

# ĀNDĀḤ

( "DIVINE LADY' OR A MAID'S VOW<sup>1</sup>)

It is the month of December when the monsoons have filled all tanks and the rivers are flowing. Then the Sun has lost his fierceness and has taken up the cool refreshing rays of light which radiate warmth of affection. All things are lovely. Ponds and pools, rivers and lakes, mountains and hilltops, great and small, are beautiful, revealing the flowery exuberance and glory of God. And like nature, the human heart throbbing with intense longing for the beloved awakens to thrilling consciousness of the supreme beloved. Men need loves, but women demand love as the price of their existence. For a woman without love there is no existence. The intimacy they demand is the entire giving up of themselves in return for a word of love. They are therefore earnest in the devotion of soul-surrender to love or the object of love. The season of Mārgaḥi,<sup>2</sup> Mārgaśīrṣa, is the most important period of this soul-giving offering of greatest merit which earns for them the realisation of their fullness in the object of their adorable union.

Many indeed have been the souls which have struggled

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<sup>1</sup> Paper read at the Indian Philosophical Congress 1940, Adayar.

<sup>2</sup> cf. Bhāgavata Purāṇa (X.22) mentions Mārgaḥi as the month of vows for Kātyāyana-Durgā which is observed by maids, and the month of Kārtikai as the month of union. Śrī Āṇḍāḥ follows the Bhāgavata instruction, the plan of the Hymn is thus drawn from it. Cf. Skanda Purāṇa II. 56. which mentions this Vrata for the sake of Kṛṣṇa as practised by Āṇḍāḥ. This refers to the fullmoon day.

to manifest this supreme consecration, but none so profoundly and thoroughly philosophically than the youthful foster-daughter of Viṣṇucitta, poet, philosopher and debater of Viśiṣṭādaita, known to Śrī Vaiṣṇvitēs as the Elder Saint, Pēriyāḷvār. She among the saints is the only one lady to be canonised, and she has more than any other among this galaxy shown the naturalness and fullness of the Divine Life, Not that she contributed to philosophic thought anything more than what Nammāḷvār and other saints, giants indeed even among themselves, have done. But in the brief compass of thirty verses she has affirmed the very essence of the Divine Life possible to terrestrial humanity. Great poetesses and seers amongst women have been the greatest in the world. To them utter expression of their being is spontaneous, natural, vivid; and their dependence on the Infinite is complete, so complete that they appear to have merged themselves in the illimitable expanse of the Infinite Being itself.

It has been claimed by all the ĀḶvārs that they speak eternal truths of religious consciousness. They also claim that what they utter has the same value and worth as the Vedas written in Sanskrit. This claim could be understood only on the ground that they also have seen the truths of the Vedas even as the Vedic Ṛṣis of yore did, and that the truths they saw confirm the truths presented in the Vedas. One important aspect of the life of the great Viṣṇucitta is that though he was left no work of importance in the Sanskrit language, he was considered to be one of the foremost debaters in the Philosophy of Śrī Vaiṣṇavism during his time.

The usual date according to the orthodox thinkers takes

this saint to the third century, but according to certain writers of the present day he belongs to the 8th century A.D. His foster-daughter Godā,<sup>1</sup> the unique figure in this galaxy, belongs accordingly to the same century. Born in the Tinnevely district and worshipping the God of Śrīvilliputtūr, she dreamt of being married to the Lord of Tirupati hills, though she was absorbed into the idol of Śrī Raṅganātha of Śrīraṅgaṃ. She was also known as she who gave worn flowers to the Lord—*Cūtik-Kōtutta-Nācciyār*, as she used to wear the flowers strung by her father for decorating the Lord of Śrīvilliputtūr, even in the very style of Śabari.

As a wonderful testament of mystico-religious consciousness the work *Tiruppāvai* is incomparably most important. As a call of a devout woman to the Lord, and as a congregational song of devotion, it is indeed valuable for understanding the psychological nature of the religious aspiration. Though a typical manifestation of the spirit of the female consciousness towards the male Divine in its largest and profoundest affirmation, it is a significant application of the religious attitude to the ordinary phenomenon of love and marriage. From the stand point of poetry it is of the highest quality.

The female has been typified as the soul of intuition, of emotional exuberance, of having the quality of love in a unique measure, a love that loves to give itself up to the beloved, displaying an utter dependence of life and being on the object of her love. It is this thorough going capacity

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<sup>1</sup> Sanskritised form of Kodai, used by Śrī Vēdānta Dēśika. Godā-Stuti.

for surrendering her entire personality to the beloved that is typical of the religious consciousness, which is characterised by love, faith, wonder and awe at the numinous. The spontaneity of this surrender is a common enough fact of love on the part of the female, whether it be in the relation of mother to her children or sister or wife. Thus the most important aspect of the female consciousness is its infinite capacity for intuitive sympathy and ceaseless sacrifice of itself. It is this devotional aspect that is utilised appropriately by Godā in her poem of consecration.

A brief analysis of the poem is necessary to point out the immense importance of her psychological understanding. This poem has been translated more than once into English.<sup>1</sup> She is the seeker who calls on all her sisters in the village to wakeup and get ready to move towards the place of the Lord Kṛṣṇa. The setting is not anything new. She utilises the story of the Bhāgavata Purāṇa where in the mouth of Mārgaśīraśa the vraja girls used to make vows to Durgā Kātyāyani so as to gain good husbands and love. The aim of the vow is to gain pleasure in the sight, delight in the proximity and ineffable happiness of union with the Godhead. Therefore so far as the general nature of the poem is concerned it does not mean anything other than a holy observance of an ancient custom among youthful maidens.

But the whole situation is utilised by Gōdā for the purpose of transforming the vow into a great consecration

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<sup>1</sup> Translations available: Dr. S.K. Aiyangar and A. Butterworth, Indian Antiquary: 1920: Heritage of India Service: Hymns of the ĀḶvārs: p. 49 ff.

or pilgrimage to the shrine and presence of the Godhead as a prelude to the marriage or union with the Divine, which is the fullest summit of Religion. The *vrata* becomes worship transcending the scope and altering the direction of ordinary life.

