக் கிழார்கள் இருந்துள்ளனர்.

> விழுநீர் வேலி நாடு கிழவோனே   (புறம். 13:13)
>
> நெல்அமல் புரவின் இலங்கைக் கிழவோன்   (புறம். 379:6)
>
> நெல்வினை கழனி அம்பர் கிழவோன்   (புறம். 385:9)
>
> கல்இழி அருவி வேங்கடம் கிழவோன்   (புறம். 389:11)
>
> ஒலிகதிர்க் கழனி வெண்குடைக் கிழவோன்   (புறம். 394:2)

எனத் தலைவர்கள் கிழார்கள் எனச் சுட்டப்பட்டுள்ளனர். இச்சான்றுகள் கிழார்கள் நீர் வளத்தையும் நில வளத்தையும் ஒருங்கே பெற்றவர்களாக இருந்துள்ளதையும் நெல் வளம் மிக்கவர்களாக இருந்துள்ளதையும் காட்டுகின்றன. இதனால், கிழவன் என்ற சொல் நிலங்களை, உற்பத்தியினால் விளைந்த தானியங்களை, சொத்துக்களைக் கொண்டவர்களைக் குறிக்கப்பயன்பட்டிருக்கிறது என்பதை அறிகிறோம். இதனால் கிழார் எனும் சொல்லைத் தம் பெயரில் பெற்றுள்ள புலவர்கள் நிலம், தானியம், செல்வம், உடையவர்களாக இருந்திருக்கலாம் என்று கருத இடமுள்ளது. இதன் அடிப்படையில் கிழார் புலவர்களின் பாடல்கள் கவனம் பெறுகின்றன.

கிழார் எனச் சுட்டப்பட்டவர்களைப் பாட்டுடைத் தலைவர்களாகக் கொண்ட பாடல்கள் புறநானூற்றில் காணப்படுகின்றன. சிறுகுடிக்கிழான் பண்ணன் (அகம். 54:14, புறம். 388:10), மையூர் கிழான் (பதி. 92, பதி. 7), கரும்பனூர் கிழான் (புறம். 381:26, 384), சோழநாட்டுப்பிடவூர் கிழார் மகன் பெருஞ்சாத்தன் (புறம்.395), ஒல்லையூர் கிழார் மகன் பெருஞ்சாத்தன் (242 : 5) பொறையாற்றுகிழான் (புறம். 391:12)

என்போர் பாடல்களிலேயே சுட்டப்படுகின்றனர். வேறுபல கிழார்கள் பாட்டுடைத்தலைவர்களாக இருந்தமையைப் புறப்பாடல்கள் (புறம். 177, 179, 180, 400) காட்டுகின்றன. பாட்டுடைத் தலைவர்களாக இருக்கின்ற அளவுக்கு செல்வவளமுன் அதிகாரமும் மிக்கவர்களாகக் கிழார்கள் இருந்துள்ளனர் என்பதைக் காணமுடிகின்றது.

படை வேண்டுவழி வாள் உதவியும்
வினை வேண்டுவழி அறிவு உதவியும்
வேண்டுப வேண்டுப வேந்தன் தேஎத்து
அசை நுகம் படாஅ ஆண்தகை உள்ளத்து
தோலா நல்இசை நாலைகிழவன்   (புறம். 179:6–16)

என நாலை கிழவன் எனும் தலைவன் சுட்டப்படுகின்றான். இக்கிழான் வேந்தர்களுடன் நெருங்கிய உறவில் இருந்துள்ளான் என்பதையும் வேந்தர்களுக்குப் போர்ப்படை தேவைப்படும்போது போர்ப்படை அளித்து உதவியுள்ளான் என்பதையும் அறியமுடிகின்றது. போர்ப்படை மட்டுமன்றி வேந்தர்களுக்குத் தேவை ஏற்படும்போது ஆலோசனைகளை வழங்கியுள்ளதுடன் அவர்களுக்கு என்னவிதமான தேவைகள் ஏற்பட்டாலும் அவற்றைச் செய்து அளிப்பவனாக இருந்துள்ளான் என்பதையும் அறியமுடிகின்றது. அதே நேரம், கொண்கானங்கிழான் என்னும் தலைவனைப் பாடும் மோசிகீரனார்.

நிறை அருந்தானை வேந்தரைத்
திறை கொண்டு பெயர்க்கும் செம்மலும் உடைத்தே
                                              (புறம். 156:5,6)

என்கிறார். இப்பாடல் அரிய தானைகளை உடைய வேந்தர்களிடம் திறை பெரும் புகழுடையவனாகக் கொண்கானங்கிழானைச் சுட்டுகின்றது. இதனால் வேந்தர்களிடம் முரண்பாடு கொண்டவனாக இவன் இருந்துள்ளான் என்பதை அதாவது வேந்தர்களையே போரில் வெற்றிபெற்றுத் திரை பெற்றுள்ளான் என்ற செய்தியை அறியமுடிகின்றது. இதனால், வேந்தர்களும் கிழார்களும் ஒத்த தகுதியுடன் இருந்துள்ளனர் என்பதையும் காலப்போக்கில் கிழார்கள் வேந்தர்களுடன் உறவுபூண்டு நட்புடன் இருந்து, பின் வேந்தர்களுக்குக் கட்டுப்பட்டவர்களாக மாற்றம் பெற்றுள்ளனர் என்பதையும் அறியமுடிகின்றது.

வேளிர், கிழார், வேந்தர் என்ற மூன்று தலைமை வடிவங்களும் தத்தம் சூழலுக்கேற்ப உருப்பெற்று வளர்ந்திருந்தாலும் இவர்களுக்குள் மோதல்கள் உருவாகி, காலப்போக்கில் இனக்கமான சூழல்கள் உருவாக்கப்பட்டுள்ளன. அதாவது, வேந்தர்களின் ஆளுகைக்குள் அடங்கிய அதே நேரம் வேந்தர்களுக்கு உதவுபவர்களாக, அதிகாரக் குழுக்களில் இடம்பெறுபவர்களாக மாற்றம் அடைந்துள்ளனர். வேந்தர்களுக்கு இணையான அதிகாரம் படைத்த கிழார்கள், புலவர்களாக இருந்துள்ளமையைச் சங்கப் புலவர் பட்டியல் காட்டுகின்றது. கிழார்ப் புலவர்களைப் பற்றிப் பேசும் கோ. கேசவன் (1979:89)

