

World Telugu Conference Publication

The Telugu Poets of Madura and Tanjore

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BY

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ముందుమాట

ఎన్నో ఏళ్లుగా అనుకొంటున్న ప్రపంచ తెలుగు మహాసభలు జరుగనున్న పర్వ సమయం ఆసన్నమవుతున్నది. ప్రపంచంలోని తెలుగు వారి ప్రతినిధులందరిని ఒకచోట సమీకరించవలెనని పెద్దలందరూ కన్న కలలు ఫలిస్తున్న శుభ సమయమిది. రాబోయే ఉగాది రెండువేల అయిదువందల సంవత్సరాల తెలుగు జాతి చరిత్రలో మరుపురాని మధుర ఘట్టము కాగలదు.

క్రీస్తుపూర్వం మూడవ శతాబ్దికి చెందిన శాతవాహన రాజుల కాలంనుండి తెలుగు ప్రజలకు ఒక విశిష్టమైన చరిత్ర ఉన్నది. భారత దేశంలో తెలుగు మాట్లాడే ప్రజలు దాదాపు ఐదుకోట్లకు పైగా ఉన్నారు. హిందీ మాట్లాడేవారి తరువాతి స్థానం తెలుగువారిదే. బౌద్ధ పూర్వయుగంనుంచి ఇటీవల బ్రిటీష్ సామ్రాజ్య పరిపాలనా యుగం వరకూ తెలుగువారు పెద్ద ఎత్తున ప్రపంచం నలుమూలలకూ వలస వెళ్లడం జరిగింది. అట్లా వెళ్లిన తెలుగువారు తమ భాషా సంస్కృతి సంప్రదాయాలను ఆయా జాతీయ జీవన విధానాలతో మేళవించి, వాటిని సుసంపన్నం చేస్తున్నారు.

ప్రపంచ తెలుగు మహాసభల ప్రధాన లక్ష్యం తెలుగు ప్రజల, తెలుగు అభిమానుల ప్రతినిధులను ఒక వేదికమీద సమావేశ పర్చడం. జాతీయ, అంతర్జాతీయ సాంస్కృతిక రంగాలలో తెలుగువారు చేయవలసిన కృషినిగూర్చి చర్చించి, నిర్ణయించుకోడానికి, తద్వారా వివిధ చైతన్య స్రవంతులను ఏకోన్ముఖంచేసి మన సాంస్కృతిక సంబంధాలను ధృఢతరం చేసుకోడానికి ఈ మహాసభలు దోహదకారులు అవుతవి అంతేకాక ఈ మహాసభలు ఆర్ధ్రమైన భావసమైక్యతకు ప్రాతిపదికలై తెలుగు జాతిని సమైక్యం చేయగలవనీ, ఆ విధంగా జాతీయ అభ్యుదయానికి తోడ్పడగలవనీ విశ్వసిస్తున్నాను.

1975 ఏప్రిల్ 12 తేదీన తెలుగు ఉగాది రోజున ప్రారంభమై ఒక వారం రోజులపాటు జరిగే ఈ మహాసభలలో వివిధ దేశాలనుంచి, వివిధ రాష్ట్రాలనుంచి, యునెస్కో వంటి అంతర్జాతీయ సంస్థలనుంచి

విచ్చేసిన ప్రముఖులు ప్రతినిధులుగానో, పరిశీలకులుగానో పాల్గొంటారు. ఈ మహాసభల సమయంలో చర్చాగోష్ఠులు, ప్రదర్శనలు, ప్రచురణలు మొదలైన కార్యక్రమాలు జరుగుతాయి. దేశ విదేశాలలోని తెలుగువారి సంస్కృతి, తెలుగు భాషా సాహిత్యాల కళల అభివృద్ధి, వైజ్ఞానిక సాంకేతిక ప్రగతి మొదలైన విషయాలపై చర్చాగోష్ఠులు జరుగుతవి. తెలుగువారి సమగ్ర స్వరూపాన్ని సందర్శించడానికి వీలైన సంగ్రహాలయాన్ని (మ్యూజియంను) స్థాపించడానికి ఈ ప్రదర్శన బీజభూతమవుతుంది. తెలుగువారి సంస్కృతిని నిరూపించే సాంస్కృతిక కార్యక్రమములు వారం రోజులపాటు సాగుతవి. తెలుగు ప్రజల సంస్కృతి సంప్రదాయాలను విశదంచేసే ప్రత్యేక సంచికలు తెలుగు, ఇంగ్లీషు, హిందీ, ఉర్దూ భాషలలో విడుదల అవుతాయి. ఈ కార్యక్రమాలలో భాగమే ఈ గ్రంథ ప్రచురణ.

