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A MONTHLY OF DRAVIDIAN LINGUISTICS ASSOCIATION OF INDIA

**43RD ALL INDIA CONFERENCE OF
DRAVIDIAN LINGUISTS -
A Grand Academic Event**

(Continued from the last issue)

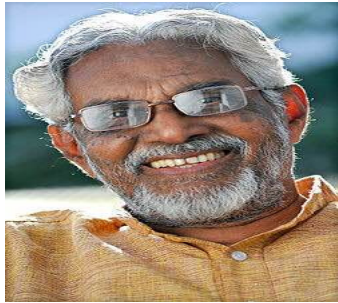
In the session chaired by Prof. S. Natanasabapathy, three papers were presented.

Nazrol Patel presented an interesting paper titled *Sociolinguistic Survey of Communicative Style of Aspiring Banking Professionals*. The study tried to explore the preferred style of communication among the young banking-sector aspirants. The second paper was by Paromita Nandy on *Disturbance of Codes in Mind - Bangla and Malayalam*. The mental aspect in code-switching from Bangla

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**EZHUTTACCHAN AWARD TO
Dr. PUTHUSSERI RAMACHANDRAN**

Dr. Puthusseri Ramachandran, the founder-member of the Dravidian Linguistics Association and the International School of Dravidian Linguistics, has been selected for Kerala's most prestigious literary award *Ezhuttacchan Puraskaram*. The award consists of a citation, plaque and a cash award of Rs. 1.5 lakhs.

Dr. Puthusseri is a well-known Malayalam poet, a reputed linguist and an academician of par excellence. His researches on inscriptions and ancient literary texts like *Kannaśśarāmāyaṇam* are considered as outstanding contributions to Malayalam language.

Dr. Puthusseri Ramachandran, a retired Professor of Malayalam and the former Dean, Faculty of Oriental Studies, University of Kerala is now serving the ISDL as an Honorary Professor. He is also a member of the Governing Council of the International School of Dravidian Linguistics, Member of the Editorial Board of the International Journal of Dravidian Linguistics and Executive Member of the Dravidian Linguistics Association.

The members of the DLA, IJDL, ISDL and the whole linguistic fraternity feel proud of Dr. Puthusseri Ramachandran getting Kerala's topmost literary award.

to Malayalam and vice-versa was discussed in this paper. The next paper was authored by three people - Selvajothi Ramalingam, Sheena Kaur Jaswant Singh and Supramani Shoniah. The title of the paper is *Institutional Support Factor and Language Use Pattern among Tamils in Kuching, Malaysia*. It gives an idea on the influence of the institutional support in the usage of Tamil in Malaysia in general and Kuching in particular. This paper indirectly indicates the need for language-planning for language maintenance. After the presentation, a lively discussion followed. The session concluded with the remarks of the chairman Prof. S. Natanasabapathy who has assessed all the papers in the session.

In the parallel session chaired by Prof. R.R. Thampuran, five paper-presenters were there. S. Kunjamma in her paper *Syntactic and Semantic Aspects of the Verb "aak" in Malayalam* illustrated its usage in different contexts. Its functional characteristics in different constructions, both as a main verb and as an auxiliary, were well explained. So also its semantic variations in different syntactic usages were also pointed out. Zeenat Tabassum presented the paper titled *Possibilities in the Order of Polar Questions in Tai Ahom*. It elucidated the interrogative constructions through which polar questions are formed in that language. She described the question particles and negative markers and the different possibilities in forming polar questions in Tai Ahom.

Malayalam Text Summarization using Latent Semantic Analysis was the paper presented by Kanitha Divakar. For text summarization, various statistical methods can be made use of and an important one among them is through the Latent Semantic Analysis (LSA). In this paper, the LSA-based algorithms were explained and evaluated using Malayalam documents. Amanda Swenson presented a paper on *Tense, Finiteness and Negation in Malayalam*. The paper re-examined the claim by a few that Malayalam is a tense-less language. Binu K.J. through his paper gave a clear picture of the Reflexive Anaphors in Malayalam.