இவர்களின் (கிழார்களின்) பொருளியல் மேம்பட்டு சமூக வாழ்வில் பெருமையோடு உயர்கின்றனர். மனிதனின் உலகியல் வாழ்வில் சூழ்நிலைகளிலும் சமூக உறவுகளிலும் சமூக வாழ்விலும் ஏற்படும் ஒவ்வொரு மாறுபாட்டோடும் அவனது கருத்துகளும் கொள்கைகளும் கண்ணோட்டங்களும் அதாவது அவனது உணர்வு மாறுகிறது. இவ்வாறு கிழார்களின் பொருளியல் வாழ்க்கையானது விசுவரூபமெடுக்கும் போது அவர்களின் உணர்வும் அரசன் அருகே நிற்கிறது. செல்வ அளவிலே அவர்களுக்கு ஏற்பட்ட வளர்ச்சியில் மாற்றமும் பெருகப் பெருக, அது அவர்களின் உணர்வுத் தன்மையிலே மாற்றத்தை ஏற்படுத்துகிறது. ஆக கிழார்களிலே பாடத் தெரிந்தவர்கள் – பணக்காரப் பாடகர்கள் – அரசுப் பணியில் சில அறிவுரைகள் சொல்கின்றனர்; அதுவும் குறிப்பிட்ட வரையறைகளுக்குட்பட்டே எனத் தெரிகிறது என்கிறார். கேசவன் கிழார் புலவர்களைப் பணக்காரப் பாடகர்கள் என அழைக்கிறார். இதனால் கிழார்களின் பாடல்களில் செல்வ வளமை வெளிப்படுகிறதா எனக் காணவேண்டியுள்ளது. புறநானூற்றில் 16 கிழார் புலவர்கள் பாடல் பாடியுள்ளனர். இவர்கள் வேந்தர்கள் சார்பாகவும் சீறூர் மன்னர் சார்பாகவும் பாடல்களைப் பாடியுள்ளதைக் காணமுடிகிறது. 16 கிழார் புலவர்களும் பாடியுள்ள மொத்தப் பாடல்கள் 56 ஆகும். இவற்றில் வேந்தர்களின் சார்பான பாடல்கள் 36 ஆகவும் இனக்குழுச் சார்பான பாடல்கள் 19 ஆகவும் உள்ளன. ஆவூர் மூலங்கிழார் எழுதிய ஒரு பாடல் (புறம்.166) சோணாட்டுப் பூஞ்சாற்றூர்ப் பார்ப்பான் கௌணியன் விண்ணந்தாயனைப் பற்றியதாகும். இனக்குழுச் சார்பான பாடல்களிலும் வேந்தனுக்கு உதவும் இனக்குழுத் தலைவன் (புறம்.

324, 281, 285), மருதநிலம் சார்ந்த தலைவன் பற்றிய (புறம். 342)
பாடல்கள் காணப்படுகின்றன. இதனால், கிழார் புலவர்களின்
பாடல்களில் பாதிக்கும் மேல் வேந்தர் சார்புப் பாடல்களாக
இருப்பதை உணர முடிகிறது. குறிப்பாக, பல்யாகசாலை முதுகுடுமிப்
பெருவழுதி, யானைக்கட்சேய் மாந்தரஞ்சேரல் இரும்பொறை,
உக்கிரப் பாண்டியன் கீரஞ்சாத்தன், இளவந்திகை பள்ளி துஞ்சிய
நன்மாறன், சோழன் இளஞ்சேட் சென்னி, சேரமான் இரும்பொறை
போன்றோர் மிகுதியாகப் பாடப்பட்டுள்ளனர். சோழர்களைப் பற்றி
14 பாடல்கள் பாடியுள்ள கோவூர்கிழார்,

> சீறூர் மன்னன் சிறியிலை எஃகம்
> வேந்துஊர் யானை ஏந்து முகத்ததுவே
> வேந்து உடன்று எறிந்த வேலே என்னை
> சாந்து ஆர் அகலம் உளம் கழிந்தன்றே
> உளம்கழி சுடர்ப்படை ஏந்தி நம் பெருவிறல்
> ஒச்சினன் துரந்த காலை மற்றவன்
> புன்தலை மடப்பிடி நாண
> குஞ்சரம் எல்லாம் புறக்கொடுத்தனவே (புறம். 308:4–11)

என்று ஒரு பாடல் பாடுகிறார். இப்பாடல் சீறூர் மன்னனுக்கும்
வேந்தனுக்கும் நடக்கிற போரைப் பற்றியதாக இருந்தாலும் புலவர்
சீறூர் மன்னன் சார்பாக இருப்பதையே காட்டுகிறது. இது போலவே
மூன்று பாடல்களில் வேந்தரைப் பாடிய பெருங்குன்றூர் கிழார்
(புறம்.318)

> கொய் அடகு வாட தரு விறகு உணங்க
> மயில் அம் சாயல் மாஅயோளொடு
> பசித்தன்று அம்ம பெருந்தகை ஊரே
> மனை உறை குரீஇ கறை அணல் சேவல்
> பாணர்நரம்பின் கதிரொடு வய மான்
> குரல் செய் பீலியின் இழைத்த குடம்பை
> பெரு செய்நெல்லின் அரிசி ஆர்ந்து தன்
> புன் புற பெடையொடு வதியும்
> யாணர்த்து ஆகும் வேந்து விழுமுறினே

என 'வேந்தரின் புகழ் பாடும் பாணர் ஒருவரும் இலர்' என்கின்றார்.
மூன்று பாடல்களில் வேந்தரைப் பாடும் ஆவூர் மூலங்கிழார் ஒரு
பாடலில் பார்ப்பனன் விண்ணந்தாயனையும் மற்றொரு பாடலில்

மல்லிக் கிழான் காரியாதியையும் பாடுகிறார். மேலும் இரு
பாடல்களில் இனக்குழு மறவர்களின் நிரைமீட்டலைப் பாடுகிறார்.
இப்பாடல்களில் வேந்தர் எதிர்ப்பு இருப்பதைக் காண
முடியவில்லை. அரிசில் கிழார் தமது இனக்குழுச் சார்புடைய ஏழு
பாடல்களில் இனக்குழு எதிர்ப்பு (304) வேந்தர்க்கு உதவும்
இனக்குழுத் தலைவர் (281) வேந்தர் உயர்வு (285) பற்றிய
கருத்துகளை வெளிப்படுத்தியுள்ளார். இதனால் கிழார் புலவர்கள்
பெரும்பான்மை வேந்தர் சார்பாக இருந்தமையை அறிய முடிகிறது.
இதனால் கோ. கேசவன் கூறுவது போலக் கிழார் புலவர்கள்
பணக்காரப் பாடகர்களாக இருந்தனரா எனக் காணவேண்டியுள்ளது.

இனக்குழுத் தலைவர்களை மட்டும் பாடிய கிழார்
புலவர்களின் பாடல்களில் தமது வறுமை நிலையைச் சுட்டும்
தன்மை மிகுதியாகக் காணப்படவில்லை. ஆனால் வேந்தரையும்
பாடியுள்ள கிழார்களின் பாடல்களில் வறுமையைச் சுட்டும்
குறிப்புகள் பல இடம் பெற்றுள்ளன. பரிசிலர்களுக்கு அளிக்கும்
வேந்தனுடைய பெருமையும் பரிசிலர்களின் நிலையும் விரிவாகச்
சுட்டப்படுகின்றன.