తెలుగు ప్రజలు భాష, సాహిత్యం, చరిత్ర, సంస్కృతి, కళలు మొదలైన వివిధ రంగాలలో సాధించిన ఘన విజయాలను విశదంచేసే గ్రంథాలు అనేకం ఈ మహాసభల సమయంలో విడుదల అవుతాయి. ఈ గ్రంథాలను రచించి, సకాలంలో మాకు అందించిన రచయితలందరకూ నా కృతజ్ఞతలు. ఈ గ్రంథాలను ప్రచురించే భారం వహించడానికి ముందుకు వచ్చిన అకాడమీ అధినేతలను అభినందిస్తున్నాను, తెలుగువారి విశిష్టతలను విశదంచేసే ఈ గ్రంథాలు సహృదయులందరి ఆదరణ పొందగలవని విశ్వసిస్తున్నాను. అయితే, ఇంత మాత్రం చేతనే ప్రపంచ తెలుగు మహాసభల ఆశయాలు సఫలం కాగలవని నేను అనుకోవడంలేదు. చేయవలసినది ఇంకా ఎంతో ఉంది. ఈ మహాసభల సందర్భంగా నెలకొల్పబడనున్న 'అంతర్జాతీయ తెలుగు విజ్ఞాన సంస్థ' మహాసభల ఆశయ సాధనకు పూనుకొనడమే కాక జాతీయ, అంతర్జాతీయ సాంస్కృతిక సంబంధాలను ధృఢతరం చేయగలదని నమ్ముతున్నాను.

జలగం వెంగళరావు

అధ్యక్షులు

ప్రపంచ తెలుగు మహాసభలు

ప రి చ య ము

సహస్రాబ్దాలుగా ప్రవర్ధమానమగుచున్న తెలుగు సంస్కృతిని తెలుగు దేశపు నలుచెరగుల పరిమితముచేయు సంకల్పముతో 1975వ సంవత్సరమును తెలుగు సాంస్కృతిక సంవత్సరముగ ఆంధ్రప్రదేశ్ ప్రభుత్వము ప్రకటించినది. అందుకు అనుగుణమైన కార్యక్రమాలను నిర్వహింపజేయుటయేగాక, ప్రపంచములోని వివిధ దేశాలలో నివసించుచున్న తెలుగువారి సాంస్కృతిక ప్రతినిధులందరును ఒక చోట సమావేశమగు వసతిని కల్పించుటకై 1975, ఏప్రిల్ 12 (తెలుగు ఉగాది) మొదలుగ ప్రపంచ తెలుగు మహాసభ హైదరాబాదున జరుగునటుల ప్రభుత్వము నిర్ణయించినది. అందుకు ఒక ఆహ్వాన సంఘము ఏర్పాటుయినది. ఆంధ్రప్రదేశ్ ముఖ్యమంత్రి మాన్యశ్రీ జలగం వెంకట రావు గారు ఆ సంఘమునకు అధ్యక్షులు, విద్యాశాఖామంత్రి మాన్యశ్రీ మండలి వెంకట కృష్ణారావు గారు దాని కార్యనిర్వాహకాధ్యక్షులు, అర్థిక మంత్రి మాన్యశ్రీ పిడతల రంగారెడ్డి గారు ఆర్థిక సంస్థా కార్యక్రమాల సమన్వయ సంఘాల అధ్యక్షులు.