The first five hymns lay down the conditions which facilitate the attainment of Divine Presence easily. The Lord is attainable only by one who is devoted to bodily and mental purity and one-pointedness of mind, who has bound one's consciousness to the attainment of the end. The second group of hymns deal with the conditions that should precede the utter surrender to the Lord or the beloved. It reveals the differences in the several types of seekers. All these seekers are addressed in feminine terms. They are the ancient forerunners on the path, the āḷvārs who had preceded her, whom she now requests to accompany her to the presence of the Lord. These are thus the experts on the path whose help is worthwhile on the difficult and arduous path of consecrated surrender. These seekers or masters who enjoy the divine presence in their consciousness are sustained by their faith in the Lord's love, but have not that love that melts and conquers the beloved from others and invokes the completest reciprocal effusion. Nammāḷvār has depicted his relationship with the Supreme Godhead as one of the lover to the Beloved, but despite its wonderful quality it never reaches this pinnacle of surrender. It is for this peculiar quality of surrender, that is dynamic, that this hymn is well known in Vaiṣṇava literature.

The usually conceded descriptions of the personal Godhead are proclaimed in ecstatic terms of endearment.

His grace is sought after through every means of surrender to teachers and friends, attendants in the palace of the Lord as well as the close kin and lovers of the Lord, and His beloved wife too. All are appealed to make the descent of grace, even a look of reciprocal acceptance, possible. The inner methodology of the path of surrender to the Divine is clearly enunciated. There is a fundamental feeling of helplessness and inability engendered, coupled with the knowledge of the supreme necessity of throwing oneself on the mercy of the Lord, the only Lord who could save, if any one could save at all.

The psychological factor concerned in this attitude is the induction of a state of mental fullness and utter vacuity of inner individual consciousness coupled with the concentration on the one object from which alone any reception of stimuli is possible.

It is this psychological situation that is fundamental to the doctrine of surrender to the Lord, this one-pointedness of mind facilitated by the utter inability to do or think or will anything else (*ākincanya*). This is the psychological preparatory- set of the future transformation in the psyche of the individual. Individual self-affirmations are the antithesis of this attitude. All the three methods of *Jñāna*, *Karma* and *Bhakti*, despite their normal efficacy, are soul dependent and not God dependent. But true religious consciousness cannot come into being unless the individual is transcended; and all the content of experience is funded into the Divine. It is the noesis that is the necessary germ of the transformation and ascent into the mansions of the Spirit.

The goal is God-consciousness and Union with the beloved, the supremest end of man (which includes woman). Once this goal is achieved, the promise is, as in other religious, the attainment of blessedness even here. The Bliss of Brahman need not be of the other world alone, but belongs naturally to all the worlds of His creation. Our birth in this universe is a preluder to the enjoyment of that Divine Consciousness even now, even here, for the one saving knowledge is the sense of the Immortal Infinitude. The world itself will put forth all blossoms: our cows will milk plenty; our harvests will be rich; honey and milk will flow through the land where the Divine has been realised. Famine and evil can have no refuge in such a place.

God is accessible; He descends even into this terrestrial existence to help His Devotees; to fulfill their vows He indeed performs miracles. He is the supreme Lord who measures all things and is yet beyond all measure. He is kindness, beauty, knowledge and glory. He is, above all, Love. Man by the dependence which he naturally exhibits to the Lord grows in and through the Grace manifested by the Divine out of sheer love and mercy, and thereby becomes regenerate.

Man thus becomes a light and a flame and power of the *Sudarśana* (divine preception), the supreme celestial power of creation of the Divine Lord which is symbolised by his *cakra*, discus.

There are many mystics who even though they have theoretically known all, do not apply themselves to the practical, who make their knowledge a comfortable bed to

sleep on rather than a living force of transforming and saving character. Sleep there can be none to those who have awakened to the life of spirit, for sleep is ignorance, sloth and perdition of the soul. No one who has been touched with the light divine can ever seek comfort in sleep. "Art thou asleep even though you heard the songs of praise of the Destroyer of Kēśin "? asks Gōdā of one of sisters. Spiritual awakening is the dawn, is *sambhūti*, is communion or birth of the soul into the mansions of the Divine Lord, for the most intense transformation occurs from this touch of the Divine Name. "Is the dumb or deaf or an ignoramus that she does not get up from her dreams?" she asks. The morning of life in the Divine cool, fragrant, salubrious, and heartening is the morning of Mārgaśīrṣa, when the birds sing the song of praise of the Divine, and love wells up towards the beloved. Even trance-state of *suṣupti* is not equivalent to the Divine Presence. Action, that is worship, prescribed by the Divine life it is that must be the fulfillment of the knowledge Divine. Such action might be mere praise of the Lord, might be service of the devotees of the Lord. The true and tried rapture of the devotee must find fullest expression in the service of the Lord even on the physical plane. To sleep or to rest content in mere trance or dream or mere contemplation is of no worth to spiritual life. Sleep of any kind is a great *tāmasic* force. It must be transcended however enjoyable it be, as in the case of the archetypal representative Kumbhakarṇa. Vigilance is the price of liberty or rather liberation of love.

The sixteenth hymn describes the need for absolute surrender to the Lord through the Masters of wisdom who are the dvāra-śēṣins, gate-selves, here represented by

Nandagopa. Absolute dependence on the Lord, *ananyārha-śēshatva*, causes *ananyā-śaraṇatva* and leads to *ananya-bhogyatva* and *ananya-prayojanatva*.

