

# Purananuru: Legacy Thinking and Philosophical Thoughts

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## ABSTRACT

Among the languages of India, Tamil has a unique classical quality. From the period of naturalism to the modern period, the way of various literary genres highlights many high thoughts for human life. Thus, in the history of Tamil literature, the period of naturalism, referred to in general terms as the Sangam period, embodies love and war as social values. 18 books like Thokai Ettuthokai books and Pattu books (Pathupattu) are naturalistic literature. It can be said that the life of the Tamil people through these literatures was based on the five types of land (Thinai) division found in Tamil Nadu. Chola country was mostly Marutham land, Chera country was mostly Kurinji land and Pandya country was Mullai land. Proprietary society and state formation originated in Mullai land. Trading cities were built on weaving. The lifestyle of the people was based on such geographical backgrounds. These were aimed at people's morals. The romantic and heroic emotions inherent in all people were emphasized in the literature of the naturalistic period. The literary tradition of that time was compiled in traditional Tamil grammars such as preface, theme, and epithet. The antecedent acts as the conditions and the theme as the background for the occurrence of the thematic morality. Ethical principles for life were constructed as natural ideals. Among these, religious ideas do not find place as institutionalized religious ideas such as Jainism, Buddhism, Saivism, and Vaishnavism. Tamils who were very involved in natural life, admired the natural qualities of the people. Also, the deities of the five types of land (Murugan, Mayon, Indra, Varuna, Kotravai) and their worship can be found in the literature of the natural age. In this way, natural life can be seen in many places like worship, business practices, relationships etc. In this way, legacy (Kodai) traditional thoughts are found in Purananuru hundred which is one of the thokai texts which are the literature of the naturalistic period. The impermanence of life is highlighted and the gift of giving and helping others in that life and alleviating the poverty of others is highlighted. In this way, the gift of Tamil tradition can be understood from a philosophical point of view.

**Keywords:** Classical Tamil, Sangam Period, Five lands, Purananuru, Religious ideas, legacy thoughts, impermanence, Philosophical view.

## INTRODUCTION

Literature contributes to Tamil literature being said to be the pride and attaining the status of a classical language. 41 books such as 18 Mealkanku, 18 Keelakanku, Tolkappiyam, Iraiyanar kalaviyal, Silapathikaram, Manimekalai, and Muthollayiram are the literary proofs for the classical qualification of Tamil. The most ancient literary work of the Tamil society can be found in the eight-fold and ten-fold books. **The Purananuru** is an anthology of 400 poems by more than 150 poets, including ten women poets. According to Tamil scholar Kamil Zvelebil the date of the earlier poems in this collection date back to the first century B.C. and the second century A.D. The Purananuru was first edited by U.V. Swaminatha Iyer in 1894 along with its old commentary, with an introduction and notes. Avvai Duraisamy edited it in two volumes and published then 1947 and 1950. Dr. George Hart translated the entire work to English in 1999 – “The Four Hundred Songs of War and Wisdom”. In 2013 Tamil scholar Vaidehi Herbert published English translation with meanings. There are several commentaries written by various Tamil Scholars. The Four Hundred of Eights interprets news about material things. In these news articles, the tradition of gifting, which is highlighted by Paan and Pulavar, is one of the life virtues of Tamils. This includes the greatness of impermanence. This research paper aims to highlight it.

## Hypothesis

Jain and Buddhist concepts, which strongly emphasized impermanence, were mixed with naturalism. The Vedic religions taught that one can attain stability through renunciation, while Jainism and Buddhism taught that one can achieve stability in an impermanent life through austerity and asceticism. In India, impermanence - virtue - asceticism are inseparable in people's lives.

The hypothesis of this research paper is that Purananuru songs, one of the literatures of the naturalistic period, adopted the concept of impermanence to emphasize the gift.

