

DRAVIDIAN CANVAS IN SANGA TAMIL

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Abstract:

Sanga Tamil is a rich compendium of classical literature in the Tamil language. Though Tamil civilization has evolved from sangam age to scientific age over the past 3000+ years, it has always been a best practice in the academic field, to benchmark and learn from Sanga Tamil, on the various faculties of humanity that we are discussing, debating and enhancing today. Verily, it has been a journey, that has captivated the thought of the modern academician, anthropologist, historian and reformer – all alike.

Whereas, the Dravidian Movement has its roots in the early 19th century which ushered in Tamil renaissance & social justice in the Tamil landscape. It too has evolved over the past 100+ years on various issues facing the society.

This paper enquires into the social canvas of the sangam era, and relates them to the philosophies of Dravidian movement, vis-à-vis the sangam society and modern society. The key Dravidian philosophies - Social Justice, Equality, Self-Respect, Casteless Collective,

Tamil Pride, Theism & Atheism, Feminism and Rational Inquiry - are all traced to their roots in Sanga Tamil, in this paper. After all, human journey is a continuous evolution of the human faculties, be it sangam age or scientific age. In this journey, we shed off our weaknesses and build upon our strengths towards the cause of the society.

Keywords:

Dravidian, Tamil, Classical Literature, Sanga Tamil, Social Justice, Self-Respect, Feminism, Theism, Apatheism, Caste, Brahminism, Superstition, Rationality, Education, Philanthropy, Nature, Native Tamils.

Introduction:

Sanga Tamil (also pronounced as changa thamizh or caṅka tamīḻ, and written in native alphabet as சங்கத்தமிழ்) is truly a Cross-Roads of Culture. It is not only a compendium of poetry that showcases the genius of classical literature, but also a Melting Pot of diverse cultures of the land. Verily, Sanga Tamil is a Social Mirror of evolution of the Tamil Society.

Any language starts from its people - Tamil too! Unlike other classical languages that have become defunct at some point in history, Tamil is continuously being spoken and written by its people, thanks to its People Oriented Philosophy of its Grammar. Architectural Structures of Grammar evolve a bit later, after 'people-forms' of the language slowly mature. In fact, there is a Tamil poem which sings, "There is no Grammar without People's Literature, and there is no oil without growing mustard, first". The best starting point to know about Tamil language, is from its earliest people-form: **Sanga Tamil**. It is a Corpus of Poetry&Prose, weaved on the fabric of Music & Drama, with silken threads of creativity running all over the fabric, even 3000+ years back.

Prof. A.L. Basham in his book 'Wonder that was India', comments on early Tamil literature: "Very early, Tamils developed the passion for classification. A unique feature of Tamil poetry is the initial rhyme or Assonance(etukai/mōnai). The first syllable of each couplet must rhyme. This initial assonance, in some poems continued through four or more lines, is never to be found in the poetry of Sanskrit languages, or as far as we know, in that of any other language. Its effect, a little strange at first, rapidly becomes pleasant to the reader, and to the Tamil it is as enjoyable as the end rhyme of the Western Poetry".

The First Rational Thought - Creation vs. Evolution:

In fact, when most literature of other civilizations were spinning stories about a super-human hand in the 'Creation' of the world, Tamil literature and the earliest available grammatical treatise -Tholkaappiyam,takes a more rational approach in earth's 'Formation'. In those days of primitive science, it talks about Physical & Chemical Properties in the formation of Earth -though not in a sense of today's chemistry,

but as a far-reaching thought, far better than an imaginary Super-human-God, breathing air or spitting water into the world, or looking with fiery thousand eyes and creating the world like a muddy pot.

"Land-Fire-Water-Air-Space elements constantly interact and the resulting Cohesion is this World!"- says Tolkāppiyam, 3000+ years back. (நிலம் - நீர் - தீ - வளி - விகம்பொடுகலந்தமயக்கம்உலகம்; கலந்த = Physical Change & மயக்கம் = Chemical Change). The Treatment of Morphology in Tolkāppiyam.

நிலம், தீ, நீர், வளி, விகம்பொடு, ஐந்தும்
கலந்தமயக்கம்உலகம்ஆதலின்
இருதிணை, ஐம்பால்,இயல்நெறிவழாஅமைத்
திரீவுஇல்சொல்லிவாடு,தழாஅல்வேண்டும்
(தொல்காப்பியம்-பொருள்: மரபியல் 635)

Land, Fire, Water, Air and Space – The Five Cohere and diffuse and the Earth is formed. Two Life Entities and Five Group Entities, non-deviant from Nature's Code

Words and denotation shall not deviate, but embrace that code (Tolkāppiyam - marapiyal 635)

There is even a talk on Taxonomy&Classification of Living Beings on Earth, though not as accurate as in today's scientific classification, but as an early attempt to 'codify & classify' the diversity of Life Forms on Earth. Why should a mere book on grammar of the language, talk about such lofty thoughts?

Sensors	Functions	Life Forms
1	Feel/ Touch	Grass (Monocots) & Plants (Dicots) - Vegetation & Other Form
2	Tongue/ Taste	Snails, Slugs and such.. & Other Forms too
3	Nose/ Smell	Ants, Worms and such.. & Other Forms too
4	Eye/ See	Crabs, Bees and such.. & Other Forms too
5	Ear/ Hear	Birds, Mammals and such.. & Other Forms too
6	Brain/ Think	Humans and such.. & Other Forms too

(Exhibit 1: Life Forms - Taxonomy & Treatment of Morphology in Tholkaappiyam)

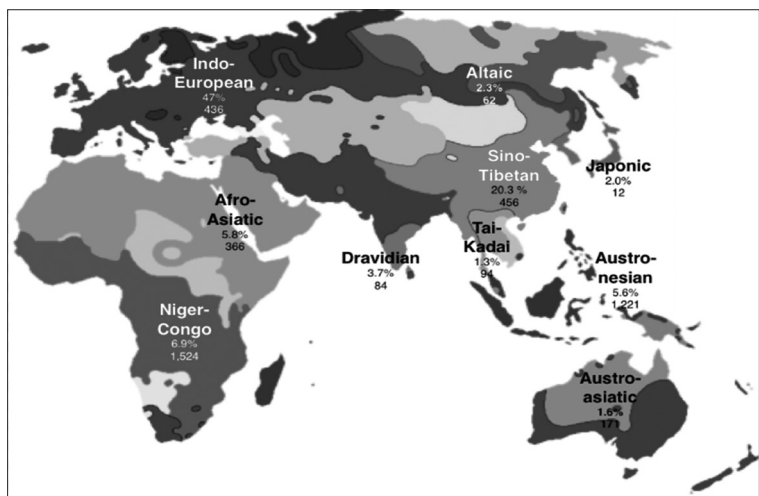
That is because: Sanga Tamil is so much People & Life Oriented, rather than some mere Syntax for the language. It discusses about Life Forms on Earth – Plant, Animal & Human, Tribes of Tamil People and the gradual advancement of a Society, not ignoring any aspect of Human Life or People's Choices. There is a path to unknowns & exceptions as well, when Tolkāppiyam records the existence of 'other forms too' (பிறவும்களவே, அக்கிளைப்பிறப்பே). The codification goes to such an extent, that even unaccomplished love, LGBTQ love, break from the social majorities - are all classified by Tholkaappiyar and placed under one's own Personal Category (aga thiNai).

Unfortunately, few religious pundits in the later centuries, pushed away all this diversity in love and life, to outside of one's Personal Boundaries (puRa thiNai). Much interpolations (இடைச்செருகல்) have also happened in the text of Tolkāppiyam, wrongly assuming the current day context, to the meanings of old words. But such interpolations have now been exposed and reconciled with advancement in linguistic techniques like serialization and contextualization.

Question: Tamil or Dravidian?

Tamil means 'Sweet' or 'Fluidity' (இனிமையும் நீர்மையும் தமிழ் எனலாகும்), so records the thesaurus – Piṅkala Nikaṇṭu. The word 'Tamil' is an endonym and the word 'Dravidam' is an exonym.

- Endonym: A name used by a group or category of people, to refer to themselves
- Exonym: A name used by a group or category of people - non-native, to refer to the native name

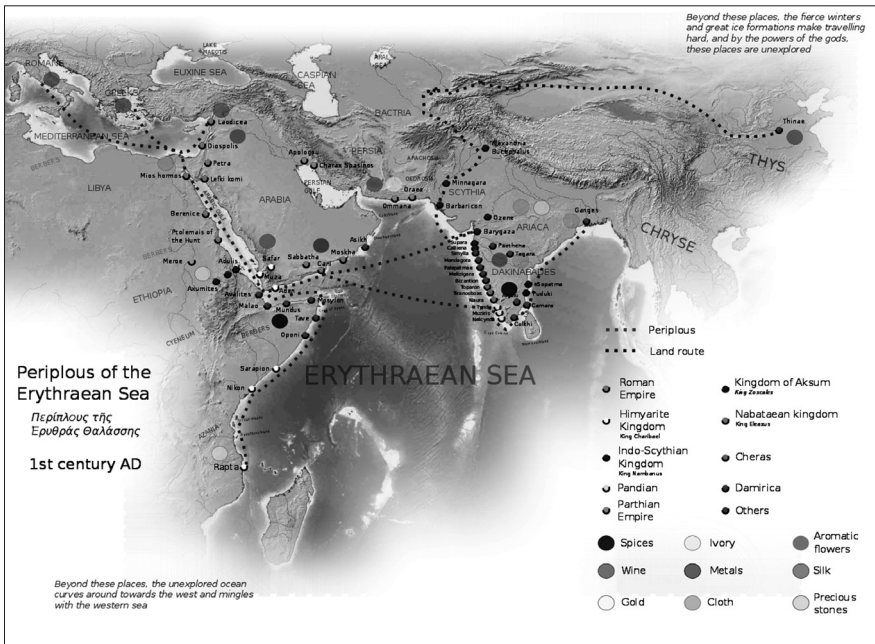


(Exhibit 2: Language Families of the World)

All over the world, each language has its own unique phonetics, that sometimes makes it impossible to render in other languages. In such cases, a close approximation to the native word is attempted. Because of the unique phonology of the medium consonant (melliṇam) ழ (l), the word 'Tamiḷ' was pronounced as 'Dravid' or 'Dramid' in various ancient civilizations of the world – including Egyptian, Greek and Roman. From there, arose the synonym (exonym) for Tamil – Dravidam.

- Deutsche is endonym, German is exonym
- Zhōngguó is endonym, China is exonym
- Farsi is endonym, Persian is exonym
- Ionian (Ἴωνες/Greek) is endonym, Yavanam is exonym
- Kedah (Malaysia) is endonym, Kaṭāram is exonym
- Jaú (Java) is endonym, Cāvakam is exonym
- Thamizh (Tamil) is endonym, Dravidam is exonym

As it is very complex to trace the first intelligent life on Earth, so is the complexity in tracing the first language on Earth. From single celled ocean life to complex human life, human evolution didn't start from a single town. Hence, human language too didn't evolve from a single town. However, many languages of the world are grouped into a 'Language Family' and



like Tyndis (Thondi), Muziris (Musiri) and Bacare (Puhar). The Roman author Pliny the Elder also records in his Latin manuscript: *Naturalis Historia*, on the commerce with Pandion (Pandyas) kings and places like Modiera (Madurai) and Cottonara (Kuttanadu) of the Dravidian Country.