> நின் நாடு உள்ளுவர் பரிசிலர்
> ஒன்னார் தேஎத்தும் நின்னுடைத்து எனவே (புறம். 38:17–18)
> ஓம்பாது உண்டு கூம்பாது வீசி
> வரிசைக்கு வருந்தும் இப்பரிசில் வாழ்க்கை   (புறம். 47:5,6)
> ஒள் நுதல் விறலியர் பூவிலை பெறுக என
> மாட மதுரையும் தருகுவன் எல்லாம்
> பாடுகம் வம்மினோ பரிசில் மாக்கள். (புறம். 32:4–6)
> அது கண்டு யாமும் பிறரும் பல்வேறு இரவலர் (புறம். 229:13)

எனக் கிழார் புலவர்கள் தம்மைப் பரிசிலராகவே காட்டுகின்றனர்.
மேலும் ஆற்றுப்படை அமைப்பில் (புறம். 68,69,70) பரிசிலர்களின்
வறுமையைச் சுட்டுகின்றனர். கிழார் என்ற பெயரைப்
பெற்றிருந்தாலும் அடிப்படையில் சங்கப் புலவர்களுக்குரிய
வறுமை நிலையிலேயே கிழார்ப் புலவர்கள் இருந்துள்ளனர்
என்பதை அவர்களின் பாடல்கள் காட்டுகின்றன.

மருத நிலம் விரிவு பெற்ற காலத்தில் உருவான கிழார்கள்
நிலத்துக்கு உரிமையுடையவர்களாக மாறியுள்ளனர். நிலத்தைக்
கைப்பற்றி வாழ்ந்த மருதநில வாழ்வில் சில கிழார்கள் ஓய்வு

நேரமிகுதி, பண்பாட்டு வளர்ச்சி ஆகியவற்றினால் நகரம் சார்ந்து உருவான கல்வியைக் கற்று புலவர்களாக மாறியிருக்கலாம். இம்மாற்றம் பிற்கால வளர்ச்சியாகக் கருதத்தக்கதாகும். புதியதாக உருவான இக்கிழார்ப் புலவர்களும் பழைய பரிசிலர் மரபைப் பின்பற்றிப் பாடல் எழுதியிருக்கலாம். கிழார்களின் பாடல்களில் அவர்களின் வளமையை வெளிப்படுத்தும் சான்றுகள் எவையும் இல்லாமல், பரிசிலராகத் தம்மைக் காட்டும் சான்றுகளே உள்ளன.

மருதநில வளர்ச்சி புதிய அறிவு மரபின் வளர்ச்சிக்கு அடித்தளமாக அமைகிறது. என்றாலும், கிழார்களின் பாடல் மரபு பழைய பாண்பாடல், பரிசிலர் மரபின் நீட்சியாக அல்லது பழைய மரபினை மாற்றாமல் கடைபிடிப்பதாகவே இருந்துள்ளது. அதனாலேயே கிழார்களும்,

சீறியாழ் செவ்வழி பண்ணி யாழ நின்
கார் எதிர் கானம் பாடினேமாக   (புறம்.144:2,3)

சீறியாழ் செவ்வழி பண்ணி நின் வன்புல
நம் நாடு பாட என்னை நயந்து
பரிசில் நல்குவை ஆயின் குரிசில்   (புறம்.146:4-6)

சீறியாழ் செவ்வழி பண்ணி வந்ததை   (புறம்.147:2)

எனத் தம்மை சீறியாழ் என்ற இசைக் கருவிகளுடன் இணைத்துக்கொண்டுள்ளனர். கிழார்கள் மருதநிலத்தைச் சார்ந்தவர்களாக அறியப்படும் நிலையில், அவர்கள் கானம் பாடினேன் என முல்லை நிலத் தலைவர்களைப் பாடிச்சென்றதாகப் பாடல் இயற்றியுள்ளதைக் காணமுடிகின்றது. அடிப்படையில் மருத நிலம் உபரி உற்பத்தியை மிகுதியாக உடைய பகுதி, அப்பகுதியைச் சார்ந்த ஒருவர் வன்புல, வேட்டை, உணவு சேகரிப்பு நிலையில் இருந்த இனக்குழுத் தலைவனை நாடிச்சென்று பாடல் பாடுவது வெறும் பொருளாதாரத் தேவை நோக்கியது அன்று என்பதை உணரவேண்டும். மென்புலத்தைச் சார்ந்த கிழார்கள் வன்புலத் தலைவர்களைப் பாடுவது பழம்மரபைப் போன்றும் பண்பின் பாற்பட்டதாக, வேந்தர்களுக்கான எதிர்ப்பைப் பதிவு செய்வதாக இருந்துள்ளது. பெருங்குன்றூர் கிழார் எனும் புலவர்,

பெருங் கையற்ற என் புலம்பு முந்துறுத்தே   (புறம்.210:15)

என வறுமையை முன்போக விட்டுத் தான் போவதாகக்
காட்டுகின்றார். மேலும்,

> அரைசுபடக் கடக்கும் உரைசால் தோன்றல் நின்
> உள்ளி வந்த ஓங்குநிலைப் பரிசிலென்   (புறம்.211:6,7)

எனத் தம்மை பரிசிலனாகவே அறிமுகப்படுத்திக்கொண்டு,

> . . . . வைகலும்
> வல்சி இன்மையின் வயின் வயின் மாறி
> இல் எலி மடிந்த தொல் சுவர் வரைப்பின்
> பாஅல் இன்மையின் பல்பாடு சுவைத்து
> முலைக்கோள் மறந்த புதல்வனொடு
> மனைந் தொலைந்திருந்த என் வாணுதற் படர்ந்தே
>
>   (புறம். 211:17-22)

எனத் தன் வீட்டின் வறுமையை எலிகளைக் காட்டியும் பால்
இல்லாத குழந்தையைக் காட்டியும் விளக்குகின்றார். அது போலவே
மற்றொரு பாடலில்,

> விருந்து கண்டு ஒளிக்கும் திருந்தா வாழ்க்கை
> பொறிபுணர் உடம்பில் தோன்றி என்
> அறிவுகெட நின்ற நல்கூர்மையே   (புறம். 266:11-13)

என அறிவைக் கெடுக்கக் கூடிய தன் வறுமையைக் காட்டுகிறார்.
இப்பாடல்கள் வேந்தரை நோக்கிப் பாடப்பட்டுள்ளன. இவற்றால்
கிழார் புலவர்களாக அறியப்படுபவர்களும் வறுமை வாயப்பட்டே
இருந்துள்ளனர் என்பதையும் பரிசிலர், இரவலர்களாவே தம்மை
அடையாளப்படுத்திக்கொண்டுள்ளனர்   என்பதையும்
அறியமுடிகிறது. இவை பாணர் மரபின் தன்மையிலேயே
அமைந்திருக்கின்றன. வறுமையை வெளிப்படுத்துவது பாணர்,
இரவலர், பாடுநர், புலவர்களின் பொது மரபாக இருந்திருக்கிறது.
இதனால் கிழார்ப் புலவர்களைத் தனியே அடையாளப்படுத்தி
அவர்களைச் செல்வ வளம் மிக்கவர்களாகக் காண இயலாமல்
போகிறது. புலவர்களின் பெயர்கள், பெயர்களுடன் இணைந்த பிற
தகவல்களின்   மெய்மைத்   தன்மையை   இது
கேள்விக்குட்படுத்துவதாக உள்ளதைக் கவனத்தில் கொள்ள
வேண்டும்.