### **Heroic Poetry**

**The Purananuru** is an anthology of 400 poems by more than 150 poets, including ten women poets. According to Tamil scholar Kamil Zvelebil the date of the earlier poems in this collection date back to the first century B.C. and the second century A.D. "It was written before Aryan influence had penetrated the South and is a testament of pre-aryan South India, and to a significant extent, of pre-aryan India. Like the Homeric epics and Greek lyric poems, the Purananuru was among the first works written down in its cultural tradition – and like its Greek counterparts, it is notable for its freshness and directness of expression"<sup>1</sup> writes Tamil scholar George Hart. In the history of Tamil poetry, Purananuru songs are the evidence of the remnants of the nomadic society and the beginning and development stages of the monarchy. As a background for the compilation of four hundred hymns, "Ancient hunting social status, which lived in the forests by hunting and preying, and the heroic social status in between, and the hill country social status of small land kings and warriors prevailed at the same time. During this period, the songs sung by the royal courtiers and the songs played by ancient musicians such as Panar, Porunar, Koothar, Kinaivar etc. were compiled by the later kings. The reason for this may be to ensure the continuity of royal lineages. The way Rajgowthaman refers to it as "Sivathambi"<sup>2</sup>, it can be realized that Purananuru is a historical treasury that helps to realize the vallas and gift excellence of the kings and to know the political hierarchies and socio-economic development levels of the Tamils. And the prowess of a king or warrior is the cause of his pride and bounty. Hence it can be understood that Purananuru songs are the treasury of heroic poetry.

### **Influence of Arya Norma on Purananuru Songs**

The political environment of Tamil Nadu, which has changed from ethnic group community life to a ministerial society, can be seen in Purananuru songs. The social life depicted in these hymns is archaic. Religion is independent. It can be assumed that some of the poets who composed four hundred hymns were literate in Sanskrit - Prakrit - Pali. Dr. Ma. Rajamanikannar said, "The individual civilizational characteristics of the Tamils and the characteristics of the vernaculars who mixed with them later"<sup>3</sup>. It is possible to know that in the lines Purananuru.91, Purananuru.367, Purananuru.397 there are references to the news of Antanar Norma and the legend of Shiva. Also, the name of the kings as Rasasooyam Vetta Perunakilli, Palayagasalai Mudukudumi Peruvaluthi, and the historical reference of Udiyan Cheralathan, who gave great impetus to the Bharata war, indicate the influence of the Vedic tradition. Also, Purananuru.378 :18-19 The lines are reminiscent of the story of Ramayana. Purananuru has many references to Velvi, Anthanar, Mukthi, epic stories, Indra, Brahman, Balarama, Rama etc. Through this we can feel that the Vedic velvis entered Tamil Nadu and the influence of the vernacular mythological stories in Purananuru songs.

Purananuru.232, 261, 263, 264, 265, 306 Thus, despite the influence of the Aryan tradition in the Purananuru songs, the Tamil people used them as parables to praise. The truth is that there is no interplay between these and a separate Aryan tradition. Because it is a fact known in the history of the world that every race is influenced by language, ethnicity and culture. However, it is also an undeniable fact that each ethnic group never completely loses its individuality.

### **Instability In The Indian Philosophical Tradition**

During the naturalistic period, religion was a way of life and was not institutionalized. In the tradition of Indian philosophical thought, the Vedic tradition presupposes concept primacy. Buddhism and Jainism advocate materialism. The Upanishads that the soul is a sentient being and Buddhism, which rejects the idea of a soul, are among the philosophical traditions of India. "The Gita clearly states what constitutes true renunciation. Renunciation is the renunciation of the attachment or desire that we get as a result of the action...Velvi is to burn the desires with the fire of wisdom" and "There is nothing permanent in the world. Buddhism implies the impermanence of everything perishing"<sup>4</sup> is also mentioned. Bharata has many religious philosophies such as Vedas, Upanishads, Ulgaayatham, Sanghya, Yoga, Mimamsa, Vedanta, Vaisetikam, Nyayam, Vedanta, Saiva Siddhanta. All these describe the states of body - life - soul - home birth etc. Dattam norms are explained in the background of conceptualism and materialism. In this way, even though there are conflicting ideas about the soul, desire, and the search for life, the religious philosophies of India are united in the concept of impermanence.