(Exhibit 3: Periplus of the Erythraean Sea – Greek Sailing Routes to the Dravidian land)

The word 'Dravidian' grew in the modern century, expanding its scope - from

their descent traced from a common 'proto-language' using scientific methods. Once such Language Family is **Dravidian** (South Indian).

The words 'Tamil' and 'Dravidian' mean the same and are often used interchangeably, not only in ancient times, but even in today's academic world. But as the proto language evolved into other south Indian languages, the term 'Dravidian' was used to denote the entire language family and the core culture thereof. The word 'Dravidam' has been in existence, even centuries before the 19th century scholars like F.W. Ellis (whose famous work on the 'Dravidian Proof') and Robert Caldwell (who wrote his famous work: 'A Comparative Grammar of the Dravidian or South-Indian family of languages').

Even though the term 'Dravidam' won't occur in Sanga Tamil, because logically it is an exonym for the endonym 'Tamil', the Dravidian word finds its place all over the ancient historical documents of the world - including the 1st century Greek sailing logbook: *Periplus of the Erythraean Sea*. It even talks about the Cheras & Pandyas as the kings of the Dravidian Country. The periplus goes on record to document the commerce and ancient ports of the Dravidian land (Damirica)

just denoting the ancient Tamil language as an exonym, and the entire language family - to denoting a movement of Tamil Renaissance. It widened from the academic world into the socio-political world, when Tamil People broke barriers and started establishing the pride of their language and culture, independent of the extinct Sanskrit language and the religion & caste thereof. Thaayumaanavar and Manonmaniam Sundaranar started using the Dravidian word in their poems - Siththar Kanam and Manonmaneeyam respectively.

Leaders of Mass Movements (to name a few: Iyothee Thass, Rettamalai Srinivasan, Sir Pitti Theagarayar, C. Natesan, MC Rajah, Maraimalai Adigal, Periyar EVR and CN Annadurai) started heavily using the term 'Dravidian' in the socio-political landscape, to usher in Tamil Pride and Social Justice. In the current day context, the term 'Dravidian' has been juxtaposed as an antonym of the term 'Aryan'. It is used as an antidote to resist Social Oppression executed via Religion & Caste and deliver Social Justice & Tamil Pride. Indeed, a great journey for one single term – Tamil a.k.a Dravidian through the centuries!

Challenge: Dravidian vs. Aryan:

Sanskrit (also pronounced as saṃskṛtam, and written in native alphabet as संस्कृतम्) is yet another classical language of India along with Prakrit, but has gone extinct unlike Tamil which still flourishes continuously, much beyond 3000+ years amongst its native People. The word 'Aryan' (आर्य) in Sanskrit originally means noble, and later started denoting the names of the first three castes, and also the northern land called the Aryavarta (आर्यावर्त). Hence the northern languages are also termed Indo-Aryan.

Unlike Tamil (of the South) which is deeply rooted in Nature & People, Sanskrit (of the North) is heavily rooted in Religion & Philosophy. It also carries a baggage of Caste & Social hierarchies inter-twined with Religion and hence the term 'Aryan' has also been used as an antonym for 'Dravidian' (Tamil). The Aryan-Dravidian dichotomy is not of the recent past, but has been in vogue from the days of Sanga Tamil.

The Aryan king Brhatta had an inferior view on the Dravidian (Tamil) culture and on the status of Love (kaLavU - களவு) in Tamil Society. The illustrious Poet of Sangam Age – Kapilar (கபிலர்) got furious over such 'holier than thou' mentality sported by the Aryan king and sang the poem - Kurin̄ci Pāṭṭu (குறிஞ்சிப்பாட்டு) in condemnation of the Aryan view and vivid education on Tamil culture. Even though the union of lovers starts with kaLavU (intimate romance unseen by others), it completes in kaRpu (learnings of familial life seen by the society).

Kapilar impressed upon the Aryan polity that Tamil Culture offers an unstigmatized approach in the relationship of woman and man. It only upholds heartfelt love between them, instead of needless rituals prescribed by the religious folk. Imagine 2500+ years up the lane, a reformer named Periyar EVR will be uttering the same

words of Kapilar - There is nothing holy about it. To quote Periyar: *"We consider marriage as a mere contract; an agreement made by the couple for their convenient life in companionship. We therefore opine that, there should be no scope for any principle to control them either as a couple or as separate individuals"* (Kudi Arasu, 12-Oct-1930). Kapilar took the same approach of companionship and hailed the ritual-free relationships that existed those days in the Tamil Society.

So, the Aryan-Dravidian divide has been running as an undercurrent - throughout the history of Tamil civilization. To understand why such a dichotomy exists, we need to explore the roots of these two different cultures. Sanga Tamil offers a holistic view to achieve this understanding of the roots.

The Literary Landscape:

Tamil Literature advents much before the Sangam Era (~500 BCE to ~300 CE) and even originates much beyond the Tholkaappiyam grammar. But unfortunately, those texts (like the mutu kuruku, mutu nārai, kaḷariyāviraḷ) are lost over the course of time. Hence the starting point of available literature for Tamil is the Sangam Literature - 2400+ Poems written by 600+ Poets, 32 of them were Women. Kings & Bandits, Family Women & Sexual Workers, Traders & Warriors, Young & Old - Every section of the Society wrote inside the Tamil Literature, on wide ranging topics of Life.

The most interesting part you will find in Sanga Tamil, is the Human relationship to Nature! It is very hard to find myths or fake stories like the 12-handed Gods & 100-headed Gods in Sanga Tamil. Though some myths were later introduced, as the society moved away from a nature-oriented life, to a religion-infused pastoral life, still Correlation with Nature was not compromised on a large scale. So much so,

the names of anonymous poets, were given on similes of Nature that they employed in their poetry.

Sanga Tamil is broadly classified into 2 sections – both put together as the 18 Upper Compendium.

1. The 8 Anthologies (eṭṭu tokai)
2. The 10 Idylls (pattu pāṭṭu)

Narrative Age - Kaapiyam (Epics)			
5 Major Epics		5 Minor Epics	
1 chilapathigaaram	Drama - Tamil Society	1 naaga kumaara kaaviyam	Jain play
2 maNimEgalai	Buddhist play	2 udhayaNa kumaara kaaviyam	Jain play
3 cheevaga chinthamaNi	Jain play	3 yasOdharma kaaviyam	Jain play
4 vaLaiaapathi	Jain play	4 neelakEsi	Jain play
5 kuNdalakEsi	Buddhist play	5 chooLamaNi	Jain play

(Exhibit 5: The 5 Major Epics & 5 Minor Epics after Sanga Tamil)

The Middle Ages of Tamil civilization, saw a gradual influx of Sanskrit (Aryan) influence via Religion & Politics. Sanskrit Religious Scholars, under patronage of political power, were profusely intermingling extinct Sanskrit, apparently trying to resurrect it, inside a completely different language - Tamil. Such was the impact, that even basic Tamil Alphabet was forced to embrace the foreign Sanskrit Alphabet, which later led to the

formation of Grantha Notation System. Social terminologies were heavily sanskritized via government bureaucracy, so much so, that even basic Tamil words like Agriculture (uzhavu or vELaaNmai) were converted to Sanskrit (vivasaayam – व्यवसाय, which only meant Occupation and not Agriculture).

Languages of the world do interact with each other and borrow words via Trade, Arts and other forms of People Interaction. But those are voluntary and not imposed. The foreign language mix is kept to a base minimum and doesn't go to the extent of changing the basic Alphabet itself, just to suit a foreign language. Tamil is already an independent classical language by its own merit, and yet this Sanskrit imposition was really out of bounds. Very few classical languages of the world have faced such an onslaught and yet surviving until today. The foundations of Tamil

The 18 Upper Compendium			
8 Anthologies		10 Idylls	
Collections of Various Poets & Music Directors		Songs by Individual Poets	
1 natRiNai	400 Songs on Love	1 thiru murugu aatRupadai	Guide to Muruga
2 kuRunthogai	400 Short Songs on Love	2 porunar aatRupadai	Guide to War Bards
3 AinguRu nooRu	500 Micro Songs on Love	3 chiRu paaN aatRupadai	Guide to Bards - smaller harp
4 pathitRu Paththu	100 Songs on Chera Kings	4 perum paaN aatRupadai	Guide to Bards - greater harp
5 pari paadal	70 Melodies on River & Deities	5 malai padu kadaam	Guide to Dancers
6 kali thogai	150 Rock Songs on Love	6 mullai paattu	Song of Forests
7 aga naanooru	400 Long Songs on Love	7 kuRinji paattu	Song of Mountains
8 PuRa naanooru	400 Songs on Society	8 nedu nal vaadai	Long yet Pleasing Winter
		9 madurai kaanchi	Praise of the Pandiyar King
		10 pattina paalai	Praise of the Chola King
The 18 Lower Compendium			
Didactic Morals		Private & Social Lives	
1 thirukkuRaL	Book of Couplets	12 ain thiNai aimpathu	50 songs on Love
2 naaladiyaar	400 songs * 4 Liner Morals	13 ain thiNai ezhupathu	70 songs on Love
3 iniyavai naaRpathu	40 songs on Sweet	14 thiNai mozhi aimpathu	50 songs on Love
4 innaa naaRpathu	40 songs on Sour	15 thiNai maalai nootRu aimpathu	150 songs on Love
5 pazhamozhi naanooru	400 songs on Folk Morals	16 kai nilai/ in nilai	~60 songs on Love
6 mudhu mozhi kaanchi	100 songs on Morals	17 kaar naaRpathu	40 songs on Love
7 chiRu pancha moolam	100 songs on Morals	18 kaLa vazhi naaRpathu	40 songs on the Chola War
8 thiri kadugam	101 songs on Morals		
9 naan maNi kadigai	400 songs on Morals		
10 Elavuthal	81 songs on Morals		

(Exhibit 4: The 18 Upper Compendium & 18 Lower Compendium)

The 8 Anthologies were more focused on the Naturist way of Life. But as the society grew into a Governmental way of life, the 10 Idylls started focusing on Kingship. With Kingship came great wars & human strife and so later, the 18 Lower Compendium arose - focusing on Morals and Citizen Nobility. The globally acclaimed Book of Couplets - **Tirukkural** belongs to the 18 Lower Compendium. It is widely acclaimed by world scholars to transcend time and serve as a Book of Humanism on Simple Morals, irrespective of culture, community and geography. It does not stick to any religion or philosophical school. It only invests in Humanity - on 3 broad subjects of Life - Virtue (aṛam), Polity (poru!) & Love (kāmaṁ).

are very strong as envisaged in Tholkaappiyam, that even such imposition could not erode its core-base. Tamil grew and is still growing independently of Sanskrit and stays so, even today in the Age of Science.

Northern Religions like Vedic Brahminism (Hinduism) and Sramanam (Jainism & Buddhism) slowly had their influx into the Tamil land. More than the other faiths, Vedic religion gained active patronage of the Tamil Kings (like the Pandya: Pal yāka sālai mutu kuṭumi Peru Valūti & Chola: Rāsasūya yākam vēṭṭa Peru Narkilī). Warfare of kings were said to bring in bad karma and the souls of royal ancestors in the upper hell, were fantasized to be hanging head-down along the river of fire (Vaitaraṇī), pining for water oblations - that the Vedic Pundits can offer and alleviate evil karma. Such Sentiments, Sacrifices, Rituals and Astrology slowly took over the Tamil land. The Naturist way of living slowly diminished.