நீண்ட காலமாகவே சிந்தனைத் துறையும் உடல் உழைப்புத் துறையும் பிரிக்கப்பட்டிருந்தது. சமூகத்தின் சிந்தனைத் துறையில் மேலோங்கிய அறிவு ஜீவிகள் உற்பத்தித் துறையில் கவனம் செலுத்தவில்லை; மாறாகக் கலாச்சாரம், சமயம், இலக்கியம், சாஸ்திரம் போன்ற மேல்கட்டத்தில் உள்ள கருத்துப் பிரிவுகளிலேயே கவனம் செலுத்தினர் (கோ. கேசவன், 1981:19) என்பர். மருத நிலத்தைச் சார்ந்தவர்களான கிழார்களும் உற்பத்தியில் ஈடுபடுதல் புலமையோர் செயல் அல்ல என்பதனால், உற்பத்திச் செயல்பாடுகளில் இருந்து வெளியேறி புலமையோரின், கலைஞர்களின் பொது வாழ்முறையான அலைதலில் ஈடுபட்டிருக்கலாம். இவ்வலைதலின் காரணமாகக் கிழார்களும் வறுமை வயப்பட்டிருக்கலாம்.

கிழார் என்ற அடை வளத்தைக் குறித்தாலும் அது தொடர்ச்சியாக நிலத்தைக் கைப்பற்றிச் செலுத்தும் உழைப்புடன் தொடர்புடையதாகும். உழைப்பிலிருந்து வெளியேறிய ஒருவர் கிழார் என்ற அடையை மட்டும் வைத்துக்கொண்டிருப்பதனால் அவர் வளமுடையவராக இருக்க இயலாது என்பதை இது காட்டுகின்றது. இதனால் கிழார் என்ற அடையை உடைய புலவர்கள் உழைப்பிலிருந்து வெளியேறி பாணர்களைப் போல அலைதல் வாழ்வை மேற்கொண்டிருக்கின்றனர் என்பதை இது காட்டுகின்றது.

நிறைவுரை

சங்க இலக்கியங்கள் 450 ஆண்டு கால எல்லையில் உருவானவற்றை உள்ளடக்கியிருப்பதனால் பல்வேறு கருத்துகள் முகிழ்த்து வளர்ந்து மாற்றம் பெற்ற நிலையைக் காட்டுவனவாக உள்ளன. கிழார் என்ற தொடர் நில உரிமையுடையவர்களைக் குறித்தாலும் கிழார் என்ற அடையை உடைய புலவர்கள் பிற புலவர்களைப் போல வறுமை வயப்பட்டவர்களாக, வள்ளல்களை நாடிச் சென்று பரிசில் கோருபவர்களாகத் தங்களை வெளிப்படுத்திக்கொண்டுள்ளனர். இம்மரபில் பாடல்களை அமைப்பது ஓர் இலக்கிய மரபாகவும் இருந்திருக்கலாம். இம்மரபு பாணர் மரபின் வழிப்பட்டதாகும். வறுமையை வெளிப்படுத்துவது பாணர், இரவலர், பாடுநர், புலவர்களின் பொது மரபாக இருந்திருக்கிறது. இதனால் கிழார்ப் புலவர்களைத் தனியே

அடையாளப்படுத்தி அவர்களைச் செல்வ வளம் மிக்கவர்களாகக் காண இயலாமல் போகிறது. புலவர்களின் பெயர்கள், பெயர்களுடன் இணைந்த பிற தகவல்களின் மெய்மைத் தன்மையை இது கேள்விக்குட்படுத்துவதாக உள்ளதைக் கவனத்தில் கொள்ள வேண்டியுள்ளது.

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சங்கத் தமிழர் பண்பாடு

திலகம் ரெங்கசாமி (M.A.)
மலேசியா.

முன்னுரை

சமூக இயல் அறிஞர்களின் (Social Scientists) கருத்தின்படி, பண்பாடு என்பது, வாழ்க்கை முறை (way of life) என்பதாகும். ஒவ்வொரு மனித சமுதாயத்திற்கும் ஒரு பண்பாடு உண்டு. ஒரு சமுதாயத்தில் வாழுகின்ற பெரும்பான்மை மக்களின் ஒருமித்த நடத்தைகளையும் எண்ணங்களையும் அது வெளிப்படுத்தும். ஒரு சமுதாயத்தில் அமைந்துள்ள கலை, நம்பிக்கை, பழக்கவழக்கங்கள், மொழி, இலக்கியம், விழுமியங்கள் (Values) முதலியன அந்தச் சமுதாயத்தின் பண்பாட்டுக் கூறுகள் எனப்படும். இனி, சங்கத் தமிழர் பண்பாடு குறித்து அலசுவோம்.

சங்க காலம்

சங்க காலம் என்பது தலைச் சங்கம், இடைச் சங்கம், கடைச் சங்கம் என பிரிக்கப்பட்டுள்ளது. கி.மு. 1000த்திலிருந்து கி.பி. 3ஆம் நூற்றாண்டு வரை அதன் காலத்தை எல்லையாக குறிப்பிடுகிறது. என்றாலும், கடைச் சங்கக் காலத்தையே சங்க காலம் என வரலாற்று ஆய்வாளர்களும் ஆசிரியர்களும் குறிப்பிடுகின்றனர்.

சங்கத் தமிழர் நிலப்பரப்பு

சங்கம் அமைத்து தமிழை வளர்த்தவர்கள் தமிழர். அவர்கள் பேசிய மொழி தமிழ்மொழி. அவர்கள் பின்பற்றிய பண்பாட்டுக் கூறுகள் தமிழர் பண்பாடு ஆகும். தொல்காப்பியத்தின் சிறப்புப் பாயிரத்தில் சங்க கால தமிழர்களின் எல்லைகள் குறிக்கப் பட்டுள்ளன.

> "வடவேங்கடம் தென்குமரி
> ஆயிடைத்
> தமிழ்கூறு நல்லுலகத்து"

என்பது பனம்பாரனார் கூற்று. இவ்வரிகளில் பனம்பாரனார் தமிழகத்தின் வடக்கு எல்லையாக வேங்கட மலையையும், தென் எல்லையாகக் குமரிக் கடலையும் குறிப்பிட்டுள்ளார்.

