

V.I. SUBRAMONIAM
COMMEMORATION VOLUMES
Vol. I: Studies on Dravidian - Crown ¼,
pp. xx + 515, Rs. 1,280/- (US\$ 110/-)
*Vol. II: Studies on Indian Languages
and Cultures* – Crown ¼, pp. xx + 458,
Rs. 1,150/- (US\$ 105/-)
*Phonetics and its Application to
Different Areas* - Demy 1/8, pp. 160,
Rs. 200/- (US\$ 15/-)

A MONTHLY OF DRAVIDIAN LINGUISTICS ASSOCIATION OF INDIA

WELCOME YOU ALL

TO THE

45th ALL INDIA CONFERENCE OF DRAVIDIAN LINGUISTS & INTERNATIONAL SYMPOSIUM

on

Case, Agreement and Postpositions (23-25 June 2017, University of Delhi)

The Department of Linguistics, University of Delhi, the Dravidian Linguistics Association and the International School of Dravidian Linguistics offer a hearty welcome to all the delegates of the *45th AICDL & International Symposium*. Eminent Indian linguists and scholars in related fields of linguistics in India and abroad will participate in this historic international conference where academicians share their views on language and linguistics. Preparations are being made by the local organizers to make it a memorable event.

The wholehearted cooperation of the delegates is solicited for the smooth conduct of this academic event. All the participants are requested to register their names, if not registered already, to ensure accommodation and other facilities. Only the registered participants will be allowed to present papers in the conference. All the paper-presenters are requested to bring a hard copy and a soft copy of their paper and hand them over to the organizers. For any further communication with the local organizers, please send email to dla45du@gmail.com, rcprof@yahoo.com or rcsharma@linguistics.du.ac.in.

CONTENTS

Welcome to the 45 th All India Conference of Dravidian Linguists & International Symposium	1
Spoken Malayalam of the 16 th Century	2
On Dravidian Poetics	4
<i>Review</i>	5
Malayālam Kḷāsik Bhāṣa - Paḷakkavum Vyaktitvavum (Malayalam Classical Language - Earliest Phase and Individuality)	
New Life-Members	6

SPOKEN MALAYALAM OF THE 16th CENTURY

Bhāṣā Naisadham Campu is celebrated as one of the best, if not the best campu (mixed prose and verse) work in *Maṇipravālam*. Published in 1934 along with an elaborate commentary, “Prāñjali” by Pāṭṭattil Padmanabha Menon, Ulloor Paramesvara Iyer and Vatakkumkur Raja Raja Varma rated it among the best, if not the very best “commentary” that had ever appeared in Malayalam. Ulloor identified the author as Maḷamangalam Narayanan Nambudiri, a rather prolific poet and dated it to mid-16th century, at Peruvanam, in the kingdom of Kocci.

Re-reading the work, I was struck by the description of the crowd that gathered for Damayanti’s *svayamvaram*. The poet reported conversations of several groups. This reportage is, in my view, a valuable record of the spoken Malayalam of the times. I cite below a discourse among a couple of Nambudiri participants. It must be remembered that it is part of the prose of a campu, and subject to rules of prosody – therefore, it cannot be an exact verbatim reportage. I have inserted punctuation within brackets, and split *sandhi* to make the meaning clearer.

Transliteration	Gloss
<i>etrayum kautukam cittatārin-kal annaṣṭaśaṅkam naṭanna-nṇuminnūm mudā taṇṇaḷil kaṇṭōru vārta cōdikkayum</i>	Amusing indeed! That day, (all sorts of people) wandered about, without a care, greeted one another with glee, and exchanged gossip.
<i>vāsu eppō! vaṭakkūnnu!</i> <i>vannu(?)</i>	Vāsu, when did you come from the north?
<i>bhavānetra nāḷuṇṭu ṇāṇ kāṇmāṇ kotikkunnu(!) pattu samvatsaram pūrṇamāyi dṛ-ḍham(.)</i>	How long have I been longing to see you, Sir! At least ten years for sure. (Vāsu’s reply. First speaker resumes:)

