

Yoga Swamigal



By S. Ambikaipakan

YOGA SWAMIGAL

S. Ambikaipakan

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NATCHINTHANAI

Praising Preceptor's holy feet is Bliss
Performing Holy Chores of Preceptor is Bliss
Holy saying of Preceptor is Bliss
Surrendering to the Holy Feet of Preceptor
is increase in Bliss.

Making all the earthly beings happy is Bliss
Treating all the beings like me is Bliss
Attaining True wisdom that all
Sweet beings are God's image is Bliss indeed.

Realizing that all are equal is Bliss
Saying that all are brothers is Bliss
To work for the welfare of others is Bliss
All are one and becoming one is Bliss.

Being humble in this world is Bliss
To work without expectation is Bliss
Completing the work perfectly is Bliss
Making all the work as Siva's work is Bliss.

Working for the ordinary people is Bliss
Raising their lives is Bliss
Establishing rest houses is Bliss
Promoting Siva's scriptures of is Bliss.

We are devotees of Siva.

Whoever regularly meditates on Thirumantiram, which states that we have no beginning nor ending, birth or death, day or night, pleasure or sorrow, will not face any shortcoming.

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You become of what you think.

For this, you need persistent effort i.e. without losing the spirit.

Nothing can be achieved by a person who is afraid to work hard; no pain no gain is the world norm.

Work persistently till you succeed. Why do you always think about the unworthy things? Discard that thought and pray whole heartedly to God. Whatever is destined for you, accept them gladly and work on them. In the end, everything will be successful.

Keep in mind always that all actions exist as it is, and continue performing the work and duties naturally - or refrain from them. Everything is right.

It does not depend on the action or inaction. Do not aspire for the absence of work. Do not get attached to the work. Action or inaction, which ever suits you naturally, perform only that.

Blessings by Satguru Bodhinatha Veylanswami

Many blessings from the Kauai Aadheenam Pitham of the Kailasa Parampara on the occasion of the publishing of the English translation of *Yoga Swami* by Mr. S. Ambikaipakan, former principal, Jaffna Vaidyeswara Vidyalaya. This English version is a translation of the original Tamil text that was published in 1972.

Mr. S. Ambikaipakan had the puniyam to know Yoga Swami personally from a young age. As the introduction states, "I knew Swamigal literally from the time I learned to read. From 1926 onwards, the time I joined Hindu College, my association with Swamigal became closer. My writing is primarily based on this long association with Swamigal."

An important part of the legacy of this great yogi, Yoga Swami, is to preserve important information about his life. This book accomplishes that feat and does so through the medium of the English language and thus is available to the broader readership of the English speaking world.

Satguru Bodhinatha Veylanswami
Jagadacharya Nandinatha Sampradaya
Kauai Aadheenam, Hawaii, USA
January 17, 2015

Forward for the Tamil book by S. Ambikaipakan

There was no book published on the life history or the sayings of Yoga Swamigal. So, two years ago, we devotees tried to publish a book, "Tribute to Yoga Swamigal's Holy Feet". But due to insufficient materials, we could not publish that book.

Many devotees insisted that I should publish at least a small book. I also felt guilty that I have not published any book in remembrance of Swamiga, though I have done for many other great souls. But then there were lot of difficulties to write about Swamigal (which I have explained in Chapter II), so I hesitated to write.

One day, during this time, I had the opportunity to have Darshan with Markandu Swami, the prime follower of Yogaswami. He enquired about my proposed publication. I explained my hesitation. He said, "Do this as Service to Siva, everything will turn out fine". This blessing gave me new impetus to start writing the book.

In 1971, with Markandu Swamigal's blessing, I had a great opportunity to start working on this book. Usually, I do not get time to concentrate on a single issue as I am involved in many projects. At last, I got the opportunity during curfew period, last April/May and I started to write the Biography of Yogaswami with the available materials.

It will be appropriate to mention here what formed the basis for writing this book. Since Yogaswami used to visit my relative Chellachi Amma from 1914, I came to know Swamigal literally from the time I learned to read.

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From 1926 onwards, after I joined the Hindu College, I had close relationship with Swamigal. My writing of this book is primarily based on this long association with Yogaswami.

Then, I also had the blessings to be associated with longtime devotees of Swamigal. As such I was privileged to gather some rare information about Yogaswami.

Meanwhile, some devotees sent me their experiences in writings. I have given due credit to such devotees wherever I have used such written materials.

One of the close followers of Yogaswami gave me old issues of Siva Thondan and referred relevant pages that can help me in my writing to encourage me. Above all, he gave me his collection of Swamigal's Holy Sayings, which he wrote down during his many visits to Swamigal. Another devotee and close follower and the custodian of Sivathondan Nilayam, Sellathurai master, gave me the old relevant issues of Sivathondan Magazines. He also, from time-to-time, gave me invaluable advice and clarification whenever I needed. I convey my thanks to all of them.

After I'm done with these essays, the issue of publishing them arose. It will take time to get it published as a book. Meanwhile, I thought I should get the opinions of followers of Swamigal before publishing as a book. So, I thought it would be good to publish first in a newspaper in the form of articles. I sent my articles on Yogaswami to Thinagaran Newspaper, which has been publishing many rare essays in its weekly issues. Interestingly, the newspaper published my articles continuously for 12 weeks with high quality photos. This paved the way for thousands of readers to read the articles. Many of them conveyed their appreciation directly in person and through letters. And they requested the articles be published as a book. I would like to convey my thanks to Mr. Sivagurunathan, the editor of Thinagaran, for publishing the articles attractively on Yogaswami .

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In order to publish as a book, I had to finish the series of articles in Thinagaran newspaper. So, I concluded the series of essays by writing two more chapters "Out of Town Journeys of Swamigal" and "Later life and Samadhi of Swamigal".

As soon as the essays were finished, discussion about publisher for the book came up and Mr. C.S. Kumaraswamy, the owner of Shanmuganathan printers, came forward to publish it. Mr. Kumaraswamy and I have been friends for very long time. He published the first article I wrote on Swamigal in 1955. Then he also published my research article 'Kachiyappar Kantha Puranam, an epic of Tamil Nadu'. Then in 1968, the sovereign issue published on my retirement by Vaidyeswara Vidyalaya Teachers' Association, was also printed in his printing press. So, it is fitting that they publish this book too. I want to thank Mr. Kumaraswamy for doing this good deed, especially in this difficult time of maintaining a printing press business. I want to convey not only my thanks but also the gratitude of many followers of Swamigal.

I want to convey my thanks to Alavetti V.K. Sittampalam Master, and Madduvil S. Gopalapillai Master for reading the proof. I also want to convey my thanks to Mr. Muruganantham who designed the beautiful art work for the book cover.

Holy Sayings of Yogaswami have also been included in this book. I am much indebted to those who helped with these. I truly understand the inclusion of these sayings has increased the prestige and the worthiness of this book by many folds.

The letters written by Yogaswami to Kalaipulavar Navaratnam (with Swamigal's advice) and to Mr. T.N. Suppaiya have been also included in this book. Others who

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have such letters and advice from Swamigal should think of publishing them which would be very valuable.

I realize that, what I have written about Swamigal is not complete because His Glory and Gracious acts are beyond any research. This is well explained in a verse in Peri- yapuranam that can be seen in the part explaining Thiruppasuram:

***To speak of the Grace given by the Lord
To scholars from the beginning
There is no end to the happiness it brings
There is no research it is said.***

I dedicate this book as a token to the Holy Golden Feet of Yogaswami in His Centenary Birth Day celebrations, trusting Swamigal will accept this with all its flaws.

**Yonder my soul, body, my belongings and all
Didn't Thou have took away the day when
Thou Embraced me
Is there any hindrance to me?**

**Oh Lord, Three eyed eight shouldered!
Do good always. For mistakes I am responsible
Yo, Perfect.**

S. Ambikaipakan

"Mani Manai", Mallakam,

Parithabi Year, Vaigasi Avittam, 03 - 06 - 1972

Forward for English Translation

We, as young children, used to visit Yoga Swamigal at his Ashram in Columbuturai, Sri Lanka, along with our father. Swamigal usually sits quiet, but at times would give religious instructions (Upathesam), providing advice for the disciples. All the disciples including our father patiently wait to hear these "Golden Verses", and consider these occurrences as high-point of their visits. At times, at the request of our father, we sing Thevarams (religious songs). Yogaswami always shared the prasatham brought by His disciples or cooked for Him by the disciples, and we always looked forward for this time. We did not pay much attention to Swamigal's teachings at that time, but started to understand them as we grew older. We now feel fortunate to have associated with the great Saivite Siddhar Yoga Swamigal.

As we have left Jaffna to pursue higher studies, we never got the opportunity to visit Satguru Sivaya Subra- muniyaswami, Gurudeva, who was ordained by Yoga Swamigal as His successor in the lineage, at his Ashram in Alaveddy, Jaffna. However, we have been associated with Gurudeva, and later his successor, Bodhinatha Veylanswami, in Edmonton, Alberta, Canada (AS) and Cincinnati, Ohio, USA (AB), respectively. We strongly believe that it is our association with Yoga Swamigal that guided us to settle down in Edmonton and Cincinnati, and to get involved in the temples at these places. We are fortunate to have got the blessings of three Swamis of Yoga Swamigal's lineage.

One of us (AS), as the President and longtime volunteer, took an active role in the development and daily

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management of the Edmonton Maha Ganapathy Temple. This temple, where poojas are done in strict Tamil Saiva Agamic traditions, was built with the blessings and support of Gurudeva. It should be noted that Gurudeva, during his 1991 visit to Edmonton, placed a Ganesh Deity in the temple garden, which later became the site for the new temple. In 2000, Gurudeva actively participated in the inauguration of Maha Ganapathy Temple and blessed the devotees. Two Ganesha Deities presented by Gurudeva are installed in the main shrines of the new temple. Since then, Bodhinatha Veylanswami has been frequently visiting this Ganapathy temple, and this gave the opportunity for the devotees to associate with him and hear his discourses.

One of us (AB), as the member of the Executive Council, took an active role in the construction of Hindu Temple of Greater Cincinnati. A single letter by him to Gurudeva explaining our connections to Yoga Swamigal led to the gift of five-foot deities of Palamuthirsolai Murugan, Valli and Deivanai, and establishment of Murugan Wing at this temple. This sacred miracle and Gurudeva's foresight is continuously fulfilling the spiritual needs of ever expanding Murugan Devotees. In 1995, Gurudeva, on his way back after participating Murugan Temple Festivals in Germany, was transiting in Cincinnati and requested us to meet him at the airport. He blessed us, and gave the blessings for the successful construction of the Murugan Wing. Bodhinatha Veylanswami was the Chief Guest at the Cincinnati Murugan Kumbhaabhisekam

Festival in 2004.

Once again it is our association with Yoga Swamigal's lineage that led to the translation of our father's Tamil Book into English. This initiative began after the visit by one of us (AS) to Kauai Hindu Monastery. During our visit, a copy of the second edition of the Tamil book, Yoga Swamigal, was

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presented to the Swamis at the Monastery. We had the opportunity to place the book in Yoga Swamigal Shrine in the Monastery. At the time of our visit, Swamis at the Monastery were writing a book on Guru Lineage of Kailasa Parampara including Subramuniyaswami, his guru Yoga Swamigal and five preceding Gurus. As there was limited information about the latter part of Yoga Swamigal's life, Swamis at the Monastery were interested in getting our father's book translated into English. Brahmanathaswami from the Monastery contacted Professor Manickavel from Chidambaram, Tamil Nadu, India and requested him to undertake the enormous task of translating the book into English. Dr. Manickavel kindly agreed to Brahmanathaswami's request to translate the book in a timely manner so that the contents of our father's book could be referenced in the book "The Guru Chronicles: The Making of the First American Satguru." We were very pleased to note that our father's book was not only referenced at several places in the book, but also several paragraphs from our father's book were directly quoted in The Guru Chronicles.

We are delighted that our father's book has been translated into English. The translated book will allow readers from all over the world to learn about the life and teachings of the Hindu Saint, Yoga Swamigal, who lived all His life in Jaffna, Sri Lanka.

Our father had close association with Yoga Swamigal from his school days until Swamigal attained Samadhi. As noted by our father in the forward of the Tamil book, he wrote the Tamil book at the request of several Yoga Swamigal's followers.

We would like to thank the Kauai Hindu Monastery for taking the initiative to translate our father's book into English. We are delighted to receive the blessings from Bodhinatha Veylanswami for the English translation.

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It would not have been possible to get Yoga Swamigal's book translated into English without the commitment and hard work of Dr. Manickavel. His profound knowledge of Hinduism literature in both Tamil and English is evident from the translation. We are also thankful to Professor Sivaganesan, University of Cincinnati, Ohio, USA for proof reading the translated book.

We have tried utmost to make sure that there are no errors in the translation and apologize for any errors.

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Balasubramaniam

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Yogaswami During Meditation

I

Spiritual Heritage

In the early nineteenth century, there was spiritual renaissance in India and Sri Lanka. A renowned French writer, Romaine Roland, in his book on Ramakrishna and Vivekananda, had noted appropriately that this spiritual rising was the seed for the political awakening in these countries.

Normally, the happenings in India affect the activities in Sri Lanka; so, let us see what happened to the religious fronts in India in the 19th century. During that period of time, several great people such as Kesabchandra Sen, Thayanandar, Ramakrishna Paramahamsar were born in India. Kesabchandra Sen started a movement named Brahma Samaj following the steps of Rajaram Mohan Rai by changing some of the Hindu traditions to suit the western trends. Brahma Samaj followers did not adopt temple worship and deity worship which are closely related.

Thayananthar started another movement by the name Arya Samaj. The main objective of this movement was to resist western influences by adopting Vedic traditions in the Hindu renaissance. Thayananthar wrote a book called, "Light of Dharma" to explain the principles of Arya Samaj.

On the other end, Ramakrishna Paramahamsar followed Indian traditions, especially temple worship, and attained enlightenment. Paramahamsar's life reminds us the life of Tamil Nadu Saiva and Vaishnava saints. Paramahamsar and his disciple, Vivekananda gave new life to Hindu religion.

Aanaikutty Swamigal

At this time in Sri Lanka, three Siddha great souls i.e. Aanaikutty Swami, Paramaguru Swami and Kadait Swami, and a religious Saint Arumuga Navalar, injected new life to Saiva religion in Sri Lanka.

Among them, Aanaikutty Swamigal wandered most of the time in the streets of Colombo. He was called Aanaikutty Swamigal because he was chubby. He acquired many miraculous powers. Even the wealthy people who lived in Karuvakadu (Cinnamon Gardens) invited him to their houses and received his blessings. Some of them paraded him in the streets on bullock cart and collect offerings from the devotees and kept those with them. Yoga Swamigal during his first pilgrimage to Kathirgamam returned to Jaffna through Colombo and on the way met Aanaikutty swamigal and received his blessings. The educationist and the famous political leader, Sir Ponnambalam Arunachalam, was one his supporters. It was due to his efforts that the Samadhi of Aanaikutty Swamigal was constructed in Colombo harbour. One of the followers of Aanaikutty Swamigal, Mother Moddaichi, was living in a hut in the jungles of Thiruketheeswaram. It appears due to her Holy presence, Thiruketheeswaram had developed into such a vibrant spiritual place now.

Paramaguru Swamigal

Paramaguru Swamigal, the other Siddhar, was believed to have wandered in Jaffna, in a place called Ramanathapuram, Kadatparai and in Mathale. Kulanthaivel Swami, the contemporary of Yoga Swamigal, had blessings and received lessons from Paramaguru Swamigal. Later he lived for some time in the palmyra jungle, where the

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present Ramanathan College exists. At that time, the place was completely covered with palmyra tree jungle.

Towards the end, Paramaguru Swamigal lived in Mathale region and attained Samadhi there. Paramaguru's Samadhi was constructed under the supervision of Sir Ponnambalam Arunachalam. He has written about Swamigal like this, "He is one of the noblest and intelligent souls whom I know. When he was young he worked as a coolie in one of the coffee estates in Sri Lanka. When he was a coolie he used to live in the jungle between Mathale and Thirukonamalai living on fruits and water available in jungle. He spent his time in meditation and living freely in nature. The travelers used to find him and forcefully bring him with them and took care of him. Then as time passed by, he became familiar to the human society. He was sweet natured. People from all walks of life- the rich, the poor, males , females and children- all were attracted by Swamigal and got peace and consolations. Though, he lived in jungle and did not have formal education, through experience he attained a certain level of understanding to engage in intellectual discussions with erudite scholars. Scholars humbly listened to him. He always remained in the enlightened state throughout his life, yet still did much social work untiringly. Since he had discovered how to unlock, at will, the spiritual power, he was flowing with tremendous inner power .

Kadait Swamigal

The third Siddhar, Kadait Swamigal, has a special significance in the history of Jaffna's Saiva religion. Since he established a lineage of spiritual Gurus in Jaffna, we can call him as Paramaguru.

The mutts in Usan, Kantharmadam, and Erlalai in Jaffna – all were established by the followers of Kadait Swami.

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Yogaswamigal also belong to this lineage. Chellappa Swami, Guru of Yogaswami was an initiated disciple of Kadait Swami. Yogaswamigal had mentioned that when he was twelve years old, he had seen Kadait Swami. Yoga Swamigal used to become ecstatic whenever he talked about Kadait Swamigal. He used to say, "Kadait Swami had consumed Sivapogam (Siva consciousness). Where do we stand when compared with him? He had displayed many miracles just like Lord Krishna. He is beyond good and bad and whatever he did, no body complained." Yogaswami used to tell as above to His close devotees to explain Kadait Swami's ever blissful state.