இலக்கிய சான்றுகள்

சங்கத் தமிழரின் பண்பாட்டை சங்க இலக்கியமான தொல்காப்பியம், எட்டுத்தொகை, பத்துப்பாட்டு நூல்களின் வாயிலாக

அறிய முடிகிறது. எட்டு தொகை நூல்களைக் கொண்டது எட்டுத்தொகை. அவை நற்றிணை, குறுந்தொகை, ஐங்குறுநூறு, பதிற்றுப்பத்து, பரிபாடல், கலித்தொகை, அகநானூறு, புறநானூறு என்பனவாகும். பத்துப்பாட்டு என்பது பத்து பாடல் தொகுப்புகளைக் கொண்ட நூல். அவை திருமுருகாற்றுப்படை, பொருநராற்றுப்படை, சிறுபாணாற்றுப்படை, பெரும்பாணாற்றுப்படை, முல்லைப்பாட்டு, மதுரைக்காஞ்சி, குறிஞ்சிப்பாட்டு, பட்டினப்பாலை, மலைபடுகடாம் என்பனவாகும். மேற்கண்ட நூல்களில் பலவற்றுள் சங்கத் தமிழரின் பண்பாடுகள் குறித்த குறிப்புகள் காணப்படுகிறது.

சங்கப் பாடல்களாக இன்று கிடைத்துள்ளவை 2,381 மட்டுமே. இவற்றைப் பாடியோர்களில் 473 புலவர்களின் பெயர்கள் அறியப்பட்டுள்ளன. 102 பாடல்களை ஆக்கியோர் பெயர் அறியப்படவில்லை. ஓலைச்சுவடிகளில் எழுதப்பட்ட இவை யாவும் மனனம் செய்யப்பட்டு வாய்மொழியாக தலைமுறைதோறும் பயிலப்பட்டு வந்தவை. பின்னர் ஏடுகளில் பொறிக்கப்பட்டு கி.பி. 19 - 20ஆம் நூற்றாண்டுகளில் டாக்டர் உ.வே. சாமிநாத ஐயர், சி.வை. தாமோதரம் பிள்ளை போன்றோரால் நூல் வடிவம் பெற்றன என்பது குறிப்பிடத்தக்கது.

தமிழரின் காதல்

தமிழரின் பண்பாடு இன்று உலகமே வியந்து பார்க்கக்கூடியதாக அமைந்துள்ளது. தமிழருக்கு காதலும் வீரமும் இரு கண்களாக விளங்கின. தமிழர் காதலை அன்பின் ஐந்திணை என்றனர். இஃது ஒருவனும் ஒருத்தியும் கொண்ட உளமொத்தத் தூய காதலாகும். தொல்காப்பியர் தமது பொருளதிகாரத்தில் இதனை களவு, கற்பு என இரண்டாகப் பிரித்துக் காட்டியுள்ளார். காதல் வாழ்வு அறத்திலிருந்து மாறுபடாமல் அன்பின்வழி நிகழ வேண்டும் என எண்ணினர்.

தலைவன்பால் தாம் கொண்ட காதலை, அன்பை தலைமகள் தன் தோழியிடம்,

> "நிலத்தினும் பெரிதே வானினும் உயர்ந்தன்று
> நீரினும் ஆரள வின்றே சாரல்
> கருங்கோற் குறிஞ்சிப் பூக்கொண்டு
> பெருந்தேன் இழைக்கும் நாடனொரு நட்பே"

என கூறுவதிலிருந்து தலைமகளின் காதல் எத்தகைய கண்ணியமான பண்பாடு கொண்டது என அறியலாம். நீண்ட நாள் களவு மேற்கொள்ளுதல் ஆகாது. விரைவாக மணமுடித்து கற்பு வாழ்க்கைக்கு தயாராகி விடுமாறு தோழி தலைவனுக்கு அறிவுறுத்துவது மூலம் நமது காதல் பண்பாட்டினை பதிவு செய்துள்ளனர்.

தமிழர்கள் நிலத்தை ஐவகையாகப் பிரித்தனர். அவை குறிஞ்சி, முல்லை, மருதம், நெய்தல், பாலை எனப்பட்டது. குறிஞ்சித் திணையின் உரிப்பொருள் புணர்தலும் புணர்தல் நிமித்தமும் ஆகும். தலைவன் தலைவியின் இந்த திணை ஒழுக்கத்தினை ஆரிய அரசன் பிரகத்தன் என்பவன் கொச்சைப்படுத்துகிறான். அவனுக்குத் தமிழின் பெருமை, தமிழரின் களவொழுக்கம், கற்பொழுக்கம் குறித்து உணர்த்த வேண்டியே கபிலர் குறிஞ்சிப்பாட்டினை பாடியுள்ளார்.

இன்று உலகமெங்கும் பிப்ரவரி 14ஆம் நாள் 'காதலர் தினம்' கொண்டாடப்பட்டு வருகிறது. ஆனால், சங்கத் தமிழர்கள் காதலுக்கு இருபத்தெட்டு நாட்கள் விழாயெடுத்து கொண்டாடினர். காதலர்கள் மன்மதனுக்கு விருந்து படைத்து மகிழ்ந்தனர். இவ்விழாவை 'இந்திர விழா' என சிலப்பதிகாரத்தில் குறிப்பிடப்பட்டுள்ளது. காதலுக்கு இத்தகு சிறப்பு செய்தவர்கள் எவரும் இருந்திருக்க முடியாது தமிழர்களைத் தவிர.

விருந்தோம்பல்

தமிழர்களின் தலை சிறந்த பண்பாடுகளுள் ஒன்று விருந்தோம்பல்.

"இருந்தோம்பி இல்வாழ்வதெல்லாம் விருந்தோம்பி
வேளாண்மை செய்தற் பொருட்டு"

என்பார் திருவள்ளுவர். விருந்தினரை வரவேற்று உணவிடுதல் இல்லறத்தில் ஈடுபட்டிருப்பவரின் கடமையாகவே கருதப்பட்டது. தமிழர்கள் விருந்தோம்பல் என்னும் பண்பாட்டு அறத்தை தம்பதியராய் சேர்ந்தே செய்திருக்கிறார்கள். அதனால்தான் கோவலன் தன்னை விட்டு பிரிந்து சென்ற பின்னர்,

"அறவோர்க் களித்தலும் அந்தண ரோம்பலும்
துறவோர்க் கெதிர்த்தலும் தொல்லோர் சிறப்பின்
இருந்தெதிர் கோடலும் இழந்த என்னை"

என்கிறாள் கண்ணகி. கோவலன் இல்லாததால் விருந்தோம்பல் தன் வீட்டில் நடைபெறாமல் போயிற்று என்பதைத்தான் சிலப்பதிகாரம் இவ்வாறு குறிப்பிட்டுள்ளது.

ஒருவன் திருமணம் முடித்து இல்வாழ்க்கை நடத்துவதே விருந்தோம்பல் கடமையை செயல்படுத்துவதற்காகவே என்று கூறுவது தமிழரின் பண்பாடு. 'மருந்தே ஆயினும் விருந்தோடு உண்' என்ற ஒப்பற்ற கொள்கையை தமதாக்கி வாழ்ந்து வருவது தமிழரின் பண்பாடு.