The eighteenth hymn is again important in so far as it brings out the necessity of seeking the help of the Mother Śrī, here invoked as Nappinnai, a doctrine special to the Śrī Vaiṣṇavas school of thought of Rāmānuja and the ĀḶvārs. The mother of the Universe, who is inseparable from the Lord is the mediatrix who leads the soul to the Lord, who invokes the grace of the Lord to flow towards the suppliant soul. The manifestations of the Mother are as many as the Lord's; her capacity is equal to the Lord, but she is utterly dependent on the Lord, not however in the sense in which the individual souls are dependent on the Lord. In the Viśiṣṭādvaita school of thought, the individual souls, freed or bound, are the body of the Lord, utterly dependent in every respect on the Lord. But in the case of the Mother Śrī, she is equal to the Lord in all respects but, she is in mind and heart and power willingly dependent on the Lord. This is the special doctrine. She is master of Māyā like God, she is infinite like the Lord and not finite like the souls. She has the world as a ball in one hand, whilst she holds the Lord God by the other. She is thus appropriately the mediating, interceding, introducing mistress of the Universe and Spouse of Viṣṇu the Protector. *Asyēśānā Jagatō Viṣṇupatni* (Yajus iv 4.37.) ĀṇḍāḶ shows that in the practice of Pṛapatti or surrender, both the Lord and Mother have to be approached together. To approach the Mother without the Lord or the Lord without the Mother is fraught with disaster to the Soul, if not, there happen delay and frustration and failure to achieve fullest enjoyment of the Divine. The classic

example of the dual approach is cited in the Rāmāyaṇa of Vibhīṣaṇa, whilst the other two approaches are represented by Rāvaṇa and Śūrpaṇakhā.

The rest of the piece is a splendid study of the fruits of surrender. The Lord is implored to awaken to the praise of his devotees from his Yoga-sleep with words that render the praise most effective:

"Like the enemies who have been defeated by you, enfeebled falling prostrate at your feet, we too, (who are your slaves) are singing your praises (for things you have done) at your doorstep."

The poetess then requests the Lord to ascend His throne, the throne of the inward heart whose impartial Ruler He is. That the Lord eternally inseparably resides in the heart is a truth which cannot be denied. What is sought in religious consciousness is to make the residence a conscious or supra-conscious Lordship, to foster a personal relation between the All-Lord and the individual Soul so that the individual no longer is his own, is positively not his own, but the Lord's. The goal of man is to enjoy the beauty and glory of the Divine, to sing His name and praises not for any particular human riches or benefit or enjoyment, but because it is the very nature of the individual, his inviolable *dharma*, the *satya-dharma* to use the eloquent phrase of the Iṣavāsyōpaniṣad (15). Praise is the goal and the means is the grace of God.

The mysterious nature of the Lord is wonderfully expressed in the 25th hymn. The general tenor is indeed different but we find here certain statements that provoke the feeling of wonder.

"When you who born as a son of one that very night becoming the son of another, wast brought up making futile the wicked intention of Kaṁsa who could not brook being thwarted, stood as a fire in his vitals O Nēdumā! We have come to you seeking from you our goal! If you grant us that transcendent fruit, we shall sing your wealth freed from exhaustion (fatigue) and shall enjoy bliss, *O Elorembāvāy.*"

The father of the Universe was born as a son to a Woman! The Unborn takes birth! The light of the universe was reared in secret! The fearless Being was hidden out of fear! These statements undoubtedly reveal the dual nature of the Divine transcendence and the immanent possibility.

It is clear from the brief analysis given above that it gives us the fundamental psychological background of religious consciousness. Firstly, it speaks about the utter dependence of the individual. The practice of vows asked to be performed for material ends are turned towards divine realisation. It is a variation of the *Niṣkāma-karma*. A divinisation of karma is the essential meaning of conversion. Secondly, it shows that the help of teachers on this path of utter surrender is as much necessary as in other paths. The thirst for the Lord's grace must be absolutely there however to make progress secure.

The symbolism implied in the whole group of hymns reveals significant concepts adapted to the revelation of the inwardness of the religious poetry of Gōdā or Āṇdā! especially, and in the Āṭvārs generally. Soaked indeed as they were in the mythological stories and exploits of God

and His incarnations, unless one has a grasp of the general principles underlying the stories it would be difficult to interpret these hymns. The qualities of the Lord are expressed through His manifestations and wondrous works and actions. His manifold nature comprising of auspicious qualities reveals itself in the incarnations, through his relationships with the universe which are of many kinds. The whole tenor of the hymns however is to pay homage to the goodness and kindness of the Lord; His approachability being, as it were, the main teaching of this hymn by Āṇḍāl. God is at once the Supreme Being of wondrous power and strength, and glory and lordship and Love. He is always seeking to bestow His love on His creatures, on those who have sought His refuge and shelter, and who worship Him at all times.

We can however, find certain special symbolisms which help us in understanding the inwardness of the mystico-religious consciousness. Girl, is the symbol of the seeker after the beloved, the Divine Lord, who is the husband of all souls, being their very self or soul. Every saint, āḶvār, is a girl who has wedded or is awaiting to wed, the Divine lord. The first ten āḶvārs are all addressed by Gōḍā as girls. The first āḶvār is called *Piḷḷāy*, (v.6) the second as "*Pey-Pēṇ*", (v.7) the third as '*kodukulum-udaiya pāvāy*' (v.8) the fourth āḶvār is referred to as '*māmān-makaḷ*' (v. 9) daughter of the uncle, that is, as Bhārgava's daughter: Śrī Kulaśekhara is called *Ammā* (v. 10), and her own father is addressed by her as *porkodiye* (v. 11). Tondaradippodi ĀḶvār is called *narcelvan-tangāy* (sister of one who has excellent wealth), (v. 12), Tiruppāṇ āḶvār is called *pāvāy* the tender lady, whose eyes resemble the bees in the flower; (v. 13); the

greatest āḷvār called "our saint," is spoken of as one who promised to awaken them earlier, *yēngaḷai munnam-ezhuppuvān vāy-pēsum nangāy* (v. 14) and the last Āḷvār Tirumaṅgai is called by the endearing name *yīlamkiliyē*: tender parrot.

The second symbolism of importance is regarding the awakening of these āḷvārs who are requested by Gōdā to accompany her to the divine presence. It is to enjoy God together and not in isolation. The religious consciousness is not content to be what Prof. A.N. Whitehead terms the business of the individual with his solitariness, but it is also a social institution, a congregational experience. The brotherhood of men before God is an important aspect of Religion. In so far as this hymn is written from the standpoint of the maid or girl or the female, we can speak of the present invitation to participate in the enjoyment of the Divine Presence as going beyond the polygamy-theory. The experience is of the unique religious kind. Enjoyment can rarely be solitary even like misery; both of them are diffusive, and whilst the one weakens, the other strengthens the life-force.