Nothing can be said with certainty about Kadait Swami's origin. It is understood from those closely associated with Kadait Swami, that he came from India and spoke colloquial Tamil. His mother tongue may be Telugu or Kannada. It still remains as puzzle how Kadait Swami came to Sri Lanka. Since he always wandered mostly in the main bazaar region of Jaffna, he acquired the name Kadait Swami.

He had a very charming appearance with perfect body features, as per *Samudrika Sastra*. He always wore dark cloth and carried an umbrella in his armpit.

Different Categories of Followers

Kadait Swamigal had various type of followers. Among them, Vyramuthu Chettiyar and Kulanthaivel Swami from Vannarpannai, deserve special mention. The free food serving mutt in the Navalar Street is located on the piece of land donated by Vyramuthu Chettiyar. This is where the Samadhi Chinnaswami of Mandaitheevu, another disciple of Kadait Swami is located. Another follower, Nanniyar is also from Mandaitheevu. His house has a memorial for Swamigal. Kulanthaivel Swamigal held a high position in

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the Government. When he became a disciple of Swamigal, he quit his position and devoted his life fully for religious services.

The other disciple of Kadait Swamigal was Chellappa Swamigal, the Guru of Yogaswami. Chellappa Swamigal must have met Kadait Swamigal when he was wandering in the streets of Nallur. Once Chellappa Swami gave a lemon fruit to Kadait Swami and he received it very affectionately. On another occasion, Kadait Swami got a rupee from a peanut vendor woman, wrapped it in a betel leaf, and gave it to Chellappa Swami. Then, Kadait Swami touched Chellappa Swami's head with his umbrella and drove him away. This was the initiation to Chellappa Swami which resulted in him attaining wisdom and enlightenment.

Kadait Swamigal had performed many miracles, like converting iron into gold, curing many devotees' chronic diseases and solving their problems. The details are recorded in the book, "Kulanthaivel Swami and his spiritual lineage" written by Pandithar M. Kandiah and published by Keerimalai Kulanthaivel Swamigal's Charitable Administrative Society.

The Samadhi of Kadait Swamigal is located in Vannarpannai, Neraviyadi.

Now, let us ponder about Saint Arumuga Navalar who revived the Saiva religion in accordance with the tradition of Vedas and Agamas. Navalar saved the Saiva religion from dominance and onslaught of Christian religion. He revived Saiva religion by establishing Saiva schools, publishing Saiva books, imbued new life to Purana story-telling tradition, and paved way for teaching Thirumurais.

Though Yogaswami came from Siddha tradition, he followed and preserved the Vedic and Agama traditions. We can see the congruence of Siddha and the Veda-Agama traditions in Yogaswamigal.

II

Birth and Early Days

There are much difficulties in recording the life history of Yogaswami. There were very few writings that were published during the lifetime of Swamigal. He always disliked anyone writing about Him. If he knows of anyone making an attempt to write, He would stop him immediately. Even 'Natchintanai' (Good thoughts), the compilation of His sayings, was published amidst many obstacles during His time. Once He gave permission to publish it, but attempted to stop it later. Swamigal would say that great truths would be desacreted when come out of human mouth. "How can you talk about "that which you are unable to talk about", he would say.

Yogaswami heard that I was trying to publish a book on Chellaachi Ammaiyar. Swamigal came to my home twice and instructed me that I should not write anything about him in that book. I told him humbly that I would mention only about the meeting of Swamigal with Chellachi Ammaiyar. As I promised Swamigal, I wrote a very short account of their spiritual relationship. Only after Yogaswami's Maha Samadhi, did I wrote elaborately in Sivathondan special issue.

Swamigal followed the Hindu tradition that spiritual matters should be imparted only to people who are ready. He held on to the principle that spirituality should not be publicised. Swamigal used to say that Chellappa Swamigal escaped (such publicity) under the cloak of 'lunatic'. Due to our good merits, Swamigal came out of the boundry and lived as one of us.

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The following life history is based on some facts that were gathered from Swamigal's conversations with followers and from Swamigal's close followers. I am writing this book only after verifying the facts as much as possible. Followers should forgive me if still persisted some mistakes even after such careful measures.

There are many different versions about Swamigal's date of birth, name of parent's and His given name. After much considerations, the details provided in Hindu Sathana (8-1-71) by Mr. S. Rathinam appears to be acceptable. These details are very close to what was written by Suthumalai Saravanamuthu Kandayah. The writings of Mr. Rathinam are as follows: "A respected Saiva man by the name of Ambalavanar was living in Tholakudi, Mavidapuram. In May 1865 his family got him married with Amutham, an unblemished Saiva woman. As they did not have progeny for few years, they worshipped and did penance to God Kandaswami. As a result of their penance, they were blessed with a child on May 29, 1872 Monday at 3.30 am in Avittam Nakshatram. They named him as Sathasivan."

Mother and Father

Swamigal's mother was also known by another name, Chinnachi Ammaiya. Some say that Swamigal's childhood name was Yoganathan. But, the name Yoganathan was given by the administrator of Colombuthurai after He qualified in the Yoga tradition. This causal name became His permanent name in due course of time. Swamigal had told that His paternal grand mother used to live in Chunnakam. Swamigal had attested that father's mother, "Appu Achi", lived near the Chunnakam Pootharayar Temple.

Swamigal's father, Ambalavanar, was a tobacco trader in Maskeliya. To go to Maskeliya, one has to go by ship to

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Thirukonamalai and then proceed there by land route. Due to this travel difficulties, Ambalavanar rarely visited home. In those days, Swamigal grew under the care of His mother.

The father was concerned about Swamigal's education when He reached five years of age. There were no schools in Maviddapuram. Further, he was not at home to supervise His education. So, he entrusted the responsibilities of Swamigal's education with his younger brother Sinniah. Sinniah was living in Columbuthurai. He had married a Catholic woman and converted to Catholic religion and had assumed the name Joseph.

Joseph admitted his adopted son first to a Tamil school in Columbuthurai. At this time, Swamigal's mother passed away. Swamigal completed third grade in the Tamil school. Then Swamigal was admitted to the Sampathasriyar English School to learn English. There he was admitted into the Catholic religion with a Catholic name 'John'.

Seed for Saiva Devotion

At that time, Swamigal's father's sister, Muthupillai lived in a village, Pandiyanthalvu, near Columbuthurai. She was an ardent Saiva devotee. She was worried that her brother Sinniah had embraced Catholic religion and that her nephew was studying in a catholic school with an additional name, John. She arranged to give her nephew Saiva books and ancient epics to read whenever Swamigal visited her. During holidays, she would send Swamigal to His hometown, Mavidapuram. Muthupillai must be credited for saving Swamigal from the influence of Catholic religion and for sowing the seed of Saiva religion in Him.

All those related to Swamigal had healthy, strong body like Swamigal and had long longevity. One of His nephews,

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Appakutti, lived in Mavidapuram. To great extend he had the appearance like Swamigal. At one time he acted in a folk drama as Yaman, the God of Death, so people used to call him Yaman Appakutti. Swamigal's aunt Muthupillai lived long life and passed away very recently. Muthupillai's son Vythiyalingam still lives in Suthumalai.

III

Career Life and Spiritual Practices

Swamigal completed His education after 7th or 8th grade in the Sampathasriyar school. Then, His father took Him to Maskeliya so that he could learn the work in estate. Swamigal was not interested to work there. He used to wander around in the estate in the cold without shirt. Sometimes He would be immersed in deep thoughts. After seeing this awkward attitude, His father sent Him back to Columbuturai.

Later, Yogaswami worked as a storekeeper with the Irrigation Department in Kilinochi. At that time the Iranaimadukkulam dam was built by Sir Ramanathan who took great initiative in its construction. Swamigal had recalled Mr. Thiruchitrampalam from Nellippalai worked as a clerk and Mr. Brown, a British worked as an engineer in that office. Yogaswami regarded work as worship and it was not surprising that everyone appreciated His good work and duty consciousness.

Meditation in the Leisure Time

Swamigal spent His leisure time meditating when He was working in Killinochchi. At that time, Mr. Vettrivelu who was a colleague of Swamigal, who later became the Grama Sevaka (Village Headman) of that region, was very close to Swamigal. He had said Swamigal used to meditate for long time, when others were sleeping. This remind us of a

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verse in Bhagavat Gita: "A Gnani is awake when others are asleep."

Yogaswami's nephew, Vythiyalingam, whom I have mentioned earlier, used to visit Killinochi when Swamigal worked there. He too had said that Swamigal's lunatic (spiritual) behavior began to show up during that period of time.

A mango tree planted by Swamigal is still there in Kilinochi. People refer this tree as "Swamiyar Maram".

It must be during this time that Swamigal must have memorized hundreds of devotional songs. He would buy many devotional books as soon as He received the salary. Once memorized the hymns, it is said Swamigal would not think about the books again. This way He memorized many Thevarams, Thiruvagasams, Thirumanthiram, the Songs of Arunagirinathar, Thayumanavar, Pattinathar, Siddhars and Avvaiyar. In later days, Swamigal used to sing these songs to devotees when they gather around. In the early mornings, he would sing in His sweet commanding voice, verses like, "Vakkundam" and "Palum Thelithenum" of Saint Auvvayar. I recollect, once he sang the following Thevaram:

***Thief I am, thieving was my service thus
spent the time
With clarity of mind searched, sought and
discovered
Those who contemplate within, know thee
within
Ashamed me with shame I laughed bellyful.***

It appears when Swamigal sang those last two lines, He might have had that unique experience of oneness that God is within us and aware of all our experiences of our actions.

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Swamigal had great interest in Thayumanavar songs too. Swamigal had quoted them in his Natchinthanai songs and in His writings.

The following verses were found in one of His prose writings, which explains the mission of Sivathondan Nilayam:

All word is silence

All work is silence

All is fulfilment of Good Silence.

IV

Darshan of Vivekananda and Guru

The year 1897 was very significant in Yogaswami's life. It appears that Swamigal quit His job at the end of that year and returned to Jaffna. He was about twenty-five years of age at that time. It was a period when Swamigal was advancing systematically in spiritual life. Swami Vivekananda (prime disciple of Swami Ramakrishna of Calcutta) came to Sri Lanka in January 1897 enroute to Jaffna. A reception procession was given to him in Jaffna and Yogaswami took part in that reception. The procession started from the Fort main street in Jaffna and ended in the Jaffna Hindu College. Yoga Swami participated in that procession.

Devotion to the End

Swamigal used to describe with great enthusiasm, in later years, about the way Vivekananda delivered his speech in the specially constructed dais after the procession reached Hindu College. Swamigal said that Vivekananda walked criss-cross both ends of the stage and began his speech with the words,

"The subject is large but the time is short."

He said that Vivekananda's bright and electrified eyes enchanted the audience. Swamigal had great respect and

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devotion for Ramakrishna Paramahamsar and Vivekananda till to the end. Swamigal made arrangement to translate the book, "In the Hours of Meditation" written by Vivekananda's disciple, Alexander in 1925. This was the first publication which was published under Swamigal supervision. Later in 1955 Swamigal arranged for publications of small-size books on the "Essence of orations of Swami Vivekananda" as Sivathondan publication.

Swamigal had special respect for the monks of Ramakrishna Mission. Swamigal had issued directives that whoever hailed from the Mission, they should be received in full respect in the Sivathondan Nilayam. Moreover, Swamigal had supported and blessed Swami Vipulanandar when he wanted to become a monk in the Ramakrishna Mission. Swamigal gave the first donation to the students' Orphan Home in Mattakaluppu, which was originally started in Jaffna by Ramakrishna Mission.

Meeting with Gurunathar

Swamigal must have had His first *Darshan* of His Guru Chellappa Swamigal at this time. We earlier saw how Chellappa Swamigal met his Guru, Kadait Swami and received initiation. The parents of Chellappa Swamigal moved from Vatukottai to Nallur to do farming. Like now, in those days the fields in Semmani division were fertile agricultural land. Chellappa Swamigal was living in a hut in Southeast of Nallur Street. The hut still exists with some renovations there. It is said that Chellappa Swamigal worked as a researcher in Jaffna office. Chellappa Swamigal was the brother-in-law of the famous doctor, Sinnathurai. Chellappa Swamigal though most of the time wandered in the streets of Nallur, he used to visit his devotee's places in Columbuthurai, Thirunelveli,

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and Kaithadi. He used to ask and get food from his devotees there.

Chellappa Swamigal was an expert in crafting hand held fans and also in making handicraft articles out of coconut leaves. In the Silver Jubilee publication of Ramanathan's College, Mr. Somasundaram, a teacher, had written:

"On the day when Sir Ponnambalam Ramanathan laid the foundation stone for the Ramanathan College, Chellappa Swamigal went to Maruthanamadam and gave him a hand made fan and said, **"There is no intrinsic evil", "All Finished long time ago", "Everything is true", and "We know nothing"**.

Appearance and Personality

Yoga Swamigal had described His Guru's inner and outer appearance in many places in Natchinthanai. Swamigal had pictured His Guru's appearance and personality like this:

**Wander in Nallur streets
laughingly Glaring eyed He,
desired no disguise
Dark skinned and in rags He clothed**

**He sleeps after midnight
Talks to mischievous
streetwalkers to confuse them
Desire no decoration
Snarls like Yama at devotees who
approach with much love**

**He has joyful walk
He is capable of others
calling him a lunatic**

**Praise and humiliation
He treats the same
Graceful walk with
laughter He possess
"Who knows?" He often said
Gracefully lie down in the steps of
chariot None knows him as a great
intelligence being
The world rebuke him as Lunatic**

As explained in Natchintanai song below, Chellappa Swamigal is beyond the bounds of philosophy and qualities :

**Neither religion nor caste restraint Him.
No message He delivers - Oh, Sinna Thangam
They (all) say he is lunatic.
Justice or injustice, none He in the situation
Displays no examples –
Oh, Sinna Thangam, He wander like a crackpot.**

**Doesn't don Holy ash nor pottu in forehead,
Nothing he repeats
Oh, Sinna Thangam
He is without attributes.**

**Be Patient , Remove ego he speaks
Contradictarily he speaks
Oh, Sinna Thangam
He had lost his mind, they will say.**

It is the Saiva religion's tenet that Siva Himself comes down as Guru to grant Grace to the matured souls. As such, there is no difference between Siva and Guru.

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This concept has been well explained by Swamigal in many of his Natchinthanai songs. As an example we will look at two of the songs below:

**With eyes on forehead,
He dances with Kaali in jungle
Came down as Ngana Guru in the country
He saved , redeemed me , as I saw the flower
feet of the Guru at the lofty Chariot step of
Nallai
Vishnu and Brahma know not the Holy Feet
He came down gracefully as Guru on this earth
Removed all the deep rooted enmity
He took over me
Saw him at world fame Chariot step of Nallai.**

Yogaswami recalls the imparting of Mahavakyas- Sacred Utterances-(by His Guru Chellappaswami) unto him in the four songs below:

The Holy Chellappan, on the steps of chariot coutyard
Said – “No intrinsic evil” , praise to him
“All is Truth Absolute”, the sage said
Unable to write it down(its true deeper inner meaning)
“We know not” He said the holy words for good.

“It has been determined”, He told long ago in the presence of devotees

Moreover when Yogaswami received the Darshan of His Guru on the chariot steps, He received the spiritual sayings
“Who are you”, “Search within”, and “Give up desire”.

At the steps of Nallur's Chariot

Yogaswami had rendered His ecstatic experience of His Guru Chellapaswami's grace. He had described this in his songs below, in a manner that the readers would have the same experience:

**Two searched in vain the God's form
He came down in human form like me
In Nallai, where everyone worshipped
Unnoticed , He ran around and walked leisurely
with smiling face**

**One day he stared at me saying
There is no intrinsic evil
He showed me the form and the formlessness
And the grace beyond the beyond
And the form that has no beginning nor end
And immersed me in absolute silence
Joy and sorrow disappeared
Engulfed in light, light, Siva's light.**

For many years Yogaswami wandered with His Guru without missing His Holy Feet. The Guru subjected Yogaswami to many tests. Both will cook the food but Guru Chellappa will throw all the cooked food and break everything (the earthen pots). Both will walk to Keerimalai to take bath but return without taking one. One day both of them stood for alms in front of a Chettiyar shop. After making them stand in scorching sun, the accountant gave them two pennies. Chellappa Swamigal was very happy and said, "Today we have earned after working very hard. Our forefathers had said, "One should eat from the earnings of hard work."

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Every year, on the first Monday of Panguni month (March), both will go to Maduvil Pandithalaichi Amman Temple. They will cook rice and eat there.

Yogaswami was not tired of those tests. Swamigal always regarded Chellappa Swamigal above mother, a better leader. Very few had sung in praise of a Guru as Swamigal. These verses, remind us about Thayumanavar who had sung about his guru, Mounaguru.

Swamigal listened to His Guru very attentively. Chellappa Swamigal normally talked like a mad man. But in between his blabberings some gems would fall, and Yogaswami used to say he would wait for hours to receive some of these gems. For discussion and clarification on religious matters, the right person to discuss would be Chellappa swami, Swamigal used to say.

V

Pilgrimage to Kathirgama

Yogaswami and another close disciple Kathiravelu, did intense penance for 40 days at the Nallur chariot court under the supervision of Chellappa Swamigal. Chellappa Swamigal's another follower, Thirugnanasambanthar of Columbuturai Vithanaiyaar, was helping these two who were doing the penance. One day Chellappa Swamigal called off their meditation and told them, "Two elephants should not be tied in one post". Yoga Swamigal walked away towards east with His tooth brush stick. The whereabouts of the other disciple, Kathiravelu, still remains a mystery.