வீரம்

கொடுப்பதில் மட்டுமல்ல வீரத்திலும் சங்கத் தமிழர்கள் சளைத்தவர்கள் அல்ல. தமிழன் வீர விளையாட்டுகள், போட்டிகள்,

விலங்குகளை அடக்குதல் யாவும் தமிழரின் திருமணம் மற்றும் விழாக்களோடு தொடர்பு கொண்டவையாக இருந்துள்ளது. தமிழரின் வீரம் நம்மை மெய்சிலிர்க்க வைக்கும். காளையை அடக்குபவனுக்கு தன் மகளை மணஞ்செய்து கொடுக்கும் பண்பாடு காணப்பட்டுள்ளது. இதிலிருந்து வீரம் எவ்வாறு அளவுகோளிடப்பட்டுள்ளது என்பது நமக்கு விளங்குகிறது. தன் மகன் போரில் புறமுதுகிட்டான் என அறிந்த தாயானவள் 'ஒரு கோழைக்கு என் முலைப்பாலை அளித்தேனா' என வருந்தி தன் மார்பையே வெட்டத் துணியும் வீரப் பண்பாடானது போற்றுதலுக்குரியது.

போர்

பகை மன்னர்களிடமிருந்து தன் நாட்டைக் காக்கும் பொருட்டு சங்கத் தமிழர்கள் போருக்கு முக்கியத்துவம் கொடுத்தனர். திடீரென்று போர் மேற்கொள்ளாமல் அதற்கும் சில விதிமுறைகளையும் அறப் பண்புகளையும் ஏற்படுத்தினர். அதனைப் பின்பற்றியும் ஒழுகினர். காலை சூரிய உதயத்தின்போது முரசறைந்து போர் தொடங்குவர். சூரியன் மறையும் வரை போர் நடைபெறும். பின் முரசறைந்து போரை நிறுத்துவர். போர் எத்தனை நாட்கள் தொடர்ந்தாலும் இதுவே வழக்கமாக பின்பற்றப்படும். பகைவர் நிராயுதபாணியாக இருக்கும் போதும் புறமுதுகிட்டு ஓடினாலும் அவர்களைத் தாக்கலாகாது.

"ஆவும் ஆனியற் பார்ப்பன மாக்களும்
பெண்டிரும் பிணியுடை யீரும் பேணித்
தென்புலம் வாழ்னர்க்கு அடங்கடன் இறுக்கும்
பொன்போல் புதல்வர் பெறாஅய் தீரும்
எம் அம்பு கடிவிடுதும் நும்அரண் சேர்மின்"

என புறநானூற்றுப் பாடல் கூறுகிறது. போர் தொடங்குவதற்கு முன்னர் பசு, அந்தணர், பெண்கள், பிணியுடையோர், பிள்ளைப்பேறு இல்லாதவர்களை பாதுகாப்பான இடத்தில் சேர்த்தனர். அத்துடன், போருக்கு ஏற்றாற்போல் வெட்சிப்பூ, கரந்தைப்பூ, வஞ்சிப்பூ என போரின் தன்மைக்கேற்ப பூச்சூடி சென்றனர் போர் மறவர்கள்.

தமிழர்கள் போர் செய்யும் காலத்தையும் வரையறுத்தனர். கார், கூதிர், முன்பனி, பின்பனி, இளவேனில், முதுவேனில், என ஆறு வகையான பருவங்களை வகுத்துக் கொண்டு வாழ்ந்தனர். இதில் வேனிற் பருவமும் கூதிர் பருவமும் போர்க்குரிய பருவங்களாகக் கருதினர். மன்னர்கள் பாசறை அமைத்துப் போர் புரிந்தனர். இதனை,

"கூதிர் வேனில் என்றிரு பாசறைக்
காதலின் ஒன்றிக் கண்ணிய மரபினும்"

என்ற தொல்காப்பிய நூற்பா வழி அறியலாம்.

போரினால் ஆட்சியில் சிக்கலோ, மக்களுக்கு பஞ்சமோ, தொழில் குழப்பமோ உண்டாகக் கூடாது என்பதில் கவனமாக இருந்தனர். எனவேதான், உழவுத் தொழில் செய்வோர் அறுவடையை முடித்து ஓய்வாக இருக்கும் கூதிர் பருவம் முதல் வேனிற் காலம் வரையுள்ள இடைக்காலத்தைப் போர் புரிவதற்கு ஏற்ற காலமாக தேர்ந்தெடுத்தனர்.

கொடை

கொடையிற் சிறந்தவன் யார் என வினவினால் ஒட்டுமொத்தமாக கர்ணனைத்தான் கூறுவோம். நமக்குக் கொடுக்கப்பட்டுள்ள தலைப்பு சங்க கால தமிழர்களின் பண்பாடு. கர்ணன் இதிகாச காலத்தில் வாழ்ந்தவன். எனவே, அவனைப் பற்றிக் கூறுவது இவ்வண் பொருத்தமாகாது.

சங்க காலத்தில் தலையெழு வள்ளல்கள், இடையெழு வள்ளல்கள், கடையெழு வள்ளல்கள் வாழ்ந்துள்ளனர். அவர்களுள் கடையெழு வள்ளல்களான பேகன், பாரி, காரி, ஆய், அதியமான், நள்ளி, ஓரி போன்றோர் குறித்துக் காண்போம். பேகன் மயிலுக்கு போர்வை கொடுத்தான். பாரி முல்லைக்குத் தேர் கொடுத்தான். காரி இரவலர்க்கு குதிரை கொடுத்தான். ஆய் தன்னிடம் உதவி வேண்டி வந்தவர்களுக்கு ஊர்கள் கொடுத்தான். அதியமான் தனக்குக் கிடைத்த ஓர் அரிய வகை (மூப்பு ஏற்படாத) நெல்லிக் கனியை ஒளவைக்குக் கொடுத்தான். நள்ளி தன்னிடம் பொருள் கேட்டு வருபவர்கள் இனி யாரிடமும் கேட்க தேவை ஏற்படாத அளவில் இல்லறத்திற்குப் பொருள் கொடுத்தான். ஓரி கூத்தர்களுக்கு நாடு கொடுத்து வாழ்வளித்தான். பாரி வள்ளல் பாரிக்கு (மழைக்கு) நிகராகக் கொடுக்கக் கூடியவன் என்பதை,

> "பாரி பாரி என்று பலஏத்தி
> ஒருவர் புகழ்வர் செந்நாப் புலவர்
> பாரி ஒருவனு மல்லன்
> மாரியும் உண்டண் டுலகு புறப்பதுவே"

என சங்க இலக்கியப் பாடல் உணர்த்துகிறது.

மன்னர்கள் மட்டுமின்றி குறுநில மன்னர்களும் இரவலர்களுக்கு பரிசில் அளித்து புரவலர்களாக வாழ்ந்தனர். 'யாதும் ஊரே யாவரும் கேளீர்' என்பது நமது தமிழர்களின் பரந்துபட்ட சிந்தனை. அதனால், இவர் அவர் என்றும், அவ்வூர் நம்மூர் என பிரித்துப் பார்க்காமல் உதவி என வருவோர் அனைவரையும் தமது சுற்றத்தார் போல எண்ணியே கொடை வழங்கியுள்ளனர்.