ఆ సంఘము, ప్రపంచ తెలుగు మహాసభల సందర్భమున వచ్చు వారికి తెలుగుజాతి సాంస్కృతిక వైభవమును తెలియజేయుటకు అనువుగ ఆంధ్ర భాషా, సాహిత్య, కళా చరిత్రాదికములను గురించి ఉత్తమములు, ప్రామాణికములునగు కొన్ని లఘు గ్రంథములను ప్రకటించవలెనని సంకల్పించి, ఆ కార్యనిర్వహణకై 44 మంది సభ్యులుకల ఒక విద్వత్ సంఘమును, శ్రీ నూకల నరోత్తమరెడ్డి గారి అధ్యక్షతన నియమించినది. ఆ విద్వత్ సంఘము ఆ లఘు గ్రంథముల వస్తువుల నిర్దేశించి వాని రచనకై ఆయా రంగములందు పేరుగొనిన ప్రముఖు

అను రచయితలుగ యెన్నుకొనినది. ఈ విధముగ సిద్ధమైన గ్రంథము లలో భాషా, సాహిత్య, చారిత్రక విషయములకు సంబంధించిన వానిని ప్రకటించు బాధ్యతను ఆంధ్రప్రదేశ్ సాహిత్య అకాడమీ వహింప వల సినదిగ ప్రపంచ తెలుగు మహాసభాకార్యనిర్వాహకాధ్యక్షులు మాన్యశ్రీ మండలి వెంకట కృష్ణారావు గారు అకాడమీని కొరిరి. మహాసభా సఫలతకొరకై కృషిచేయు సంకల్పముతో ఈ బాధ్యతను వహించుటకు అకాడమీ సంతోషముతో అంగీకరించినది.

ఆ విధముగ ప్రకటింపబడిన గ్రంథశ్రేణిలో ఈ The Telugu Poets of Madura and Tanjore ను రచించిన Sri Timma- vajjhala Kodandaramaiah గారు ఆంధ్ర పాఠశాలోకమునకు సుపరిచితులు. వారికి మేము కృతజ్ఞతా బద్ధులము. గ్రంథమును నిర్దుష్టముగ, చక్కగ ముద్రించిన దక్షిణ భారత ప్రెస్ వారికి మా కృతజ్ఞతలు.

హైదరాబాదు

21-3-75

దేవులపల్లి రామానుజరావు

కార్యదర్శి

ఆంధ్రప్రదేశ్ సాహిత్య అకాడమీ

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1. Salutation to Goddess Meenalōchani who made Kadam-bavana her abode in order to protect the mankind, the better-half of Lord Sundarēśwara and one who releases the bonds of Samsāra with a parrot on the hand uttering some sweet words, the twinkling bright ear-rings reflecting on the cheeks, the eyes showering the celestial grace and the smiles resembling the moon-light emerging from her lips.

— *Ahalyā samkrandanamu (1-4)*

2. I surrender to Lord Sundarēśwara appearing in the shape of a Linga, the Lord that is residing in the milky ocean, who is very much interested in the act of protecting the devotees, who is the abode of fame, and who is the ancient Jangama who has protected the universe by slaying the three townships (Tripurāsuras) with considerable ease with the help of Mountain Mēru as his bow and Mahāvishnu as his arrow.

— *Ahalyā samkrandanamu (1-3)*

3. Akhilānda Nāyaki, the mother Goddess, who rules over the three worlds with love, who is the base (Ālamba) to all good qualities, whose handsome smiling face resembles the disk of moon, to whom Hērambar is born and whose lips can be compared to cintāmaṇi, the devine gem, may always grant us victory in all our endeavours.

— *Ahalyā samkrandanamu (1-5)*

4. I earnestly praise with devotion, Lord Ranganādhā, who resides in Srirangam, who rejoices very much on account of Kaustubha, on whose chest Goddess Laxmi resides and who resembles the blue cloud jointed with a lightning while he rests on the Serpant-Lord, Adishesha which covers him with his fine, thin (Kurpāsa) like a shawl, which looks like the light of the Kesarās found in the white lilies blossoming from the lake of Moon.