Swamigal, took to full renunciation and walked towards Kathirgamam in the eastern direction. This pilgrimage likely took place till 1910. Pilgrims who undertake pilgrimage like this, do not carry money or (extra) clothes. They eat what is offered and sleep anywhere. Many such hardships can be found in the life history of Vivekanandar, who was a renunciate. Yogaswami too had to struggle with hunger, thirst, malarial fever and floods on the way. A teacher, Vallipuram had written the Swamigal's narrative account of the travel as follows:

"I was walking towards Kathirgamam and as I was approaching Mattakalappu suddenly, I got fever. I could not walk anymore. I laid my head on a stone and slept underneath a tree. In the morning there was no fever and there was a 25 cent coin on the stone pillow. I took the coin to a store, ate dosai, and continued to walk. On the way Anaikutty swamigal (must be Sittanaikutty Swamigal) saw me. He came running and embraced me and said,

“Because I saw you, it must rain.” I told him, not now. Let it rain after one hour. It rained indeed after one hour. On the way I had to cross a river that had flooded. As I could not cross the flooded river, I dug a shallow ditch in the river bed sand and slept. On the third day, some hunters came to this side of river on a catamaran (some bamboo sticks tied together). They cooked some food and said, “Oh fasting noble man, Oh fasting noble man” and woke me up and fed me . They then took me on the catamaran to the other side of the river .

Anaikutty Swamy

Yogaswami returned to Jaffna via Colombo. As we noted earlier, he met the big Anaikutty Swamy in Colombo. He gave Swamigal a five cent coin and blessed him saying “Trunk (Ganesha’s trunk) this is trust” (“Thumpikkai ithu Nambikai”). Swamigal, like a begger, went to meet Sir Ponnampalam Arunachalam. He did not have any change, so he changed a twenty-five cent coin and gave ten cents to Swamigal. Similar to Arumuga Navavalar having supported Ramanathan’s family, Swamigal also supported the benevolent Ramanathan and Arunachalam families till the end. Swamigal always praised their services to the people of Sri Lanka, especially to Tamil community.

When Swamigal went from Colombo to Mathalai, a miracle took place. There, Saravanamuthu, the father-in-law of Thillaiyampalam who was the president of Sivathondan Nilayam, was working as an overseer. Somebody appeared in Saravanamuthu’s dream and said “A devotee in rags is coming hungry. Go and receive Him”, and disappeared. The next day morning as per the dream, Saravanamuthu met the hungry Swamigal in rags. He took Swamigal to home to

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refresh, gave Him new clothes and food, and saw Swamigal off.

The relatives were unaware that Yogaswami had gone on pilgrimage to Kathirgamam. They went and enquired about the whereabouts of Swamigal with his Guru Chellappa Swamigal. "He is already dead", Chellappa replied. But when they saw Yogaswami returned alive, the surprised relatives went back to Chellappa Swamigal and questioned him why he told that Yogaswami was dead. Again Chellappa Swamigal said emphatically,

"We do not lie, we told the truth, and He indeed is dead ". The relatives did not understand and thought it was a meaningless saying of an insane man. But, in reality Swamigal is "dead", for the world and how could they comprehend this (mystic saying)?

Maha Samadhi of Gurunathar

When Chellappa Swamigal was sick, Yogaswami visited him. Swamigal had narrated to a devotee of what happened then. "Chellappa Swamigal was lying down as he was ill. Everybody paid a visit to him; I too wanted to see him and went there. Chellappa Swamigal shouted, "What are you going to see? Stand there. Think about you," . I turned back and never went again".

Swamigal had described the Maha Samadhi of Chellappa Swamigal as follows: "He roamed around the town all day and went back to Nallur Chariot shed and lie down. At that time, one person went there. Chellappa swamigal requested that man to go out and come back later. The man went out and within a short time he heard a thud sound. The man rushed back and saw the body of Chellappa Swamigal stiff

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like a stick. On close inspection, there was no breathing. Chellappa Swamigal had left his body on his own will.”

Chellappa Swamigal had insisted with his relatives and devotees that his body should be cremated and was cremated accordingly.

Holy Shed

After his return from Kathirgamam, Yoga Swamigal took residence in the root of an Illuppai (illipai) tree near a shed, where he would stay in the future. Rain or shine, He stayed there in the open.

As he was living in the open place and exposed to sun and rain, the devotees made a request to Swamigal to move into a nearby shed. This shed was a shop before. One person by the name of Nanniyar, who belonged to Aryalai, was running the shop. One day Nanniyar, while was drunk, tied Chellappa Swamigal to a post in the store. Neighbors who heard the shouts untied Chellappa Swamigal. Yogaswami, referring to this incident said, “Many people now bow their head and worship in the place where, Chellappa Swamigal was tied up.” Swamigal began to live in the shed from 1914.

Initially Swamigal used to sleep in the North side of the shed. Later Swamigal changed position to sleep on the South side. He had given the reason to Teacher Vallipuram :

“When I moved into this shed, I used to sleep in the North side. One day, in the midnight, my mind said “snake, snake”. First I ignored, but my mind repeatedly said. So, I lighted a matchstick and saw a snake was lying near me. I said, “Okay, You sleep here and I will move over there”, and from then onwards I am sleeping here in the south side of the shed.”

VI

Relations with Followers and Coming of the Devotees

Chellachi Ammaiyar was born in a well-known farmer family in Chunnakam. She meticulously observed all the four paths (margas) of Chariyai, Kiriya, Yoga and Gnana and lived gloriously with the grace of God. It appears that beginning 1914, Swamigal used to visit Chellachi Ammaiyar. She attained Maha Samadhi on 27th January 1929. Swamigal shared a few things about her to scholar Navaratnam who had noted down. These written material have not been published yet. I have written about them in Chellachi Ammaiyar's Memorial issue:

"It is necessary to mention here about some preceptors associated with the spiritual life of Chellachi Ammaiyar. Foremost among them would be Yoga Swamigal. We really need a Sekkilar (who wrote the biography of the spiritual life of 63 Saivite Saints) to describe about the spiritual relationship between Ammaiyar and Swamigal. One will think and the other will put it into action. Those who have seen them together can never forget that scene very easily. Swamigal used to praise Ammaiyar to devotees who attained full enlightenment just by staying at home, without going to jungle or climbing mountains. Ammaiyar also had said many times that she had seen many renunciates in her life but not (a gem) "full renunciate" like Yoga Swamigal. The devotees will understand in due course about the wonderful happenings between them."

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I shall not repeat here since I have written about them in detail in Sivathondan Sovereign Publication.

Jaffna saw many new developments in 1916 and 1917. In 1916, the Young Men Hindu Association (Y.M.H.A.) was started big and had great influence in the life of young generation. Some of the important people who served in that Association were Justice M.S. Illayathambi, Advocate A. Ambalavanar, Muthaliyar S.Thiruchittambalam, Mr. M. Sabarathina Singhi and Mr. V. Muthukumar.

Pandit Mylvagananar

In 1917, Scholar Mylvagananar (later to become Swami Vipulanandar) was appointed as science teacher in Sampathiriyasiyar College. He lived in Anaippanthi. He formed Vivekanandar Association in his house. Notable figures in that association were scholar K.Navaratnam, Teacher S. Mayilvaganam, Teacher R.N. Muthukumaran B.A., Mr. V.S.S. Kumaraswamy, Mr.R.N. Suppiah and Scholar A. Periyathambipillai. In a newspaper article Periyathambipillai had written the following about the life of Scholar Mylvagananar at that time period:

“What was in my imagination all the while, became a reality when I met scholar Mylvagananar in person in 1917. The house he lived in Anaipanthi was more like a public house. Highly educated people, young people pursuing higher studies and many social service workers often frequented this house. Yoga Swamigal who rarely could be seen anywhere, also would be seen there. Due to Swamigal’s Grace, that house always appeared to be filled with new bright light and freshness. Swamigal was enormously gracious and fond of the Scholar. He saw a matured soul in him ”.

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Scholar Navaratnam had narrated about his first meeting with Yogaswami in Chellachi Ammaiyar memorial: "One day in 1917, Muthaliyar, S. Thiruchittampalam, Mr.M.S. Elayathambi and Brahmashri E.K. Subramaniya Iyer went to have holy darshan of Ammaiyar. As I was a student then and showed keen interest in Hindu Youth Association, they took me along. I want to record my thanks to Mr. M. Sabaratna Singhi for making all arrangements for us to have Darshan of Ammaiyar. Though I went to see Ammaiyar, I was distracted by a person who looked like a sage, sitting near Ammaiyar. Those who came with me were concentrating their mind and eyes on Ammaiyar. However, my mind and eyes were somehow transfixed on the rishi sitting next to Ammaiyar. It was because of His magnificent appearance and nothing else. I did not know who He was and I had no knowledge of Him at that time. Only on our return journey to home, I learnt that He was the Swamigal of Columbuthurai which was the other common name for Sri Yoga Swamigal. I was engrossed by His appearance and He impressed me deep in my mind".

Close Followers

From the above account it is clear that the important people in Y.M.H.A., Vivekanandar Association, Mr. M.S. Elayathambi, Mr. M. Sabaratnasinghi, Mr. K. Navaratnam, Scholar Mylvagananar, Mr. T. Muthukumar, Mr. V.C.C. Kumaraswamy and Mr. R.N. Suppaiyah all knew Swamigal in 1917. Later, all of them became close devotees of Swamigal. Among them, Mr.M. Sabaratnasinghi was the first devotee to light camphor before Swamigal and worshipped Him.

Though Scholar Navaratnam had met Swamigal in 1917, his intimate relations lasted till 1920. They were always together for more than five years. Every day early

morning, Swamigal would go to Navaratnam's house. Later, when Navaratnam goes to Central College, Swamigal also would accompany him. After Mr. Navaratnam had gone to College, Swamigal would stay in a tea shop run by Mr. Sinnathambi near the college. When Navaratnam return after College, Swamigal would go with him. Later in the evening, Swamigal and Navaratnam would go to Muthavalli with some devotees and sit there to read books of Swami Vivekananda and Aravinthar.

"Sky is the Roof"

During holidays, Swamigal and Navaratnam would wander around in different towns.

When Mr. Navaratnam fell ill of malaria fever, physician Muthukumar treated him, while Swamigal and Mr.C. Mylvaganam took care of nursing work.

Mr.C.Mylvaganam, lived in a room in Maruthanamadam when he was working in Rama-nathan College as a teacher. Most of the time, Swamigal was seen in that room of Mr. C. Mylvaganam.

For some time I stayed in a hostel, run by Mr. Mylvaganam, while I was studying in the Hindu College. It was located on the south side of Kasturiyar's house. At that time Mr. Srikantha, son of Mylvaganam, was a student in Central College. I think it was in 1927, we observed Maha Sivarathri in the Hostel in the Holy presence of Swamigal. Swamigal and Navaratnam sat in meditation in the evening about 6pm. It was only the next day morning about 5 o'clock Swamigal came out of meditation and woke up Navaratnam from his meditation. The reason why I point-out this here is to illustrate how advanced was Navaratnam in his spiritual practice.

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The people of Jaffna expected that both Navaratnam and Mylvaganam will become the rightful heir of Swamigal. They requested Swamigal to establish an ashram. To this, Swamigal replied, "The four directions are the walls of my ashram and the sky is the roof." Perhaps both of them were destined to go in different ways; and that could be the reason why the ashram was not established at that time. It is rare to find anybody like the two who had understood well about Swamigal. Navaratnam would have written the best book about Swamigal if he was alive then. Since he was no more, I requested many times our respected Mylvaganam to write the book on Swamigal. He told me that his memory had declined and his physical strength had weakened.

However, a small book 'Happiness' written by Mylvaganam and his explanations of the Maha Vakkiyangal (great sayings) would be very useful to know further about Swamigal.

Navaratnam wrote some essays on Advaita Vedanta in Sivathondan Magazine on the request of Yogaswami. Those articles were published as a book in 1995 as 'Sivathondan' Publication.

Swamigal – Thiruvilangam

In 1920, another great man met Swamigal. He was advocate, Mr. Thiruvilangam, who had written extraordinary commentaries on Sivagnanasithiyar, Sivapragasam, Thiruppugal and Kandalangaram (Saivite Literary works). In 1920, he became the Manager of Manippai Hindu College, and appointed Scholar Mylvagananar (Vipulanandar) as principal. It was through Mylvaganam that Thiruvilangam met Swamigal.

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On this Mylvagananar (Vipulananda Adigal) had written as follows : (Mr. Peethamparanar had helped me to write as Vipulananda Adigal had written) "Thiru- vilangam is a great soul who had worshipped and meditated Lord Kumaran (Muruga) and got enlightenment. Thiruvilangkam had great yearning to meet noble souls. Knowing his deep interest, Mylvagananar took him to Columbuturai to meet Yoga Swamigal, the Paramayogeswar (supreme God) of yoga. Their spiritual love for each other crossed beyond the borders of this world.

From then on, the lodge of Mylvagananar at Manipay Hindu College turned into a scintillating divine spot. Whenever, Thiruvilangam returned from Colombo, Swamigal and teacher Navaliyoor Thambaiya would also go to the lodge. Throughout the night, they would sing Thirupugal so enchantingly that the listeners would be transported to the inner world of Lord Kumaran. Myl- vaganannar who would be fully absorbed in the singing would go deeper and deeper into himself seeking more light of wisdom."

Swamigal had commented that Thiruvilangam, by constantly pondering on the deeper meaning of the verses of the Saiva Literatures to which he was writing commentaries, got clarity and had turned himself into light. Swamigal said he was immersed in light, without his knowledge, when Thiruvilangam died in Colombo. This explains well the spiritual relationship that existed between them.

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Swamigal Seated on a Chair

VII

Visits by Political Leaders

Sir Duraisamy was the first among the many political leaders to establish close connection with Swamigal. Mr. C. Mylvaganam had told about Yogaswami to Advocate Somasundaram of Nallur who was a friend of Sir Duraisamy. In 1921, Mr. Somasundaram himself took Sir Duraisamy to meet Swamigal. During that time, Sir Duraisamy was contesting for the assembly election for the first time.

Sir Duraisamy had accounted his first meeting with Swamigal as follows: "In 1921 I was contesting in the election for Sri Lanka's first reform assembly from North district. I went along with a friend to receive blessings from Swamigal. It was October, rainy season. The floor of the hut where Swamigal lived was all wet. They have laid a wooden plank to sit. I was very nervous to go there and face Swamigal. In those days, Swamigal was in divine ecstatic state (people used to say he was 'mad'). I was fearful in my mind what Swamigal would say. We greeted Swamigal and sat on the wooden plank. We did not speak. Swamigal spoke and whatever he spoke, did not register in my mind . But at last Swamigal gave me a lime fruit. I was happy to receive it as Prasadam (holy offering) and returned."

Sir Duraisamy remained as a sincere devotee from 1921 till Swamigal attained Magasamadhi in 1964. Despite of many ups and downs Sir Duraisamy remained an ardent devotee Swamigal. Similarly, Swamigal also loved Sir Duraisamy very much, and never forgot to write letters to him wherever he went. This is very clear if one reads the

publication, "Swami's Thirumugangal" (Swami's Letters). Whatever Swamigal thought (of implementing), Sir Duraisamy would put them into action.

A Miracle Performed!

I want to mention here about a miracle Swamigal performed in the life of Sir Duraisamy. Sir Duraisamy was the leader of the ruling party and was invited for the coronation of Queen Elizabeth II. At that time, he was yet to receive the 'Sir' title. When the travel arrangements were being made suddenly he fell ill. The physicians advised him not to go.

On those days, Swamigal was staying in Peradeniya with Mr. Velupillai, brother of Scholar Somasundaram. Swamigal felt Sir Duraisamy's sickness from Peradeniya. One day, he gave Velupillai a list of herbs to buy. He took the list to the medical storekeeper who told him that these herbal medicines were highly toxic. Velupillai mentioned this remark to Swamigal and Swamigal told him not to mind that remark and requested him to boil them. Velupillai made a decoction of those toxic ingredients and gave to Swamigal. Swamigal consumed the drink and within a short time, started to vomit severely. Also He suffered from severe diarrhea motion. Velupillai became afraid and started crying. After some time Swamigal asked for some lemon juice and salted soda, mixed them in water and drank. Few hours later, Swamigal became well. The next morning Swamigal said, "Now Duraisamy can go to London. The treatment for his illness has been done. If he goes (to London) it will be good for him and the Tamil community". Duraisamy went to London, and received the 'Sir' title from the Queen. He got this rare gift in his life due to the grace of Swamigal.

Swamigal remained as though nothing had happened after this remarkable miracle. Velupillai also kept quite as he was afraid of Swamigal. He revealed this incident to me only after Swamigal attained Maha Samadhi. What a difference between Yogaswami and modern swamis who live in the world of publicity.

Other Miracles

If we attempt to compile and write all the miracles that Swamigal performed in the life of His close devotees, it would become an epic itself. Swamigal even had given legal advice to one of His devotees. Someone had lost his lands to his brother who was working as an officer in the railways. He sought Swamigal's help and blessing. Swamigal advised him on what grounds to file the legal case and the exact approach to the case. Further, Swamigal instructed him to tell them (the opposition party) that He had given this advice on the case. That devotee did exactly as advised and won the case.