வழிபாடு

இயற்கையைத் தெய்வமாக வழிபடும் மரபு தமிழர் பண்பாடு. இயற்கை என்பது நிலம், நீர், நெருப்பு, காற்று, ஆகாயம் எனும் ஐம்பூதங்களால் ஆனது. இயற்கை பேரிடரான நில நடுக்கம், எரிமலை,

கடற்காற்று, மழை வெள்ளம், சூரிய வெப்பம், இடி முழக்கம் போன்றவற்றிலிருந்து இயற்கையே நம்மைக் காப்பாற்றும் என நம்பி அவற்றை வழிபடலாயினர்.

> "நிலம் தீ நீர்வளி விசும்பொடு ஐந்தும்
> கலந்த மயக்கம் உலகம் ஆதலின்"

என இந்த உலகம் ஐம்பூதங்களின் கலவை என்கிறார் தொல்காப்பியர். மலையை மலைமகளாக உருவகப்படுத்தி போற்றினர். மலைகளில் ஆலயங்களை எழுப்பினர். மலையேறி சென்று வழிபாடு நிகழ்த்தி திரும்புவதால் அவர்கள் ஆரோக்கியமாகவும் விளங்கினர்.

சங்க கால தமிழர்கள் வையை ஆற்றைப் போற்றி வழிபட்டனர் என்பதை பரிபாடல் பாடுகிறது. நீரின் கடவுளான வருணனையும் வழிபட்டனர்; உலக மக்களுக்கு மட்டுமின்றி அனைத்து உயிர்களுக்கும் ஒளி கொடுக்கும் தெய்வமாக சூரியனைக் கண்டதால் சூரிய வழிபாடு செய்தனர்; தைத் திங்களன்று பொங்கல் விழாவும் அவ்வாறு உருவான ஒரு முறைதான். காற்றின் தெய்வமான வாயுவையும் வணங்கினர். இவை தவிர, முழுமுதற் கடவுளான சிவன், லிங்க வழிப்பாட்டையும் நிகழ்த்தினர். இவ்வழிப்பாட்டை செய்பவர்கள் சைவர் என அழைக்கப்பட்டனர்.

திருமாலை வழிப்பட்டோரை வைணவர் என அழைத்தனர். ஆனால், பாரிய அளவில் முருகன் வழிபாடு குறிஞ்சித் திணையில் மேற்கொள்ளப்பட்டது. வீரத்தின் உறைவிடமாகிய கொற்றவை வழிபாடும், நடுகல் வழிபாடும் மக்களால் போற்றப்பட்டது.

சங்கத் தமிழர்கள் ஓரறிவு படைத்த ஜீவராசிகளையும் மதித்து போற்றி வந்தனர். நெய்தல் நிலத்து தலைவி புன்னை மரத்தை தன் சகோதரியாக நினைத்து அதனுடன் உரையாடுகிறாள். அத்துடன் ஆலமரம், அரசமரம், வேப்பமரம் போன்றவற்றை வணங்கி வழிபட்டனர். அம்மரங்கள் வெளிப்படுத்தும் பிராணவாயு நமக்கு தேவை என்பதை உணர்ந்ததால் சங்கத் தமிழர்கள் அவற்றை ஆலயங்கள்தோறும் வளர்த்து வழிபட்டனர்; இன்றும் அந்தப் பண்பாட்டைக் காத்து வருகின்றனர்.

கலை

சங்க காலத்தில் கலைகள் செழித்து விளங்கின. அவை கட்டிடக்கலை, ஓவியக்கலை, சிற்பக்கலை, இசைக்கலை, நடனக்கலை, ஒப்பனைக்கலை ஆகியன ஆகும். மன்னர்கள் கலைகளையும் அவை சார்ந்த கலைஞர்களையும் ஊக்குவித்து வந்தனர். சங்க இலக்கியங்களில் பறை, பாண், யாழ், துடி, தண்ணுமை, கழல், முழவு போன்ற பல்வேறு இசைக் கருவிகள் தொன்மையானவை. யாழ் இசைக் கருவி நான்கு வகைப்படும். அவை மகரயாழ், பேரியாழ், சகோடயாழ், செங்கோட்டி யாழ்

எனப்படும். இந்த இசைக் கருவி குறித்து சுவாமி விபுலானந்தர் தமது யாழ் நூலில் விரிவாக விளக்கியுள்ளார். இவ்விசைக் கருவி வாசிப்பவன் பாணன் என்று அழைக்கப்படுகிறான். பறை இசைப்பவன் பறையன், துடி இசைப்பவன் துடியன் என அழைக்கப்பட்டார்கள். பாணனின் மனைவி விறலி என அழைக்கப்படுவார். விறலி மற்றும் பாடினி இருவரும் ஆடல்பாடல், இசைக்கருவி இசைத்தல் ஆகிய மூன்றிலும் வல்லவராக திகழ்ந்தனர். இவர்கள் அரசரைப் பாடி மகிழ்வித்தனர். பொருநராற்றுப்படையில் யாழ் பற்றிய நீண்ட வருணனை கூறப்பட்டுள்ளது.

அ. ஓவியக்கலை

சங்க காலத்தில் அரண்மனை, கோவில் சுவர்களில் ஓவியம் தீட்டியிருந்தனர் என்பதை நெடுநல்வாடை, மதுரைக் காஞ்சி, பட்டினப்பாலை முதலிய நூல்கள் தெரிவிக்கின்றன. மேகங்களின் கார் முகப் பகுதியில் குருவி போன்ற உருவங்களைத் தீட்டினர் என்னும் செய்தியை நற்றிணை தெரிவிக்கிறது. கட்டிலின் மேற்கூரையில் சந்திரனோடு உரோகிணி கூடியிருக்கும் காட்சி தீட்டப்பெறும் வழக்கிருந்ததை நெடுநல்வாடை பதிவு செய்கிறது. இதிலிருந்து இயற்கை ஓவியங்களும் கற்பனை ஓவியங்களும் படைத்து காட்டியுள்ளனர் என்பது தெரிகிறது.

ஆ. சிற்பக்கலை

பழங்காலக் கோட்டைகள், மதில்கள், பல்வகைப் பொறிகள் நிரம்பிய வேலைப்பாடுகள் உடையனவாகவும், பல்வகைப் பறவைகள், விலங்குகள் ஆகியவற்றின் உருவங்களையும் படைத்தனர். கற்கோயில்களும் சிற்பக்கலையின் சிறப்பினைக் காட்டுவதாகவே அமைத்தனர். இவை தவிர கல், மண், மரம், பொன் முதலியவற்றைக் கொண்டும் கவர்ச்சியான உருவமுடைய பொருட்களைப் படைக்கும் ஆற்றல் பெற்றிருந்தனர்.

