

Contribution of Women Poets for Tamil Literature

Prof.S.Subbulakshmi.
Director, School Of Music and Fine-Arts,
Vels University (VISTAS), Chennai – 600 117.
E-mail ID: director.music@velsuniv.ac.in



Abstract:

Women poets are the ones who have assimilated the Tamil poetic tradition. In Sangam literature both in Agananuru and Pathitruppattu shows evidences about Viraliyātruppadaī where virali is a female bard. There were 6 songs on Pathitruppattu about Viraliyātruppadaī. According to Sangam Literature there have been 26 poetess throughout the time. Aadhi mandiyār, Kākkai Pādinīyār Narchellaiyār, Avvaiyār are some of the pioneering women poets of Ancient Tamil. In vedic period women were teachers and Panini was the first and foremost grammarian in the world. Kāraikkāl Ammaiār and Andāl were best contributors of Bhakti literature. Kāraikkāl Ammaiār was the first person to compose songs with pan, poetic forms like Andhadi and Irattaimani malai belongs to 5th century. The only female composer of Kuravanji is Poonkodhai of 17th century. Many female poets published Charithra Kirthanas in 19th century..

Key words : Avvaiyar , Sangam literature, Poetic forms, Kuravanji, charithra Kirthanaigal.

Introduction:

From Sangam period Female poets have been creative and prolific writers and have emerged as an unique and coherent articulations of an Indian voice. They are the one who have assimilated the Tamil poetic tradition. Though there was no indication of women served as ministers in the King's court, the positions of women during Sangam period was very respectful and highly appreciable. Agananuru says“Sangam Women exceled in Education” Sangam women were talented in fine arts like singing, dancing and writing. Women who were competent in literature, music, drama were called “Madukuravai” “Kannagi” is mentioned as madukuravai by Ilango Adigal in Silapadikaram . According to Sangam literature Avvaiyar, a great sangam poet received a rare golden gooseberry which may contribute a very long life from a Tamil Monarch Adhiyaman. In Sangam literature both Agananuru and Pathitruppattu shows evidences about Viraliyātruppadaī where virali is a female bard. There were 6 songs on Pathitru patthu about Viraliyātruppadaī.

Pioneering women poets of Ancient Tamil:

These female poets belonging to various walks of life produced unparalleled matchless secular works. According to Sangam Literature there have been 26 poetesses throughout the time. Some of them are

Sangam women Poets:

1. Aadhi mandiyār, 2.Allūr Nanmullaiyār, 3. Anjil Anjiyār, 4.Avvaiyār, 5.Bootha pandiandevi Perunkoppendu, 6.Kākai Pādinīyār, 7.Nachcellaiyār, 8.Kāmakkanni, 9.Pasalaiyār, 10. Kāvarpendu, 11.Kuramagal ilaveni, 12.Kuramagal kuriyeyini, 13.Mudathāma kanniyār 14.Mullaiyur Poodiyār, 15.Pondai Pasalaiyār, 16.Ponmaniār, 17.Ponmudiār, 18. Vellivēdiyār 19.Venni Kuyathiyār, 20.Veripadaiya Kāmakkaniyār.



Poems of women poets of Sangam:

1.Aadhi Mandiyār - Kurunthogai

Munnar kuzhiya vizhavi nānum

Aadukala magane

- kurunthogai- 31

2.Venni Kuyathiyār - Purananuru

Nali iru munnēr nāvāi Otti

Purappun nāni vadakkirundhone - Purananuru - 66

3. Kākkai Pādinīyār Narchellaiyār:

The female bard of Pānar community is called Pādini. This poet belonged to that community. Her name is Narchellaiyār. Because of her mention about Crow (kākkai) in kurunthogai - song -210, she was called as Kākkai pādinīyār. She has also written **Kākkai Padiniyam** , a text on Grammar and 10 songs on the King Aadukot pattu Seralāadhan and received many gifts and honors.

4. Avvaiyār :

There are many poets in the name of Avvaiyār from Sangam period.

1.**First** one belongs to Sangam Era was a contributor to Tamil literature.

2.**Second** one was Chola Avvaiyār who was a court poet in Chola Kingdom of 12th century. She was one of the equally famous poets of that period. Kambar and Ottakoothar were the contemporary poets of her period.. The famous Aathi Chudi was written by her.

3.**Third** one was a notable female poet of 9th century. She was popular for her amazing poetry with moral instructions. She was also a respectable and noble saint of that time.

4.**Fourth** one was the one who lived in 15th century composed religious songs like Vināyagar Ahaval . In vedic period women were teachers and Panini was the first and foremost grammarian in the world .