It would be correct to say that the 1936 Jaffna election had really disturbed Jaffna. In the said election, Arunachalam Mahadeva and Nevins Selvadurai were contesting for the Jaffna constituency. Swamigal supported Mahadeva. But some of Swamigal's close devotees, M .S. Eliyathambi, P.N. Suppaiya and Kalaipulavar Navaratnam supported Nevins. During those days Swamigal was in His ecstatic, angry state and used to wander in the streets singing and dancing. Finally Mahadeva won the election. Swamigal felt that Mahadeva was more suitable as he had good family background and personal qualifications.

I want to narrate an incident, which will indicate Swamigal's magnanimity. I was one of those who sup-

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ported Nevins as a candidate. One day in Mani Iyer's house, Swamigal and myself were having our meals when I happened to mention that, "People are saying, why Swamigal should get involved in politics." Swamigal did not say anything. After this incident, I went to Swamigal's Ashram after a few days. Swamigal started scolding me about what I said at Iyer's house. The scolding went on from morning till evening; most of them were aimed at Kalaipulavar Navaratnam. In between scolding, He went to a neighbor's house and brought two coconut leaf mats and also food for Him and myself to eat. Swamigal served the food himself, but it appeared He was not satisfied with the vegetable preparations. He said, "How can I serve you this food? (deserve better food)". He went to another house and brought better vegetable preparation and served me before eating.

I realized that the hand that beats will also embrace eventually. Usually, Swamigal used to scold and chase only His close devotees. The devotees accept that as blessings.

In 1947 there was another election. A prominent Tamil leader wanted to contest against Mahadeva in the Jaffna constituency. Swamigal told the Tamil leader, "You need to be in parliament. Mahadeva also need to be in Parliament. So, you contest in some other constituency in which you are comfortable" because he was a very popular leader in the whole of Tamil community and not just in Jaffna. However He did not listen to Swamigal, contested, and won the election. But later, someone from his party and who was more popular and experienced contested. The popular leader lost the party candidacy. Only then, he regretted that he should have listened to Swamigal. That Tamil leader did not listen to Swamigal and it was a great loss for him and for the Tamil community.

VIII

Welfare of Saiva Religion

Yogaswami took many proactive measures to promote Saiva Religion. He conducted Saiva Siddhanta Philosophy classes and coaching classes to recite Tirumurai in proper manner and gave new life to Puranic song and story telling.

We have observed, from the time of His career days, that Swamigal had good training and great interest in Thirumurai. In the beginning when devotees gather to have darshan, Swamigal used to sing in distinct and commanding voice the Thevarams (Holy Hymns) and Thiruvagasam for many hours. After singing, He would sit in meditation. The devotees would sit down and wait quietly till Swamigal gave them permission to leave. Sometimes He would recognize the devotees' problems intuitively and to their surprise, would give solutions to their problems. In those days it was rare to hear anything else (from Swamigal).

The First Experience of Mr. Thambar

Mr. Thambar, principal of Central College, met Yoga Swamigal for the first time in December 1922. He had written about that meeting as follows: "Darkness was setting in when we reached the junction of Columbuturai and Swamiyar streets where we saw a divine being sitting under the shadow of the street kerosene lamp. He was wearing white vetti and sitting in Lotus Posture. With smooth skin, white beard, grey hair and sharp eyes like a lion, Yogaswami appeared like one of those great ancient rishis. After deep

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meditation, He opened His eyes. His eyes were shining like the eyes of a tiger at night. Then He started singing devotional songs, roaring like a dam water released into the ocean. For two hours it went on like a blowing storm. Those songs were sung as if they overflowed deep down from the naval. We all were enchanted and mesmerized by His music and songs. After He had finished, there was absolute silence like the silence after the storm. We all stood in silence. Then, He looked at us, burst into loud laughter, and enquired who we were and why we came. With fear we told the reason for coming. "I am not an astrologer to give predictions; I tell people whatever appears in my mind at that time," He replied. Then, He said all four of us were good students, so we would succeed in the examination. Since it was late at night, about 9 pm, he asked us to go home."

Regular worship started in Swamigal's Ashram and it became a tradition to recite Sivapuranam in the morning and evening . In the beginning Yogaswami used to lead the singing and others followed. Then, the owner of the land where Yoga Swamigal's hut was built, Mr. Thirunavukarasu was leading the Sivapuranam singing. The tradition of memorization and reciting Sivapuranam, which was started by Swamigal, began to spread among Sri Lankan Hindus. Even those people who were unaware of Sivapuranam , with Swamigal's contact, started learning and recite. One of the followers had narrated as below in Sivathondan (Vol.30: Issue 6) about Swamigal's service to the movement of memorizing Sivapuranam:

Recitation of Sivapuranam

"Swamigal had said that nothing like Sivapuranam helps a person in the spiritual practice (sadhana) in Tamil or in any other language. Swamigal popularized Sivapuranam

throughout Sri Lanka and gave new impetus to Saiva religion. The movement of memorization and recitation of Sivapuranam was a great achievement of Swamigal towards Saiva Religion. Literate, illiterate, the old and young – all participated with devotion and enjoyed great benefits. It brings me the same bliss now as the first time I was sitting in front of Swamigal and in many occasions I experienced the same ecstatic state in singing Sivapuranam. We got the feeling that Siva Himself, surrounded by rishis and celestial beings, was sitting in front of us in Thiruprenthurai, chanting Vedas”.

Generally, songs from Thevaram, Thiruvagasam and Natchinthanai were sung after Sivapuranam recitation. A friend of Swamigal, Mr. Duraiyappa of Columbuturai, was an expert in music and had formal training in singing Thevaram songs from the time of Chellappa Swamigal. In the evenings he used to sing some of his favorite songs in Swamigal Ashram. He was an expert in singing the “*Siraiyarum Maddakiliyae*”, “*Thondaranju Kalirum*” Thevarams and Natchinthanai song “Thiruvarul Kaikooduthu” and a boat song. He had short stint in conducting Tirumurai classes in Elandaikulam Pilliyar Temple under the supervision of Swamigal. Another devotee, Ariyalai Kanthaiyah also used to sing Thevaram, Thiruvagasam, and Natchinthanai songs exactly like Swamigal. One day when, Mr. Kanthaiyah was singing, Swamigal accompanied him with vocal thalam (beats). That was a memorable experience.

Thevaram in proper melodic mode

Yogaswami insisted that all children, especially those studying music, should learn to sing Thevaram in proper melodic mode (pann). “What is the use in singing just the verses alone without singing of the Thirumurais which are mantra power”, he would comment. As per the advice of

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Swamigal, the children of Postmaster Ramalingam and Sivapackiam, the daughter of Accountant Rasanayagam were first to study Thevaram and Tiruvasagam in proper melodic mode. Swamigal wrote some Natchinthanai songs exclusively for them.

Sivapackiam had studied the melodic modes from Satchithnanda Rajayogi (Sankara Subbaiyer). Once she sang the Thirupallaiyeluchi, with a Veenai, in the early morning of a Maha Sivaratri day in Ariyalai, which is still ringing in my ears . Swamigal wrote the following verse with her name.

Raham: Husseini Thalam:

Aathi Pallavi

**I came searching wealth to thy Holy
Feet Grant me Grace Deva
Satgurunatha**

Anupallavi

**Sivapackiam who loves singing, searching the
world
Drive away her darkness of illusions, Oh Guru
(I came searching)**

Saranam

**Can you leave me? Is it just?
Is it worthy for Swamigal show no
compassion?
Oh King, resident of Nallur , who uttered the
sacred word "Who knows" , Oh sage
The incomparable father, Oh Chellappa
(I came searching)**

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Violin expert Somasundaram and drum expert Ratnam both from Puthuvatti, were born in same musical family. They had the honour to play accompaniment music for musical story discourses of Satchithananda Rajayogigal (Sankara Suppaiyar). One will never forget the scene when all three - Sangara Suppaiyar, Somu and Ratnam-perform together on the same stage. After the demise of his mother and uncle Ratnam, Somu was not in proper mental frame to play in concerts. He was teaching only those students who came to his house. Swamigal used to visit him and listen to his violin music while also compose music for his poems. His daughter and the daughter of his uncle, both were studying music when their financial conditions did not permit them to pursue further.

Having taken note of Somu's situation, Yogaswami arranged for a bhajan every Friday in Vanarpanai Sarasvathy Library. Somu used to play violin for these two girls who were singing. Usually one of the devotees would sponsor the bhajan and the girls would receive gifts. In this way, Swamigal helped many needy people on right time.

Nagalinga Parathesiyar

Swamigal had demonstrated many times that miracles can happen even in this modern times by singing particular Thevaram songs that are associated with miracles in proper melodic mode. Thirunganambanthar received gold coins from Lord Siva when he sang the Thevaram "Idarinum Thalarinum" when he appealed for money for his father who wanted to perform Yagna in Thiruvavaduthurai. Yogaswami also had received gold coins whenever He recited "Idarinum Thalarinum" Thevaram song. Mr. Vallipuram teacher had written about such an incident as follows: "One day I was with Swamigal in this lodge. There were also some other

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devotees. A car was coming on the road. Swamigal stood up and went to the street. One Nagalinga Swamigal got down from the car. Swamigal embraced him with His Holy Hands, and seated him on the tiger skin on which He was sitting. We gave Swamigal another seat who was sitting on the floor. Silence prevailed for some time. Swamigal asked Nagalinga swami to sing Thevaram. (Nagalinga swami is also known as Nagalinga Parathesiyar). Parathesiyar remained silent. Sensing Parathesiyar's mind, Swamigal said, "Idarinum Thalarinum".

Paradesiyar started to sing those holy ten verses. Paradesiyar body started to shake. Eyes were pouring tears. Ambience of devotion pervaded everywhere. Our hearts also started to melt. When the eighth verse was sung, a car came on the street and stopped in front the house. Two people got down from the car. I thought they were Goddess Umathevi and God Siva from Holy Kailash. They washed their hands and legs from the well water and stood before Swamigal in reverence with folded hands. The tenth verse was completed. Swamigal's Holy eyes stared at those who were standing in front of Him with folded hands. The Ammaiyaar (woman) placed all those materials they had brought with them in front of Swamigal and touched His feet in obeisance. Appar (man) also did the same prostrations. Swamigal asked them to get up from the floor; they got up and stood in humility and devotion. They brought on a silver tray pooja articles, flowers, fruits, betel leaves, arecanuts, coconut and camphor together with a silk pouch. Swamigal took the silk pouch, untied, and emptied it on the floor. Many gold coins fell from the pouch with a sound. The driver who brought Parathesiyar was a Sinhalese; he was leaning on a coconut tree and watching everything. Swamigal first called him and gave him some gold coins. Then he told the priest to look after Parathesiyar. He put the rest of the coins in the bag,

tied, and offered that pouch to Parathesiyar. The surprised Parathesiyar stood immediately, paid obeisance with folded hands, received the pouch with both hands from Swamigal and touched them with his eyes. He was crying standing in front of Swamigal. Then, Swamigal told Paradesiyar, "Now attend to other matters." Parathesiyar worshipped Swamigal again, finished Siva Pooja and had his meals with the priest."

The Benefits of Kolaru Pathigam

At one time, Nagalinga Paradesiyar was famous and uncomparable in giving music-cum-story discourses of Saiva Saints, with musical accompaniment. But at later stage, he was stricken with poverty and sickness. Knowing his distress, one Mr.V.S. Kandiah, one of Swamigal's devotees, brought Paradesiyar to Swamigal .

Swamigal always advised his devotees to recite the Kolaru Pathigam to drive away sickness and similar miseries. Once, Swamigal's close devotee and the President of Sivathondan Nilayam, Dr. Guruswamy, was suffering from sickness. Swamigal urged his children to recite Kolaru Pathigam. The next day, there was no change in his illness condition. Swamigal told his children, "You did not sing the song properly" and started to sing Kolaru Pathigam himself and the illness began to subside.

Swamigal had emphasised the power of Kolaru Pathigam and other two Holy Pathigams as follows: "With Nada (sound) they cure sickness. Mannar Kudi Swami knew only few Thevaram like, 'Veyuru Tholi Pangan', yet he recites them often and he developed many powers to do miracles. We can strengthen our mind by reading Thevarams like, "Namarkum Kudiyallom" and "Naallen Cheyum".

Siddhanta Literature

It was Yogaswami's desire that all Saivaites must learn well the Siddhanta literature. Swamigal had high regards for I.Ponnaiya, the Physician from Erlaalai, for his deep knowledge in Siddhanta philosophy. Swamigal arranged him to conduct Meikandar's Siddhanta philosophy classes first in Vanarpanai and then in Erlalai. Swamigal arranged to write essays on Saiva Siddhantha and published in Sivathondan. It should be pointed out that a delegation was sent to England to expound and promote Saiva Siddhanta Philosophy.

Swamigal wished that Puranas are read in the temples and Ashrams regularly. Swamigal stressed that all miseries afflicting the Tamil community would be dispelled by reading Kandapuram. Kandapuram and Periyapuram were read regularly in the verandah of Mr. Muthukumaraswami Chettiyar's residence in Vanarpanai. In this reading discourse several people participated including Navali Thambaiya teacher, Erlaalai physician Ponnaiya, Vannai Thambiyappa, Thikkam Chellaiyapillai, M.V. Thirugnanasambanthar, and V. Ramanathan. Teacher Thambaiya was fluent in reading Periyapuram and an expert in explaining the meaning of the verses. In Periyapuram, wherever, Thevaram Pathigam (ten verses) appeared, the verses of Periyapuram would also be in the same melodic mode (pann) as those of Thevaram. Thambaiya used to sing in the appropriate melodic mode. Swamigal liked the commentaries given by Ponnaiya on the Siddhantha principles wherever they appeared.

Kandapuram Discourse

One day Sri La Sri Ambalavana Swamigal (Navalar) presented a discourse on Kandapuram. For a phrase

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“Kanthanai Payantha Nathan” (Siva who was afraid of Kanthan) he delivered a speech for three hours.

Later, Ambalavana Swamigal told Mr. M. Mylvaga- nam, the teacher from Hindu College, about Yoga Swamigal as follows: “Yoga Swamigal do not wear saffron robes nor don Holy ash or rudraksha beads, yet all the famous people, judges, proctors and advocates of Jaffna, all bowed to Him. What a miracle. The secret is Swamigal has deep devotion for God and live without desire. Those qualities adorn His renunciate life.”

For many years, Swamigal celebrated Maha Sivarathri with devotees in many places. On those days Puranam discourse was given prominence. Once, Sivarathri Puranam was read. When the story of Sukumaran was read, Yogaswami asked to stop the reading. It was not suitable to be read in a public assembly, and this was the reason why Swamigal requested to stop. Later, during Maha Sivarathri celebration “adiimudi thedum” – (fathoming the feet and head of the Lord) the chapter from Kandapuram took prominence to be read.

For some time, monthly Sivarathri was also observed along with Maha Sivarathri. The monthly Sivarathri prayers were conducted in Columbuturai Elandaikulam Pil- laiyar Temple. Many professionals participated in the discourses. However, Kokuvil Kumaraswamy Pulavar took an important and active role in this activity. Swamigal was much fond of listening to his commentaries on Periyapuram. Parameswara Iyer who was an expert in violin, usually played in Pulavar’s discourses. Once, the entire Sandeswara Nayanar Puranam was read by Parameswara Iyer and Kumaraswamy Pulavar gave commentaries. The pair was combatible as a team and Swamigal did not want them to be disturbed.

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Swamigal made Kumaraswamy Pulavar to write an abridged version of Kandapuram and published it through Mr. Thillaiyampalam.

Interest in Periyapuram

I want to mention here, about an incident, which demonstrates Swamigal's interest in Periya Puranam. Once, Kokuvil Kumaraswami Pulavar gave a discourse in a portion of Periya Puranam. Swamigal was listening to the discourse from his Ashram through the loud speakers. Swamigal confessed later that He shed tears when he heard the description of the meeting of Saint Appar and Saint Sampanthar.

Whenever monthly Sivarathri was celebrated, the following day Swamigal usually would go to Mr. S.R. Kandaiah's garden in Ariyalai along with some devotees in cars and bullock carts. He would cook and eat there. Several devotees participated in this rare sacred activity –among them were Chavakachcheri advocate Kasipillai, Alaveddy retired principal Kanapathipillai, Mr.& Mrs. Ponnaiya, Mr.& Mrs. Sinnappa, Mr. & Mrs. Elaiyathambi, Kaithadi Mr. & Mrs. Mylvaganam and his sister. It was indeed a sight to see Swamigal and others bathe and wear dry clean clothes and pray in the nearest temple before having meals together. Whoever participated in this rare opportunity were blessed souls indeed.

IX

Alcohol Prohibition

Yogaswami, just like Navalar, took deep interest in two social issues that brought benefits to the society: alcohol prohibition and agriculture promotion. The difference was, Navalar being a confirmed bachelor, was able to involve directly in these issues, while Swamigal being a renunciate, involved in these issues indirectly thorough his followers and devotees.

Navalar already began to sense the evils of alcoholism and started to campaign against the evils of alcoholism long before even India started to think about prohibition. He noticed that alcoholism had spread fast and wide among people only after the foreign government came to power. The government promoted consumption of liquor only to augment their income. In 1874 Navalar had written in his geographical science textbook as follows: "Alcoholism is the root cause for poverty, misery and all sins. Liquor was rare in ancient Sri Lanka. Now, however, it is growing fast. The British Lords received about 600,000 rupees as income in 1852 and 2,000,000 rupees in 1872 as income from the sale of liquor. The Sri Lankan citizens would be healthy and wealthy, commanding good morals and longevity, if only the civilized and well educated British Lords find a way to boost their income by some other means other than from the sale of alcohol."