இ. வானசாஸ்திரக் கலை

சங்கத் தமிழர்கள் வானசாஸ்திரக் கலையில் கரை கண்டவர்களாக விளங்கினர். கார் காலத்தில் வையைப் புனலைப் பாடும்போது ஆவணித் திங்கள் அவிட்ட நாளில் எந்தெந்த விண்மீன்கள் எவற்றைத் தீண்டின என்று பரிபாடற் புலவர் பாடுவதும் சேர மன்னன் ஏழு நாட்களுக்குள் அழிவான் என விண்மீன் வீழ்ந்ததைக் கொண்டு கூடலூர்க் கிழார் உரைப்பதும் பண்டைத் தமிழரின் வானசாஸ்திர அறிவை அறியலாம். இவ்வாறு வானத்தைக் கணித்துக் கூறுபவர்கள் கணியன் என்னும் பெயரால் அழைக்கப்பட்டனர். காலங் கணித்தல், பயன் கூறல், வருவன முன்னர் அறிந்து காத்தல் என்ற வகைகளில் வானநூற் கலையிற் தமிழர் மிகச் சிறந்து விளங்கினர் என்று அறிய முடிகிறது.

ஈ. ஒப்பனைக்கலை

சங்கத் தமிழர்கள் தங்களை அழகு செய்து கொள்வதில் மிகவும் அக்கறை காட்டினர். உடை, அணிகலன், மலர், வாசனைப் பொருட்களைப் பயன்படுத்தினர். தங்களுடைய மரபுக்கும் தொழிலுக்கும் சூழ்நிலைக்கும் ஏற்ப ஆடைகளை அணிந்தனர். முனிவர்கள் மரவுரி ஆடையை அணிந்தனர்; பார்ப்பனர் காவிவுடை தரித்தனர்; மறவர்கள் நீலக் கச்சாடை உடுத்தினர்; நீராடும் காலத்தில் தனியாடை அணிந்தனர்; மெய்க்காப்பாளர்கள் சட்டையிட்டு காத்தனர்; புணர்ச்சி காலத்தில் பட்டு நீக்கித் துகிலாடையை மகளிர் உடுத்தினர் என்ற பண்பாட்டுச் செய்திகள் பட்டினப்பாலையில் கூறப்பட்டுள்ளது.

குஞ்சங்கள் கட்டப்பெற்ற பட்டாடைகள் அதிகமாகப் பயன்படுத்தப்பட்டுள்ளன. ஆடைகள் விறைப்பாக விளங்க கஞ்சியிட்டனர். காவிதிப்பட்டவர்கள் தலைப்பாகையை அணிந்தனர். ஆடவர்கள் கழலையும் மகளிர் சிலம்பையும் அணிந்தனர். கண்ணகி அணிந்த சிலம்பால் ஒரு மாபெரும் காப்பியமே நிகழ்ந்தது என சிலப்பதிகாரத்தின் வழி அறிவோம். குழை, தொடி என்பவை இருபாலருக்கும் அணிகலனாயின. குழந்தைகளுக்கு கிண்கிணி, ஐம்படைத்தாலி முதலியவை சூட்டி மகிழ்ந்தனர். பொன், வெள்ளி, முத்து, மரகதம் ஆகியவற்றால் அணிகலன்கள் செய்யப்பட்டன.

மலர் சூடும் வழக்கம் சங்க காலத்திலேயே தமிழர் பண்பாட்டில் இருந்து வந்தது. தார், மாலை, கண்ணி என்னும் மூவகை மாலைகள் கட்டப்பட்டன. மகளிர் தம் கூந்தலை நெய்யும் மயிர்ச் சாந்தும் பூசி மணஞ் செய்வித்துக் கொண்டனர்.

> "உடுத்தும் தொடுத்தும் பூண்டு செறீஇயும்
> தழையணி பொலிந்த ஆயம்"

என்பது குறுந்தொகையில் கூறப்படும் மலர்ச் சூடுதல் பற்றிய செய்தியாகும்.

ஆடவரும் பெண்டிரும் சந்தனத்தைத் தம் மார்பில் பூசிக் கொண்டனர். பூசிய சந்தனம் காய்வதற்கு முன் வேங்கைத் தாதினை அதன் மேல் அப்பிக் கொண்டனர். மணப் பொருள் சுண்ணத்தை மேனியில் பூசிக் கொள்வர். இச்சுண்ணத்தை நவமணிகளும் பொன்னும் சந்தனமும் கற்பூரம் முதலியனவும் புனுகிலும் பன்னீரிலும் நனைய வைத்து இடித்துத் தயாரித்ததாக நச்சினார்க்கினியர் உரைக்கிறார். நெற்றிக்குத் திலகமிடுவதும், கண்களுக்கு மையிடுவதும் தோளிலும் மார்பிலும் தொய்யில் எழுதுவதும் மகளிர் மேற்கொண்ட ஒப்பனைகளுள் சில ஆகும்.

விளையாட்டுகள்

பொழுதுபோக்குக்காக சங்கத் தமிழர்கள் பல விதமான விளையாட்டுகளை ஆடினர். புனலாடுதல், பல்லாங்குழி, சிற்றில் ஆடல்,

ஊஞ்சல், மரமேறுதல், பட்டம் விடுதல், பாண்டி, சிலம்பம், ஜல்லிக்கட்டு என அடுக்கிக் கொண்டே போகலாம். புனலாடுதல் குறித்து பரிபாடல் இவ்வாறு கூறுகிறது.

நெய்ம்மாண் சிவிறியர் நீர் மணக்கோட்டினர் பரி 6:25

இவற்றை விளையாடி தங்களின் பொழுதை நல்வழியில் கழித்தனர்.

தொகுப்புரை

பண்பாடு ஒரினத்தின் வாழ்க்கை நெறி. அது தொன்று தொட்டு பயன்படுத்தப்பட்டு வரும் ஒரு செயல்பாடு. காலத்தின் மாற்றத்திற்கு ஏற்ப அவை மாற்றங்களை கொண்டு செயல்படவும் செய்யும். பாவாடைதாவணி அணிந்த மங்கையர் இன்று சுடிதார் அணிகின்றனர். வீட்டு உணவு உண்போர் இன்று உணவகங்களில் உண்ணுகின்றனர். சாந்துப்பொட்டுக்குப் பதில் பல நிறங்கொண்ட ஒட்டுப் பொட்டுகளை நெற்றியில் ஒட்டிக் கொள்கின்றனர். ஒவ்வொருவர் வீட்டிற்கும் சென்று திருமணம், பிறந்தநாள், காதுகுத்து போன்ற வைபவங்களுக்கு அழைப்பிதழ்கள் கொடுத்து அழைப்பதே தமிழர் பண்பாடு. ஆனால், இன்று, புலனம் வழியாக அழைப்பிதழ்களை அனுப்பி வரவேற்கிறோம். ஆக, பண்பாடு என்பது காலத்திற்கு ஏற்ப மாறுந்தன்மை கொண்டு விளங்குகிறது.