The third symbolism implied in these hymns is the symbol of bathing in the river which symbolises inward purity through the repetition of the names of God. It is the food and water of the surrendering soul. Rain-giver, Parjanya, *mazhai-kaṇṇā*, is the teacher of knowledge which he showers on men. Sleep is ignorance. The religious people do not sleep the sleep of ignorance. Dawn is the time of awakening. Cows and buffaloes usually stand for teachers who in the morning disperse themselves from their

sheds (R̥g V.I. 42.4. "The dawn hath laid the darkness open, as the Cows their stall.. This refers not only to knowing but enjoying even erotically as is witnessed in the usages,"He knew her". The relevancy of the context is important however. The sun's rays not merely know or reveal the world but also set up processes of insemination or germination or distraction. The vedic seers were conscious of this when they spoke of the rays of the sun. The fine hot rays as well as the cool and resplendent light) even as the morning comes on, teaching the nature and glory of God (v. 8). The cot symbolises the human body and mind supported by the fourfold tendencies such as egoistic agency, egoistic cognitivity, and egoist enjoyability. Fragrant hair symbolises the overflowing perfume of devotion. Beauty for a women consists in having beautiful hair, for the devotee and the surrenderer beauty consists in having one-pointed devotion. Pots in which milk is drawn are the fit disciples. Sweetness of the sugarcane means the attributes of Īśvara.

Most of these symbols are very common in the literature of these saints. The uniqueness of these here consists in the individuality of the composition, and the richness of the religious and mystical feeling contained herein.

The gains to the understanding of the nature of devotion from an understanding of the philosophy of Gōdā from these hymns are (i) the necessity for purity (ii) an one-pointedness of mind in devotion, (iii) a vigilant attitude of receptivity to God's messenger and teachers, and (iv) an eager attitude of mind to surrender everything to the Lord. The path being difficult the help of tried and trained

teachers is a necessity, and a devotee should take all help he or she can on the path of devotion. Devotion itself consists in the fulfillment of knowledge in worship, in keeping of vows, and even the least fit individual, like a woman, can follow this path of surrender. Loyalty to the path is the absolute need in any path, and without it there is no possibility of success.

There is a fundamental difference in the temperaments of the male and female sexes. This has been admirably stated by Gerald Vann thus:-

"There is a useful analogy to be drawn between the divergent psychological tendencies of West and East on the one hand and the male and female types of mind on the other. There are perhaps few people who are psychologically speaking wholly male or wholly female; in the genius the characteristics are united. But in theory at least the two are easily distinguishable. In the male mind there is predominance of reason, concern with the active, the practical, with doing; direction is centrifugal, looking to external achievement. In the female mind there is predominance of intuition, receptivity, concern for being rather than doing; direction is centripetal, the well-being of the object of love rather than the well-doing of other, external things."

The fusion of both these tendencies is the desideratum. The religious consciousness being more introspective and intuitive is nearer the female consciousness than the male. The āḶvār-consciousness has typically been the maid's immaculate devotion, and perfection in devotion, growing into personal experience of the Divine. Being herself a female, ĀṇḍāḶ or Godā typifies this emotion or experience naturally, spontaneously, and superbly.

## ĀNDĀḶ

### THE DOCTRINE OF SUBSTITUTION IN RELIGION AND MYSTICISM

The ways of mysticism are wonderful and mysterious. It is however, morphology of mysticism that is important. It is true that, despite wide differences of views relating to the content of this kind of experiences, there is agreement as to the manner of experiencing this kind of experience. The directness, immediacy, the intimateness and the inwardness of this kind of experience have already attracted the attention of the psychologists of religious consciousness. The philosophies of Bergson and other intuitionists have paid heed also to the nature of the content of these experiences. They have shewn that over and above the features already referred to, there is Reality-quality that is almost identical with the thing-in-itself of Kant, that with which reflective or analytical reason could never relate itself. This is the highest goal of reason that reason itself could never perceive. All this shows that the content of mystical experience or intuition is reality.

There is, however, a particular principle at work which has not been paid as much heed to as it deserves. This principle is the principle of 'conversion' or substitution that leads to conversions. It is this which makes it possible for the individual to achieve unity with the object of his quest,

an object that is very distant or aloof due to a variety of reasons, such as utter transcendence or alienness in substance or alienness in form or alienness in measure. It is because of this substitution or conversion, that mysticism claims to become a dynamic state of search after reality, and proceeds from the bondage in which it finds itself to the liberation that it perceives to be its *summum bonum*. Reality, *satyam*, is the goal of mysticism, a full blooded and integral reality that contains all knowledge within itself, without remainder, just as the Good is the goal of moral life. The Good is included in the Reality as a fundamental aspect of it. Whether this Reality is perceived and enjoyed as the ecstasy of being, bliss and knowledge or it is experienced as the revelation of the fullest plenitude of power, puissance and participation in the Divine Life that is utterly different from and greater than the ordinary segmented and thwarted consciousness which we possess and endure, it is certain that Reality-consciousness is something far more transcendent, that is, sacred, than our ordinary conceptions admit.

Vision which is higher than intuition is the goal of man. Intellectual sympathy passes over into the perception of the unity even on the plane of ordinary sense. The fact is that most writers have thought that intuition is equivalent to vision, because this vision is perception through the instrumentality of the mind and as such it is other than the perception of the senses. This view is unwarranted. The object perceived by the senses undergoes an arrangement coeval with the perception by the mind and thus is enlarged in its fullest measure. The finiteness of the eye and limitedness of space on the retina are not at all the facts

about it, nor are they plausible objections. The famous Vision of Arjuna did not annul Śrī Kṛṣṇa whom he was perceiving, whom he was praising and of whom he was afraid. Śrī Kṛṣṇa persisted in the perception even whilst He who was the locus of all, into whom all the universe came crashing in as Time, the eternal womb, and went out of Him. It is important to bear in mind the picture of the Divine Lord in this context of vision, which is more truly a vision than any other.