Alcohol Prohibition Campaign

In 1913 & 1914 the Singhalese were actively engaged in the alcohol prohibition campaign. Special mention can be made of F.R. Senanayake, D.S. Senanayake and D.B. Jeyatilaka for their participation in that prohibition propaganda movement. In the riot of 1915, the British government charged all of them with treason and put them in the prison, though they were involved in the propaganda of alcohol prohibition.

In 1924 in Jaffna, the members of Y.M.H.A., which we had discussed earlier, were actively involved in the propaganda. At that time, as a local option, the law allowed to take vote to close toddy and liquor shops. With this law as the basis, intense campaign was done to close-down liquor stores. Leading the campaign was one Mr.V. Muthukumar M.A., a teacher. The office of Justice S. Rasaratnam (later, to be known as Hindu Board Rasaratnam) near the Central College was used as campaign centre. Yogaswami gave full support for this movement, as He knew fully well the evils of alcoholism. Once, a renunciate who had long association with Swamigal, went to see Swamigal after consuming alcohol. Swamigal severed the relationship with him from that day. Swamigal talked to many liquor store owners with many examples, that the wealth accumulated from the sales of liquor would not do any good for their generation.

Swamigal daily visited the propaganda office and encouraged the volunteers involved in the collection of votes. He arranged their midday meals with some of His devotees. With Swamigal's blessing and tireless work of the volunteers, all the liquor and toddy shops were closed in Jaffna.

Status in Jaffna

Though all the liquor stores were closed in Jaffna, liquor from adjacent districts started to flow in. The law allowed one person to bring maximum two bottles of liquor to Jaffna. Moreover, smuggled liquor also started to come in. As such there were agitations to reopen liquor stores in Jaffna. Added to this unrest, there were also claims that toddy tappers were unemployed. These agitations weakened the alcohol prohibition campaign. Political leaders too supported these agitations. As a consequence, liquor stores were opened and taxes on toddy tapping trees were introduced. The introduction of tax on toddy tapping trees, nurtured the toddy tappings by leaps and bounds.

Seeing this new development, Swamigal encouraged all Sivathondan members to get involved actively in the alcohol prohibition propaganda. As per Swamigal's orders, North Lanka Prohibition Association was formed on 8.3.1952 under the leadership of Dr. C. Guruswamy. In June 1952 issue of Sivathondan, an advertisement appeared as follows: "With God's Grace, the Alcohol Prohibition Association was established on 8.3.1952, and is in service since then. We need financial assistance to perform this service. All Sivathondan members are requested to donate one rupee for this service. This amount can be paid in part every month or the full amount for the entire year may be sent to the following address: S. Visvalingam, Manager, Sivathondan."

Disrespectful Act

Following Swamigal's order, many essays were published in Sivathondan on the evils of alcoholism and the aims of Alcohol Prohibition Society. The following is an extract from one of the essays:

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“The elders testify that in the olden days drinking alcohol was considered as a disrespectful act and those who consumed alcohol usually did behind the scenes. But, under the foreigner’s rule alcoholism had risen and people considered it as a civilized act. Dinner celebrations were centered on liquor consumption. They supported this habit because of their status symbol and wealth. Why should such a trend of foreign influence continue even after Sri Lanka’s independence. Many types of liquor get imported in huge quantities to this country and millions and millions of rupees flow out to other countries. Souldn’t we think about this? Poverty increases due to liquor consumption. The poor people spend more than 60% of their income to support this habit. The Mother of Lanka is making a frantic call to the people of Sri Lanka to destroy the Liquor demon that is responsible for many fatal accidents, violent murders and heinous crimes. Oh, citizens of Sri Lanka, leaders of this country, resolute young lions, rise up against this and annihilate this evil. Work for the progress of the country to make a good state. The North Sri Lankan Alcohol prohibition propaganda Society had come forward to deliver the means to achieve this. We wish them success in their endeavor.”

During the active alcohol prohibition campaign period, Swamigal wrote the following Tirukkural verse when I was the Secretary of the Alcohol Prohibition Propaganda society:

***“Deliberation ends When a decision is reached.
To delay that decision’s execution is detrimental.”***

(Translation taken from, “Weaver’s Wisdom” by Sat guru Sivaya Subramaniaswami, Himalayan Academy, 1999).

Swamigal had sent this Kural verse to remind us that we should work more diligently and efficiently. It appeared as if Swamigal wanted to stand as an example to the Kural

verse in that even in His eightieth year He memorized all the Thirukural verses of Aram (virtue) and Porul (prosperity) chapters.

Few liquor stores were closed due to the efforts of Alcohol Prohibition Propaganda Society. As voting against the tax on trees was not part of the voting right act, we could not do anything. The alcoholic habit is increasing. As devotees of Swamigal it is our duty to act and prevent the spread of alcoholism.

Promotion of Agriculture

Sri Lanka, which was once self sufficient in food production, became dependent on other countries ever since the beginning of British rule. Navalar had attributed the reasons for this acrimony in his geographical science text book, as had been mentioned earlier, as follows: "Three quarter of Sri Lankans are farmers involved in agriculture, but since they do not have the drive and technical expertise, they are not able to grow sufficient paddy for Sri Lanka. In contrast, in England only one in three is a farmer but able to grow sufficient grains for their country.

In Sri Lanka only one sixth of the land is cultivated for Agriculture. The British are not extending sufficient assistance to the Sri Lankan citizens. If only they take measures to convert the jungles and maintain the lakes with proper irrigation methods, sufficient grains can be grown for Sri Lanka."

X

Navalar's Foresight

It is amazing that Navalar had written on this matter as early as 1874, with such accurate foresight. When famine and disease struck in 1877, people suffered very much. Paddy seedlings were scarce to plant paddy. Navalar took great efforts to procure paddy seedlings from the Government. The then Governor Gregory, formed the Jaffna-Mattakalappu Commercial Agriculture Society for the benefit of locals. Navalar bought 200 shares for Rs.2,000. He organized meetings in Saivaprakasa Vidyalayam and urged the Jaffna people to buy the shares. Those interested to know more about this, please refer to the book, 'Navalar's Panigal' (Navalar's works), written by Mr. S.Thananchayarajasingam. We will see later about the establishment of Agriculture Farm in Mattakalappu on the advice of Swamigal.

Swamigal desired that Tamil people should become self sufficient in food production. Only then we can live with respect, he stressed. He advised we should reduce the consumption of rice and increase the intake of small grains. He had emphasized this in the following Natchinthanai song:

"Oh people! Would there be poverty if you eat rice once?
Oh you consider placing yourself to the Holy Feet of God
Full hearted to protect your body".

Temple and Swamigal

Till 1930 Swamigal made arrangements to do farming in a land near the famous Kandavana Kaddavai Murugan Temple. Before proceeding any further, it would be more appropriate

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if we first understand the relationship of Yogaswami with this Temple. The Temple's Manager Thikkam Sellaiyapillai, was one of Swamigal's close devotees. He was a true Siva devotee. He attended without fail the Puranam discourses conducted by Swamigal. Navaliyur Scholar Somasundaram had written some long poems about this Temple. Teacher M. Mylvaganam had written the following when they were launched in the presence of Swamigal. "Once, Yoga Swamigal was sitting with many devotees in the Eastern Hall of Kanthavana Kadavai Kandaswamy Temple. Also present were Sankara Subbaiyar, also known as Satchithnandaaraja Yogi, and Thikkam Sellaiyapillai. Swamigal announced "Let us now we launch Navaliyur Somasunderam Pulavar's Kandavananatha *Nanmanimalai and Pathigam*". Swamigal ordered the famous musician, V. Ramanathan to read that book. He sang in the appropriate tune for each verses, melting the listener's hearts. Everybody was immersed in the meaning and the music of those verses. At that time a peacock appeared, opened its feathers and started to dance to the amazement of the devotees. On seeing this Swamigal complimented, "Of course, peacock will come and dance when we sing this divine poet's song".

(Elanadu, 11.4.1965).

Living facilities for Devotees

The land in Kanthavana Kadavai, which Swamigal acquired for farming, belonged to a German company that produced sugar from sugarcane juice. Thikkam Sellaiyapillai is the owner of the land. The gardeners did some modification to the former horse stable of Germans and converted it as their living place. Mrs. Thikkam Sellaiyapillai had written as follows: "Then in 1930 in the Tamil month of Margazhi, Swamigal with the intention of giving a decent and respectful

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livelyhood for some of His devotees, invited them to stay in a building within our compound and do farming there. He paid some money to Thikkam Sellaiyapillai and saw to their food supply and other needs. For more than a year the garden work was going on well but then later, all the workers left one by one. Now we are doing the work by ourselves.”

Yogaswami’s plan for agriculture promotion came into perfect implementation only after Swamigal’s Samadhi. The agriculture farm was attached to Sivathondan Nilayam of Mattakalappu Sengalady. The person in-charge of this project was one of the truest devotees of Swamigal, with the renunciate name, Santhaswami, son of Lord Soulbury. His sole ambition was to fulfil his guru Yoga Swami’s wishes. He received mental peace only from Swamigal, which he could not obtain anywhere else. He did immeasurable sacrifices to experience that peace. The following Thevaram of Appar Swami describes his position more aptly:

“First, She asked His name,
Then asked how He looks
Then asked about His whereabouts,
Then she became part of Him
On same day she discarded mother and others
She forego the tradition of others
She lost herself, lost her name
Took refuge in His Holy Feet ”.

Santhaswami had written a letter to his son-in-law in which he had clearly stated the objectives of this agriculture farm. The gist of that letter is as follows:

“You had enquired about the objectives of this agriculture farm. Like all agriculture farms, the objective of this farm is to reap maximum yield without damaging the soil”.

Religious Life

Apart from this general objective, there was a special objective too. This was to train the young people between the age of 16 to 25 in agriculture sector. But this is not an ordinary agriculture school. Whoever join here have to follow certain religious disciplines they they spent most of their time in the paddy fields.

The present era is known for separating the other aspects of life- such as science, arts and philosophy- from religion. In the olden days, whether in the east or west, there was no division like this. Many aspects of life revolved around religion. The neglect of this resulted in the present day chaos of our life. Now, I live among Tamil people. Their life had been revolving based on agricultural farming.

Sivathondan means slave to Siva. All the work done by Sivathondan is Pooja to Siva. One should not think about reward when doing work. In other words all the proceeds of the work must be dedicated to Siva. This is not a new concept. Bhagavath Gita also says the same thing. I wish that you will read this book when you are grown up.

I am not sure how much you have understood from what I have written above. So far, no young men have come forward to join. We have a building to live. We have the best field in the whole district. We are doing the farming with hired laborers now. This is also good. We are becoming good agriculturist by experience. We expect the right people to come at the right time. Good if it happens. Good also if it does not happen. There is nothing wrong. Wrong cannot exist any where. Everything is right”.

XI

Sivathondan Magazine

Mr. K.K. Nadarasan started the Sivathondan Magazine with the blessing of Swamigal. He was the editor of the magazine from the beginning. Swamigal was very fond of Mr. Nadarajan as an individual and also as son-in-law of Navali Thambaiya teacher. Mr. Nadarasan opened a printing press, Kamalasanani end of 1934. He started Sivathondan Magazine to help the printing press. Mr. Nadarasan had explained this in the special issue of Sivathondan:

“It was due to my penance that Swamigal visited the press within a few days of its inauguration. Swamigal said, “So you have started a printing press, now, run it carefully.” Then after a week Swamigal came back and said, “For a printing press to run successfully a magazine is needed to run it continuously. Since you have learnt journalism, you may start a magazine.” I asked Swamigal what name should I give for the magazine. Swamigal did not give any answer and left. But He came back on another day and said, “Name the magazine as ‘Sivathondan’ and run it in a small scale.”

Swamigal’s Instructions

The first issue came out in the year Bava, in the Tamil month of Margali (January, 1935). In that issue, as per the instructions from Swamigal, Mr. Nadarasan wrote an editorial, “Who are we?” From second issue onwards, as instructed by Swamigal, Mr. S. Mylvaganam teacher wrote expositions on *Mahavakyas*, the great sayings. Swamigal

urged all of His followers to subscribe to Sivathondan. It is evident from the above, that Swamigal was directly supervising many matters related to the publication of the magazine, while Mr.Nadarajan was the editor.

We can glean from Swamigal's writings in the 1939 December issue of Sivathondan, 'Greetings to Sivathondan' the birth and goals of Sivathondan magazine.

***"Carrying the sacred syllable Aum on our head
Declaring ourselves as servants of Siva
Chanting the Mantra uttered by Guru "Who
Knows" in mind
With the grace of Lord Siva, The Sivathondan was
born
In Bava year Margali month (December) to the
delight of all in Jaffna ,
without diverting from path of Siva."***

The greatest service of Sivathondan magazine was to publish Swamigal's Natchinthanai songs. Some Natchinthanai songs were written exclusively in praise of Sivathondan Magazine itself. Others, as said before, were written by Swamigal for His devotees. This includes both poems and prose. The very first Natchinthanai written for Sivathondan publication is as follows:

God is Life of Life

"God is life of our life, so we belong to God, slave to God. All our movements are God's movements. We are unable to forget Him any time. We have nothing to complain.. We are eternal, omnipresence and omniscient. Let's meditate this way every moment, and free ourselves from the lower consciousness and attain the higher Divine consciousness.

***"Always my action is Your action
I am not other than You
This is the compromising nature of Vedanta
and
Siddhanta".***

Thayumanavar's holy saying above is perfect evidence for this.

Just as Sivathondan regularly published essays on Siddhanta, it also published essays on Vedanta philosophy. For example, we can particularly refer to the essays on Advaita Vedanta by Kalaipulavar Navaratnam and a Tamil translation of Viveka Chudamani by Sangarachariyar. Swamigal had preached in many verses in Natchintanai about the compromise between Vedanta and Siddhanta.

"Let us declare Vedantam and Siddhantam are the same"

***"Clear path shown by Sivathondan
Like pouring rain teaching poem-
revealing Vedantam and Siddhantam
are not different
Thus showing the end of Nadanta"***

"See Vedanta and Siddhanta as one "

So, it is useless to ask whether Swamigal is follower of Vedantha or Sithantha. In His own words, He had said that

"Vedanta and Siddhanta are equal". Above all, he had propagated on the best values in Buddhism, Christianity and Islam.

So, it is evident that Yogaswami belonged to the enlightened Siddar tradition, levelling Siddhanta and

Vedanta on same platform and going beyond religions and silence.

“Kundalini Sakthi” – Book

It was during the same time when Kamalasanani printers were publishing Sivathondan that a translation of ‘Serpent Power’ by Sir John Woodrofe was done in Tamil under the supervision of Yogaswami. Mr. K.K. Nadarasan had written about the people involved in the translation work in the special issue of “Sivathondan”.

“When I say “we”, it includes the people who had participated in the translation work. It was done in a vacant house across Kamalasanani printers under the supervision of Swamigal. They were Mr. M.S. Elayathampi, Mr. R.N. Subbaiyah, Thalaiyaali Chidambaranathan, Alaveddy Mr. R. Sinnathambi and myself. We were regulars and Mr. C. Mylvaganam joined us occasionally.”

As Max Mueller did a service to popularize the Vedas, so did Woodrofe for the *Tantras*. Generally, Saktha Agamas are known as Tantras in North India. It is difficult to understand the meaning of the Vedas and Tantras. The Tantras explain the rituals and conduct of its practices. As such it is indeed commendable that a foreigner had understood and had explained. The chapters which explain the six *Chakras*, *Nadis*, and *Vayus* make us wonderstruck. Though, science had advanced so much but the Westerners are still unable to research and find these matters well. Their researches are still in the early stages. As such, it is indeed a great blessing for Tamil people to have a precious book translated under the supervision of Swamigal.

It is very difficult to translate the part related to Yoga Path. It is said that even Swami Vivekananda wrote the book

'Raja Yoga' only after getting clarity by meditating on some salient points. This rare translation, though was published in Sivathondan, it is greatly regrettable that it has not been published as a book. We expect actions would be taken to publish the book soon.

Two Judges

Two people who were involved in this translation project deserve special mention: Justice M.S. Elayathamby and Advocate T.N. Subbaiah. We had mentioned about them earlier. They were very close to Swamigal and took active part in religious, political and social life in Jaffna. There was hardly any movement or organization in Jaffna without their involvement in the early part of this century. Both were good orators in English and Tamil. We have mentioned earlier that Swamigal used to conduct Puranam discourses in the house verandah of Muthukumaraswamy Chettiyaar, the father-in-law of Mr.Subbaiah. In addition to the discourses, many political leaders and social leaders who are interested in social development, assembled in evening and discussed many issues. Mr. M.S. Elayathamby had high respect for Swamigal though he took Sinnaswami as his Guru, the disciple of Kadaitswami. He had accompanied Swamigal in many of the pilgrimages in Sri Lanka and India.

Swamigal's Trust

During this period, Swamigal used to spend His daytime mostly in Vannarpannai. He used to eat His lunch in His favorite devotees houses or in some shops. Importantly, we have to mention one such house of a devotee: Kasturi Muthukumar's house. Swamigal would direct devotees with ailments to Dr. Muthukumar. Swamigal trusted that the

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doctor would give medicine and treat the disease without looking at the patient's status. Swamigal also knew that the doctor would not charge the poor and if necessary he would even give medicine and money to the poor. Swamigal had said many times that Dr. Muthukumar was not doing his medical practice to make money.

XII

Sivathondan Nilayam

We have already seen how Yogaswami arranged to conduct Puranam story-music discourses, Thirumarai and Siddhanta classes in temples, devotee's houses and shops. Further, Sivathondan society took the responsibility of publishing Sivathondan magazine and it needed an office to administer the publication of the magazine. In addition, Swamigal's devotees needed a place to do meditation and religious practices (sadhana). To fulfill all these needs Sivathondan Nilayam (Centre) was inaugurated on 4.11.1953.