Vedic Religions wallowed local ancestral deities and common folk theism, into their portfolio to gain mileage of religious conversion of the locals, in addition to the kings. This in turn, saw the dilution of Sanskrit Vedas & Upanishads. Instead, Puranas (new stories) started their ride and wholly changed the face of Vedic Religion as well. Power became the focal point of Organized Religion. To sustain Power, even Vedic Gods (like Indra, Soma, Mitra, Savitr, Rbhus & Aśvins) were disowned and new Puranic Gods synthesized from local deities (like Maayon, Cheyon & Kot Ravai renamed in Sanskrit) and minor Vedic Devatas (like Shiva of the 11 ekadasa rudras, Vishnu of the 12 dvadasa adityas) were

elevated to Primal Gods. A new wave of Bhakti (Devotional) Literature arose, to accommodate the new advent of Puranas.

The Bhakti Literature is of two major groups – Shaivism & Vaishnavism. The local Āśvakam and Sramana Religions like Jainism & Buddhism too, had their own corpus of Tamil Literature, but those were more philosophical than devotional, and hence started declining after the Kalabhras rule. Bhakti swept the land - via the works of Nāyaṇmārs (Shaivism) & Ālvārs (Vainavam). They shifted the Vedic Philosophy of an Abstract God to a more personalized & customizable God concept, that easily attracted the masses. Arts & Aesthetics (Music, Dance, Sculpture, Painting, Festivals & mostly Stories many of them imaginary) were widely used for the religious propagation of Brahminism (Vedic, now gone Puranic).

Bhakti Age			
12 ThirumuRai		4000 aruLi cheyal	
1,2,3 Sambandar	thiru kadai kaappu	1 Periya Aazhwaar	Periya Aazhwaar T.Mozhi
4,5,6 Appar	thEvaaram	2 AandaaL	Thiru Paavai/ Naachiyar T.Mozhi
7 Sundarar	thiru paattu	3 KulasEkara Az.	Perumaal Thirumozhi
8 Maanikka Vaasagar	thiru vaasagam/ kOvaiyaar	4 Thiru Mazhisai Az.	Naanmugan/ Chanda Virutham
9 ChEndanaar/ Others	thiru visai paa/ pallaaNdu	5 Thondar Adi Podi Az.	Thiru Maalai
10 Thirumoolar	thiru mandhiram	6 Thiru PaaN Az.	Amalan Aadhi Piraan
11 Kaaraikaal Amma/ Others	prabandham	7 Madhura Kavi Az.	Kanni Nun Chiru Thaambu
12 ChEkkizhar	periya puraaNam	8 Thirumangai Az.	Periya Thiru Mozhi & Others
		9 Poigai Az.	1st Andaadhi
		10 Poodhathu Az.	2nd Andaadhi
		11 Pei Az.	3rd Andaadhi
		12 Nam Aazhwaar	Thiru Vaai Mozhi & Others
		x Amudhanar	Raamaanusa NootRu Andhaadhi
18,312 Verses		4,000 Verses	

(Exhibit 6: The Bhakthi (Devotional) Literature in Medieval Tamil)

These Bhakti poems, even though heavily inspired by Sanskrit and Brahminism, also carried an independent narration, with soul-stirring Tamil eloquence. This led to positive vibes of enrichment of the language, but also led to negative vibes of religiously infused feudal society and its byproducts

like Caste System & Women Suppression. Graded Inequality was the order of the day. Education started to be reserved only for the Elite. These social evils cannot be directly blamed on literature, because literature merely portrayed the society of those times. There is no denying the richness of Bhakti Literature, even though they are no match to the naturist and humanist Sangam Literature.

In the rest of this paper, let us **trace in Sanga Tamil, the key Dravidian philosophies:**

- Social Justice
- Self-Respect
- Equality
- Rationalism
- Apatheism
- Feminism &
- Anti-Brahminism

and benchmark our current day progressive thoughts, with core thoughts from the classical age.

(Disclaimer: By the term Anti-Brahminism, we only intend to mean the opposition to caste and power system of graded inequality in the society. We do NOT mean any individual or a group as a whole).

Anti-Brahminism in Sanga Tamil:

Kalitokai, one of the eight anthologies in Sanga Tamil vividly narrates a beautiful but a sad story. Our Heroine (thalaivi) is in deep love with the Hero (thalaivan) and enjoys meeting him in private, in the dark hours after dusk. One night, when she goes to meet and relish with her beloved, she is stopped and challenged by a Brahmin of that village. He questions her chastity and asks how a noble woman can walk on the streets during night time?

All such customs were unheard of hitherto in the Tamil land, but with the advent of Vedic

Brahminism and their royal patronage, the social discourse had started to change. The Girlfriend (thozhi) of our Heroine had already warned her about this growing advent of Brahminism and about the new customs and rituals in their area. The Heroine trembles. The Brahmin seeing her feeble nature, tries to lure her by offering his betel nuts and invites her for an unsolicited affair.

But our Heroine, a smart Tamil girl has other ways to escape this ordeal. She bends down as if in supplication, picks the sand from the ground, throws it in the Brahmin's eyes and runs away to a nearby settlement (cheri). Knowing very well that Brahmins won't enter the cheri because of their caste codes and rules, she cleverly escapes into that settlement and sees her friend (thozhi). With pangs of passion, unable to meet her lover, she laments to her friend that Brahminism has brought suffering to the town.

This poem is a very important record of how Brahminism reshaped the Tamil society into a Caste-ridden, Ritual-induced, Women-restrictive landscape. Let's directly read through the poem in the native tongue (keywords bolded for understanding) and also dwell on the translation in English. Here we go!

கலித்தொகை 65 (குறிஞ்சிச்சக்கலி) கபிலர்
குறிஞ்சித்தீனணை; தலைவிதோழியிடம் சொன்னது
திரந்து இழாய்! கேளாய்! நம் ஊர்க்கு எல்லாம் சாலும்
பெருநகை! அல்கலநிகழ்ந்தது; ஒருநிலையே
மன்பதை எல்லாம் மடிந்த இருங்கங்குல்,
அம் துகில்பேர்வை அணிபெறத்தேடி, நம்
இன்சாயல் மார்பன்குறிநின்றேன்; யான் ஆக, (5)

தீர்த்தறைந்ததலையும், தன்கம்பலும்,
காரக்குறைந்து கறைப்பட்டுவந்து, நம்
சேரியின்போகா முடமுதிர்பார்ப்பானை,
தோழி! நீ போற்றுகி! என்றி, அவன் ஆங்கே
பாராக்குற முடிப்பணியா, பொழுது அன்றி. (10)

யார் இவண்நின்றீர்? எனக்கூறிப்பையென
வைகாண்முதுபகட்டின்பக்கத்தின்பேரகாது,

தையால்! தம்பலத்தின்றியே? என்றுதன்
பக்குஅழித்துக்கொண்டனத்தரலும், யாதுஒன்றும்
வாய்வாளேன்;நிற்பக்கடிதுஅகன்று, கைமற்றி,(15)

கைப்படுக்கப்பட்டாய்சிறுமி! நீ,மற்றுயான்
ஏனைபிசாக! அருள்என்னைநலிதரின்,
இவ்ஊர்ப்பலிநீபெறாஅமல்கொள்வேன்
எனப்பலவழ்தரங்காது,வாய்பாடிநிற்ப,
முதுபார்ப்பான்அஞ்சினன்ஆதல்அறிந்து,
யான்எஞ்சாது(20)

ஒருகைமணல்கொண்டு,மேல்தூவக்கண்டே,
கடிதுஅரற்றிப்பூசல்தொடங்கினன்;ஆங்கே
ஒடுங்குவயத்தின்,கொடுங்கேழ்க்கொடுங்கண்
இரும்புலிகொண்மார்நிறுத்தவலையுள்,ஓர்
ஏதில்குறுநரிபட்டற்றால்! காதலன்(25)

காட்சிஅழுங்க, நம்ஊர்க்குளவாஅம்
ஆகுலம்ஆகிவிளைந்ததை, என்றும்தன்
வாழ்க்கைஅதுஆக்கிகொண்டமுதுபார்ப்பான்
வீழ்க்கைப்பெருங்கருங்கைத்து!

Kalitokai 65 (Kuriñci Kali) – Kapilar
Kuriñci Tiṇai, What the heroine
said to her friend
(Translation by: Ms. Vaidehi Herbert)

My friend wearing perfect jewels! Listen!
This will get our town to laugh. It happened
lastnight.
When our townsfolk were asleep,
Draped in mybeautiful clothing,
I awaited my man with a handsomechest. (5)

The bald-headed leper, The blemished one
in our town,that lame
Old Brahmin who does not enter
ourneighborhood(cheri),
The one you warned me about; showed
up,spotted me,
Bowed to me and asked, “**Why are you**
hereat this unsightly hour?” (10)

Slowly, he stuck to my side, like an old bull
that had sighted hay.

“Lady, will you eat my betel leaves and betel
nuts?”

He asked me as he opened his pouch, and
said again,

“Take these” - as he tried to hand them to me.
I was speechless. He spoke without restraint,
and said: (15)

“Girl, you have fallen into my hands! If you
are one spirit,

I am the other spirit. You better be gracious
to me.

If you trouble me, I’ll **take away the**
offerings you have

Received from this town.” He prattled on
and on, and

Irealized that the old fellow was scared of
me, thinkingI was a demon. (20)

I picked up a fistful of sand and threw it
at him

And he immediately caused an uproar.
It was like a useless littlefox getting trapped
in a net

Set out to catch a fierce-eyed,
Mighty tiger with curved stripes. (25)

This old Brahmin has deprived me of my
tryst with my lover.

He has brought suffering to this town.
He has made lustingafter women his way
of life,

And created a great, big streetdrama last
night.

Sonow, we have direct empirical evidence
in Sangam Literature on how the Tamil Society
was encountering Brahminism and its (im)moral
code, some 2500+ years back.Along with our
Heroine, we too feel the pathos, as we get to
know about the negative transformation of the
Tamil society.

It’s also true that there are other poems in
Sanga Tamil that talk about the patronage of

Vedic Brahminism from theKings, as well as some Puranic Deities & their stories. The fact is: **Sanga Tamil stands as a Social Mirror, recording both the advent and rejection of Brahminism in the ancient Tamil Society.**

One can easily find in Sanga Tamil, the mention of Ramayana's Rama (puṛaṇāṇūru 378, akaṇāṇūru 70) and a few other characters from Mahabharata, but those were the stories that have started spreading in the society at that time. A key point to be noted is: Nowhere in Sanga Tamil will Rama be picturized as the God of Tamils, but only a passing reference made in the context of a simile or a story. Rama is never accorded the worship status of kōṭṭam, kūttu and music in Sanga Tamil. For that, we need to wait for a few more centuries, for the Bhakthi literature to arrive on the scene.

Rationalism & Feminism in Sanga Tamil:

Rationality is defined as a characteristic where opinions&actions are based on reason, logic and knowledge, rather than on a religious belief or emotion. Human beings are sentimental by nature and they don't operate on logic 100% of the time. Still, there should be an effort to balance both – the path of emotion and the path of reason, in an effort towards a mature society. When even educated professionals of today's modern age fall into sentimental traps, Sanga Tamil portrays an ancient society of Rationalism.