The logic of mystical consciousness consists in its effort to discover the principles that invariably accompany their manifestations. Vision is the invariable terminus of all these kinds of endeavour, though it is not necessary that it should be so, for, utter transformation of the individual into the divine nature and immortal existence is also the aim of the human being. Freedom from misery and mortality and the achievement of the immortal and blissful state are the inward aims of all life. It is vision that makes these possible, as the *Īśāvāsyōpaniṣd* says:

[illegible]

Vision is transmutive in its influence. It might occur all of a sudden, and possess unique possibilities to the individual and to the race itself. These visions are, in most cases results of prolonged periods of preparation, through *niyama*, etc., so to speak, of the inner being, so as to facilitate the reception of the Reality-experience. The psychological and physiological changes in man such as the lowering of

resistance in the many synaopses and the integration of the nervous and psychonic functions of the body, permit the reception of stimuli of a particular kind more easily, whilst at the same time it heightens the resistance to alien stimuli. The visions of the world-spirit of the Gītā and some Purāṇas, as well as the Spinozistic vision of Being—(the two extremes of sudden and of progressive kind)—have evolved through long periods of preparation. The Yōgasūtras and all other religious practices, Buddhistic, Jainistic or Siddha, have accepted the need for this special preparation through self-control of the psycho-physical organism. The fact that the vision dawned on any mind at any one time, in an instant unexpectedly, or out of grace of God, only reveals that the last term alone was perceived out of the necessary links in the chain of psychic causation. Such realisations do not come about by the force of unreason, unconscious motivations and drives and dopings of the physical organism.<sup>1</sup>

The transmutational nature of the vision is such that it alters the entire outlook of the individual. In a sense, it is fundamentally new and is surcharged with the will to manifest itself through the denial of all lower values. This phase it was that made Nietzsche coin that famous phrase '*transvaluation of all values*.' This is nothing other than the conversion of the psychic attitude. If we look into the nature of the transvaluation incident to the transmutation of the consciousness, we find that the claim that this is sudden is belied. It is not in the *quantum* of content mainly that the transformation occurs. It may also occur, but it is

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<sup>1</sup> Īśa. Up. 10.

not its fundamental characteristic. What is gained is the new perspective, a new vision, a physical perception of a new order of existence, an extension in the direction of depth rather than elongation. The vision opens a new direction, so to speak, in thought and action, unknown here to before and unlike any knowledge or action practised before.

The general tendency of a vision is to convert the entire aspect. There is another function of this vision. It is to adapt what has been known to the new situations. And since in the vision what mainly happens is the shift of attention which arranges the perceived content in quite a different manner in regard to the perceived, it means in the dynamic sense of purpose, the substitution of one set of ends in the place of predisposed ends. The whole literature of religion and mysticism reveals this gradual substitution of different and ideal ends in the place of accepted ends or ends instinctively or habitually fixed in regard to certain activities. The definite doctrine of Mysticism and Religion is that instincts are essentially and consciously modifiable. Without this assumption, as Prof. Mc Dougall showed, no dynamic possibilities are available, and life itself will become nothing but a robot. The Freudian theory of sublimation of instincts is also an affirmation of the principle of substitution of ends and goals, of methods and practices, by breaking one set of habits and replacing them with quite a different set of habits. This theory of substitution is not other than the variation of the theory of conditioned reflex or reintegration in psychology. The principle in religious psychology also is identical. The factors of substitution are varied in different places and in different personalities, but in the main, substitution as a fundamental principle of conduct is

universal.

In the cases of beings which are for the most part unthinking and unconscious, and even in respect of man in those conditions of which he is unconscious, conditioning is made by the environment or by individuals, who are interested in conditioning the reactions of individuals, as in the case of education through environment. Subtler influences are thereby created which are impossible to overcome or to set at naught. But in the case of conscious and thinking beings substitution is intended and cultivated, and fostered with care, and becomes the most important aspect of ethical and religious life. No morality is possible, not to speak of transcendent and amoral morality, unless this substitution of interests, ideals, ends, purposes and the universe of experience takes place. It is just possible that starting with any one aspect, one may be led on to the substitution of the rest in progressive series. This fact, well-recognised by modern ethicists, only shows that in regard to ethics or religion, there can never be a static or insular or fugitive existence. The whole complex tissue of reality internally related in the experience of an individual unfolds itself as dynamic morality with all the force of a universal personality, having eternal value and effect. It is because this compact unity of the personality occurs on the occasion consequent to the Vision that we find that such beings become great souls, mahātmās. It is because of this quality of evolution through conversion that it is possible to arrive at the fullest summit of peace, śānti, that passes understanding. All great poetry must possess this particular quality of Śānti, and be the abode of this essence of Divine Experience.

Considered in another way, this theory has other implications, substitution is possible only on condition that such a substitution can possibility utilise and not frustrate the drive or power that is inherent in the instinct. Secondly, it is canalising of that force towards ends by means that are primarily ideal. This makes the entire process of substitution and its scope at once wide and deliberate. Practices that have previously gone along with certain ends are substituted in regard to other ends and sometimes even in violation to the entire aims of the previous. It would be most interesting to study the phenomena of substitution in the institutions of taboo and totem and their development in modern social life. A certain method is accepted in order to help realisation of quite a different end. Other gods are invoked by the name of one God with which that name was associated originally, much to the confusion of the practiser. New mythologies are created to substantiate this substitution. The whole history of religion reveals the integrative activity of substitution and substantiation.

We have already said that this doctrine of substitution is a common fact in education and life. The development of moral life is based on the substitution of bad habits by their contraries, as the Yōga of Patañjali<sup>1</sup> has long ago stated and which phrase was made well-known by William James, the greatest Psychologist of modern times.