The house selected for Sivathondan Nilayam in Vannarpannai was closer to Saiva Welfare Society, Hindu College, Vaidyeeswaran Temple, Vaidyeshwara Vidyalayam, Navalar Vidyalayam and Saiva Pragasa Workshop. It is apt that Sivathondan Nilayam was located in Vannarpannai, the hub of many Saiva religious societies.

We will understand the objectives for the Sivathondan Nilayam if we look at the plan of the building. The Sivathondan Nilayam was complete with a Purana Hall, meditation Hall, rooms for the followers to stay, kitchen and washroom facilities. In the Purana Hall, activities such as Purana and music discourses, recitation of Thirumurai and memorizing practice of Natchinthanai were conducted. In the meditation Hall upstairs, a Thiruvadi (Holy Feet) was enshrined and silence is always observed. At the time of Pooja to Holy Feet, the bell is rung, only *arathi* (showing of camphor flame) and *pushpanjali* (flower oblations) are done but the recitation of Thirumurai would be stopped.

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The Mattakalappu Sengaladi Nilayam follows the same pattern of Sivathondan Nilayam in Jaffna.

The Thiruvadi Pooja was important and central in Swamigal life, which signifies Holy Grace. At first, the holy Thiruvadi was placed on a pedestal specially designed, to the West of the well in the flower garden of the temple land, opposite Columbuturai Ashram. But that Thiruvadi got lost, and they placed a new Thiruvadi in the eastern corner of the north side of the Ashram building of Swamigal. Every year, on second Monday in the month of Panguni, special Pooja was held for Thiruvadi.

Swamigal revived and gave a new impetus for Tiruvadi Pooja, which was a tradition in Hindu Religion, but had become uncommon now. In Ramayanam, Bharadan went to jungle and requested Rama to come back to Ayodya to rule the country. When Rama refused, Bharadan got his sandals , did coronation ceremony for that and ruled the country as a representative of Rama.

Thiruvadi and Saiva Preceptors

Our preceptors had sung the glory of Thiruvadi in many Holy verses in Thevaram. Thiruganasambanthar, in his *Koyil Thirupatigam*, had sung, "praising bountiful God's Holy Feet is wealth of wealth".

***"Across prosperous towers sky high
With golden moon shining
Very wealthy and well learned people living
in Thillai Chithrambalam, Praising bountiful
God's Feet which is wealth of wealth."***

Appar Swamigal had sung the glory of Tiruvadi in *Tirutandagam* and in *Tiruvadi Tiruvirutham*. In the first song of

Thiruvadi Thiruvirutham he had praised the glory of Tiruvadi as follows.

***"The Holy Feet of Aiyarappan who dons circled serpent
Who beyond thoughts , beyond comprehension
To those able , special ambrosia pours
Removing all past karmas and giving mukti "***

Sundaramoorthy Swamigal in *Thirupunkur Thirupathigam* refers to the grace of Siva on His devotees and to receive such Siva's Grace, he too surrendered to God's Holy Feet. The following is a verse from the song :

***"When the Lord of Death came
A Sage took refuge, Thou saved him
For this reason I too take refuge unto Thou
Holy Feet,
So when Yama comes, tell him I'm Thou
devotee
And save me from death
Oh Lord of bountiful Tirupunkur."***

Manickavasagar had sung many verses on the glory of Thiruvadi beginning from his very first song of *Sivapuranam*. In the first line of *Sivapuranam*, he had sung ,

***"Long Live Namasivaya,
Long live the the Lord's Holy Feet"***

and ended the song by,

***"They will be placed under the Holy Feet ,
To the delight of multitude of people."***

In *Vaishnavam* also, the Holy Feet has special significance. Ganesaiyer , in his memorial issue, has written as follows:

“Those who have been to Vaishnava temple could not have missed noticing a crown like ornament on the feet of procession deity in the sanctum sanctorum. This object is called, ‘*Sadagopam*’ and is seen in all Vishnu Temples. In Vishnu temples, after the Pooja, they will place this Sadagopam on the head of the devotees to bless them. On close examination one will find two foot steps carved on the Sadagopam. Those are the Holy Feet of the God that we go to worship. In Vishnu Temples, the first Pooja is done to this Sadagopam. Vaishnavites, who firmly believe in the philosophy of surrender to the Holy Feet of Vishnu, avidly regard this surrender as their lifetime goal. To signify this, the Holy Feet of the deity is deeply respected, honored and revered in Vishnu Temples and is placed on the head of devotees as blessings.”

Sivathondan Nilayam (Centre)

In Sivathondan Nilayam, on special occasions such as Maha Sivaratri, Tiruvadi Pooja, Swamigal Guru Pooja and Tiruvathirai, special abishekam and elaborate *Soda-Sobasara Pooja* to Thiruvadi is done. On ordinary days, Pooja is done in morning and evenings. On special Homa days, Pooja is also done in midday.

In Sivathondan Nilayam, daily in the evenings, Pura-nam story-music discourses and Tirumurai recitation are done regularly. Thirumurai classes are conducted on Saturdays and Sundays and Siddhanta classes on Sundays. Homa is done on the first Sunday of each month. The Siva-thondan Nilayam also sponsors Maheswara Pooja (Annathanam) in Nallur Temple on every Nakshatra day of Maha Samadhi of Chellappaswamigal (Asvini) and Yoga Swamigal (Ayiliyam).

Swamigal never entered the Sivathondan Nilayam until 1963 i.e. some time before His Maha Samadhi, though

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he founded and looked after its administration. In following lines He gave the reasons: "I move with different types of people. If I go in they too will follow me in. This Nilayam has a Holy order to follow. But we have no tradition."

I want to mention about an incident happened in 1963 at the time when Swamigal was living in Sivathondan Nilayam. Professor T.M.P. Mahadevan had come to Jaffna to launch a book, "Studies in Hinduism" written by Kalaipulavar Navaratnam. As he had already visited Swamigal in a previous occasion and got blessed, he wanted to visit Him again. Professor was staying with me and I took him to Sivathondan Nilayam in the evening around 4 o'clock. At that time, Swamigal was sick as he had fractured His leg. When we reached there, teacher Sellathurai, who was responsible for the activities in Sivathondan Nilayam, was wiping Swamigal's Holy Body. He asked us to wait outside for a while. Once cleaning was done Swamigal applied Holy ash liberally on His body and appeared like Lord Thatchinamoorthy. Teacher Sellathurai ushered us to come in. We went in, paid obeisance and sat there. Swamigal was in meditation for long time and then gave permission for Mahadevan's departure.

Some Miraculous Events

The interesting thing was Swamigal suddenly had instructed Sellathurai teacher much earlier to wash Him just few hours before we went there. According to him, Swamigal had told he wanted to keep the body clean. It must be that Swamigal wanted to give special Darshan to Professor Mahadevan.

When Professor visited Sri Lanka in 1955, some miracles happened. At that time Prof. Menakshisundaranar, Prof.Mahadevan and Prof. A .S. Ganasambandan had come

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as invited guests to attend the anniversary celebration of Parameshwara College. They stayed with Mr. Nadesapillai as guests. They visited Swamigal on their first day and Swamigal asked them to come the next day too. The next day they wanted to take some food to Swamigal and arranged with the cook of Mr. Nadesapillai. But, unexpectedly, the cook got sick. They arranged for other alternatives but that too did not materialise. Anyway they went there again with some disappointment. Swamigal greeted them and asked, "Why do you want to bring food from Mr. Nadesapillai? Do you think we cannot give you food?" On hearing this, all three were shocked. Then Swamigal served food to everyone. While eating, Mahadevan thought in his mind that how nice would it be to receive food from Swamigal's hand from His serving. Immediately, Swamigal mixed well His food on His leaf and served a portion of His food on Mahadevan's leaf. When grapes were served, Ganasambandan thought how nice if the skin is peeled off. Swamigal peeled off the skin and gave it to Ganasambandan.

After this experience, the Professors wanted to know more about Swamigal. At that time, no writings on Swamigal was available in essay or book form. I had a hand-written article about Swamigal written several years ago. It was not published as I was afraid of Swamigal. I got them typewritten and gave them a copy. Later, I showed the copy to Kalaipulavar, got his approval, and got it published in 'Veerakesari' with a pseudo name 'Sivanadiyan'. After some time it came out as small booklets.

Swamigal's Desire

Swamigal desired that devotees should assemble in Sivathondan Nilayam from time to time and involve in Ashram life. At one time, he made some students and teachers

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from Parameshwara College and Vaidyeshwara Vidyalayam to stay in the Ashram for two days in a month. The following Natchinthanai Song explains the goals of Sivathondan Nilayam:

“Join Sivathondan Nilayam Meditate and attain salvation
Rest in silence
Regard this as Mantra.

You want to know that man and this man
But do you know the Atma is immortal
Bear in mind it's bliss incomparable
Know that All is Truth

Do not indulge in lure of five organs
Do conquer the Five senses
Let go extreme enmity
Learn Vedanta and Siddhanta

Know that There is No Wrong
Worship chanting Aum Sivayanama
Melt your hearts and attain Bliss
Know that this is solid Truth.

XIII

Out of Town Journeys of Swamigal

Swamigal did not undertake outstation journeys for long time after He returned from His walking pilgrimage to Kathirgamam. Swamigal used to mention that He got no permission to go out of Jaffna Peninsula. He would travel south up to Murukandy Pillaiyar Temple and return.

As far as we know only after 1928, Swamigal began to travel to Kandy and Colombo. He took those journeys for the welfare of the devotees there. In the early days, had mentioned before, Justice M.S. Elayathamby used to accompany Him. Swamigal considered him as the right person to accompany him during travels. M.S. had simple taste for food and cloth. His normal clothing was a single wrap *veshti* in the waist and a towel on shoulders. Very rarely, he wore shirt. He had the willpower to handle any situation. Moreover, he was very jovial. Even in his final moment, he was cracking jokes; he told the Brahmin who came to receive alms, "Sir, I am going to go there (I am going to die), if you have any message to your father, tell me, I will convey that to him when I reach there."

Homa

Local and nearby people will come to see Swamigal whenever He visited a place. A big Homa would be done at the place where Swamigal stays.

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Swamigal once visited *Malainadu*, hill region, about which Scholar Padmasani Rasenthiram had narrated in Sivathondan an incident as follows: "Once we went to see Swamigal with a desire in mind to go on a pilgrimage to India. Swamigal said,

"Discard India pilgrimage. We will go some place and stay there for ten days." On the same evening we left with Swamigal. Along the journey Swamigal said we would just go and stay in a comfortable place. On the way in Ratnapura we stopped at a devotee's house briefly for ten minutes. After tea, He wanted us to leave without delay. From there, we straight proceeded to Belihuloya. An overseer there did all arrangements for us. We all stayed in the building of the Village Association. Devotees from Colombo, Balangoda, and Ratnapura came and assembled there. In the morning and evening we recited Siva Puranam, Thevaram, and Thiruvagam and the rest of the times we spent listening to Swamigal's discourses. Those ten days went by happily with the group of devotees. Swamigal preached to all of them according to their level of understanding."

Chidambara Dharshan

Among the places where Swamigal stayed in outstations, specific mention must be made about Swamigal's stay in Peradeniya Sugar Cane Plantation where the present Peradeniya University is located. For more than ten years, Swamigal visited this place every month, each time staying up to three days. Swamigal stayed in the house of Mr. Velupillai, brother of Scholar Navali Somasundaram, whom, we had mentioned earlier. Swamigal had also been to Kadugannawa when Mr. Velupillai lived there. The day when Mr. Velupillai was transferred to Peradeniya, Swamigal had visited him along with Mr. M.S. Elayathamby. The house in Peradeniya

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was comfortable except that the toilet was located near the kitchen and as such Mrs. Velupillai did not like that house. When Velupillai was worried about the house and the toilet facilities, Swamigal visited him. Swamigal requested one of His devotees Mr.Kandaiyah, who was an overseer in Kadugannawa to solve the problem and he made toilet facilities constructed in a different location in single night.

After some time, Mrs. Velupillai and their children moved to Jaffna in conjunction with the children's study. Mr. Velupillai and his servant alone stayed in that house, so it was convenient for Swamigal to stay there. That house transformed to look like an Ashram. Mr. Velupillai had recorded Swamigal's stay there in Sivathondan (Vol. # 3 & Issue #11).

I wanted to describe in Velupillai's own words how Swamigal cured him from a severe disease. "One afternoon around 3pm, I became dizzy and did not recover till night 7 o'clock. Lord's son had sent 2 doctors who treated me with medicine. I gained consciousness but, I was not able to get up or understand what was happening to me. At 8 o'clock in the morning Swamigal came by a coach. He said, "I have brought three medicines for you". He came near me and stroked my head with His compassionate hands uttering 'Sivayanama' the sacred syllable. Next day Swamigal said, "Look here, I will show you *Chidambaram Darshan* and started dancing for five minutes with his one foot down, the other foot raised and hair unfolded. On the third day, He had brought with Him a medicine which He gave me mixed in warm water. I recovered on the fourth day." I told this miracle incident to Dr. Ramanathan, the president of Kambala Hospital. He said, "that dance is a wonderful *Miruthiyunjaya dance*, a death has been avoided".

Peradeniya University

Swamigal was staying with Mr. Velupillai. One day He went for a walk in the garden with Velupillai. After walking a short distance, Swamigal raised His hands over His head worshipping a hill near by. Velupillai also did that without really understanding. Swamigal explained, "God's presence is there, and Saraswathy is playing here (in the garden)." After Swamigal said this, the Peradeniya University was established in the garden within few years. The hill that Swamigal worshipped, housed a Murugan Temple. All the buildings on the garden were destroyed for building the university, but the house where Swamigal stayed was spared and is still standing there.

Service of Rasarathinar

Swamigal often visited Navalapittiya. Kantharodai Mr. T. Sivagurunathan, who worked in Railways, had written an article in the Special issue of Sivathondan Publication as follows: "When I was working in Navalapittiya in the "Trans" office of the Railways, Swamigal used to go there to check the progress of the Hindu Youth Association, Kathiresan Vidyasalai and the devotees there. It was during that time that my relationship and devotion with Swamigal deeply developed.

Yogaswami and His devotees used to visit the Queensbury Garden, where we worshipped together the Samadhi of Navanada Siddhar, a mystic. One night we stayed in the village, Rambupittiya in the house of Mr. Subramaniam. After some time I was transferred to Anuradapura trans-office.

During that time, one day I had to go to Navalapittiya to solve some problems in the administrative board of Kathiresan Vidyasalai. Swamigal also was in the same railway compartment as me. When I got in the rail compartment,

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Swamigal asked, "Who is implementing and shouldering the good work of Arumuganavalar? ". When I told the names of Sir Ponnambalam Ramanathan, Sir Arunasalam, Sir Kanagasabai, and S. Rasarathinam, Swamigal replied that it was Rasarathinam who had established Tamil Vidyalaya in many places and was following Navalar's way.

Markandu Swamigal

Another place Swamigal used to visit regularly is Diyatalawa in the hill regions. The main reason was to visit a person by the name Markandu who was working in the land survey office. This is the same Markandu who now lives in Kaithadi by the name Markandu Swami. Swamigal used to meet him in Diyatalawa since 1931. Later, when he was transferred to Colombo, Swamigal used to meet him there too. When Markandu got retired, Accountant Mylvaganam arranged him to stay in the Ashram near his house.

Markandu Swamigal had written down all the upadesams given by his Guru. His appearance reminds us of that of the Sages described in Thirumurgaatrupadai.

"Dressed in stitched bark neatly

Knotted pure white hair on the right side
On their spotless shinning bodies

Deer Skin drapes their thin breast
Their bodies like skeletons moving

Many middays have passed, with no food eaten
Minds free of wrath

Erudite, none knew their knowledge

Their heads filled with endless knowledge
Passionately they show beyond rage-vision
Sorrow is not known to their nature

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These are the sages who first enter.”

The relationship between Swamigal and Markandu Swami reminds us of the relationship between Apputhiyadigal and Thirunavukarasu Nayanar. Apputhiyadigal lived “praising arasar’s Holy Feet and seeing that all the things and all days are his Holy Feet.” Markandu Swamigal was also like him. He exalts “everything is Swamigal”. For him, Natchinthanai songs are the *Manthiram* (sacred words) and *Thanthiram* (*magical action*). He had memorized all the Natchinthanai songs by heart. He will sing those songs to devotees and uses them to quote for all the matters.

Photo taken

Swamigal used to visit Chilaw where Dr. V.R. Pasupathy was working. Once when Swamigal was there, the doctor’s son, Muthukumaraswamy (now partner in Satchitha-nanda, Shockman, Wijeyaratne and Company) took a photo of Swamigal without His knowledge, while meditating. This is the photo that all the devotees use now for worshipping. He apologized for taking a photo without Swamigal’s permission but requested again to take another photo. First Swamigal refused, then he said “Since that is your wish, I will sit on the chair and you can take the photo.” This is the photo in which Swamigal was seated on a chair. Credit goes to Muthukumaraswamy for taking these photos and made it available for all devotees.