Let's now hear a story narrated in Naṭṭiṇai –the first of eight anthologies in Sanga Tamil. The Girlfriend (thozhi) of our Heroine (thalaivi) performs a Soliloquy (speaking to oneself), as if she is speaking to the Tamil God - Murugan. The Hero (thalaivan) is nearby overhearing this sweet drama. **The lady in an apparent jest, scolds even the God as a Fool.**

Murugan (Cheyon) & Thirumaal (Maayon) are not Vedic deities, but are a mere remembrance of the ancient ancestors of the Tamil land, deified via memorial stones and accorded worship status of kōṭṭam (altar), pūṣai (flowers), kūttu (dance) and isai (music).

The Heroine is in a passionate love with the Hero and has gone love-struck and love-sick. The Mother of our Heroine unaware of the love, thinks that some spirit has descended on her daughter and arranges for a dance worship – called the vēlaṇ verī. The worship dancer (local priest) performs the dance for God Murugan with kāntaḷ flowers. The girlfriend on seeing all these, couldn't control her laughter, as she knows that our Heroine is not possessed by God Murugan's spirit, but by our Hero's love spirit. She chides the God, who is supposed to be all-knowing, but not knowing this simple love matter. In an apparent jest, she exclaims: "Oh Muruga, you may be a God, but you are a Fool! May you live long!"

நற்றிணை34 (திணை: குறிஞ்சி, துறை: வேலன்வெறி)
பாடியவர்: பிரமசாரி (தலைவிதோழியிடம் சொன்னது)

கடவுள்கல்கனை, அடைஇறந்துஅவிழ்ந்து
பறியாக்குவனைமலரெட்டு, காந்தன்
குருதிஒண்பூஉருகெழக்கட்டிப்
பெருவரைஅடுக்கப்பொற்பச்சூர்மகள்
அருவிஇன்னியத்துஆடுநாடன் (5)

மார்புதரவந்து, படர்மலிஅருநோய்
நின்அணங்குஅன்மைஅறிந்தும் அண்ணாந்து
காந்நறுங்கடம்பின் கண்ணிகூழ்
வேலன்வேண்டவெறிமனைவந்தோய்

கடவுள்ஆயினும்ஆக(10)
மடவைமன்றவாழியமுருகே!

Naṭṭiṇai 34 (Tiṇai: Kuṛiñci, Tuṛai: vēlaṇ verī)

What the Heroine's friend said to Murugan, as the Hero listened nearby
(Translation by: Ms. Vaidehi Herbert)

From the countrywhere
fresh blue waterlilies, that
blossom

Pushing aside leaves,
not plucked by people,
from springs in the divine
mountain,

Arestrung together with
blood-red, bright glory lily

Blossoms as lovely
garlands worn by the
goddess

There, who dances to
the roars of the waterfalls,
that sound like sweet
musical instruments,

Her affliction is due to the embraces of the
man, who makes the mountains beautiful.

**Her distress was not caused by your
anger.** Even though you knew that,

You came to the veriyaattam ritual and
accepted the offerings given by the diviner with
lifted head,

Who wore a rainy season's fragrant kadampam
flower garland

You may be a God,

**But you are ignorant! May you live long,
oh Murugan!**

As you can see, the Girl is bold enough to
challenge the familial & social customs prevalent
in the society. She is even able to call the
God - a Fool, although in jest! The religious
philosophies of omniscience & omnipotence of
the God are made fun of. If the God is not even
able to know the source of distress, how can
he alleviate the distress of his devotees? Be
it simple Tribal worship or the grand worship
in Organized Religion – if logic and rationality
come into play, most of the propagated and
indoctrinated assumptions would be shattered.
Let's imbibe this Rational Spirit from our own
Sanga Tamil Girl.



(Exhibit 7: Women Poets in Sanga Tamil
and their Themes)

Put together, there were 32 Women Poets in
Sanga Tamil, who wrote 170 poems in the Upper
Compendium. The literary themes touched by
the Women of those days, were not only on
Love & Family, but approximately 70 discourses
on Society, Valor, Bravery, Education and Social
Justice. That was the peak of Feminism in Sanga
Tamil.

Apatheism (and Atheism) in Sanga Tamil:

Apatheism is the attitude of apathy towards
the existence or non-existence of God. Apatheists
are not generally interested in accepting (or)
rejecting any claims about God, and the stories
concocted by Religion. They simply spend time
in useful causes to the society rather than
debating with Theists on false premises and
assumptions of the religious texts. Hence, they
cannot be called Atheists too, as they don't care
about theism at all. Such philosophical schools
existed even during the times of Sanga Tamil.

Worldwide, Theism is about the acceptance
of God and Atheism is about the denial of

God. But only in the Indian context, Theism is about the acceptance of Sanskrit Vedas and Atheism is about the denial of Sanskrit Vedas. Such a strange categorization throws light on the power & authority of Brahminism in the Indian Religious context. Even if you deny God, you are accepted as a Theist (Āstika), as long as you submit yourself, to the authority of Brahministic Vedas (veda prāmāṇya vādī). On the other hand, even if show true love towards a personal deity, but question the authority of Brahministic Vedas, you are dubbed as an Atheist (Nāstika) (nāstiko vedanindakaḥ).

The Āstika schools are six in number. Sāṃkhya and Mīmāṃsa don't believe in God, but believe the Vedas and accept the Vedic authority and hence considered Theist.

1. Mīmāṃsā or Purva Mimāṃsā (Vedic – Samhita, Aranyaka & Brahmana)
2. Vedānta or Uttara Mimāṃsā (Vedic – Upanishad)
3. Nyāya (logic)
4. Vaiśeṣika (atom)
5. Sāṃkhya (enumeration)
6. Yoga (samādhi or concentration)

The Nāstika schools are four in number. Some may count Ajñāna (Agnosticism) as the fifth. None of these accept Vedic Authority and hence considered Atheist.

1. Buddhism
2. Jainism
3. Cārvāka
4. Ājīvika

The Tamil (Dravidian) school of philosophy does not figure on the above lists, because it is an unorganized one and a different entity in itself. Apathetic to the Vedas, Tamils have their own primordial philosophy and religion

(the term Tamil 'religion' is a misnomer, as it is more a way of natural living, rather than an organized religion). These days, Ācivakam is considered to have emanated from the Tamil land, but Tamils had an unnamed philosophical school even before that - Living with Nature and Living in a Commune. After all, Living is the only Philosophy of the Tamil People.

வையத்துள்வாழ்வாங்குவாழ்பவன் வாணுறையும்
தெய்வத்துள்வைக்கப்படும்.(குறள்:50
அதிகாரம்:இவ்வாழ்க்கைஇயல்:இவ்வறவியல்)

Who shares domestic life, by household virtues graced

Shall mid the Gods in heaven, who dwell be placed. (KuRaL: 50)

Living a purposeful life is the realization of Tamils – 1) Purpose to the self (akam) and 2) Purpose to the Society (PuRam). Termed 'thiNai', it means the Way of Living.

Internal (akam) is up to individuals and their personal lives, namely: love, affection, parenting, friendship etc. External (puRam) is up to the Society (Individuals put together) and their social lives, which goes by various prevailing factors in the social scene namely: bravery, politics, justice, morals etc. The concept of God does not arise because, those who have lived a purposeful life – both to the self & society, those Leaders are considered 'Gods' - memorialized, sung and remembered by the ensuing generations. The Tamil word kadavuL (God) does not occur in the philosophical ThirukkuRaL, but only the words iRaivan (leader) & theivam (light) find a place. Though Sanga Tamil has numerous instances of the word kadavuL (God), most of their connotation is in the context of the memorialized heroes, leaders and ancestors.

#	Internal Conduct Theme (agam)	External Conduct Theme (puRam)
1	Attempt (kaikkiLai)	Covet (vetchi x karanthai)
2	Wait (Mullai)	March (vanchi x kanchi)
3	Enjoy (kuRinji)	Defend (uzhignai x nochi)
4	Break (marutham)	Fight (thumbai)
5	Pine (neidhal)	Victory/ Defeat (vaagai)
6	Leave (paalai)	Praise (paadaaN)
7	Grandiose (perunthiNai)	General (pothuviyal)

(Exhibit 8: Life Themes (thiNai)
in Sanga Tamil)

Memorialization is usually done via Naṭukal (நடுகல்) or Kantu (கந்து) and a simple kōṭṭam (altar) built in memory, and then cherished forever with pūsai (flowers), kūttu (dance), isai (music) and uNavu (feast). The primordial deities –Thirumaal(Maayon), Murugan (Cheyon) & KotRavai (Valiant Woman) are such memorialization of bygone Leaders of the Land. They are assigned as primary deities to the land where they had lived (Mullai, KuRinji & Paalai). The other two lands (Marutham & Neithal) are emigrated lands from the above three, and hence the same three deities were revered there too, in addition to new memorials arising in every generation. However, Vendhan (the active King at any given time) is the custodian of the Marutham land and VaruLNan (sea wind) is the custodian of the Neithal land and they rotate and keep changing, unlike Maayon, Cheyon & KotRavai.

Unfortunately, after the Vedic Religion swept over the Tamil land, these local deities were absorbed and assimilated into the fold of Brahminism (Hinduism) and the local population was embraced and got converted into the new fold. However, that did not happen instantly, but consumed and subsumed over a period of time. This lead time gave the opportunity for the Tamils to revolt, refuse, protest and nonconform to the new socio-political order. These were aptly captured and registered in Sanga Tamil. Let's see one such poem from the cherished Puṛaṇāṇūru – the last of the eight anthologies.

புறநானூறு335 (திணை: வாகை, துறை:
மூதின்முல்லை)
பாடியவர்: மாங்குடிக் கிழார்
(பாடலின்சிலபகுதிகள்கிட்டவில்லை)

அடலருந்துப்பின்

.. ..குரவேதளவேகுருந்தேமுல்லைஎன்று
இந்நான்குஅல்லதுபூவும்இல்லை;

கருங்கால்வரகேஇருங்கதிர்த்தினையே
சிறுகொடக்கிகளன்னேபொறிகிளர்அவரையொடு(5)
இந்நான்குஅல்லதுஉணர்வும்இல்லை;

துடியன்பாணன்பறையன்கடம்பன்னன்று
இந்நான்குஅல்லதுகுடியும்இல்லை;

ஒன்னாத்திவ்வர்முன்னின் றுவிவங்கி
ஒளி றுஏந்தமுருப்பின்கன்று
எறிந்துவீழ்ந்தெனக்(10)

கல்லேபரவின்அல்லது,
நெல்உகுத்துப்பரவும்கடவுளும்இல்லை.



(Exhibit 9: Memorialization (Nadu Kal) &
Dance (Kuravai Kooththu) in Sanga Tamil)

**Puṛaṇāṇūru 335 (Tiṇai: Vākai, Tuṇai: Mūtin
Mullai)**

Poet: Māṅkuṭi Kīlār (Parts of the poem are missing)

(Translation by: Ms. Vaidehi Herbert)

Of strength difficult to overcome
There are no flowers other than these four
– kuravam, thalavam, kuruntham and mullai,

There are no foods other than these four
– varaku with black stems, large-eared thinai, (5)
kol on small vines, and spotted avarai beans,
There are no groups other than these four
– thudi drummers, pānars, parai drummers
and kadampans.