After a thorough discussion, Prof. R.R. Thampuran, the Chairman of the session, made valuable comments on each and every paper presented in this session.

[To be continued]
S. Raja & K.N. Geethakumari

KOṬUṆṆALLŪR BHAGAVATI TEMPLE – FROM A HISTORICAL AND SOCIOCULTURAL PERSPECTIVE

(Continued from the last issue)

Rituals and Festivals

Koṭuṇṇallūr Bharāṇi festival is a yearly temple festival that takes place every March. The devotees who attend this festival are all lower-caste Hindus and their yearly pilgrimage is accompanied with music and dance. The records show that the Mārār community has the rights of playing drums, kāvutīṅṭal is performed by the Malayan Taṭṭān and the making of turmeric powder is by the Pilāppaḷḷi Mūttamma of this temple. The rice for the temple is brought by the Kuṛaṅciyār Ēṛāttu family and the ghee for pāyasaṃ is brought by Eḷuvattu Paṅikkar. The kāvutīṅṭal was organized by Nāliyattu Mēnōn and another ritual is kōḷikkallu mūṭal by the Bhagavati viṭṭukār. On the Bharāṇi day, ṭṛchandanappoṭi, the sandal powder (paste) for the deity, was prepared by the members of the

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Pālakku Vēlan family. The flag-hoisting was done by the Eṭamukku Kuḍumbi. All these show the non-Brahmanical connection of Koṭuññallūr kāvu.

On the Asvati day, the pilgrims throw small packages containing turmeric, pepper and other articles together with some coins, a coconut and a live cock over the roof of the quadrangle. On the same day, the Pulayas commence their sacrifice of cock at a place called Pulappāṭaṃ or the field of Pulaya, situated about a furlong to the east of the temple. The Pulayas continue the sacrifice till the forenoon of the Bharāṇi day.

Meanwhile, the ordinary services of the day are all closed by 10 a.m. At 12 o'clock, the aṭikaḷ, a priest who is not a Brahmin, enters the sanctum and performs the service of ṛccandanappoṭi cārttal after closing the doors. After about three-hour pūja, the northern door is closed and the pūjāri-s come out through the eastern door. Then the chief Raja of Koṭuññallūr moves to the basement of a papal tree in the eastern side from his temporary seat in the temple. This basement is called nilapāṭutara. In the nilapāṭutara, the Raja is seated with all paraphernalia. Then, the assistant of the Raja, known as kōyṃa, hoists a red-coloured umbrella as a symbol. At the very moment, the crowds, who were standing on the basement around the trees and those who were standing behind the veḷiccappāṭu, approach the shrine and touch the temple with their sticks. By this act, it is supposed that the temple is polluted. The pilgrims in a frenzy mood run around the temple in a wild manner and then retire. This practice is called Aśvati Kāvutiṅṭal. During the festival period, people come here in a violent mood. At the time of kāvutiṅṭal, all the temple protectors or custodians named ūrāḷa will be present. The supreme authority, kōyiladhikārikaḷ, of that time, gives sticks to the ūrāḷa-s just before the kāvutiṅṭal, which symbolically shows the rights of the protectors.

The distinctive feature of this festival is the sacrifice of cocks in the temple. It begins on the Tiruvōṇaṃ asterism i.e., seven days before Aśvati. Cocks are sacrificed on kōḷikkallu by a Nair belonging to a house called Koṭuññallūr Bhagavati Vīṭu. The cocks sacrificed by him are brought from the taṛavāṭ of Taccōḷi Otēnan and Kārappiḷi Kuṛup in Malabar. This practice was discontinued with effect

from 1954 in pursuance of the provisions of the Travancore Cochin Animal and Birds Sacrifices Prohibition Act of 1953. Now, the pilgrims simply fly the cock in front of the altar as a symbolic act.