— *Ahalyā samkrandanamu (1-1)*

Rise of Nayak kingdoms at Madura and Tanjore

The Nayak kings of Madura and Tanjore, being Andhras patronised Telugu poets and literature and a few of them were themselves authors of repute in Telugu. The literature that flourished in their period and also in the subsequent period when the Maharashtrians ruled over a part of the country is considered as a separate school in Telugu literature with distinct characteristics of its own. It is a glorious chapter in the History of Telugu Literature. To evaluate its significance it is necessary to know about the establishments of kingdoms at Madura and Tanjore by Nayak kings.

Vijayanagara kings had to fight first with the Bahmini sultans and later with the sultans of Ahmednagar, Bijapur and Golkonda in order to safeguard their Hindu kingdom from their aggression. To accomplish this, Krishnadevarāya, the greatest of the Vijayanagar kings, divided the villages under his rule, except those granted to temples and learned brahmins, which were known as devadēyās and brahmadēyas respectively, into two categories namely Bhandāravāḍa villages and Amaram villages. The villages under the first category were made to pay the taxes levied direct to the state exchequer and hence called Bhandāravāḍa; Bhandāra meaning the royal treasury. The right of collecting taxes from the villages of the second category was given to the local chiefs under the orders of the king on the condition that they should help the Rāya in his war with an army of specified number of Infantry, Cavalry etc. when required and also pay a specified amount of tribute to him every year. The chiefs of these amaram villages were called 'amaranayakās' and their right to collect revenue is called 'amranayamkaramu'. 'Amr' is a Persian word which means 'order' and it has been adopted as

'amaram' in Telugu. After the great war of Tallikota in the year 1565 in which the Vijayanagara king met a severe defeat, there was chaos and confusion all over the country. The local chiefs took advantage of the situation. Fought the less powerful nāyakās of the neighbouring parts and established kingdoms of their own and declared independence. The chiefs at Madura and Tanjore who were till then acting only as amara nāyakās became Vassals (Samantas) to the Vijayanagar king who was then ruling at Penugonḍa and started having their own symbol and insignia.

As these two principalities were in far south, there was no danger of any Mohammedan invasion on these parts. Unlike in the Andhra Region which was directly under the pressure of Mohammedan invasion, the people in the Madurai and Tanjore region were living in peace. As the political conditions in the Andhra region under the Vijayanagar king were becoming worse, many people were compelled by circumstances to migrate to other parts of the country, preferably to the south where people were living in peace. The Andhra immigrants to south included the learned brahmins, poets, artists and artisans. The Nāyak kings at Madura and Tanjore welcomed them. They granted agrahārās to the vedic scholars, patronised the poets and artists, and employed a few in their courts. The Nāyak kings began to patronise poetry, dance, drama, music and other arts in order to emulate the example of Krishnadevarāya in patronising letters and arts. Due to the patronage of these Nāyak kings there came into being a considerable number of literary works with some new characteristics. This literature is designated as southern school of Telugu literature.

It is generally believed that the Nāyaks of Madura and Tanjore were the first to encourage Telugu compositions in the south. But it is not true. Earlier to the Nāyak kings a poet by name Paccapkappurapu Tiruvengalākavi wrote a dwipada poem Cokkanadha Caritramu at the instance of one Cina Rāmappa to be dedicated to his elder brother, Peda Rāmappa. They were the sons of Goḷḷa Basavendra who ruled at Sivapuri in Ramanadhapuram district on behalf of Acyutadeva Rāya (1534-1538 A. D)

and hence the date of composition of the work might be roughly about 1530 A. D. Though Telugu is introduced by these Golla chiefs in the Tamil land for the first time, it attained an eminent position only during the Nāyak rule at Madura and Tanjore. Nāyak kingdom of Madura came into being only after the Tallikota war in 1565 A. D. The Nayak kingdom at Tanjore came into prominence a few years earlier in 1550 A. D. according to historians. While all the Nāyak kings and the Maharastrian rulers at Tanjore patronised letters and encouraged poets, only a few Nāyak kings of Madura were interested in patronising literature because most of them engaged themselves in war and were fighting many battles. Before we discuss about the poets and their works of Madura we shall have an account of the Telugu literature that flourished at Tanjore, in the chronological order of the kings and poets of their courts.