<i>kaṣṭam (!) ōrōru samsāram ulkoṇṭu asaṭ² muṭṭupāṭāka koṇṭu³ itra vaikṭinēṇ⁴ (.)</i>	Alas! Because of one problem after another, this person suffered so much that it has taken so long.
<i>iṭṭinārāyaṇaṇ illattirikkunna nāḷ-oṭṭu-dandiccū gēham bhariccīṭumō(?)⁵</i>	Iṭṭinārāyaṇaṇ (speaker’s brother) – will he do anything at all for the household on the days he is home?
<i>entariṇṇāṇavaṇ cintayillētumē(.) hanta ṇāṇō valaṇṇiṭṭi-ṇēṇ inniṇe (.)</i>	What does he know, he cares nothing, but alas, so I am thus in deep trouble.
<i>santatikkeravum saikaṭam pāramenne-(e)ntuvāṇ pēr-akkaniśṣāṇ - girā (.)</i>	It will be very difficult for me to have children – so said that kanissan astrologer – what is his name? (<i>entuvāṇ pēr</i> , inserted as parenthesis, to show aversion).
<i>kālamē (,) hanta (,) ṇāṇ nālu vēṭṭiṭṭinēṇ (-) nālilum kūṭi yinn-ōrttukāṇum vidhau pattu peṇṇuṇṇaḷ uṇṭu (,) uṇṇiyilla ētumē(!)</i>	(So I rushed off) and married four wives straightaway – and now, if I think carefully and count correctly, I have ten daughters, but not a single boy!
<i>raṇṭaṇṇakattu tiraṇdirikkunnatum raṇṭatinnāyorumpēṭṭu irikkunnatum sāmpratam⁶(;)</i>	Two have attained puberty and cannot leave the home; two are getting ready currently;
<i>raṇṭu chaulam kaḷiṇṇiṭṭum uṇṭu innale kannikoṇṭu onniṇu annam kotuttṭiṇēṇ (;)</i>	Two have had their hair-dressing ritual <i>chaudam</i> done, and to one, I gave the first rice-feeding rite yesterday;

Latest Publications: DRAVIDIAN SYNTACTIC TYPOLOGY. Sanford B. Steever. 2017, PB, Demy 1/8, pp. xiv + 162, Rs. 240/- (US\$ 24/-). INDO-ARYAN LOAN-WORDS IN MALAYALAM. K. Godavarma, 2017, PB, Demy 1/8, pp. xii + 252, Rs. 300/- (US\$ 30/-). LANGUAGE DISORDERS AND DIFFERENTLY ABLED CHILDREN. G.K. Panikkar (Ed.), 2017, PB, Demy 1/8, pp. vi + 154, Rs. 200/- (US\$ 20/-). INDEX OF RĀMACARITAM, Naduvattom Gopalakrishnan, 2017, HB, Demy 1/8, pp. 1224, Rs. 1400/- (US\$ 140/-).

<i>piṅne mūnnuṅṅu mūlam mutal kāl piṛanniṅṅavirrinnu⁷ pēriṅṅa- tilla (;)iṅṅane</i>	Then there are three, born from the mūlam asterism onwards – so I have not yet even named them;
<i>buddhi celuttēṅṅamē (.) pattum otūlayō (?)</i>	Please think well, is not the count of ten complete?
<i>cāttam ūṅṅunna nāḷ oliṅṅiṅṅu iṅṅināṅṅāyaṅṅane kāṅṅmatinṅṅill- ahō (!)⁸</i>	Except on the days when the annual obse- quies are performed, Iṅṅināṅṅāyaṅṅaṅṅ is never to be seen, alas!
<i>kayyil illa ētum ayyāyirattinnu pōrum kaṅṅakkārar⁹ (!)</i>	I have no money at all. The creditors would number about 5000!
<i>ittaram cāpalam nīlavē tūki- yum nūṅṅam innu ūṅṅumuṅṅu ōrttukollēṅṅamē(!)</i>	Thus chattering end- lessly – (here his friend, Vāsu obviously, inter- poses): Sure, you should not forget that there is a feast today!
<i>kōṅṅakam koṅṅu iṅṅam veccu sūṅṅiccu pōy kālamē cennu upastāṅṅavum ceytu koṅṅu innu vanniṅṅuvēṅṅam viṅṅēṅṅa- nāḷ ōrōṅṅu uraccīṅṅuvāṅṅ (.)</i>	We shall reserve our places by keeping our breach-clouds (kaupīṅṅ- am) here, and go, do our routine rituals and then, we shall come back here, have time to talk about various things.

[The text goes on to make fun of other groups e.g., astrologers, black magicians etc., but not in this detail. The astrologers’ gossip is full of technical terms, and is amusing only to one learned in that subject.]