Nair and Tīya pilgrims from north and south Kerala begin to arrive a few days before the sacrifices of cocks. This may be a symbolic act of the blood sacrifice. Blood sacrifice which is a cruel and bitter form of worship had been the main part of the Kaṇṇaki cult in the beginning. According to *Cilappatikāraṃ*, a Pāṇḍya king butchered one thousand goldsmiths for the appeasement of the heroine. A question arises whether human sacrifices existed at any time in the history of Koṭuññallūr temple. The answer would be that it might have existed in historic times. We come across forms of self-torture and shedding of blood by the veḷiccappāṭu. Sri. C. Achuta Menon strongly suggested that blood cult or animal sacrifice was a part of Kāḷi worship.

Another peculiarity of this temple is the singing of obscene songs during the period of Bharāṇi festival. This is most controversial and widely discussed.

The festival opens on the Bharāṇi asterism of the month of Kumbhaṃ (February-March). A goldsmith of the polluting caste goes around the temple three times ringing a bell at about 7 a.m. He is supposed to have polluted the temple. After a few minutes, the eldest female member of the Pilāppaḷḷi house attached to the temple announces that the temple has been cleaned. The Namboothiri priest then enters the temple and conducts the usual services. The trees standing near the temple, especially the banyan and the papal, are decorated by hanging flags on their branches. The porticos of the temple on the east and the west side are also similarly decorated. On the next day, after Bharāṇi, the premises of the temple and its vicinity are swept clean and the wells purified in the evening. The Namboothiri priest now enters and performs the puṇyāhaṃ and gives paśuddānaṃ. After this, the usual services commence. At about 8 p.m., the eastern door of the inner shrine is opened for pūja.

Here pañcakarma pūja is performed as per the earlier Tantric practices. As soon as these pūja-s

are over, the door is closed once again and the pilgrims make their return journey in a quite inoffensive manner, taking home the prasādaṃ which consisted of sandal paste mixed with turmeric and a black paint of burned rice.

The next day i.e., on the Rōhiṇi asterism, at about 9 a.m., the eastern door of the inner shrine is opened and the pūja performed. On the subsequent two days, the pūja performances begin at 9 a.m. Regular services are resumed from the next day, when, as usual, the Northern door is opened for worship. A large number of devotees attend this and it is esteemed as a great merit to worship at the time of naṭa tuṛakkal.

Another important festival celebrated in Koṭuṅṅallūr temple is the tālappoli festival. This is dedicated to Kālī. It starts on the first of the month of makaraṃ. This celebration is of four successive days and there is a procession of elephants. The feature of this procession is the arrival of women carrying trays with coconut and rice accompanied by pañcavādyam and pāṇṭimēlam. The tālappoli starts with the makarasaṅkramaṃ which is considered very sacred.

People of different religions like Islam, Christianity, Buddhism and Jainism assemble together at Koṭuṅṅallūr. It constituted the basic principle of secularism which is the fundamental principle of the Constitution of India. It is to be noted that the cultural, social and religious revolutions started here. Thus, Koṭuṅṅallūr Bhagavati becomes a nucleus of Kerala culture. The obscene song sung by the Dalits is a symbol of protest against the age-old slavery and suppression. This temple generated forces which directly or indirectly gave a mortal blow to the very root of caste system and created the basis for the emergence of a new social association and interaction. As a result of the processes of Sanskritisation, a low-caste Hindu, tribal or any other group changes its customs, rituals, ideology and way of life in the direction of a high caste. Generally, such changes are followed by a claim to higher position in social hierarchy. The people of Koṭuṅṅallūr were caste-free. They mingled with everyone and no one was banned from having access to them by reason of birth. Feminist theologians have urged a re-appropriation of ancient goddess traditions, arguing that such female

23rd ANNUAL CONFERENCE OF FOSSILS

Folklore Society of South Indian Languages and Yogi Vemana University, Kadapa, Andhra Pradesh will jointly organize the 23rd All Indian Conference of FOSSILS from 4th to 6th February 2016 at the Conference Hall of Yogi Vemana University, Kadapa. The thrust areas for discussion are: (i) Folklore Survey of India, (ii) Conservation of Folklore and (iii) Folk Performances.