In the Vedic ritual performances there is a particularly interesting fact regarding the principle of substitutions. It is called *vinīyōga prthaktva*, separating injunction, use of a

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<sup>1</sup> Yōgasūtra II.33: Vitarkabāadhanē pratipakṣabhāvanam.

particular rite separately to another. A hymn addressed to Indra is asked to be utilised to address Agni (Pūrvamīmāṃsā III, ii. 2) in the *gārhapatya* rite. The transference of an Indra-Hymn to Agni is a case of substitution of a method in place of another or in respect of another. Undoubtedly this transference entails the interpretation of the name 'Indra' in such a way as to conform to the known or perceived new nature of Agni. Another case also is found where a method taught in regard to knowledge is utilised in such a way as to show that it is the culmination of action. Or to take yet another example, a method taught in regard to action is sought to be utilised for the purpose of knowledge. The fact that the Īśopaniṣad, says Vēdānta Dēśika, is at the end of a *Samhitā* which deals with rituals and action, shows that the function of knowledge which the Upaniṣads deals with is sought to be served by the *Samhitā* itself. This is an important fact regarding the controversy about the relation between the Karma-kāṇḍa and Jñāna-kāṇḍa. Leaving aside this fact, we are presented with the fact of substitution of ends by other ends, and methods by other methods.

Action that is selfish or centrifocal can be transformed into activity that is fruitful of a contrary effect; that is, lust could be utilised in such a way as to yield love instead of disgust and hate and misery. The consciousness that is forced to canalise into habits of a pattern which divest themselves of all consciousness might be made to subserve the interests of an awakened vigilance that makes even the unconsciousness in them to cease to exist. Sleep which is full of nightmares and dreams for most persons, and is well-known as a state of unconsciousness, can be more and

more made to be a state or utter recipience and consciousness such that it ceases to be itself. Such then are the inherent possibilities in the transmuting activity of right substitution. Right substitution is that which enlarges consciousness; wrong substitution is that which degrades and limits the ambit of consciousness.

The mystic consciousness characterised by the instinct towards liberation of itself from the limitations seeks rightly expansion. It proceeds towards the vision or intuitive apprehension of Reality. It substitutes, as it progresses, more and more extended frontiers to be overcome as its aim. In fact, it is due to the fact that one does not become aware of obstacles arranged in concentric circles as it were, unless one goes on jumping over them or destroying them, that one does not and cannot state as to how many obstacles one has to jump over. The main fact remains that the ideal,—that almost ever-receding ideal in practice, of utter and absolute liberation from all limitations, *nirupadhika-jñāna*, is the aim of all mystic efforts. That it might be achieved after knowing seven sheaths or twenty-six principles, or thirty-six is merely a matter of detail.

In the religious consciousness also we find that the minor dependencies on things of the self, of family, of caste, or race, nation and humanity are given up till the dependence is on the one reality which is the soul and self of all. According to Plato, substitution of the goals of self, of family, of race, of nation, of humanity and of all life culminate in the substitution of Good or God alone as the real focus of all interests and dependence.

Substitution is two-fold, firstly, the abandonment of the contrary, and secondly, the acceptance of the true end which is the vision of Reality.

A concrete example of this substitution—principle and transference is seen in the hymns of Śrī Āṇḍāṭ, that paragon of mystics who celebrated her marriage with the Divine, an adept in the understanding of the several mansions of spirit, a supreme exponent of the path of religious life. Her hymns are replete with symbols, and the use of symbols in a two-fold manner reveals her understanding of the essential feature of dynamics of the religious life.

The occasion of sacred bathing by women as a vow in the glorious month of December-January (*margaśirṣa*, when the Sun is in Sagittarius) is utilised for the utter consecration and wooing of God through prayer and appeal, surrender and praise. The Month of December-January<sup>1</sup> is claimed, by Bhāgavata mystics, to be the period when discrimination between the mind and body is possible. The song itself is a clarion-call to devotion to the Lord on the part of all souls who feel the instinct for dependence on the Lord full, and, therefore, are essentially women who are representative of the dependence-spirit. The song itself is an instruction. The call to bathe is a call to bathe in the waters of knowledge and to serve God through works. The vow is important and has to be loyally observed by giving up all sense of personal vanity and enjoyment. The whole piece reads like the efforts of an archer taking aim, and the praise

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<sup>1</sup> Bhāgavatapurāṇa. X. 22.

reads like a gathering force of concentration. Instead of material felicity which is never denied, inward realisation and final and unending company of the Divine are sought, from which there can be no return to the life of ignorance and pain, delusion and self-delusion of independence. Ordinarily all vows are kept by ladies for the realisation of some material ends such as happiness in children, in love for husband, in riches and jewels, but here all are restored to the Divine from whom in perennial stream all flow towards the seekers unasked for.

*Hearken! ye happy Dwellers in the world!  
The deeds that we must do to keep the vow  
Singing the feet of him the lord supreme  
Who sleeps upon the hooded snake within the  
    sea of milk  
Bathing at break of day,  
Nor ghi nor milk we will eat: we will not paint  
Our eyes, with black flowers shall not deck our hair,  
Nor deeds unfit we'll do: no evil words  
We'll speak but give kind arms and muse with joy  
Upon this way, ah Elorembavay!*

(Tiruppāvai : 2. Translation by J.S.M. Hooper)

The above verse in the original Tamil is intensely metaphorical and suggestive of mystical and religious outpouring of the mind. No translation obviously can do justice to that aspect of the work. The general meaning of the passage is that it is a call to those chosen souls who are willing to throw themselves into the pursuit of the highest ideal of dependence on Reality instead of dependence on vanishing and impermanent interests and things. Her whole

life was one of consecration to it till she finally, it is said, merged her entire physical and psychical being in the infinite form of Śrī Raṅganātha at Śrīraṅgaṃ. If the life of Divine Joy is a result of the realisation of the ideal of dependence on Reality, no less is the realisation of beauty on this earth of ours by the same method. All actions whether they are vows of men or women, austerities of sages or offerings of the devoted, even the ordinary actions of man when used in the interests of realisation of the ultimate knowledge of dependence-cum-liberation, become sacred ways of approach.

In another of her poems, the *Nāchiyār-Tirumōḻi* there is attempted another type of substitution. Kāma, the lord of desireful union, is prayed to assist in the marriage of herself with the Divine who is spiritual and sātvic in nature. A pure purpose is sought to be achieved with the help of a vital (*rājasīc*) agency.