Two Days in Colombo

I was blessed to stay with Swamigal for two days when I went to Colombo in connection with teacher’s association work in 1939. When I finished my work, I heard Swamigal

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was staying in Kandiah's house, the son-in-law of overseer Thillaiyampalam at Rajasinghe Road. So I went there to pay homage to Swamigal. I saw Swamigal was sitting surrounded by devotees. Since the owner of that house had gone to Jaffna, the neighbour Amma Mrs. Selvarajah was taking care of the meals arrangement for Swamigal and devotees. Amma had made special preparations for midday meals for Swamigal. When the lunch time came, Swamigal told Amma, "Pillai my breakfast still has not digested, so feed these devotees with your food." Amma was very disappointed. But the close devotees would not be surprised with this. Nobody can predict how Swamigal would act; as the saying goes, "Siddhar's action is Siva's action." He was not bounded by any human laws or any tradition. When nightfall came, all the devotees returned home. Only Swamigal and me stayed there. In one of the rooms, there were two beds for us. Those were spring beds with mattresses, bed spreads and two pillows. On seeing this bedding arrangement, Swamigal said, "Tonight my position going to be like the fisherwoman who slept under a jasmine-flower bush." In those days Swamigal never slept on a cot or a mattress. It must be pointed out here that Swamigal agreed to sleep on a cot only after He became sick.

Later that night, Swamigal narrated the fisher woman's story. "One night, a fisher woman happened to sleep under a jasmine-flower bush. She could not bear the smell of jasmine flowers and was unable to sleep. Her mind craved for the familiar and usual fish odor as she is a fisherwoman. She kept a fish basket near her but still the jasmine-flower smell was overpowering. Then she sprayed a little water on the fish basket, and the fish odor started to pervade suppressing the jasmine smell. Only then she could fall asleep", Swamigal finished the story.

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Swamigal stressed the moral of the story, i.e. "We should learn good habits at young age; those habits are hard to change even by Saints." Then we talked about many of the devotees, their merits and demerits. Then Swamigal said, "These are all mundane things. Truly, we have no rights to talk about somebody's demerits. Every man is living according to his Karma. We should learn to see Siva in everybody and every body in Siva." He had stressed this point in many verses in Natchinthanai. Among those, here are two lines as an example:

"See All in Easan
See Eesan in All"

We see this same point in Esavasiya Upanishad. "He who sees all existence in Atman and see the Atman in all existence, one cannot hate anything,".

Swamigal had traveled to India several times with devotees. Many of those devotees who travelled are no longer with us now. We could not gather any information on these travels. But, some of the letters written by Swamigal from India had been published. One of those is as follows:

Kasi(God)
30.11.40

I wandered searching and arrived at Kasi and found (God) Viswanathan in me. So, do not wander, despair and worry. There is a delightful saying, "The medicine you are looking for lies just underneath your feet". Here also people are like us. There is nothing unusual in the world. I have completed doing all the funeral rites for all Jaffna people – the dead, the living and those going to live. Hereafter, live in this world according to your ability and love and take refuge beneath God's Feet.

XIV

Swamigal's Latter Life and Blessings of Samadhi

Swamigal stopped out of town journeys in later part of His life. We can assume that Swamigal did take into consideration His health. He lived mostly in Vannarpanai and Kaithadi. It is natural for the body to weaken due to ageing even if one has an iron body. Once, Swamigal mentioned about this as follows: "At one time I used to sleep in the cold, as on one occasion in Maruthanamadam, I was soaked in rain all night. Later I used to sleep on the roots of the *Eluppai tree*. Since the body was healthy at that time, the weather didn't affect me."

Later, once Swamigal joked, "Last time my feet used to prick the pebbles but now the pebbles prick my feet."

Swamigal was very particular in taking care of His body. The reason was that He did not want to trouble others by becoming sick. Generally, Swamigal would not allow anybody to attend to Him. He washed His own utensils.

Swamigal was careful as far as food is concerned. Just as He preached to others, He would eat moderately. He often stood by his conviction that do not eat if you are not hungry, even the food is offered by God. He would not take breakfast in the morning, and would eat rice at noon. At night He usually ate very little string hoppers. He drank tea in the morning and evening. Though this was His regular schedule, on some days He would not eat anything the whole day. Some times He ate bread only.

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Before eating, He usually washed His legs, face and applied Holy Ash in the forehead and body. One day while Swamigal was having his meals in a restaurant, He saw a Brahmin teacher just washed his hands and sat to eat. Swamigal told him, "You are a Brahmin, and a teacher moreover. Children will follow your examples. You should know one should wash face, legs and apply Holy Ash before eating. , you should be an example to your students." Swamigal wanted to be an example to others in taking care of the body, following certain disciplines before eating and in following Saiva traditions because people always followed what elders did. The Bhagavat Gita said , "Whatever the high class people did, others followed them. Whatever they make it a tradition, the people in the world followed that."

Earlier, we saw Swamigal lived mostly in Vannarpanai and Kaithadi; more so in Vanarpanai. After the Siva- thondan Nilayam in Vanarpanai started to function, He went there almost every day. Some times He would go twice or thrice in a day to advice the Sivathondan Nilayam administrators and the publication of the Sivathondan Magazine.

Swamigal appointed Sellathurai to manage Sivathondan Nilayam who had worked as a teacher for a long time and retired as a headmaster. He became a renunciate. He had traveled all over India several times, stayed in several Ashrams, and learned carefully about their management. He was well trained in religious philosophy.

Accountant Mylvaganam from Kaithadi, his younger brother Visuvalingam, and son-in-law Muthukumaraswami had close relationship with Swamigal for long time. That is why Swamigal made Markandu Swami to stay there. Swamigal often used to go to Kaithadi after Markandu Swami moved over there. He would eat the food prepared by Markandu Swami and in the afternoon He would return to Columbuthurai. He also made, Ramsbotham, son of Lord

Salisbury, to stay in Kaithadi after he became Swamigal's follower.

The Thithireya Upanishad says a Guru's life gets fulfilled by his disciples. In this Upanishad, a Rishi prays as follows: "May the Brahmacharis come to me, may they come unbidden, from all directions. May the Brahmacharis have courage to overpower the senses and have calm mind and come to me . As streams flow towards deep place and as months are combined to complete a year, Oh Lord sustainer of all, let the Brahmacharis come from all directions and may my life get fulfilled."

We do not know if Swamigal prayed as above but His followers came from all four directions. So far we saw disciples who came from our country. Now, we shall look into those who came from western countries.

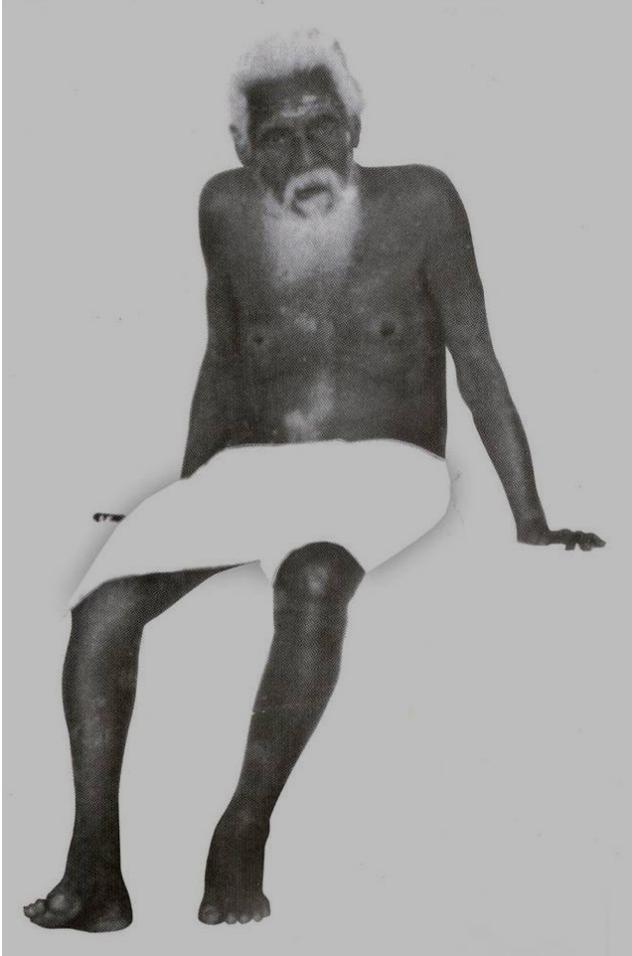
Western Disciples

A German with the initiated name, Gowribala was the first western disciple to take Swamigal as his Guru. He was a Buddhist monk in the Island Hermitage in Dodanduwa, Sri Lanka. During the Second World War, Gowribala and other German Buddhist monks were taken to India and kept under custody in Dehradun. Gowribala crossed the security-post and was travelling in Himachal Pradesh, where he met a *Sakta* swami. This Swami gave him the initiated name, Gowribala.

After the war, he came back to Sri Lanka and stayed in Kalanilayam in Jaffna. He met Yoga Swamigal many times. Once, it seems Swamigal told him, "Gowribala **Summa Iru** (Be Still)". From that day, he took those words as his *upadesha Mantra*. He tattooed those words in his arm. Then he started doing research on Summa iru and collected

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materials in religious literatures. He published a book, **'Formula for Staying Still'** (Summa Irukka Soothiram). Though this book was published twice, but each time only hundred copies were printed as special editions. In this book the explanations on the Guru tradition and ***staying still*** is explained. The following is a section of the writing on Guru tradition:



Swamigal During Latter Years

***"In the shadow of Kallala tree
The Lord with third eye on forehead
Gestured hand sign, the silent teaching
understood by four Sanagars,
Just so, Murugan instructed perfect
Arunagirinathan to Stay still
Following the tradition silent Guru
Tayumanavar received the grace,
And the teaching prospered, took root
Spread to Elam , In Nallai town
The Satguru of our Guru Chellappa
The Great Wanderer Kadaitswami imparted
The great teaching to sprout in him.***

The phrase "**Summairu**" is explained as follows:

"As mentioned in this book: **Kaya Mounam** (body-silence) means being without work, without any use, without any benefit, and without hindrance. **Vakku Mounam** (Word-silence) means, being without speech, being calm and remaining silent . **Mano Mounam** (Mind-silence) is being without thoughts, without reason, without expectations and without any goals. **Suddha Mounam** (Pure-silence) is being in usual self, without attention, without productive and being still. **Para Mounam** (Supreme-silence), is remaining annihilated without any desires and without any possessions . This is what this perfect phrase denotes."

An Australian young man, Barry became a disciple of Swamigal through Gowribala. He was given nickname "Narikutty" (young Fox) by one Amma. He traveled to many places in India and then stayed in Kathirgamam and hill country. Now he is staying in a mutt in Karampan. We have already seen about Ramsbotham, the son of

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Lord Salisbury, who got initiated name "Santhaswami." He too went to many places in search of peace and at last took refuge in Yogaswami. In 1963 in the morning of Arudra Natchathiram in Margali month, he was initiated by Swamigal and given the name Santhaswami.

Swamigal carefully observed him before giving the initiation. He imparted unto him all spiritual knowledge. I had the opportunity to witness the teachings once or twice. I give below what I wrote down. I give translation of which Swamigal spoke in English:

"Sometimes I will speak in contradicting manner. The reason is to create confusion in your mind and make it clear . When the mind is pure, everything you will see clearly."

"You walk in your path and stand on your feet."

"There is no difference among the Realised Souls. All their experiences are same."

"God is seen in the ox, cow, and in dog." "You should see God in good and bad."

"Do not lament that you should learn Sanskrit and Tamil; your English is also a divine language."

"Believe in your own power. Listen to the voice of your inner Atman. God's Kingdom is in you."

"If you want to dance, go and dance, but do not do that because others are doing."

"In the beginning there was only one Being. Later it became many."

"Everybody worship God in their own way."

"Do not get cheated by others."

"Be moderate in eating and sleeping."

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Master Subramuniya, an American, received Upadesha from Swamigal. He had established Ashrams in USA, Kauai Island in Hawaii, and Alavetty in Sri Lanka.

Disease is a Boon

Swamigal rarely get sick. Once, a bicycle hit Him and His knee was injured and was affected for some time.

Before He broke His leg, Swamigal said there were some premonition that something going to happen. Swamigal told Thirunavukarasu that He would not be sleeping in the shed any more and urged him to roll the bed and tie it. It is said daughter of Thirunavukarasu had cautioned Him not to approach the cow which was later responsible for Swamigal's fall. Despite of all those premonitions and cautions, that which had to happen had happened, Swamigal said.

Even on the day when Swamigal fell, He went to Vanarpanai. On that afternoon, He went to Columbuturai by foot. Once he arrived there, Swamigal as usual started to clean the cowshed. At that time, one of the cows jumped. Swamigal turned around quickly to avoid but the thigh bone was hit and broke. Immediately Swamigal fell on the ground. This is the accident that happens to old people. This incident happened on 21st February 1961.

The devotees who heard about this incident, got together and discussed the next course of action. The discussion was joined by Dr. Guruswamy and other doctors. They decided to do surgery on Him. An orthopedic specialist, Dr.V. Rasanayagam from Colombo, who is the son-in-law of Srikantha, came down and performed the surgery.

Many wonder why Sages get sick. Devotees are aware that Ramakrishna Paramahansa and Ramana Maharishi were stricken with cancer. Swami Vivekananda had clarified

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that, "It is natural for the body to be affected by sickness, old age and death. The bodies of Sages are no exception. Some are of the opinion that the Saints absorb devotees' miseries, which they must experience.

Some of the observations of Swamigal about His sickness:

"This sickness is a boon, one without fail must experience the Karma."

"When the body came, it brought all those connected with it and one of it is the sickness ."

"We need not think deep about this sickness. It all finished long-ago. Need not be afraid of anything. Whoever know the cause for the sickness would know that it is panacea for all miseries and would remain peacefully."

After surgery, Swamigal stayed in the Hospital for few months. During this period, the devotees had rare gift to serve Swamigal. The devotees who were approved by Swamigal, took turns to take care of Swamigal. Swamigal allowed those devotees to attend to Him based on several factors including their family responsibilities, their physical and mental health.

The devotees realized that Swamigal, while still in hospital, would not be able to stay in the shed any more. Therefore they built a new room near the shed with modern facilities.

Swamigal used a wheel chair to move around in and out of that room. After some time He visited many places in car, though He was not able to walk independently.

It was during this time Swamigal stayed in Sivathondan Nilayam and gave new life and energy to that place.

During this period, Swamigal suffered fever and lung infection frequently. Such type of diseases affected him

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every now and then. It was Dr. S.A. Vettrivelu who attended and treated Swamigal daily.

It was during this time the *padayatra* – pilgrimage by walking- sponsored by Sivathondan Nilayam was started. Women and men from Kaithadi, Aanaikottai, Mangumpun, and Chunnakam came on walking pilgrimage to Sivathondan Nilayam. The movement had full blessings of Swamigal.

Swamigal had deep devotion for Lord Murugan of Nalloor and Goddess Thaiyalnayagi of Vannai Sivan Temple. In His last days, Swamigal encouraged the devotees to do *Abishegam* and special Poojas in these temples. Swamigal used to sing the following lines on Goddess Thaiyalnayagi (it is to be noted that we could not get the complete verses).

“Oh, mother Thaiyalnayagi
This is good time Amma
Oh Vaani! Oh Sivagami!
Thou came to live
In world famed Vannai City
Oh Mother thou gave birth to Kandasamy
Oh Mother Thaiyalnayagi.”

Swamigal continued to have sharp memory and clarity of mind though sickness was affecting Him. Some people, who did not know Swamigal well, said His memory was declining. I was very sad to hear that and went to see Swamigal. As I went there, Swamigal asked me, “Do you remember that you scolded so and so (he mentioned his name) in front of Sivan temple ? “. I was surprised that Swamigal reminded me about the incident that happened several years ago, as a remedy to relieve my worry from my mind.

As though Swamigal had waited for an auspicious day for His Maha Samadhi, He attained Maha Samadhi on 23-4-

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1964, the Thiruvadi Pooja-day, early morning about 3.30am in Ashlesha Natchatra in the month of Panguni. He used to conduct Thiruvadi Pooja on every Second Monday of the month. The *Thinakaran* news paper had good account of the feelings and expressions of the devotees who were there during His Grand Departure. The report which is a compilation of the expressions, appeared on 25-4-1964 as follows:

“Yoga Swamigal was over 90 years of age when He left the body. Generally speaking, we can say and console ourselves that Swamigal who worshipped the Holy Feet of the Lord daily, led a full life and attained the Holy Feet of Siva. But, to those who were with Him for long time cannot control the tears or bear the feeling of vacuum in our hearts, when we realized that we no longer going to see his Holy form in the hut with white beard, white hair, white Holy Ash, wearing white vetti and smiling gently. We cannot express our grief in words when we cannot hear His voice anymore in this life , singing in His commanding voice Manickavasagar’s Siva Puranam ‘Nama Sivaya Valga, Nathan Thal Valga, Imaipoludum yen Nenjil Neengathan Thal Valga’ with His devotees. We bound to have the disappointed feeling in us. Intense grief shatters our heart when we think of the smiling face of Swamigal- that which made us laugh belly full when He seemingly said He would solve all mundane problems in the world - would be set on fire in funeral pyre.

Swamigal would not have worried about His death as He always considered ‘death like a bird leaving the cage; the soul leaves the body.’ He would have been peaceful because all His work had finished. However for those of us, who used to go to Him with complicated problems to receive advice and blessings, are deeply concerned as there is nobody to guide us.”