### **Purananuru – Legacy (Kodai) Traditional Thoughts**

Jain-Buddhist concepts such as impermanence, asceticism, and celibacy were mixed in the life of the Tamils who were united with the inner and outer during the period of naturalism. They said that the kings will not have longevity, youth or wealth. Even though in the traditional emotional life, the idea of taking money and giving money has become an alternative thought, they realized the impermanence of wealth. So, they sought lasting glory in a transient life. The gift was greatly appreciated. The gift of living for the benefit of others was highly valued for the existence of the world as "Undalamma ivulakam". They interpreted the fly as an act of charity.

The gift of gift has been a constant thought in the Purana 400 songs that were created in the troubled ethnic group social life and the developed Moovendar's monarchical system. The Paanars were identified as the Iravalars of the caste social life. Poets were considered to be members of the government and intellectuals in politics. In the beginning the poets sang to the people and the poets to the kings, but the intention may have been to receive gifts for both parties,

although the composition of the poets differed. This can be felt through series like "Arugathu Eya, Ompa Eya, Theta Eya, Ma Van Eya, Uwara Eya, Alandu Kodai Aranya Eya, Poiya Eya". It means that the giver should give not less than night. This means that the tradition of gifting is superior to other hundred songs.

### **Inconsistency In Purananooru**

The world and the things of the world are ever changing. This is clarified in the expression's manna ulgam, nilla ulgam. That whoever is born is bound to die, Purananooru.356:1-5. It states that kings who live and rule will also die.

"Life without all life" (Purananuru.203:3)  
"Those who have knowledge and fame have perished  
On that day the whole world will be roasted" (Purananuru.206:8-9).

The songs clarify the impermanent thought that everyone who has fame, knowledge and power will die in the world.

### **Devaloka World**

It is the gift made in this life that makes one whole again. Some of the Purananuru songs present the idea of living in the upper world.

"Veda Velvidh business is over  
Knower is another knower  
This world is given by the dead" (Purananuru. 224: 9-11).

The world mourns the death of a man who has done many useful deeds such as guarding the panas and performing auspicious rituals. So even after death the giver is said to be merciful by the world. O one of great renown, glorified by the poet,

"God created the world" (Purananooru.228: 11) says It means that the one who is the best in gift will reach heaven. This is what Koodalarkizhar refers to as "Melor Ulagama Eithinan" (Purananooru.229 : 22).

### **Wealth Is Impermanent**

Declaring the permanent nature of wealth, it should be given to those who seek it as long as they live.

"Annor Selvam too Manni Nil Latu  
And because of its nature  
Honesty and discipline are a gift  
The filling of the poisoner's hand is ombumati" (Purananuru.360: 11-14).  
The lyrics make it clear.

### **Immanence Concept In Gift Tradition**

The virtue of caring for the welfare of the people is the main idea of the gift tradition. The idea that if you make a gift of virtue in this life, you can achieve its benefit in rebirth, was considered as the life virtue of the Tamils. A man of veeram in Purananuru songs became a man of praise and glory. Killing and looting are ephemeral in warfare, but all of them are transient in the warlike heroic age. Purananuru suggest that the glory of a gift is greater than the glory of war. Veeram – war – death – weeping – jubilation of victory is considered as stages of war. The reason for all this is wealth.

Plundering and destroying the resources of a defeated race is glorified by Pulavar tradition. The poet's tradition did not completely eradicate the lost martial tradition. Unwelcome praise. Pulavar tradition, which aimed to get a reward by singing the success of the royal tradition of war, and Pan tradition, which aimed to get food as a gift to alleviate their poverty, are both included in the Purana hundred songs. Although the method of gifting, the purpose of gifting, the items in the gift, etc. are different, both the traditions do not insist on avoiding or eliminating war or the atmosphere of war. Rather, a king's veeram-victory is revealed only when there is war. The ritual of the night is to sing its praises.