Here it is clear that the principle of substitution is of enormous value in the interpretation of the transferences of symbolisms, mythologies, actions of all kinds, in religious and mystic life. The fact that the early Śrī Vaiṣṇavas displayed enthusiastic interest in the value of these hymns as instruction shows that they availed themselves of the transmuting power of substitution and as the dynamic force of canalising of the instincts of mysticism towards liberation, and of religion towards supreme Reality-dependence.

## ĒṇḌēṇ

### The Date of The Tiruppāvai

The song of Śrī Āṇḍāḷ is unique in many respects. there is a wealth of psychological understanding that stands beyond comparison with anything written by other poetesses of literature. The date of this poem has been sought to be fixed by Mr.M.Raghava Aiyangar the learned editor of the *Śēn Tamil*, on astronomical grounds. Of course, the idea is not to substantiate the astronomical figures that tradition has given them. Before we consider his views, *en passant* we shall refer to the refrain of the poem *elōrambāvāy* which is also found in the composition of Māṇikka Vācakar. The date of Māṇikka Vācakar is now fixed in the latter half of the ninth and first half of the tenth century. Borrowing between the two hymnists is not unlikely, but it must be entirely decided by the fact as to who was the earlier. It may be that it is a common air or tune, and thus there may not have been a question of borrowing at all.

Mr. M. Raghava Aiyangar fixes the date of the *Tiruppāvai* to be the 18th December 731 A.D.<sup>1</sup> Though this is called Mārgaḷi he considers that it can be Tai, and thus there is nothing to prevent our accepting this date which falls at the beginning of Tai. He considers that the reference to *Matī niraṇḍa Nannāḷal* (v. 1) is to the full moon and that in the thirteenth verse there is the statement of opposition between Jupiter and Venus, *Vēḷḷi yēḷundu vyāḷamurangiṟu*.

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<sup>1</sup> 1. JORM.ii. II.i. Sen Tamil. Vol, xx, Āḷvārkal-Kāla-Nilai

Looking over the dates in Mārgaḷi for such a full moon with this opposition between Jupiter and Venus, we find that the date 18th December 731 suits admirably. It must be remembered that the time of this phenomenon should be about 4 a.m. and not about 5 or 6 a.m. for here we find Āṇḍāḷ waking up her mates. The view put forward by Mr. K.G.Shankaran as 850 A.D.<sup>1</sup> on astronomical grounds shows the distance between the Sun and Venus to be very little (just within 5 degrees) which can only be just half an hour before sunrise. The phenomenon could not be so clearly observed.

Historically considering, he comes to the conclusion that Pēriyāḷvār, the father of Śrī Āṇḍāḷ, makes references to Nedumāraṇ, the Pāṇḍyan king (*Pēriyāḷvār Tirumōḷi*. IV. ii. 7). There are three Māravaramans: the first lived about the beginning of the seventh century A.D. (620); the second Māravaraman, converted back to Śaivism by TiruJñāna Sambandhar, fought at Nēlvēḷi (A.D. 680); the third was Parāṅkuśa Māravarman (730-767 A.D). Mr. Raghava Aiyangar claims that it is this Māravarman who is mentioned by Pēriyāḷvār, as the ruler of the *Ten Cuḷal*. Mr. Raghava Aiyangar further considers that he who is called Māraṇ and Vallabhadeva was really Parāntaka Nēduñcadaiyan Pāṇḍyan. Prof. K.A.Nilakanta Sastri following the date given by the editor of the *Śēn Tamil* (Vol. V 52-3) accepts that Pēriyāḷvār was the contemporary of Jaṭila Parāntaka I (second half of the seventh century). We find that Mr. Srinivasa Aiyangar in the Tamil studies holds that he must have flourished about 840-915 A.D. But this date, as

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<sup>1</sup> Ibid I.ii.

pointed out by Mr. Raghava Aiyangar, makes him a contemporary of Nāthamuni, the first ācārya of Śrī Vaiṣṇvism, between whom and the āḶvārs there must have elapsed quite a long time. For, as pointed out by Dr. Krishnaswamy Aiyangar,<sup>1</sup> the entire canonical literature must have been completed by the beginning of the tenth century so that Śrī Rāmānuja could have the whole 4000 reduced into its present form. The date of Nāthamuni is about 825 A.D. He must have lived into the tenth century, for his grandson, Āḷavandār flourished in the tenth-eleventh century and he was the grandfather of Śrī Rāmānuja – the twelfth century apostle. These facts make it possible for us to place Periyāḷvār some time earlier, that is, the eighth century. Mr. Raghava Aiyangar adduces an additional argument<sup>2</sup> which consists in pointing out that there is coincidence in the wording of the Madras museum plate and the *taniyan* recited on Periyāḷvār. The reading in the Madras plate is *Kurucaritan kondādi*, which should be taken to mean 'having adored the deeds of this preceptor' instead of what Mr. Venkanna has done, 'having followed the footsteps of his ancestor'. This can well fit in with the duties of the king, one of them being the adoration to the preceptor according to Dharmaśāstra. Here we may note with satisfaction the parallel statement in the *taniyan* where it is stated:

*'Pāṇḍiyan kondāḍap paṭṭar pirān vantānenṟu'.*

There is however one interesting point made out by Mr.

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<sup>1</sup> Early History of Vaiṣṇvism p. 46-47.

<sup>2</sup> JORM. II. i.

Raghava Aiyangar which makes his case rather weak. He, on the basis of the *Divya-sūri-caritram* of Garudavāhana Paṇḍita, tries to show that Nammāḷvār, Kulaśēkhara, Pēriyāḷvār and Toṇḍaradippōdi Āḷvār were contemporaries and that in fact Pēriyāḷvār went to Āḷvār Tirunagari, Tirukkurukūr, to consult Nammāḷvār regarding the marriage of his daughter, Śrī Āṇḍāḷ.<sup>1</sup> The story can mean only that all the Āḷvārs were present at the same time, which may be a mere conjectural embellishment for making the story of the marriage of Āṇḍāḷ with the Lord Raṅganātha interesting, since if we conceded this point we shall be forced to explain other facts.