The Hindu Sadanam published a brief summary of the happenings during the Samadhi of Swamigal. Since the

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report is a direct reporting, let me state it here:

I am giving the summary account of the happenings during Maha Samadhi and the last funeral procession that appeared in Hindu Sadanam which gave live description:

“Yogaswamigal, the beacon light of Jaffna, attained Siva-mukti on Monday 23-4-1964 at 3:18am. When this news was announced in radio, many of His devotees started thronging from different parts of Eelanadu. On Tuesday 24-3-1964, throughout the day devotees, school students and others paid homage to His Holy body which was laid in Columbuturai Ashram. Devotees in groups recited Thirumurai, Tamil prayer songs and Natchinthanai songs. On Wednesday 25-3-1964 5.00am morning, they did Abishegam to Swamigal’s body with devotion. Swamigal’s holy body was covered with pure white cloth and flower garlands. His body was placed in a square box decorated with flower strings, and was carried by devotees through Columbuturai Street to the cremation ground at Thundi.

The procession route from the Ashram of Swamigal to the funeral ground, both sides were decorated with leaves and flowers. The people living in the streets paid homage with lighted Kuthuvilaku and water pots in front of their homes to mark their love and reverence to Him. When the body was carried on procession, they sang bhajan and devotional songs.

The procession reached the funeral ground about 9 am. Thousands of people- men, women and children-gathered to witness the cremation. Volunteers segregated men and women to be seated separately. Silence pervaded everywhere.

The body was placed on wooden stack, which included quarter ton of sandalwood. Every body was meditating on the Grace of Yoga Swamigal. Kokuvil Mr.T. Kumaraswamy

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Pulavar recited Tiruvasagam songs and one puranam song with full devotion. The body was ritually lighted on the funeral pyre. Everybody loudly said, 'Aragara' and worshipped the light.

Sinhalese brothers, Muslims, and Christian also were there to pay their last respect. Everyone watched Swamigal merging with the Light. The whole place appeared like Holy Kailash had descended on Earth.

Earlier Swamigal, with deep feelings had said, ' For more than fifty years, I have done whatever I have to do. I have preached whatever I have to preach. I have no regrets.'

So, let us attain liberation by following Yogaswami who had showed us the path for more than half a century.

**There is No Evil.
Finished Long Time Ago.
We Know Not.
All is Truth Absolute**

Yogaswami's Words of Grace -1

(Courtesy from one of Swami's Devotees)

Be like a compass needle, always showing the North direction.

You are a friend and a foe to yourself.

Stay unnoticed even though you did the work.

Take control and rule the *prana* (vital breath).

Joy and sorrow are twins.

The power of celibacy is enormous.

Meditate in the morning and evening.

Do everything moderately (Middle path).

Make the mind which seeks sensual pleasure to be absorbed in Atman.

Actions done with non-attachment – that is yoga and that is renunciation.

Do not let the mind wander hither thither ; see everything as forms of Supreme Being.

Eat after making Nivethanam (God's offering). Eat the food as though giving offering to the Homa Fire (Homa Kunda).

Each man is a Divine Being.

The Prakruti (the Universe) is indeed Sakti (power).

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Let the joy and sorrow to pass-by like a cloud.

Control and rule yourself (mind).

Need a balanced state.

Should not think about what is required for tomorrow.

Praising Mahatma Gandhi: The following are Gandhi's praiseworthy aspects:-

A) Doing action without any attachment

B) Fearlessness.

C) Restraining body senses

The Kanchiram Nut (nux vomica) will be usefull when needed, likewise all are good indeed.

(These poisonous nuts can be used as medicine)

Learn to Remain Still (Summa Iru)

Should not allow the mind to wander in two ways; Need one pointed concentration of mind.

Do not have enmity inside.

Walk like holding a Kiluvam stick.

(Kiluvam stick is strong with equally strong pointed thorns. People walk with that stick confidently but very carefully not to get pricked by those thorns)

We need not even think of anything.

A dog when unleashed would become energetic ; likewise we can attain super power if we can train to be Remain Still. But it must be used for good purpose.

Can we say the stars do not exist because we are unable to see them during daytime? Likewise if we can remove

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darkness in us we can see God.

Indeed the independent kingdom is within us. We need to struggle (fight within) to get there.

Reading Thevaram is one way to control the wandering mind.

What is in the Form?

If smoky soot covers the (glass) shade how would the light shine out? Just so the Atman and Maya.

The food that we consume determines the nature of character. Vegetable food which is satvic in nature is better than the Tamasic food like meat.

Practice appraising yourself.

Remain aloof like fingers; Join together when needed.

I am doing my volunteer service; Likewise you do your volunteer service.

Rather than being satisfied with what we have, we wander with greed.

As the worker (iron smith) works easily with things kept in fire, our mind and senses when trained properly will behave positively.

Anything will be successful when done without any confusion in the mind.

Need not hold your breath. Need not do penance. When you can see yourself everywhere, that itself is a big secret.

When I think, that man go into action. That much power is in man. Everywhere is mechanism indeed. Big secret.

How foolish is to talk about a person's one or two blemishes

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, ignoring ten other noble qualities that he has.

We recited Thevaram to spend time. Not even once time went away. We remain here always.

When working in lower rank job, we desired to go for a higher rank . When we go to higher position we desired for big salary. When we get the big salary, we want the children to settle in good position. Is there any limit to these desires?

Do charity when you have wealth.

Even the person that you regard as undesirable, may possess some noble qualities that may not be found even in Mahatma Gandhi.

You and God are one and cannot be separated
(inseparable).

Just as you shut the door, shut all five senses and meditate.

Regard your profession and others as means of attaining God. Such a person will live satisfactorily in any life.

Life of a house holder and life of a renunciate - both are great indeed.

Do your work perfectly. That is Yoga indeed.

Perform your duty perfectly and wisdom will appear.

The ancient word of assurance that I can give you is God is always with you .

How many things the devotees get from Iswaran for the enrichment of their Atman?

Heart must be pure. What more can I say?

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More often I think I'm in God's presence. That indeed is a good way to remain pure.

Instead of thinking of flying in the sky, think of the things that you want and sure you will get it.

Should work hard. Only few know the truth. Others are followers indeed.

Do the things necessary for the wife and children . Why interfere with grandchildren's karma.

You can cheat others but cannot cheat your ownself. Everything will materialise on its own if you act according to your conscience.

Jesus Christ said one should not work for his sake (Christ) but to work for one's own sake.

He said what is the use in serving him without improving one self?

Will there be satisfaction if you are a king?

Will there be satisfaction if you are a beggar?

It doesn't matter in what position you are. Knowing yourself by yourself brings satisfaction.

The mind does not stay still and wanders around everywhere. That is its nature. What does it matter to me?

Behave morally and unite the mind with the Atman. If you are immoral, the mind will do harm.

Just like a single pin is enough to kill oneself, to correct oneself, one doesn't need to learn a lot.

Just like a person takes care of their children, one should

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take good care of the mind. Indeed, the mind is our friend and foe.

When one reaches the mountain top it is cool and cannot see the differences of the paths below the plains. Similarly, the fundamental principles in all religions are indeed the same.

There are no differences between Sinhalese, Tamils, Dutch and White people. They have the same organs as we.

We should change ourselves by ourselves. We should not look for any help from others.

Is there any greater friend for us than God?

The bee does not make any noise when collecting honey from a flower. Few muktas (enlightened Gurus) will give advice. Others will remain silent.

We are all servants of Lord Siva. Instead of believing that everything is Siva's work, we get caught up in futile efforts and create worlds within ourselves and suffer.

Without like or dislike , activity or sloth, open and see the house of Moksha using the key of Meditation on Siva (Siva Thiyanam). There is no You nor I; no She nor He.

The more you study, the more the mind will expand. Control of the mind will give consolation.

Even in minor deeds we must be careful. Even the big chariot will fall and break without the axle pin.

We climb to the top branch only by climbing step by step. There are people who can fly there like birds. We too can fly with the feathers of scriptures, Guru and Experience.

Nintynine out of hundred people are existentialists.

Yoga Swamigal

It is no exaggeration to state that man is a Divine Being.

It is mind's extension also even to think of controlling the mind. If we can merge the mind with Atman, then creation of thoughts will not be its activity.

The cat will bite if you pull its tail. The world is also the same. We must live detached like water and the lotus leaf.

What lacks a man who submits all actions as God's action? All his needs will be fulfilled.

Water flows to the lower ground and stagnates there. Be like the water and remain humble .

This world is a training college. Some students are studying in kindergarten, and some in the B.A. class. Those in B.A. class will never insult those in kindergarten.

God is in everyone's heart, residing there like an electricity generator.

We should treat wife, children and the world as means to attain God's feet.

Being still is great physical exercise.

Our forefathers had passed down many stories so that we can easily absorb the teachings of Truth.

We need not hold the breath and do pranayama. All (mind control) will come automatically with Meditation on Siva (Siva Thiyanam).

Instead of enjoying humans as beautiful walking flowers, selfish thoughts of "mine" and "I" drive a man to an impoverished state.

As we kiss children every day we should kiss God daily and

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do our work.

Work is play.

Practice the little we know. That is enough. We will attain all knowing power.

As the sailor reaches the shore by following the beacon, the desire to attain Atma gnanam (Self Realisation) is enough. That indeed is like beacon that will lead you in the right path and take you to other shore. Need not pursue the wants and unwanted.

If you live naturally without going over limits, everything will come automatically.

Why think many things in mind and bind yourself as if you can do things by yourself. All actions finished long time ago.

Do do do Meditation on Siva (Siva Thiyanam).

Saying I am Siva is true true true.

Saivage salvage salvage by knowing that.

Nothing is lost. Nothing is gained.

Don't complain about anybody at anytime. That will create mental confusion in you.

It is better to spend time studying oneself than spending time in reading books. Studying is also yoga.

Doing Siva Thiyanam is the easiest path at this time.

Do not pray to God requesting a thing. We should not even request salvation.

We are Atman (Soul). Know this.

Yoga Swamigal

This hand prevents us from seeing each other. We can see each other if we remove our hand.

A train engine runs pulling many coaches. Will it run if it miss the railway track? Elders have shown us the path and we should follow.

It is good to associate with Sivanadiyars (Siva's devotees).

When you look at the trees, there is no mountain. When you look at the mountain, there are no trees.

The journey is long. We have to go slowly. We should stick to the path ; not get into thorny bushes.

We should nurture God like we nurture our children. God is with you. There is nothing new.

Know Thyself by Thyself.

We may recite Thevaram to attain one pointed mind.

That which goes up beyond certain limit, will pull down later.

Now, we all do Yoga. Doing actions without expecting reward is Karmayoga. Doing actions towards Siva is Sivayoga.

By doing Bakthiyoga, the other three will be attained. When praying to God, pray for Love, not demanding for this or that. Later we can demand for necessary things. Do you ask one or two coins from a wealthy man?

Every one of you has Sivapackiam (Siva's Grace).

Do not have to run to Kathirkamam and Chidambaram in search of God.

Buddha had desire to give sermons. Desire can be reduced. How can one be completely without it? We take whatever suits our experience and discard the rest.

Yoga Swamigal

What is there to read? Man is man after all.

Like flowers and fruits mature and ripe, let experiential knowledge come step by step.

Though the lotus flower grows in mud, it is valued. Likewise, what does it matter where the enlightened souls reside?

In higher consciousness where is Guru? Where is disciple? Everything is Brahman. Everything is Siva's presence.

We need gold (money) for living. As such there will be desire for gold. If you are unattached, what does it matter how much material you have?

If "I" die "You" will be well (good).

Noble qualities due to wisdom and wisdom due to noble qualities flourish and grow like pond and lotus. .

Yogaswami's

Words of Grace-II

(Provided by Mr. C. Kandiah)

Pointing to a pipal tree Swamigal gave a rare Upadesh. "Look! Just as a seed appears and shines forth as a tree, trunk, branch, leaf, flower, and fruit, likewise the seed of Supreme Reality (Brahmam) shines forth as the world, life, the body, the moon, the sun, the five elements, male, female , the Paramatman and all. The Only Reality shines as world, life and Universe. True knowledge is to see Unity in Diversity.

Everything is created, sustained and dissolved in God. Therefore, there is NO EVIL. The world is sacred and secret.

We are not joining God newly. God is always, ever with Atman. He is never separated from us and will not ever.

Meditate on Siva . The Jiva (Soul) will manifest as Siva.

Give up the misconception that we are different from God. There is no "I". Only God exists. He alone dances as all beings, as the world, as life and as Paramatman.

Even the the noble souls have to suffer from remnants of Prarabdha Karma. Sometimes the mind will go after mundane things and suffer. Chant the God's name, the Panchakshara, five letter sacred Mantra. You will attain Fullness (of Divine Consciousness.)

Give up like and dislike. Treat praise and mockery as equal. Live like the tamarind fruit and its shell, water on the lotus leaf. You will attain Liberation, *Veedu (Moksham)*.

There is no birth and death for Atman. It remains as it is. Praise and worship the Lord and understand this Truth.

Yoga Swamigal

Ignorance is to say this is My Action.

Wisdom is to say it is God's Action.

Ignorance is to say God and me are different. Only God exists. Wisdom is to realize that there is no 'I'.

Ignorance is to say God is different, Guru is different and 'I' is different. Wisdom is to realize God, Guru and I - are one.

Realize the Self by Thyself and remain as the Self. This is Holy Feet. This is Liberation, *Moksham*.

Yogaswami's

Words of Grace-III

(Compiled by Sivanadiyan)

God is indivisible. Man is divisible..

No body has seen God. God is all. All are doing pen- ance.

There is no going and no coming. But, there is going and coming. We should understand this strange thing.

In Saivism there is room for all type of worships. Each Soul can worship according to its nature.

There will be differences always. But, we can remain by not getting affected with those differences.

No body Dies.

The World is and is not.

There is nothing, when you look from the top.

God is with everyone. Those who search see Him.

Others don't see Him.

God appears sometimes as Subramaniyar, sometimes as Pillaiyar, and sometimes as Saraswathi.

Everybody has adequate wealth according to their needs. Failing to acknowledge this, man wanders with frustration.

You and I are of same age. If you understand this calculation, you will know all.

Masu (dirt) means forgetting to accept that every- thing is GOD'S ACTION.

Yoga Swamigal

Sivamayam

Dear Navaratna!

To conquer the consequences of Karma
No key found in Vedas and all Books in library
Watch the mind closely, otherwise
Do not get distressed, Oh Mind
No fate for dwellers in celestial world.

Yours,

The One who never forgets
7.2.34

Noble Secret

We all belong to One Religion and one Caste. There is no differences among us.

We are pure and we have been placed in God.

All different changes reflect the special qualities of True Nature.

The wise say it is Maya.

Only the virtuous people can realize this Truth, others will not understand.

That's the reason the Saints repeatedly urge us to treat all life as our own life.

So, everything rests in virtuous life.

So by leading virtuous life and and regarding all life as your life continuously, wonderful experiences happen and through them, one will realize that he is not inanimate being but intelligent being.

Yoga Swamigal

Sivamayam

14-11-33

Suppaiya,

The saying "There is nothing to fear , nothing causes the fear" is the lifeboat to cross the ocean of births and deaths. This is our companion, therefore nothing lacks. As such let us embark on this long journey with heartfelt joy.

"As 'A' is life in all letters, God as Absolute Intelligence, without comparison pervades everywhere in full ."

Sincerely,
The one who never forgets.

Yoga Swamigal



Yoga Swamigal's Mahasamadhi Shrine (left) and Former Home (right) in Columbuturai, Jaffna



Yoga Swamigal's Holy Feet (Patham) in a Shrine at His Former Residence.

Yoga Swamigal

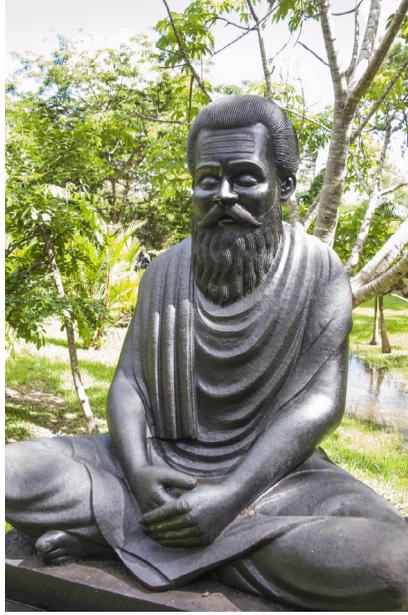


Sivathondan Nilayam in Jaffna



Yoga Swamigal's Murti in Sivathondan Nilayam

Yoga Swamigal



Yoga Swamigal's Statue in Kauai Monastery, USA





Mr. S. Ambikaipakan

was born on May 3, 1908 in Chunnakam, Sri Lanka. He had his early education at Jaffna Hindu College and received the Bachelor of Arts Degree from the prestigious Presidency College in Chennai, India.

He married Nagulambikai in 1941 and lived in Mallakam, Sri Lanka. While living in Chennai, he was

a regular visitor to Ramakrishna Mission, and became a lifelong follower of the teachings of Sri Ramakrishnar Paramahansa, Swami Vivekanadar and Sarada Devi Ammayar. This association also led to his appointment as a teacher first at Batticaloa Sivanantha Vidyalyam, and later as Principal of Jaffna Vaidyeshwara Vidyalayam by Swami Vipulanandar. This school initially had 150 students, and Mr. Ambikaipakan's untiring effort led to the transformation to a Grade A school with 1500 students and fifty teachers, at the time when he retired in 1968 after 33 years of service. He also greatly contributed to establishment of Ramanathan Music Academy and University of Jaffna, and served as a member of the first Governing Council Body of University of Jaffna. Previously, he served as a Senate member at the University of Ceylon, Peradeniya. He was associated with Yoga Swamigal since his school days and was a close disciple of Swamigal. He has authored several articles and books both in Tamil and English, and devoted his entire life for the development of Saivism and Tamil culture. He played an active role in organizing several religious and Tamil cultural functions conducted in the twentieth century in Jaffna. He was very active until his death on January 26, 1986.