Telugu Poets of Tanjore

a) Telugu Poets of the Nayak Period of Tanjore

Raghunādhā Nāyaka (1613-1631 A. D.)

Raghunādhā Nāyaka, who ruled at Tanjore stands comparison to Sri Krishnadeva Rāya of Vijayanagar in several respects. Both of them were great warriors who fought many battles. They patronised poets and composed poems themselves. They had to their credit a few works dedicated to them also. It appears that the Nāyāk kings of both Madura and Tanjore emulated Sri Krishnadeva Rāya both in administration and patronage of fine arts. Raghunādhā Nāyaka had in his court many poets and poetesses who could compose poems both in Sanskrit and Telugu. Among them Cemakūra Venkata Kavi, Krishnādhvani, Rāma-bhadrāmba and Madhuravāṇi are considered eminent. Raghunādhā Nāyaka was himself a poet in Telugu and is said to have composed about 100 works. But only two of his works only, Raghunādhā Rāmāyaṇamu and Vālmīki caritramu, are available to us. We do not know if he had completed the composition of this Rāmāyaṇa as we find it incomplete with only three cantos and a part of the fourth canto in Bālākāṇḍa. The story starts with a description of the Kosala and ends with Putrakāṁṣeti after the usual preliminaries observed towards the beginning of the work. The fragment part of the fourth canto contains a description of the Svetadwīpa. The story of Ṛṣyasṅga found in the second canto is a master-piece of poetic art. Madhuravāṇi, a poetess in his court, translated Raghunādhā's Rāmāyaṇa into Sanskrit. As the Sanskrit work appears to be a small one, we cannot definitely come to a conclusion that she had translated Raghunādhā's Ramayana in toto. The other work 'Vālmīki caritramu' is a poem in three cantos describing in detail the early life of the sage Vālmīki and it was dedicated to Lord

Srirama. *Sringāra Sāvitrī*, a work in two cantos is published as a composition of Raghunādhā. However no positive evidence is found in the work to accept it as the work of Raghunathā Nāyaka. A few more works are said to have been written by Raghunādhā on the basis of references made to them. Yagnanārāyaṇa Dīkshita and Rajacūḍamaṇidīkshita have referred to his composition of *Pārijātapaharaṇa* which he composed in extempore in a very short period of only two yāmas. They have also stated that Acyutappa Nāyaka his father was very much pleased with this composition and had *kanakābhisheka* (sacred bath of gold coins) performed to his son in the court. It appears that he has also written three *yakshagānās* namely *Gajēndra mōksha*, *Rukmini Krishna vivāha* and *Jankīpariṇaya*. *Raghunadhābhyudaya*, a later work by *Vijayarāghava Nāyaka*, mentions that these three works were being read out by the court-singers in the court of Raghunādhā Nāyaka. He wrote two works in *Dwipada* metre namely *Acyutābhyudaya* and *Nalacaritra*. The former describes the life and activities of Acyutappa Nāyaka, the father of Raghunādhā Nāyaka and is considered to be a pioneer attempt in writing 'Nāyakābhyudaya' poems which was followed up later both by his son and grandson. *Achyutābhyudaya* is a poem in *dwipada* metre and it is not available. A mention about this work is also found in *Sāhitya sudha* by *Govinda Dīkshita* and also in *Raghunādhā Rāmāyaṇa*. Though we have the above references to the work it is not available. His *Nalacaritra* is a poem of eight cantos in *Dwipada* metre dedicated to his personal deity Lord Sri Rāma. In this work, Raghunadhā attempted to accomplish a happy blend of Nala's story found in the *Aranya Parva* of the *Mahabharata* and *Sringaranaishadha* of the great poet, *Srinadhā*. *Govinda Dīkshita* mentions about this work along with his other works. It is stated in *Raghunadhābhyudaya* that *Achyutābhyudaya* and *Nalacaritra* were used to be read by court damsels in his court.