**There are no gods, other than the
memorial stones of heroes** who blocked
enemies,

killed their elephants with lifted, bright
tusks and got killed,

and they need not be worshipped with heaps
and heaps of rice showering!

The poet Māṅkuṭi Kīlār clearly attests on: who is considered as KadavuL (God) by the Tamils? He even goes an extra step and compares the native Tamil worship with the non-native Brahmin religion. Instead of simple memorial & remembrance, the Brahmin (Hindu) religion profusely wastes food like milk & rice on stone artifacts in the name of abhishekam (ritual bathing) and naivedyam (ritual food). Sanga Tamil clearly denounces them and says: “We don’t throw heaps and heaps of rice to please the Gods (and the Brahmin priests who partake them all). Instead, our food is just simple varagu, thiNai, koL and avarai. We offer only what we eat. And we take them back and eat as blessed food. Our ‘Gods’ are only those nadukal memorials for our ancestors, who have fought for our cause! For us, there are no other Gods!”

Social Justice in Sanga Tamil:

What is Social Justice? Why should we earn it and why should we sustain it? Social Justice can

be defined as: “Equal access to life’s resources – education, wealth, health, opportunities, honour and privileges of ALL members of the society”. Though the concept looks very lofty and egalitarian, the path towards social justice is not always easy. Such simple concepts of human life, become the most challenging to achieve and sustain. Why the great Tamil sage vaLLuvar had to elucidate on such a simple common-sense thought - “piRappu okkum ellā uyirkkum” (All life is born equal)?

From time immemorial, human society is always fragmented into two cores – the powerful & the powerless. While the powerful tend to accumulate resources of the society to their own coffers, social movements spring up to stop that power grab and balance the resources to one and all. The language and forms of these movements may vary from country to country, based on the local scene & settings. In the so-called holy land of India and Tamilnadu, the power settings are based on Caste, which in turn is fueled by (Hindu a.k.a Brahmin) Religion. Even in the age of Science, the discriminatory birth-based caste system is here to stay and sadly, cannot be undone anytime soon. So, how to deliver and sustain social justice?

Social Justice is one of the key principles of the Dravidian Movement in the 19th, 20th and the 21st centuries. It is so close and dear to the hearts of the followers of the Dravidian Movement. In fact, Tamilnadu was the forerunner for Social Justice in the whole of India – when the Dravidian forefathers launched the first Affirmative Action by passing the Communal G.O # 613 legislation in 1921.

(Also wish to record here, that in the current day context, Aasiriyar K. Veeramani has been a lifelong champion of Social Justice. He is the go-to person whenever legal hurdles come in the way of social justice. He turns every roadblock into a stepping stone – be it a reservation percentage issue or creamy layer criterion.

Religious scholars may boast about Lord Krishna as 'sambhavami yuge yuge', but for the Dravidian Movement, Krishnasamy Veeramani is the real 'sambhavami yuge yuge', appearing each and everytime in the fight for Social Justice.)

Education is one of the key pillars to Social Justice. To provide equal and equitable opportunity for education, to the underprivileged sections of the society, is a key component in social justice delivery.

The key difference between social justice struggles of the West and social justice struggles of India is: Atleast there was access to education in the West, even though people were segregated based on Race and Color. But in India, doors to education were completely shut off by Brahminism to the underprivileged people based on Caste. Generations after generations, lost their education and thereby lost their quality of life. Their History was written by the Brahmins and their Positions were taken by the Brahmins.

It was openly declared in the law book: "Sūdras are not qualified. Smṛiti prohibits their education. The ears of him, who hears the Veda are to be filled with (molten) lead and lac. His tongue is to be slit".

(Brahma Sutra Bashyam, Adi Sankaracharya - Chapter 1, Section 3, Adhikarana 9, Sloka 38)

- प्रतषिधःशूद्रस्यस्मर्यते

pratiṣēdhaḥ śūdrasya smaryatē (Smṛiti prohibits Shudra education)

- वेदमउपशृण्वतस्त्रपुजतुभ्यांश्रोत्रप्रतपूरणम्

vēdam upaśṛṇvatas trapu jatubhyān śrōtra pratipūraṇam (Pour molten lead (trapu) in ears, if they hear)

- भवतचिवेदोउच्चारणजहिवाच्छेदः

bhavati ca vēdōccāraṇē jihvā cchēdaḥ (Slit the tongue, if they utter)

- श्रवणाअध्ययनार्थप्रतिषिधात्

śravaṇa-adhyayana-artha-pratiṣedhāt (Prohibition of hearing, studying and understanding)

Such were the cruel punishments coded in the Rule Book, if Shudras & underprivileged people attempted to learn. Manu Smṛiti also borrows such codes and enshrines them in the Governmental Law.

एकमेवतुशूद्रस्यप्रभुःकर्मसमादशित्
एतेषामेववर्णानांशुश्रूषामनसूयया

ekameva tu śūdrasya prabhuḥ karma samādiśat

eteṣāmeva varṇānāṃ śuśrūṣāmanasūyayā (Manu Smṛiti: Discourse 1, Section 58, Sloka 91)

For the Śūdra, God ordained only one function: the ungrudging service of the Upper Castes.

धर्मोपदेशंदर्पेणवप्राणामस्यकुर्वतः
तप्तमासेचयेत्तैलंवक्त्रेश्रोत्रेचपार्थविः

dharmopadeśaṃ darpeṇa viprāṇāmasya kurvataḥ

taptamāsecayet tailaṃ vaktre śroत्रे ca pārthivaḥ (Manu Smṛiti: Discourse 8, Section 41, Sloka 272)

If a Śūdra teaches a Brāhmaṇa, the king shall pour heated oil into his mouth and ears. (Even with all such restrictions, somehow if a lower caste person attains some mastery, then the Brahmins can unabashedly beget his skills and then restrict him/her to his due low place in the Varna System).

So, Education has been a lost opportunity for generations! To compensate for that colossal loss, Affirmative Action (Reservation) in the educational sector for the underprivileged people, is one of the key pillars of Social Justice. This mammoth responsibility does not stop with their education alone. Next is their empowerment. **Education leads to Empowerment! Empowerment leads to Quality of Life!**

Sanga Tamil, even 2000+ years back, anticipating all these social evils that were upcoming with the advent of Vedic Brahminism, warns the Tamil population on how to face the onslaught. In fact, it had already started even during the days of Sanga Tamil, under royal patronage by a few kings to the Vedic Religion. Interestingly, one king - who didn't succumb to the sentimental temptations of religion, had the moral courage to stand up and speak: "Hey Tamils, Education is your only Emancipation". His name was Pandiyan Nedunchezhiyan and his honorific was 'Arya Padai Kadantha' (One who conquered the Aryans).

புறநானூறு 183 (திணை: பொதுவியல், துறை: பொருண்மொழிக்காஞ்சி)

பாடியவர்: ஆரியப்படைகடந்தநெடுஞ்செழியன்

உற்றுழி உதவியும், உறுபொருள்கொடுத்தும்,
பிறற்றைநிலைமுனியா துகற்றல்நன்றே.
பிறப்புஓரன்ன உடன்வயிற்று உள்ளும்,
சிறப்பின்பவலவந்தாயும்மனத்திரியும்.

ஒருகுடிப்பிறந்தபல்லோருள்ளும் (5)
மூத்தோன்வருகஎன்னாது அவருள்
அறிவுடையோன் ஆறுஅரகம்செல்லும்.

வேற்றுமைதெரிந்தநாற்பால் உள்ளும்,
கீழ்ப்பால் ஒருவன்கற்பின்,
மேற்பால் ஒருவனும் அவன்கண்படுமே! (10)

Puṛaṇāṇūru 183 (Tiṇai: Potuviyal, Tuṛai: Poruṇ Moḷi kāñci)

Poet: Pāṇṭiyan Āriyappaṭai Kaṭanta Neṭuñceliyan

(Translation by: Prof. Dr. George. L. Hart)

Learning is a fine thing to have if a student helps a teacher
in his troubles, gives him a mass of wealth and honors him
without ever showing disdain!

Among those born from the same belly,
who share the same nature, a mother's heart will be most tender
toward the most learned! Of all who are born into a joint family,

A king will not summon the eldest to his side but instead he will
show favor to the man among them who has the greatest knowledge!

And with the four classes of society distinguished as different,
should anyone from the lowest become a learned man,
someone of the highest class, reverently, will come to him to study!

Nedunchezhiyan clearly records here that the four varna system of Brahminism is discriminatory (வேற்றுமைதெரிந்தநாற்பால்). But he alone cannot change the whole of Tamilnadu, which has already started falling into this precipice via Religion & Politics. Yet, he dreams of the day, when the Brahmins themselves would come to a Tamil (Shudra) and reverently pay their respects to the fountainhead of Knowledge. Probably he had a premonition that 2000+ years down the lane, this was going to happen in 1967 CE - when Arignar Anna took over the reins of the Government, not as the King, but as the Chief Minister of Tamilnadu. So, let us heed to the clarion call made by our own Dravida Pandiyan, who conquered the Aryan! —"Education, Education and Education is our only Emancipation!"

Equality in Sanga Tamil:

All lives are Born Equal (piRappu okkum ellaa uyirkkum) is the 'moola mantra' of Tamils. Our Leader, Ayyan VaLLuvan has registered this one line - into the hearts of all Tamils. Every Tamil worldwide, knows this one line from ThirukkuRaL. But there is a next couplet too, which people might have missed.

சிறப்பொக்கும்எல்லாஉயிர்க்கும் - சிறப்பொவ்வா
செய்தொழில்வேற்றுமையான். (குறள் 972
அதிகாரம்: பெருமை)

All lives are Born Equal. Diversities of work, give each their special worth.

மேலிருந்தும்மேலவ்வார்க்குமேலவ்வார்க்கு - கீழிருந்தும்
கீழவ்வார்க்குமேலவ்வார்க்கு. (குறள் 973 அதிகாரம்:
பெருமை)

The so-called upper castes are not upper, when they have low qualities.

The so-called lower castes are not lower, when they have high qualities.

VaLLuvar had such a moral conviction to break the Caste Hegemony and he vehemently spreads this message of Equality all over his work – ThirukkuRaL, the Magnum Opus of Tamil language.

There are many places in the KuRaL, where the Vedic religion is challenged either subtly or overtly. There are hardly 8-10 direct root Sanskrit words in the KuRaL, and they too are employed - mostly in a tone of condemnation of the Brahminism via their own lingo. Some ignorant people take it as a pride, and boast that VaLLuvar is talking about their religion and the characters in their puranic stories. Of course, one has to mention by name, if he is condemning and ridiculing that person. Is ridicule a pride?

• ஐந்தவித்தான்ஆற்றல்அகல்விகம்புஉளார்கோமான்
இந்திரனேசாலுங்கரி (குறள் : 25 -
அதிகாரம்: நீத்தான்பெருமை)

Indra – The Lord of the Devas (Vedic Indra, not the Jain Indra) is the proof of pettiness, who got disgraced by a hermit of will power to tame the five senses. It is an open ridicule of the chief Vedic God Indra.