The difference of opinion about the āḷvārs' dates have been ably dealt with by Dr. Krishnaswami Aiyangar, and others, and we find that so far as Nammāḷvār is concerned he belongs to the sixth century and Kulaśēkhara must have lived some time before 600 A.D or after 800 A.D when the Kerala overlordship over the Pallavas, and Colas might have been possible, that is to say, before the rise of the great Pallavas or after the collapse of the dynasty following the death of the great Pallava Nandivarman which probably took place some time about A.D. 800.<sup>2</sup>

From this it is clear that since two great saints Pēriyāḷvār and Śrī Āṇḍāḷ and Kulaśēkhara could not have been

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<sup>1</sup> cf. *Divya-Sūri-Cāritam: Āṇḍāḷ Vaibhavam* v. 3-7 p. 125 ed. 1939. The *Guruparamparai* of Pinbaḷagiya Perumāḷ Jīyar p.92, mentions that Śaṭhakopa and Śrī Vallabhadeva were present at Āṇḍāḷ's marriage. The *Vadagalai Guruparamparai* (6000) does not mention this.

<sup>2</sup> Early History of Vaiṣṇavism: S.Krishnaswami Aiyangar p. 36-7.

contemporaries at all. What might be suggested is that, as in great stories we find the gods showering flowers from the sky, the blessings of these saints must have been had, or some such device must have been at the root of this tradition.

Further historically speaking it complicates the position, for who is this Kulaśēkhara whom Pēriyāḷvār met at Tirukkurukūr? If he was the King of Kudal (Madura) and Kongunād, who had his capital in Kollinagar (Quilon-Tiruvancikkalam), who was the Parāṇṭaka Śrī Vallabha I, the disciple-patron of Viṣṇucitta, whose capital was Kudal?

Either this account is wrong, or the ruler Parāṇṭaka of Madura must have been Kulaśēkhara himself, but we have no means of determining his identity. Thus there is a lacuna in the entire summing up, which thus requires further understanding of the relationship between the several ĀḶvārs. That Śrī Kulaśēkhara also lived about this time is clear from other accounts, and it is affirmed by Mr. Srinivasa Aiyangar that he was a Pāṇḍyan who lived about the middle of the eight century, and who was a staunch follower of Viṣṇu. The dispute indeed is whether Śrī Kulaśēkhara was a Pāṇḍyan ruling the Cera territory (within which was included the Kerala) from his capital town of Kollinagar? On the basis of a communication from Śrī M.R. Rajagopala Aiyangar passed through Prof. R.Ramanujachari, Mr. Pisharoti tries to sum up the case against the Kerala Prince, Kulaśēkhara, being the ĀḶvār Kulaśēkhara who was also a king of Cera, and Konganāṭu.<sup>1</sup> The whole topic thus is

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<sup>1</sup> 6th All-India Oriental Conference Pro. p. 202 Also his Mukundamālā. Annamalai Sanskrit series.

nowhere clear and bristles with difficulties. In an article on the *Madura Chronicles* in the Journal of Oriental Research, Madras, it is pointed out that a Kulaśēkhara was the king of Madura in Kṛta Yuga. The period between 600–900 A.D. was an age of intense devotional activity. It was an age when the minds of men, the common men had seen the need for religion. The protest was against the whole edifice of Buddhistic logicalism, which culminated undoubtedly in the wonder of Nihilism, and utter discord and divorce from normal human life. The return to positive experience, or renaissance, was facilitated by very highly developed poets whose visions were translated into vigorous outpourings, suffused with the traditional lore of the Veda and the Upaniṣads and the vast literature of the Āgamas. It was an age of tremendous literary output in Sanskrit as well as in Tamil. It is even said that Pēriyāḷvār composed a commentary on the *Kalpasūtras*<sup>1</sup> and it is accepted by all traditionalists that Śrī Kulaśēkhara was the author of the devotional lyric *Mukundamāla*.

The entire output that has been registered during that period shows in progress the revival of the theistic trend, and a spontaneous religious-consciousness seems to have overwhelmed and bathed the consciousness of the people. There is truth in the assertion<sup>2</sup> that during that period

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<sup>1</sup> Rahasya-Traya-Sāra: Śrī Vēdānta Dēśika; Puruṣārtha-Kāṣṭhādhikāra.

<sup>2</sup> JORM. II.vol. pt. I. cf. Tiruvoymōḷi. V. ii. rejoices in the presence of innumerable bhaktas. Perumāḷ Tirumōḷi II. vi and viii. Periyāḷvār Tirumōḷi IV. ix. 6: speak of the missionary zeal with which Vaiṣṇavās

bhaktas and bhāgavatas were incarnating in splendid and continuous prolixity for the betterment of the people as a whole. The orientation of the consciousness of the people from a barren speculative or even unhealthy atheistic trend was thus achieved. It was that that stood in such good stead during the dark night of our civilisation, the great disaster that befell the entire North and invaded with sporadic but nonetheless severe and disintegrating force South India, the Mohammedan invasions that did not distinguish between the Śaiva and Vaiṣṇava theism which were entirely monotheistic. The period of such emotional religious outbursts was followed by the period of the Ācāryas, the teachers. Already we have evidence of such preceptorial activity in the āḷvārs, but it is clear that the saints of God, deluged in the divine ecstasy, were universal givers of love and promise to all, whilst the Ācārya-duties were more arduous though not less universal, in so far as they had to transmute and guide and lead the people of the world. In one sense, looking at the history of Vaiṣṇavasim, this too was almost completed before the Great Night of the invasion, in the persons of Śrī Aḷvandār, Rāmānuja, Vātsya, Varada, Ātrēya Rāmānuja, and Śrī Vēdānta Dēsika and Pillay Lōkācārya.

The historical student thus will find that there must have existed a definite gap, be it ever so brief, between the two types of regenerative activity undertaken by the Āḷvārs on the one hand and the Ācāryās on the other, which are inseparably entwined in every sense. This place the date of Āṇḍāḷ somewhat nearer to what Mr. Raghava Aiyangar has

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and bhaktas are moving through the length and breadth of the Tamil land spreading the message of liberation.

stated than in the ninth century.

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