Rāmabhadrāmba:

Rāmabhadrāmba was a poetess who adorned the court of Raghunādhā Nāyaka. Though she is said to have written many works, only a Sanskrit poem by name '*Raghunādhābhyudaya*' is

available to us. The poem deals with the life and victories of Raghunādhā Nāyaka. As the work was written by a contemporary poetess and describes the achievements of her patron it furnishes authentic historical information about the king and his times. The poem contains 12 sargas and 900 ślokas. At the end of each sarga a 'Gadya' is added in accordance with the practice in Telugu. She appears to have written a few works in Telugu also but none of them is available to us. The fact that she was good at composition in Telugu also is mentioned in a work called Rājagopāla Vilāsamu by Chengalva Kāḷa Kavi who lived in the times of Vijayarāghavanāyaka. It is also inferred from the work that she was a disciple of Chengalva Kāḷa Kavi and received training from him in the poetic composition. Though no trace of evidence is found to her Telugu composition, the use of Yati and prāsa as in Telugu in certain Ślokās of her Raghunādhābhyubaya reveals that she was a poetess in Telugu also. She was also good at samasyāpūraṇam. On one occasion when two Samasyās (Problems) one in Telugu and the other in prākṛit were given in the court of Raghunādhā Nāyaka, she could successfully complete and solve them to the satisfaction and joy of one and all.

Madhuravāṇi :

Madhuravāṇi is the gem among the poets and poetesses who enjoyed the patronage of Raghunādhā Nāyaka. She has composed Rāmāyaṇa in Sanskrit in which only 14 Sargas upto Sundra Kanda are available to us. She was equally good at composition in Prākṛit and Telugu as well. But no Telugu work written by her is available to us. The 'Gadya' at the end of each Sarga tells us that Raghunādhā Nāyaka has honoured her with Swarnabhishēka (The Sacred bath with gold coins) in his court in appreciation of her poetry. The circumstances which led her to the composition of her Rāmāyaṇa in Sanskrit is narrated in this manner. On one day a few court-singers were reading the Telugu Rāmāyaṇa by Raghunādhā in his very presence and an idea has struck to him. He posed a question to them whether any of them could translate his work into Sanskrit. The poets and poetesses who have assembled there to listen to his Rāmāyaṇa

Cemakūra Venktakavi wrote two works namely Sārangdhara caritramu and Vijayavilāsamu. The latter is also called 'Subhadrāpariṇayamu'. Of the two works, Vijayavilāsamu is dedicated to his patron benefactor Raghunādha Nāyaka. The title of the work also significant in the sense that it was written after the great victory of Raghunadha over the chiefs of the Pāndya, Tundīra, Nepala (Jāfna) territories. Raghunādha Nāyaka after winning the wars over the above, caused construction of a beautiful palace in Tanjore and named it as 'Vijayabhavana' to mark his great victory. As the poet had mentioned these victories in his poem, it can be presumed that the work might have been written and dedicated to Raghunadha on a ceremonial occasion in about 1616 A. D. in the newly constructed palace. Vijayavilāsamu is a poem of three cantos containing 672 verses including vacanās. The theme deals with the love adventure of Arjuna (Vijaya) who married Ulūci, Citraṅgada and Subhadra. He adopted the story from the Mahābhārata and made out the same with descriptions and dialogues to make a full-fledged independent poem.

His other work 'Sārangadharacaritramu' is also a poem of three cantos like his Vijayavilāsa and contains 689 verses. It deals with the story of Sārangadhara, the son of Rājarājanarendra-Citrāngi, who was married to Rajarājanarendra in his old age compels his young son by his first wife by name Sārangadhara for love intrigue which he refuses bluntly. Citrāngi enraged by his refusal of her wish and a total disappointment in the matter, causes him punishment at the hands of his father by telling him that he misbehaved towards her. When the order of the king to cut his hands and legs was executed, a siddha by name Matsyēndranādha appeared before him and told him that he was innocent. The king came to know about this through the executors and realised that it was Citrangi who was really at fault and ordered that she be thrown into a well. By the grace of Matsyēndranādha Sārangadhara regained his lost hands and legs and became a Siddha.