For further details, contact the Organising Secretary Dr. N. Eswara Reddy (919490-192228, eswaryvu@gmail.com).

religious images would empower women and create a more balanced and humane society. The Bhagavati temple of Koṭuṅṅallūr, supposed to be a centre of Kaṅṅaki worship, was thus instrumental in producing a modern pluralistic society founded upon the principle of freedom of sādhanā and one rule of law for all and also provided a stage for national awakening.

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B. Padmakumari Amma

A REPORT ON "A SHORT TERM INTENSIVE COURSE IN DRAVIDIAN LINGUISTICS"

21st - 26th September 2015, CALTS, University of Hyderabad

(Continued from the last issue)

Prof. G. Uma Maheshwar Rao, Director, CALTS inaugurated the event and welcomed all the participants.

Recent Publications: **The Morphosyntax of the Dravidian Languages**, P.S. Subrahmanyam, 2013, HB, Demy 1/8, pp. xxx + 687, Rs. 1,000/- (US\$ 100/-). **A Survey of Smṛiti Literature**, N.P. Unni, 2013, PB, Demy 1/8, pp. 8 + 164, Rs. 200/- (US\$ 20/-).

Following are the courses offered in the training programme: 1. Salient Features of Dravidian Languages, 2. Grammars of Non-literary Dravidian languages, 3. Historical Phonology of Dravidian Languages, 4. Dravidian Languages, geography, nomenclature and Sub-grouping, 5. Verbs and Verbal Categories of Dravidian, 6. Pronouns in Dravidian, 7. Gender, Number and Person in Dravidian, 8. Procedures for Historical Reconstruction, 9. Convergence between Dravidian and other language families, 10. Computational Application of Divergence between Dravidian languages: With Special Reference to Telugu and Tamil, 11. Dravidian Languages and other External genetic relations, 12. Dravidian Contact with Munda and Indo-Aryan in Central India, 13. Corpus Studies distribution frequencies of Word Formation Similarities and Differences, 14. Syntactic typology of Dravidian, 15. Phonetics of Dravidian, 16. Syntactic Structures of Dravidian, 17. Agreement in Dravidian, 18. Structure of Dravidian Nouns, 19. The Story of an Elephant, 20. Verbs in Dravidian.

In the valedictory session, a panel discussion on *The Past, the Present and the Future of Dravidian Linguistics* was organized and the following Professors were the chief panelists: P.S. Subrahmanyam, Former Director, CAS in Linguistics, Annamalai University. B.R.K. Reddy, Former Dean, Telugu University, Registrar, Dravidian University, G. Uma Maheshwar Rao, Director, CALTS, University of Hyderabad.

COMMENTS ON V.I. SUBRAMONIAM COMMEMORATION VOLUMES

"The V.I.S. Commemoration Volume is impressive. It contains papers by the top authorities of Dravidian Linguistics as well as it covers new fields like computational and corpus-based studies, reminding us of late Professor Subramoniam's vast research interests. And it is also produced very nicely. An excellent volume, worthy of Dr. V.I.S."

Masato Kobayashi

"Looks like a high-quality production and I look forward to reading the many articles."

Caroline Wiltshire

At the end, participants gave valuable suggestions for fruitful researches on Dravidian languages. In this connection, Prof. B.R.K. Reddy requested everybody to become members of the Dravidian Linguistics Association.

Discussion on Next Workshop

A discussion on the next workshop was also initiated in the Valedictory session. It was suggested that two workshops may be conducted - one in December 2015 and the other in April 2016 - at CIIL.

Course Summary

The course began with a brief overview of the beginning of Dravidian historical/comparative linguistics and its important insights (especially developments that led to the formulation of the Dravidian or South-Indian family of languages). A discussion on the proof of the formulation of Dravidian family and the sub-groups was initiated. Various aspects of linguistic studies on Dravidian languages were discussed, and the contact of Dravidian with other language families was also exposed. The course focused on the development of Dravidian comparative/historical linguistics and issues that constitute challenges requiring further thinking and research.

The course ended with the vote of thanks by Dr. Arulmozi, CALTS.