Dialect Variation: The dialogue throws up the process of transformation of dialect in the Nambudiri speech forms. Already, the southern speakers had started referring to troubles as *mutṅṅuppāṅṅu* instead of

the more Sanskritized form *buddhimuṅṅu*. The form *kaṅṅakkārar*, showing doubling of plural marker *-ar*, remains a feature of southern dialects even now. If the schematic adopted in the table above is accepted, then Vasu, the interlocutor, is obviously the ‘northerner’ because the other asks him, “Vasu, when did you come from the north?” The first speaker is probably the senior because Vasu addresses him as “Bhavān” (‘you’, honorific). The southerner is a garrulous example, typical of elderly Nambudiri-s, who cannot stop once they start talking of their own troubles. Vasu is more practical-minded; he remembers and reminds the other of the need to “reserve” their places in the dining hall by the simple device of keeping their, probably wet, breach-clouds (*kaupīṅṅam*) as proxy!

Concordance between Word-ending of Subject and Predicate: A diagnostic difference that sets off Malayalam from Tamil has been famously the lack of gender- number- person indicators in the verb-ending suffixes. Probably, Malayalam speakers had been simplifying their language use by dropping concordance in their conversation, though it was retained in the written language until recent times. Our sample shows that the practice died rather hard! The garrulous Nambudiri is not consistent in the usage, except with reference to the first person singular. In his opening sentence, he asks “*eppōḷ vāṅṅu?*”, omitting concordance and adopting the simplest form of the past tense. The expression “*vaikīṅṅinēṅṅ*” is interesting – I wonder whether there is any “sanction” for such usage in the grammars of other Southern Dravidian languages! Northerner Vasu is less bothered about concordance than the southerner.

It is interesting to speculate that the gradual abandonment of concordance by prestigious speakers like Nambudiris hastened

the development in Malayalam for relinquishing it forever.

Sidelights on Social Anthropology: Nambudiri families were not all affluent in the 16th century. Though they had high prestige, and many privileges, materially, they were not well off. Many of them depended a great deal on the free meals they were entitled to at temples and palaces. The literature indicates that they flocked to such free feasts in great numbers and extreme gusto. In our example, the eagerness to ensure a place in the queue as well as the *naiveté* of the means of assuring it – by placing a wet and not necessarily clean piece of intimate underwear to mark reservation – is evidence of both their dependence as well as the privileges they commanded. In day-to-day living, they often suffered poverty, and relieved themselves by getting indebted – probably, when the debts got very heavy, the local chieftain discharged their obligations.

During the 17th century, conditions in Kerala became politically and militaristically full of conflict. Martanda Varma I of Travancore started a regime of conquest and warfare that upset all pre-existing property relations. Following him, in Kocci, Saktan Tampuran campaigned against the excessive powers of the feudal overlords, confiscating property. In Malabar, the Zamorin was increasingly challenged by the Western maritime powers against whom he fought continuously, and then, in the next century, was annihilated by the Mysore Sultans and the British. These conditions resulted in instability, and Nambudiris emerged as points of comparative security because their caste protected them against dispossession of their property. Many landowners formally put their properties under Nambudiri *janmam* in order to safeguard them. However, when the British introduced their Land legislations and tenure systems, they misunderstood the property relations and treated *janmi*-s as absolute owners. Suddenly, many Nambudiri families became absolute owners of vast properties, and were catapulted into affluence. Since then, the Nambudiri dominance in Kerala became quite apparent.

¹ Note: *vaṭakkūnnu* instead of *vaṭakku ninnu*.

² He adopts the Sanskrit style of referring to himself as *asau*, third person singular, signifying this person.

³ This shows the “southern” provenance of the speaker, perhaps Thiruvalla, then a well-established Nambudiri settlement. A Trichur-based Nambudiri would have said *buddhimuṭṭu* – signifying difficult situations.

⁴ Note the ‘-eṅ’ suffix ending the verb to make it conform to *ñān*, first person singular subject (understood). It is also used as a ‘verbifier’ to convert an adverb into a verb. Please also see note below.

⁵ Please see note, on the social anthropological implications.

⁶ Typical of the Nambudiri turn of speech even now – e.g., a chronically ill person will be said to be striving hard to die.

⁷ He refers to them as *avarriṅnu* = to them inanimate, because they are yet to be named.

⁸ On such days, (*cāttam*), there will be a feast at noon, and Ittinaranan does not miss them! (Please see note at the end on the social anthropology of Nambudiris.)