5. Kāraikkāl Ammaiār - First Pan Composer:

In Bhakti literature pioneering and unparalleled works were done by Tamil female poets. The first and Foremost is Kāraikkāl Ammaiār who belongs to 5th Century. She was first Pan Composer. She was the first person to write the poetic forms like Andadhi and Irattaimani malai of Sitrilakkiam. Her Signature is Karaikkal Pei. She was the one who witnessed the dance of Lord Shiva. She depicted as a ghoulish women with a pair of Symbols. She is one of the 63 Nayanmars of Periyapuram. She has written three texts with the total of 143 songs. She has been recognised by the Government of Tamil Nadu as **“Mother of Carnatic Music”**

1.Mootha Thirupadhigam - 22 songs with Pan.

2.Arpuḍha Thiruvandadi - 101 songs

3.Irattaimani Malai - 20 songs

6. Andal - Divya Prabandam :

The holy persons were referred as nayanmars in Saivism and Alwars in Vaishnavism . The 12 Alwars were historical personages who composed poetries called Divya prabandam. Andal of the fragrant Tresses was one of the 12 Alwars, the only women among them. She belongs to 8th century.

ஸ்ரீமதி தேவகுன்வர் நானாலால் பட் மகளிர் வைணவக் கல்லூரி, தமிழ்த்துறை



மற்றும்
பிரணவ் ஆய்விதழ்
நுண்கலை / தமிழ் / பல்துறை
இணைந்து நடத்தும்
பன்னாட்டுக் கருத்தரங்கம்
“தமிழ் இலக்கியத்தில் மகளிர் பங்களிப்பு”



She has written two texts with total number of 143 songs.

1. Nāchiyār Thirumozhi -
2. Thiruppāvai

7. Poonkodhai - Ardhanārishwarar kuravanji

The oldest composition with fully evolved structure is found to be Thiruchenkodu Ardhanārishwarar Kuravanji composed by a female poetess Poonkodhai. This is the only Kuravanji written with traditional format and structure in 17th century. Poonkodhai was the only female poet who has written kuravanji one of the 96 Prabandas (Sitrilakkiam)

1. Ardhanārishwarar Kuravanji . – on the deity of Thiruchenkodu

Charithra Kirthanas and Female poets:

In 19th century there were many female poets well versed in harikatha with high knowledge of many subjects.

8.Lakshmi Ammal : (1850 – 1915)

Lakshmi Ammal a harikatha Exponent was the daughter of Nānu Sastri in Kumbakonam. She has written a book on “**Meenakshi Kalyanam**” which was published as second edition in 1973.

9.Krishnammal :(1855- 1920)

Krishnammal has written texts on “**Gāneshwarar Charithram**” and “Thirumal Kirthanaigal” was printed in 1915.

10 ..Rangammal:

Rangammal was a patriotic poet born in Thirunelveli. Her “**Mahatma Charithra Kummi**” was published in Journal “Sudesamithiran” in 1923. Her another two books on Patriotic songs “**Baratha Desa Kirthanaigal and Desa Bakthi Kirthanaigal**” were published in the year 1924.

11. Seshammal: (1875 – 1925)

Seshammal has written two Charithra Kirthanaigal..

1. “**Droupathi Charithram**” with 44 songs printed in the year 1909.
- 2.”**Ekkini Patthinigal Charithra Kirthanaigal**” with 23 songs printed in the year 1921.

12. Leela Vinodhini Ammal :

Leela Vinodhini Ammal has composed many books on Kirthanas and prabandam. They were “**Hari nama Kirthanam**” “**Para Vasudevar Prabandam**” and a collection of kirthanas in general were printed in the year 1868.

13. Nadana Gopala Nayaki:

A music book “**Natana Gopala Sangirthanam**” was published in the year 1887. She has also written kirthanas in the form of Kanni (275 kannis) in praise of Andal.

14. Rathnadevi :

Rathnadevi was a great music composer with a high knowledge in Karnatic music and Hindustani music. She has published a book on “**Sangita Sahithyangal**” in the year 1913.

15. Ranganayaki Ammal :

Ranganayaki Ammal belongs to Srivilliputthur. She has published “**Nammāzhar Thiruvatthiyayana Kirthanaigal**” which comprised of more than 40 kirthanas.

16..Vembu Ammal :

Vembu ammal belongs to Kumbakonam. She has composed many **Charithra Kirthanaigal** like

- 1,Uddayār kirthanaigal
- 2.Nagāsura vijayam

- 3.Prahalāda charithram,
- 4.Ramayana kirthanaigal .
- 5.Sudhāmar Charithram

All the above were published many times in between the years 1890 to 1896. Prahalāda Charithram was written with 320 songs comprising of virutham , kanni and Kirthanai.

Conclusion:

It is regrettable that many women poets have gone unrecognised for the beauty and brilliance of their poems. India has a rich tapestry when we go through the language and culture. All the women poets bring out their extraordinary knowledge, non unique histories and flair to their work. But what they have in common is their unparalleled command over their language and written word. Female poets in India broke the form and stormed a path, leaving a permanent enduring mark on Indian literature. Now many diverse Indian women poets were probing the role of form in existing. Female poets in India left an indelible mark on literature in general and Indian Literature in particular. They are the stars who had the gift of creating the world's out of words.

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