• தாம்வீழ்வார்மென்தேள்துயிலின் - இனிதுகொல்
தாமரைக்கண்ணன் உலகு? (குறள்: 1103 -
அதிகாரம்: புணர்ச்சிமகிழ்தல்)

Is lotus-eyed Vishnu's heaven (Vaikunta) sweeter than sleeping on Lover's arms? VaLLuvar states that love bliss is far better than Vaikunta. It is an open ridicule of Lord Vishnu (if thaamarai kannaan means so).

• அவிசைநீந்துஆயிரம்வேட்டலின் - ஒன்றன்
உயிர்செகுத்து உண்ணாமைநன்று (குறள்: 259 -
அதிகாரம்: புலாண்மைத்துத்)

Nonviolent worship is far better than brutal killing of herds of animals and offering them as 'Havis' in 1000 sacrifices. It is an open ridicule of the Vedic Yagnas (fire sacrifices like Aswamedha, Vajapeya, Rajasuya and PutraKameshti) and the amount of meat poured in the ritual fire. Strangely, the Cow Killers of yesterday have become the Cow Protectors of today, in the Indian political context.

• பழுதிதண்ணும்மந்திரியின்பக்கத்துள்வீடுவோர்
எழுபதுகோடி உறும் (குறள்: 639 - அதிகாரம்: அமைச்சு)

Seventy crores of enemies are far better than a Brahmin Minister intending the King's ruin. It is an open ridicule of the politico-religious nexus and the patronage of Brahminism by the Kings. VaLLuvar uses their own Sanskrit term 'Mantri' to ridicule them, whereas he uses the regular Tamil term 'Amaichchu' everywhere else.

• மறப்பினும்ஓத்துக்கொளவ்ஆகும் பார்ப்பான்பிறப்பு,
ஒழுக்கம் குன்றக்கிடும் (குறள் : 134 -
அதிகாரம்: ஒழுக்கமுடைமை)

Even if you forget your Vedas, there is no harm; you can learn them again. But if you forget your Dignity and Discipline, your so-called Brahmin Birth (Dvija) is useless. It is an open ridicule on the authority of the Vedas and the self-claimed Superiority of Birth. VaLLuvar uses their own terminology to ridicule them.

VaLLuvar - the man who is passionately advocating Equality, is never going to sing flatteries to the Religion which advocates Inequality and Discrimination. Be assured, however much a few people twist the meanings of the KuRaL, the natural logic in the KuRaL will expose their falsity. Merely using a term from the religious corpus does NOT confine VaLLuvar to that corpus. It is akin to calling Periyar EV Ramasamy as 'Rama Bhaktha' just because he has the term 'Rama' in his name, as given by his Parents. In fact, EVR was the one who was thrashing Ramayana in the nook and corner of Tamilnadu. Similarly, VaLLuvar uses their own terms and stories prevalent in the society to ridicule them. Ridicule is not a Pride!

Sanga Tamil is a Torch Bearer of Equality. Be it King or a Commoner - All are Equal - in the eyes of Tamil Justice. Here is one such song which equates the Ruler with an Illiterate Citizen.

புறநானூறு 189 (திணை: பொதுவியல், துறை: பொருண்மொழிக்காஞ்சி)

பாடியவர்: மதுரைக்கணக்காயனார்மகனார்நக்கீரன்

தென்கடல்வளநகம்பெருமையினர்,
வெண்குடைநீழற்றியஒருமையோர்க்கும்,
நடுநாள்யாமத்தும்பகலும்துஞ்சான்
கடுமடப்பார்க்கும்கல்வனஒருவற்கும்,

உண்பதுநாழி, உடுப்பவைஇரண்டே! (5)

பிறவும்எல்லாம்ஒர்ஒக்குமே!

அதனால்செல்வத்துப்பயனேநடவ்,

துய்ப்பேம்எனினே, தப்புநபலவே.

Puṛaṇāṇūru 189 (Tiṇai: Potuviyal, Tuṛai: Poruṇ Moḷi kāñci)

Poet: Maturai Kaṇakkāyaṇār Maṇaṇār Nakkīraṇ

(Translation by: Ms. Vaidehi Herbert)

Between those who Rule with white umbrellas,

not sharing with others this earth, surrounded by clear oceans,

And an uneducated man who stalks fast animals

In the middle of the night and during the day without sleeping,

everything is equal:

the need for a measure of food to eat and two sets of clothes.

So, the purpose of wealth is charity.

If one thinks of enjoying wealth by himself, many matters will fail!

Nakkeeran himself was a caste-occupation nexus breaker. His father was an Accountant (kaṇakkan) whereas he took up the profession of a Poet and rose in the ranks of the Pandya court. Unfortunately, many fake stories were spun on Sangam Poets in the latter-day work, Thiruvilaiyaadal PuraaNam and Nakkeeran was disgraced on account of his caste. To drive home a discriminatory point that God himself will help the Brahmin, Nakkeeran was falsely depicted as a person punished by God Shiva. He had to run from temple to temple, to assuage Shiva by singing kOba prasaadam and getting cured of his cursed disease. Thiruvilaiyaadal PuraaNam even went to a further low and falsely depicted that Tamil is subservient to Sanskrit language and the 48 Sanskrit Letters took Avtar as 48 Sangam Poets.

Tamil has undergone so much injustice, that we need to apply the same Social Justice principles to the language also and restore its Self-Respect. Equality is the quintessence of Tamil language!

Philanthropy in Sanga Tamil:

Organized Religion often boasts that, it alone shows philanthropy & charity to people, by providing free food in temples and offering other menial items & services to visiting devotees. Some people also have a misconception that, progressive movements just talk theory and offer no philanthropy at all. Such people should visit Periyar Thidal and see in person, all those charitable institutions operating in full swing towards benefitting various sections of the society.

Philanthropy & Rationalism are not exclusive but inclusive! Giving Back to the Society – is also one of Periyar's cherished humanist goals. Destitute Children's Home, Hospitals, Dispensaries, Schools, Rural Upliftment, Legal Aid, Water & Nature Conservation – are all a part of the package in the day-to-day activities of Dravidian Movement. Unlike Organized Religion, the essence behind Dravidian Philanthropy is not a selfish motive of attaining the heavens after death, or accumulate good karma, but Giving Back to the Society without any expectation. Sanga Tamil talks on such Motiveless Philanthropy.

புறநானூறு 134 (திணை: பாடாண், துறை: இயன்மொழி)
பாடியவர்: உறையூர் ஏணிச்சேரிமுடமோசியார்;
பாடப்பட்டோன்: ஆய்அண்டிரன்

இம்மைச்செய்துமறுமைக்கு ஆம்எனும்
அறவிலைவணிகன் ஆய்அவ்வன்,
பிறரும்சான்றோர்சென்றநிறியென
ஆங்குப்பட்டன்று அவன்கைவண்மையே.

Puṇānāṇūru 134

(Tiṇai: Pāṭāṇ, Tuṭrai: Iyaṇ moḻi)

Poet: Uṇaiyūr Ēṇicēri Muṭamōciyār,

Hero: Āy Aṇṭiraṇ

(Translation by: Ms. Vaidehi Herbert)

Āy is not like a businessman with fair prices who thinks that the good done in this birth will help the next one.

His generosity is because of other noblemen before him who followed the right path!

True Philanthropy is motiveless. The ancient Tamil King Aay Andiran was a great patron & philanthropist. His generosity was not out of the motive of attaining godly heavens or a higher birth in the next life. Such motives are called: Bargain on Dharma. (அறவிலை அறத்தைவிலைபேசல்). Both Sanga Tamil & the Dravidian Movement shun such a kind of Motive-Guised-Philanthropy! As Periyar rightly puts it: "Gratitude is the duty of the receiver. If the giver expects gratitude then it is a mean mentality". Let us sport such a Sanga Tamil spirit, and give back to the society without expectation in return.

Self-Respect in Sanga Tamil:

The pre-cursor to Dravidar Kazhagam was the Self-Respect movement. It kindled the spirit of Self-Respect and also Tamil-Respect in the nook and corner of Tamilnadu. It resonated in every woman and man, made them think beyond the yoke of religion & caste and made them to respect themselves.

So, what is Self-Respect? Why does one need it? Self-Respect is the quality of according dignity to one's own self. It is all about how you treat yourself, and how you allow others to treat you.

Self-Respect is not inflated ego or false pride, but the subjective evaluation of one's own worth and conducting one's own self with honor and dignity. Self-respect forms the foundation of all healthy relationships. When you accept yourself as a person, with both weaknesses and strengths, it changes how others perceive you. When you know your own worth, you will not let anyone treat you like a doormat.

Humans by nature have some element of Self-Respect in them, but sentiments and

situations lead them to pledge their own honor for a temporary or a tangible benefit. Psychologically, Religion plays a dampening role in Self-Respect. It advocates for a Master over you, and demands your implicit supplication towards that Master. Combined with Caste, it is a deadly combination that makes you surrender yourself, your family, and your generations - to a greater authority of Power.

That's why Brahminism combined Caste with Religion and propounded the dogma of 'chatur varnam maya srishtam' – the Lord God himself created the Caste System (Varna). Because of the God-element in Caste, you inherently submit yourself without question, accepting Caste as a divine diktat and learn to live in a grid of Graded Inequality. This is a psychological warfare on Self-Respect!

Dravidian Movement used Self-Respect to kindle Equality. Periyar once remarked that "we are fit to think of 'self-respect' only when the notion of 'superior' and 'inferior' caste is banished from our land". Once people start to realize the importance of Self-Respect and resist the manipulation by whatsoever authority, all other objectives – Equality, Rationality, Women's Rights, Human Rights, Economic Parity, Freedom from Caste and Ultimate Liberation – will all be realized. That's why Self-Respect is as valuable as the Life itself. It is called 'suya mariyaadhai' in common lingo and 'than maanam' in chaste Tamil.

Sanga Tamil inculcates the spirit of Self-Respect in each and every person. Even for a material benefit, one is discouraged to pledge one's Self-Respect. Sanga Tamil upholds your Self-Respect and enjoins upon you to treat yourself with dignity, how high or low you are - in the socio-political or socio-economic ladder. Even Tamil Kings got to grow up in a situation, that they acknowledged the Self-Respect of their citizens irrespective of their power status. There

are numerous instances in Sanga Tamil, when the learned men refused to blindly supplicate to the King.

Let us walk through a small story in Sanga Tamil. Nakkeerar was the Chief of Poets in the Pandya Royal Hall. He authored a work called Nedunalvaadai (நெடுநல்வாடை) in which he sings on the passion of the thalaivi (Heroine) and thalaivan (Hero). The hero has gone to participate in a war for his homeland and the heroine misses him badly. But the news comes that our Hero was victorious at the battlefield and returning shortly. As the journey back to home was long (நெடு), but tinged with happiness on the victory (நல்), the Vaadai (வாடை) breeze from the North was causing mixed emotions in our Heroine's heart. So far so good, and an awesome Poetry. But the author Nakkeerar inadvertently made a glaring mistake.