⁹ Please note the word *kaṭakkārar*. Padmanabha Menon has dealt with this in great detail in his commentary and shows that this clearly indicates the southern provenance of the speaker – in the southern dialect, such usage viz., a double plural indicator, e.g. -*ārar*, is usual. Menon points out that the author, Naryanan Nambudiri, had resided for long at Tiruvella – Ulloor proves that he had learnt astrology and mathematics there under a famous preceptor. Hence, the usage in the work is not an error, but deliberate. It shows the persistence of some dialect forms over centuries because the use is common in the southern areas even now.

T. Madhava Menon

ON DRAVIDIAN POETICS

(Concluding Part)

Environmental Aesthetics and *Tiṇai* Concept

Aesthetics behind *Tiṇai* concept had a greater value when we take into account the ecology-based environmental aesthetic studies. *Tiṇai* divisions and its *mutal*, *karu* and *poru!* factors can be redefined by using the principles of ecological aesthetics. Each and every level of

human life is directly or indirectly akin to the place where he settled. Thus, the place is considered as the central pivot of life and the geographically-oriented *Tiṇai* concept becomes the basic vision of the ecology-based environmental aesthetics or poetics. Theories of new literary perspectives like Dalit aesthetics, Eco-feminism, Landscape aesthetics and Eco-linguistics can also contribute quintessence of ideas for the innovations based on *Tiṇai* concept, the oldest Tamil poetics which can rightly be called Dravidian poetics.

Naduvattom Gopalakrishnan

REVIEW

**MALAYĀLAM KĪĀSIK BHĀṢA -
PALAKKAVUM VYAKTITVAVUM
(Malayalam Classical Language -
Earliest Phase and Individuality)**

Naduvattom Gopalakrishnan. 2012. Kerala: The State Institute of Languages. Pp. 100. Rs. 60/-.

The lovers of Malayalam language and literature had been very much concerned for a long time on the denial of classical status to Malayalam language though it is also a member of the family of languages such as Tamil, Kannada and Telugu. The Central Government instituted certain specific criteria for issuing the classical status for languages. The applications satisfying the criteria had been rejected on many occasions. Actually, Malayalam must have received the recognition just by proving the fact that Malayalam belongs to the family of languages Tamil, Kannada and Telugu but there exists a difference of opinion among the scholars regarding the origin of the Malayalam language. The argument that these languages belong to the same family would be accepted only if we agree that the languages Tamil, Kannada, Telugu and Malayalam had originated from *Mūladrāviḍam* or from an ancient Tamil which existed before today's Tamil language. The great scholar Kerala Panini A.R. Rajarajavarma believed this argument. Based on this argument, Naduvattom Gopalakrishnan wrote the book *Malayālam Kīāsik Bhāṣa - Palakkavum Vyaktitvavum*. This book depicts the details of the report, which helped in securing the

classical language status to Malayalam language. Including this report, there are seven articles in this book. Each article serves as a fingerprint to the earlier phase and individuality of the Malayalam language. A brief account of the highlights of each article is given below.

1. The first article entitled *Kēraḷa, Cēra Śabdannaḷ* establishes that the word *Kēraḷa* existed even before the word *Cēra*. There was a common status to the Tamil and Malayalam languages, irrespective of differentiating Tamil or Malayalam. In addition to this, the language of Malaināṭu had its own peculiarity of *Malaināṭu Vaḷakkam* in the ancient period itself. This implies that the Malayalam language is as old as Tamil and throws light into the identity of *Kēraḷa* and the language of *Kēraḷa*.

2. The second article is on *Vidēśabhāṣakaḷile Pūrva Kēraḷa Bhāṣa*. It describes the terminology on Kerala depicted in the travelogue of foreigners and concludes on the phonological features of the then-existing language of Kerala. It establishes that Kerala had its own language for communication even before the Christian era.

3. The third article is entitled *Kēraḷabhāṣayute Pūrvaghaṭṭam*. The songs of the Sangam poets of Kerala origin depicted certain words and usages which did not belong to the Tamil language. This phenomenon of *Malaināṭu Vaḷakkam* proved that Kerala had its own language of communication (*vāmolī*) which means the people who lived in Malaināṭu had a mother tongue. In addition, the songs of *Paḷamtamiḷ* had Malayalam words and grammatical usages. These facts substantiate that Kerala had its own characteristics, different from ancient Tamil Nadu.