Therefore, if there is no war, there will be no meaning for the Iravalar (Ban Gena, Pulavar Gena) to be sung as a gift. Therefore, it is possible to know that there is no benefit in doing war without explicitly saying that the system of war should be abolished, but instead, by inculcating the concept that worldly life is unstable and wealth is unstable, they got their own reward and got rid of their poverty condition.

After attaining fame and attaining the upper world, your kingship will pass to your son. If you don't give the right of government to your son, you will have to fight with them. If you lose in it, the enemy will laugh. So do good now. The lyrics of this song say give help to others. (Purananooru.213:22-24).

If you do good deeds, you can reach heaven. Birava Norma can be achieved. If not both, you can live and die with fame. So, it is better to live with fame.

"For those who seek high and rise high  
I think there is a desire to do something  
Toyya world consumption will also increase" (Purananuru.214:6-14)

No matter how much praise and love a person has, the word will kill him. Hence the impermanence of life, emphasizing the need for blood to be glorified while alive,

"Glory be to the singer."  
The name of the man is Anbina Ne  
Ai Kolanne praised by monks  
O dear one who is praised by the wise" (Purananuru.221:1-4).  
"What's wrong everyone?"  
On the day when the life of the word of remembrance rises"  
(Purananuru. 214:7,8).

Lyrics of the song. The poet's poverty was said to be the reason for the blood, but the king's desire for fame was also said to be the reason for the gift. That is why the kings who were patrons praised the virtue of blood.

### **Fear of Death**

(Purananuru. 361: 4-6, 361: 8, 361:10) The lyrics of this song say that the one who gives a gift to night and day will not be afraid of the one who claims it. This means that if we embrace the concept of impermanence without fear of death, there will be no fear of assertion. So, we know that the gift should be kept. There is no one in this world who has lived without a body. Surely the one who says it will take his life. Therefore, it is emphasized that "do the first action" (Purananuru.263: 17) which is the action of blood.

"Madai is not close to the beggar" (Purananuru. 366: 17-18)  
"The day when truth is doubled" (Purananuru.366: 22)

The lines are emphatic. They should make a hunger offering by giving food to the night. Because death is certain; it is implied that it is not false. Also, we should live by providing enough for the night war. Because life is too short. Therefore, the thought that other than giving, good deeds do not accompany death.

"Throw the sanctuary close to the pilgrim  
Good deeds that have been done to live or  
There is no morning glory" (Purananuru.165:1-2).

### **CONCLUSION**

Literature dealing with people's life events is not purely fictional. They have the power to shape and guide the life of a race. The humane values emphasized by the literature are the upliftment and manifestation of the culture of a race. In this way, naturalistic literatures (Sangam literatures) which are considered to be the treasures of Tamil culture, highlight the noble life virtues of the Tamil people. Four Hundred Hymns is a historical treasury composed of 399 hymns about kings and Vallalls of their respective eras. Context describes the morals and ethics of the social structure of the family.

Objectivity refers to the emphasis on social values for life. Both are essential for life. The literature of the naturalistic period assumed that both the family and the society should be characterized by higher values of life. Purananuru songs contain many aspects of the martial arts of the kings, governance, education, virtue, gifts of princes - small kings - Kurunila king - Vallall, customs, foreign references, historical data etc. In these Kodai traditional ideas are suggested by Irappoar and Purapoar.

This research paper establishes that the impermanent philosophy of life is a major factor, as evidenced by the four hundred hymns. The influence of the Aryan tradition is found in the songs of the Purana hundred and in the series of Velavithe, Rituals, Worship, Devaloka and Puranic epics. Through this we can feel that Dravidian-Aryan mixed thoughts prevailed here and there in Purananuru songs. Philosophies of Indian Religions All religions and philosophies accept the concept of impermanence even though they have absorbed many concepts. This research paper proves that the institutionalized religious ideology is intermingled with the naturalistic lifestyle. In this way, it is possible to know that the legendary literature of the country of India is the factor that builds the cultural high ideology and human values.

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