On the journey back, he picturized the garrison of soldiers carrying spears in their hands, decorated with neem leaves and flowers. Neem flower is the insignia of the Pandya King. According to the Rule Book of Tamil Poetry, one is not supposed to disclose the names of the lovers or their origins, as it may lead to disruption of their Love. The Akam (love and family) Poetry should only carry anonymous references. The PuRam (war and society) Poetry can carry names and origins. But because Nakkeerar inadvertently indicated, that the lovers belonged to Pandya country, by subtly showing neem flowers on the soldier's spear, his Love Poem was pushed from Akam to PuRam by the Academic Hall. Even though Nakkeerar was the Chief of Poets in the Hall and Pandya King was the Patron of the Hall, that did not influence the decision of the Tamil Academia. They stood rock-solid and refused to bow to authority.

Such was the Self-Respect of the Citizens of the King. In the following poem, we even see a Feminist Self-Respect, when Avvaiyaar refuses

to yield to the Authority of the King, and walks away without meeting him or getting gifts from him. She self-respectfully sings, that she is not going to pledge her poetry to the King's command, and there are so many avenues open to her living!

புறநானூறு 206 (திணை: பாடாண், துறை: பரிசில்)
பாடியவர்: அவ்வையார்; பாடப்பட்டோன்:
அதியமான்நெடுமான்அஞ்சி

வாயிலேளையே! வாயிலேளையே!
வள்ளியோர்செவிமுதவயங்குமொழிவித்தித்தாம்
உள்ளியதுமுடிக்கும்உரனுடைஉள்ளத்து
வரிசைக்குவருந்தும்இப்பரிசில்வாழ்க்கைப்
பரிசிலர்க்குஅடையாவாயிலேளையே! (5)

கடுமான்னோன்றவநெடுமான்அஞ்சி
தன்அறியலன்கொல்? என்அறியலன்கொல்?
அறிவும்புகழும்உடையோர்மாய்ந்தென
வறுந்தலைஉலகமும்அன்றே; அதனாள்
காவினென்கலனே, சுருக்கினென்கலப்பை, (10)

மரங்கொல்தச்சன்கைவவச்சிறார்
மழுவடைக்காட்டகத்துஅற்றே,
எத்திசைச்செவினும்அத்திசைச்சோற்றே!

Puṛaṇāṇūru 206
(Tiṇai: Pāṭāṇ, Tuṟai: Parisil)
Poet: Avvaiyār, Hero:
Athiyamāṇ Neṭumāṇ Añci
(Translation by: Ms. Vaidehi Herbert)

O gatekeeper! O gatekeeper!
O gatekeeper who never closes the gate
against
those who come in need leading lives of
pleading,
to sow shining words in the ears of the
generous
and gain what they wish for, with their strong
hearts!

Does the lord Nedumāṇ Anji with swift horses
not know

himself, or know me? This is not an empty
world where

those with intelligence and fame have died.
So, we have

packed our instruments in drawstring bags
to carry them on poles.

This world is like the forest where children
of carpenters go with their axes.

**Whether we go this way or that way, there
is rice in all directions!**

There are as many as 6 Avvaiyaars in Tamil
history. The earliest Avvaiyaar was this Sanga
Tamil Avvaiyaar, the friend of Paari – the vELir
King. Contrary to the popular belief, that Avvai
was a grand old lady, the truth is: Avvai was
a young viRali (singer) who even drank wine
with her male counterparts. She never sang on
God Vinayaka, as that deity didn't even exist
during the Sangam Age. Unfortunately, with
the advent of Vedic Religion, every aspect in
Tamil history was distorted and rewritten by
the Brahmin authority in later days, to suit their
Caste Collective.

In the above poem, Avvai stands tall when she
refuses to pledge her knowledge for money. Self-
Respect is heartwarming. Feminist Self-Respect is
even more heartwarming and contagious. More
power to the Feminists of our century!

**Aryan-Dravidian Struggle in Sanga
Tamil:**

As we near the end of this essay, let's go
through some lighter moments of humor and
fun in Sanga Tamil and also quickly recap on this
Aryan-Dravidian conundrum. We already saw
how the Aryan King Brhatta was countered by
the Dravidian (Tamil) philosopher-poet Kapilar.
So, this Aryan-Dravidian dichotomy is real, and
has been in vogue for 3000+ years.

Some scholars opine that: Tamil & Sanskrit
(or) Dravidian & Aryan have co-existed. True,

but that co-existence comes with confrontation too. If there exists an act of aggression, there exists an act of liberation too. Merely being a contemporary, does not mean co-existence. The space for Tamil has always been fought for, against the high-handedness of Sanskrit.

If we just go by the earliest written accounts in history, we can infer on the contemporariness of the two stratum, but history is not only seen from written accounts, but much beyond that. After all, Tamil & Sanskrit are two completely independent languages, differing in all aspects – alphabets, sounds, structures, words, script, form, matter, culture, prose, poetry, philosophy and what not?

In linguistics, we define a concept of Stratum. A language that influences, or is influenced by another language via contact & interaction is called a Stratum.

- Substratum: A language that has lower power or prestige than another
- Superstratum: A language that has higher power or prestige than another.
- Adstratum: A language that may be in contact with another, but without higher or lower prestige.

Tamil is Adstratum - already an independent classical language by its own merit, and even in the modern age, a rich and living language amongst its People, unlike Sanskrit which has gone extinct. Tamil is neither a substratum nor a superstratum to Sanskrit or any other language. The foundations of Tamil are very strong as devised in Tholkaappiyam, that even royal Sanskrit imposition could not erode its basic foundation. Tamil grew and is still growing independently of Sanskrit, even today in the Age of Science.

The Core Virtue of Tamils: It has NEVER imposed itself on other languages & cultures

via politics, religion or by any other means. Live and let live, with Self-Respect has been Tamil's hallmark. The Tamil Space has always welcomed new cultures, new philosophies, new languages and new people. Handshakes are welcome, but Hand-twists are not. Openness to other cultures does not mean that Tamil Identity can be replaced with a foreign one. Lost Identity is not a virtue. Holding on to Roots is a virtue!

In this paper, we have been seeing steadily, how Tamil language and Dravidian culture have been having an independent narration vis-à-vis the Sanskrit language and Aryan culture. Let's also explore some fun facts in Sanga Tamil, which records how a section of the Tamil people trolled the Aryan influx. Tamil people's sense of humor has been amazing even during the Sangam days, when there were no memes.

The Girlfriend (Thozhi) chats with Heroine (Thalaivi) and trolls the Aryan Brahmins who are new to the Tamil land. *Aiṅkuṇūṟu* – the shortest poems of Sanga Tamil, records this comedy troll. The mane (hair) of the horse that our Hero rides, looks like the tuft (kudumi) of short Brahmins waving o'er head.

ஐங்குறுநூறு202 (திணை: குறிஞ்சி); பாடியவர்: கபிலர்
அன்னாய்வாழி! வேண்டுஅன்னை! நம்ஊர்ப்
பார்ப்பனக்குறுமகப்போலத்தாமும்
குடுமித்தலையமன்ற,
நெடுமலைநாடன் ஊர்ந்தமரவே.

Aiṅkuṇūṟu 202 (Tiṇai: Kuṟiñci); Poet: Kapilar

(Translation by: Ms. Vaidehi Herbert)

Mother, may you live long! Please listen to me!

The tufts of the horses rode by the lord of the tall mountain
are certainly like the tufts on the
heads of our town's Brahmin boys.

Yet another satire and a bold comedy is

performed on the Vedas. The lack of unique script for writing Sanskrit is being trolled in Kuruntogai, the sweetest poems in the 8 Anthologies of Sanga Tamil.

Our Hero is love-struck with our Heroine and pangs & pines in her separation. His Brahmin Associate who is an Aryan, may have talked about the mAyAvAtam (illusion) in the Vedas and tries to tell our Hero, that all these love and life are mere illusions. Our Hero retorts, calling him thrice, "Oh Brahmin, Oh Brahmin, Oh Brahmin, Your Vedas are so weak, that they are not even written down. If your Vedas are divinely capable as being claimed (that via Yagnas one can beget anything), why not they suggest a medicine to unite the separated lovers?" The Brahmin gets dumbstruck. No Answer to a Logical Question.

குறுந்தொகை 156 (திணை: குறிஞ்சி); பாடியவர்:
பாண்டியன் ஏனாதிநெடுங்கண்ணனார்
பார்ப்பனமகனே! பார்ப்பனமகனே!
செம்புருக்கின் நலநார்களைந்து
தண்டொடுபிடித்ததாழ்கமண்டலத்துப்
படிவஉண்டிப்பார்ப்பனமகனே!
எழுதாக்கற்பின்நின்சொல்லென்றும் (5)
பிரிந்தோர்ப்புணர்க்கும்பண்பின்
மருந்தும் உண்டோ? மயலோஇதுவே?

Kuruntokai 156 (Tiṇai: Kuṟiñci); Poet:
Pāṇṭiyaṇ ēṇāti Neṭuṅkaṇṇaṇār
(Translation by: Ms. Vaidehi Herbert)

O Brahmin! O Brahmin!
You with your ritual food, O Brahmin!
hanging pots on staff made from
a murukkam tree with red flowers after its
lovely bark is peeled!

**Is there any remedy
in the unwritten words from your Vedas
to unite separated lovers? Is this all a mere
delusion?**

Doubting, questioning and ridiculing the so-called infallibility of the Aryan Vedas & Rituals,

can be seen throughout Sanga Tamil and the later epics. Even when the society had slowly changed and yielded to Brahminism via royal patronage, some sections of the society still had not accepted the Aryan customs. In the later epic Cilapatikāram, the Heroine Kannagi does the same and openly denounces Aryan myth.

Kannagi is often considered in today's progressive groups, as a meek woman, submissive to her husband and not a good example for feminism. But unfortunately, that's not the case. Yes, the fabricated stories of Kannagi that are currently prevalent in the society are spun over conservative backwardness. But, if you read the epic directly from the lines of the author – iLango AdigaL, you can see the boldness of **Kannagi and her ability to challenge the Aryan myth.**

Times have changed in Tamilnadu during the days of Cilapatikāram and the Society has even started embracing arranged marriages, instead of the usual love marriages of the Sangam Age. The marriage of Kannagi & Kovalan was itself an arranged one and officiated by a Brahmin. The parents of the bride & bridegroom even though not belonging to Vedic religion, but to the religions of Aseevakam & Buddhism respectively, chose to nominate a Brahmin priest for the marriage. Because, as upper-class merchants of the day, they were close to the King, and didn't want to offend him and his patronage to Vedic Religion. But after the marriage ceremonies, Kannagi lives on her own, in Tamil culture instead of the Aryan culture. She was not submissive to her husband, but just had an impeccable love towards him.

Kovalan, her husband picks up a companionship with another girl, a dancing damsel named Madhavi - who was a courtesan (il-parathai) but not a prostitute (nayappu parathai). Male chauvinism has existed for centuries, across all cultures and Tamil culture was not an exception. But still, the Sanga Tamil Culture did not put a taboo on Womanhood.

It had the guts to choose a 'parathai' and her girl-child born outside the institution of marriage - as the Heroines of the Story. Unfortunately, this humanistic open mindedness was killed by Organized Religion, which later produced epics objectifying womanhood and carrying a false propaganda, that the chastity of women lied in their bodies. The later religious epic Kamba Rāmāyanam (unlike Cilapatikāram & Maṇimēkalai) carried a false narration that women must be so chaste in their bodies, that even when enemies lifted off the women of so-called noble birth, they dug and lifted the ground without touching their bodies. Such was the religious taboo imposed on woman's body.