4. The fourth article is titled *Kēraḷavum Kēraḷabhāṣayum*. During the reign of Asoka Mourya (268 to 232 BCE), Kerala had emerged to be known to other parts of the country. In the second *Śāsana* of King Asoka, Kerala was also mentioned along with the Cōḷa and Pāṇḍya regions. The article highlights the origin, development and evaluation of the languages of Kerala, more than the word *Kēraḷa* itself. If the languages of Kerala did not have a self-identity, it would have remained only as a dialect of

Tamil. Actually, missionaries had spread the name *Malayālam* to the language of Kerala.

5. The fifth article *Kannaḍa Tuḷu Bhāṣakaḷum Malayālavum* investigates the changes that had occurred in the Malayalam language and culture due to the association of people who speak Tulu and Kannada. We can observe a hybrid nature of the culture and language of Tulu and Kannada in the Malayalam language and the culture of the northern parts of Kerala, especially Kasargod. The article gives a list of words with the same meaning used in Kannada, Tulu and Malayalam languages. This indicates the long association of the three languages Kannada, Tulu and Malayalam.

6. The sixth article is entitled *Malayālagadyam – Prārambhaḡhaṭṭam*. The use of the Malayalam language is evidenced in the inscriptions of Edakkal Caves. We are in receipt of lengthy Malayalam literature from the beginning of *Kollavarṣa*. The article gives a thorough analysis of ancient Malayalam prose models such as King Asoka's *Śāsanā-s*, *Vāḷappalli Chepped*, *Tariṣappalli Chepped*, *Mūḷikkūḷam Temple document*, *Airāṇikkūḷam document*, *Tiruvalla Cheppeds* and *Bhāṣakaḷiḷyam*.

7. The seventh article *Śrēṣṭha Bhāṣā Padaviyūm Malayālavum* describes that Malayalam had an earlier phase and individuality equivalent to that possessed by languages like Tamil, Kannada and Telugu belonging to the family of Dravidian languages. Thus, the article is a brief account of the report submitted by the Government of Kerala to the Central Government. It analyses all the four criteria forwarded by the Central Government, with examples for each. Criterion A – High antiquity of its early texts / recorded history over 1500-2000 years. Here it establishes that Malayalam has second place regarding the ancient written documents among the Dravidian languages. Criterion B – A body of ancient literature / texts which is considered a valuable heritage by generations of speakers. Here it analyses the role played by Malayalam literature in improving the life of Keralites and in preserving the culture different from other states. Criterion C – The literary tradition has to be original and not borrowed from another speech community. Here it

discusses the original literary tradition of Malayalam language. Criterion D – A Classical language would be distinct from its later current form and could be discontinuous with its later forms or its offshoots (like Latin vs. Roman, Sanskrit, Pali vs. Prakrit and Modern Indo-Aryan). Here it establishes that Malayalam has a rich heritage of 2300 years. Malayalam had a continuous evolution with respect to language and literature.

Thus, on analyzing these seven articles, we understand that each article gives a scientific proof to the arguments in the seventh article. The book could be written only by a scholar with in-depth knowledge in language and literature. The way of analyzing and interpreting the existing perspective on language is a creative approach with originality. In this respect, the book *Malayālam Kḷāsik Bhāṣa - Paḷakkavum Vyakti-tvavum* is an asset to Malayalam language and literature.

T.K. Santhosh Kumar

NEW APPLICANTS FOR LIFE-MEMBERSHIP OF DLA

[To be approved by the Executive Committee]

(May 2017)

1. **Dr. Raj Nath Bhat** (Membership No. 1294/2017)
Professor, Department of Linguistics, Banaras Hindu University, Varanasi – 221 005, Uttar Pradesh
2. **Mr. Arun Sundar C.S.** (Membership No. 1295/2017)
“Arun Nivas”, Kappikadu, Poovachal P.O., Kattakada, Thiruvananthapuram – 695 575, Kerala
3. **Dr. R. Shyamala Jagadeeswari** (Membership No. 1296/2017)
AS 2, KGM Apartment, 5th New Street, Mayiladuthurai – 609 001, Tamil Nadu

**Contribution to
DLA News Endowment Fund**

05.05.17	Ms. Rose Pereira	Rs.	200.00
TOTAL AS OF LAST MONTH		Rs.	1,95,351.00
CURRENT TOTAL		Rs.	1,95,551.00