*Reported by
G. Uma Maheshwar Rao & K. Parameswari*

ALL INDIA CONFERENCE ON REGIONAL LANGUAGES - REPORT

10-12 October 2015, Jalandhar, Punjab

(Continued from the last issue)

After the inaugural session which was organised by Dr. Sukhvinder Singh Sangha, Gen. Secretary, Punjabi Bhasha Akademi, the panel discussion commenced. It was presided over by Dr. P. Mohanty, Dean, Humanities of Central University, Hyderabad. Dr. O.N. Koul, Dr. Chaman Lal, Dr. P. Pavithran, Senthil Nathan, Dr. Garga Chatterjee and Dr. S.K. Brahmchari were the other panelists on the dais. Dr. Joga Singh acted as the coordinator of the panel discussion. The views of the panelists are stated here in brief.

Recent Publications: **The Contribution of Melputtūr Nārāyaṇa Bhaṭṭatīri to Sanskrit Literature with Special Reference to Vyākaraṇa**, P. Visalakshy, 2013, Crown ¼, pp. 428, Rs. 900/- (US\$ 81/-). **A Contrastive Analysis of the Phonological Systems of Bengali and Malayalam**, Dhruvajyoti Das, 2014, pp. xii + 140, Rs. 220/- (US\$ 20/-). **Studies on Bangla from a Broader Perspective**, G.K. Panikkar, Syamala Sasidharan & Sourav Chakraborty (Eds.), 2015, pp. 216, Rs. 230/- (US\$ 23/-).

P. Mohanty: The use of the term 'regional languages' is derogatory because these are our national languages. Why do we need a national language when there is no need of national religion? Strange that even Gyanpeeth awardees call Hindi the national language. Multilingualism is the answer to all our language problems and it must be defended.

O.N. Koul: Mother tongue is best suited for conceptualization. In Kashmir, Sheikh Abdullah and Farookh Abdullah passed orders for Kashmiri, Dogri and Ladakhi to be the medium of education but they were not implemented. Education in a language other than mother tongue causes rootlessness and this is one of the reasons for terrorism. Mother tongue is essential for a strong bond among the Kashmiri people.

Chaman Lal: All Indian languages are national languages of India. Sanskrit is spoken by a few hundred people but it has more budget allocation than any other language. The budget allocations should be proportionate to the number of speakers of that language. The wards of the Prime Minister, President, ministers and bureaucrats should study in government schools.

P. Pavithran: 97% people speak Malayalam in Kerala, 65% speak Kannada in Karnataka, 62% speak Tamil in Tamil Nadu. Hence, single-language-for-one-state policy is not correct. Education through mother tongue is essential. Mother-tongue community is a social community. It is an aesthetic community whereas this is not true about a non-mother-tongue one. It is strange that the examinations of the Kerala Public Service Commission are held in the English medium.

Senthil Nathan: Language experiences are the same all over India. The alignment of school-board syllabi with that of the CBSE has made all

schools, in a way, CBSE schools. Tamil is an official language in Singapore. The standard of Tamil of a Singapore Tamil student is better than that of the students in Tamil Nadu. We need to engage at all levels - linguistic, economic, political etc., through the mother tongue. The policy of globalization has to be changed.

[To be continued]

Joga Singh & Sukhvinder Singh Sangha

NEW ENROLMENT FOR LIFE-MEMBERSHIP (November 2015)

1. **Dr. C.G. Sankar** (Membership No. 1224/2015)
160/30, Via Vadivel Nagar, Kamarajar Salai, Near Nirmala Girls HSS, Madurai - 625 009, Tamil Nadu
2. **Mr. C.P. John** (Membership No. 1225/2015)
VRA 20, Women's College Lane, Thycaud P.O., Vazhuthacaud, Thiruvananthapuram, Kerala
3. **Ms. Ruchi Singh** (Membership No. 1226/2015)
House Sh. 8/4-10, Ayodhya Dham Colony, Shivpur Bypass, Varanasi - 221 002, Uttar Pradesh
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