Kannagi, now living alone without her husband, was counselled by a Brahmin woman called Thevanthi. Quoting the Aryan Rituals, this Brahmin lady asked Kannagi to offer worship & sacrifice at the Surya Kundam (Sun Well) & Soma Kundam (Moon well), which would auspiciously

கைத்தாயும்அவ்வை, கணவற்குஒருநேரன்பு
சோமகுண்டம்சூரியகுண்டம் துறையும்கிக்
காமவேள்கேட்டம்ம்தொழுதார்,கணவரெரடு
தாம்இன்புறுவர்தலகத்துத்தையலர்
ஆடு தும்என்றஅணிஇழைக்கு
அவ்வய்இழையாள்,பீடுஅன்றுஎனஇருந்தபின்னரே
(சிலப்பதிகாரம் - புகர்க்காண்டம்
கனகத்திரும்பரைத்தகதை: 55-64)

My Husband, let him return out of Love, but not out of Ritual – this was Kannagi's stand. All these Aryan Rituals were new to the Tamil land, and Kannagi refused to fall a prey to the Aryan Myth. At least now, let's reevaluate our stands on Kannagi and her perceived slavery & submission to her husband. All those stories are hearsay and folklore -which don't find a place in the direct epic. Kannagi didn't even want her husband back via an Aryan Ritual. That was her mental conviction!

Book	Paarpaan	Arya	Veda
Tholkaappiyam	6		
Sanga Tamil - Eight Anthologies			
natRiNai	1	1	1
kuRunthogai	3	1	
AinguRu nooRu	2		
pathitRu Paththu	1	1	
pari paadal	4		4
kali thogai	3		
aga naanooRu	2	5	
PuRa naanooRu	5		3
Sanga Tamil - Ten Idylls			
thiru murugu aatRupadai			
porunar aatRupadai			
chiRu paaN aatRupadai			
perum paaN aatRupadai			
mullai paattu	1		
kuRinji paattu			
madurai kaanchi			2
pattina paalai			
nedu nal vaadai			
malai padu kadaam			
Total	28	8	10
Grand Total	46		

Book	Paarpaan	Arya	Veda
Sangam Maruviya Tamil - 18 Lower Compendium			
naaladiyaar			
naan maNi kadigai	1		1
innaa naaRpathu	2		
iniyavai naaRpathu			
kaLa vazhi naaRpathu			
kaar naaRpathu			
ain thiNai aimpathu			
thiNai mozhi aimpathu			
ain thiNai ezhupathu			
thiNai maalai nootRu aimpathu			
thirukkuRaL	1		
thiri kadugam	4		1
aachaara kOVai	6		
pazhamozhi naanooRu	2		
chiRu pancha moolam	1		
mudhu mozhi kaanchi			
Elaadhi	1		
kai nilai			
Total	18	0	2
Grand Total	20		

bring her husband back to her. But know what?
Kannagi refused to do that Aryan Ritual!

(Exhibit 10: Concordance of
Brahminism in Sanga Tamil)

So, one can see the ridicule of Aryan Rituals throughout the Sanga Tamil landscape. The words 'Aryan' & 'Brahmin' (paarpaan) occur in many places in Sanga Tamil, but mostly in condemnation context.

- ஆரியர்அவறு (அகநானூறு 396)
- ஆரியர்துவன்றிய (பதிற்றுப்பத்து 11; நற்றிணை 170)
- ஆரியப்பேடி (சிலப்பதிகாரம் 27-186)
- பழவடவண்பார்ப்பனமகனே (குறுந்தொகை 156)
- பார்ப்பனக்குறுமகன் (ஐங்குறுநூறு 202)
- பார்ப்பனர்க்குழிந்தார்படிவு (பரிபாடல் 24)
- வேளாப்பார்ப்பான்வான்அரம்துமித்த (அகநானூறு 24)
- பார்ப்பான்மடுவென்ஓலை
தடிந்துவீழ்த்தகடுங்கண்மழவர் (அகநானூறு 337)
- முதுபார்ப்பான் - வீழ்க்கைபெரும்கரும் கூத்து (கலித்தொகை 65)
- சேரியின்போகாமுடமுதிர்பார்ப்பான் (கலித்தொகை 65)

We even get to know some strange habits of the Aryan Brahmins from Sanga Tamil. Paripāṭal-24 says: Brahmins sometimes avoid bathing and brushing their teeth. (பார்ப்பனர்க்குழிந்தார்படிவு; அந்தணர்கேடையலர்ஆறு; ஐயர்வாய்புகறார்ஆறு). It is because: the river sometimes flows with flowers and honeybees in them, which the Brahmins consider impure. Sometimes when women bathe in the river, their perfume and powder also flow in the waters, which the Brahmins consider impure and walk away without bathing. We already saw from Kalitokai-65 that Aryan Brahmins never entered the chEri neighborhoods of common people thinking it is too lowly for the brahmin caste - a sheer discrimination.

As already said in this essay, especially in the section: Anti-Brahminism in Sanga Tamil, there are few other areas in Sangam Classical Literature, where the Aryan Brahmins are extolled by the Kings and Nobility. I also wish to highlight them here, for the cause of unbiased objectivity.

- பார்ப்பனர்க்கு அல்லது பணிபு அறியலையே (பதிற்றுப்பத்து 3)
- ஏற்றபார்ப்பனர்க்குநர்கைநிறைய (புறநானூறு 36)

There is also a subsection called the Brahmin Victory (பார்ப்பனவாகை) with just 2 poems in the whole of Sanga Tamil. This deals on how Vedic Religion and Aryan Brahmins used their royal patronage and their new-found political power, to vanquish other Religions like Aseevakam, Jainism & Buddhism. It looks like more of an inadvertent Confession Statement rather than a Victory Statement. Here is one.

Book	Paarpaan	Arya	Veda
Five Major Epics			
chilapathigaaram	9	17	7
maNimEgalai	5	1	
cheevaga chinthamaNi	5	2	5
vaLaiyaapathi			
kuNdalakEsi			
Five Minor Epics			
udhayaNa kumaara kaaviyam		1	2
naaga kumaara kaaviyam		1	
yasOdharma kaaviyam			
chooLamaNi			
neelakEsi			
Total	19	22	14
Grand Total	55		

(Exhibit 11: Concordance of Brahminism in Tamil Epics)

There was an influential Brahmin in the Chola country named Vinnantaayan of the Kauniya (Kaundinya) Gotram. He conducted a huge fire sacrifice, where expensive ghee flowed like water. His lineage is praised by Moolankizhar as: Masters in 4 Vedas & 6 Vedangas & 21 Fire Rituals and a powerful Brahmin clan who defeated the so-called false religions of Jainism & Buddhism. We already saw that these religions were branded Nastika (atheist), since they didn't submit to the Brahmin Vedic Authority.

புறநானூறு 166 (திணை: வாகை, துறை: பார்ப்பனவாகை)
பாடியவர்: ஆவூர்மூலங்கிழார், பாடப்பட்டோன்:
சோணாட்டுப்பார்ப்பான்களணியன்விண்ணந்தாயன்

ஒன்றுபுரிந்தநூர்இரண்டன்,
ஆறுணர்ந்தஒருமுதுநூல்
இகல்கண்டோர்மிகல்சாய்மார்

மெய்அன்னபொய்உணர்ந்து
மூவேழ்துறையும்முட்டின்றுபோகிய

நூர்ஏழின்இடம்முட்டாது
நீர்நாணநெய்வழங்கியும்,
எண்ணாணப்பலவேட்டும்

**Puṛaṇāṇūru 166 (Tiṇai: Vākai, Tuṟai:
Pārpaṇa Vākai)**
**Poet: Avūr Mūlankilār on Pārpāṇ Kauṇiyan
Viṇṇantāyan**
(Translation by: Ms. Vaidehi Herbert)

You who is an heir of learned men who
performed
**the twenty-one rituals without fault, who
understood**
those who disrespected and spoke truth-like
lies,
**defeating those who would contend with
the ancient**
**work of four divisions and six sections,
focused on**

without omitting the fourteen ritual sites,
you pour out
more ghee than water, sacrifice more times
than there are numbers.

The only other Paarpana Vaagai song also
records the power & influence that Aryan
Brahmins wielded in the Royal court, that even
a frail looking Brahmin can command the King
to abandon a war. The great commentator Avvai
Duraishamy says: பார்ப்பனவாகையாவது: கேள்வியாற்
சிறப்பெய்யானை, வேள்வியான்விறன்மிகுத்தன்று
(புறப்பொருள்வெண்பகமாவை 8:18). The King whose

royal authority cannot be questioned, can be
terrified in the name of Vedic Sacrifice.

As we saw earlier, Tamil Kings like Peru
Valuti & Peru Naṟkiḷli even went to the extent of
sporting a title in their names, indicating their
submission to Vedic Authority (**pal yāka sālai
mutu kuṭumi peru valuti & rāsasūya yākam
vēṭṭa peru naṟkiḷli**). It was falsely preached, that
the warfare of the Kings would bring bad karma
and their ancestor had gone to hell and hung
head-down in the river of fire (Vaitaraṇi). They
were panging for water oblations, that only Vedic
Pundits can offer and cool down their souls. Such
terrifying Sentiments, Sacrifices and Astrology
made the Kings submit to Godly Authority of
Brahminism. Once Governmental Power was
gained, the Brahmin Nobility could push through
any Law and Legislation that institutionalized
and cemented the Vedic Philosophies of
discrimination - like Caste System, Varna
System, Graded Inequality & the Codes of Manu.

These Aryan references in Sanga Tamil have
to be read with the context, and not just harping
on the occurrence of a few words. The context
is: **Sanga Tamil stands as a social mirror,
recording - both the advent & rejection -
of Vedic Religion, Aryan Brahminism &
Casteism in ancient Tamil Society.**

Also, the Benediction Poems (KadavuL
Vaazhthu) in Sanga Tamil are latter-day
additions during compilation of the texts
and they don't count towards the factual
reading of the sangam society as such.
Nowhere in Sanga Tamil will Vedic/Puranic
Gods like Rama be picturized as the God of
Tamils, but only a passing reference made
in the context of a simile or a new religious
story that is gaining propaganda in the
social sphere. Rama or any other God of
Brahminism, is never accorded the worship
status of kōṭṭam, kūttu and music in Sanga
Tamil. For that, we need to wait for a few

more centuries - when Bhakthi literature dawned and replaced the Sangam Literature in the Tamil landscape.

Inference and Conclusion:

As we conclude, let us compare and contrast the landscape of Sanga Tamil with the Dravidian Movement, even though they are some 3000+ years apart. The Tamil Society has tried to carry forward its Core Culture & Civilization, however much injected by Religion & Caste.

The Dravidian philosophies of today, were also the Sanga Tamil philosophies of yesterday, namely:

- Social Justice
- Self-Respect
- Equality
- Education
- Anti-Brahminism
- Anti-Sanskritization (Anti-Hindi)
- Apatheism
- Rationalism
- Feminism
- Philanthropy

Let us benchmark our current day thoughts, with core thoughts from the Tamil classical age. After all, human journey is a continuous evolution of the human faculties - be it sangam age or scientific age. In this long journey, we shed off our weaknesses and build upon our strengths, towards the cause of the society - Society of Social Justice. The **Dravidian Canvas in Sanga Tamil** will be an inspiration to continue the Dravidian Journey.

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