The story of Sārangadhara is first found in work called Navanādha Caritra by Gaurana (1400 A. D.). But the scene of activity which was Māndhātapura of Mālavadeśa found in

Navanādhacaritra has been shifted to Rajamahēndravaram and the king's name was also conveniently changed as Rājarājanarēndra instead of Rajamahendra by a poet Doneru Konerunādhā (1549 A. D) in his work 'Bālabhāgavata'. In this respect Cemakūra Venkatakavi followed the latter version which was subsequently followed by others also.

His Sārangadharacaritra does not contain the prologue and the prologue to Vijayavilasa is supplied towards the beginning of this work. The prologue to Vijayavilāsamu is important in several respects and consists many verses of historical importance. The poet is very much fond of employing sabdālamkāras, ślēṣa and certain gimmicks in word-splitting as Rāmarājabhūṣana did in his Vasucaritra. His style is lucid and graceful that nobody could compete with him even if they wished to do so. In the prologue to Vijayavilāsamu, Raghunādhā Nāyaka appreciates his poetry in different places as follows :

'Who is there equal to you in brevity of words (Vangniyamārūdhī niyantavādikēḍi) (1-48)

'You are quite capable to employ gimmicks in each and every verse' (Pratipadyamunandu camatkriti galungan jeppa nērutuvu) (1.50)

'Nobody can imitate or copy your method of poetic composition in the world (Kshitilō nī mārḡa mevarikin rāḍu sumī) (1-50)

This appreciation of Raghunādhā is no exaggeration and his works will prove the correct judgement and evaluation of the poet by Raghunādhā Nāyaka.

Krishnādhvari :

Krishnādhvari is also a poet who adorned the court of Raghunādhā Nāyaka. He wrote Dvyarthi kāvya (A poem of two stories blended into one by employing ślēṣa etc.) by name Naiṣadhapārijāteeyamu. This is a work of four cantos and is dedicated to his patron, Raghunādhā Nāyaka. The theme of the work relates to the stories of Nala Caritra and Pārijātāpaharana,

We have already seen that Raghunādhā had composed two separate works by name Nalacaritra and Pārijātāpaharanamu. In order to please the king, Krishnādhvari might have thought of taking up the same themes for his poem and blended them into a single poem. The skill that he exhibited in the work in blending the two stories together is remarkable and it is considered to be a notable work among Dvyarthi Kāvyaś that we have in our literature. Though the work is known to scholars even from the last quarter of the 19th century, it is still lying in manuscript form in the Tanjore Saraswati Mahal library. The poet expresses his desire in the prologue that his work should be the younger sister of his earlier five works (Sanskrit?) that have been dedicated to Raghunādhā. The five works are: Raghunādhābhūpāleeya, Pārijātakathāvathārika, Kalyāṇakaumudī Kandarpa Nāṭaka, Amarukālamkāra and Tālacintāmaṇi which are supposed to have been written in Sanskrit.

Vijayarāghava Nāyaka (1633-1673 A. D.):

Vijayarāghava Nāyaka was the son of Raghunādhā Nāyaka and followed the example of his father in patronizing arts like poetry, dance and drama. He was himself a poet and many works were also dedicated to him. His court-poet Chengalva Kāḷa Kavi has given a detailed account of him in his work viz. Rajagōpālavilāsamu. It is said that he had on his leg a 'Sahitya rāyapendēramu' in which the figures of the kings that were defeated by him were carved to mark his victory over them. He used to have literary discussions and discourses in his royal court called 'Vijayarāghava Vilasa' where a flag called 'Sāradādhwaja' was hoisted in front of him. It looked as if the 'Sāradādhwaja' was announcing the poetic skill of Vijayarāghava Nāyaka and also the essentials of good poetry. He had in his court along with poets, a good number of musicians, and dancers among whom 'Chandrarēkha' was one who was held in high esteem. Krishṇāji alias Krishnamāmba used to entertain the audience with her poetry. Musical discourses were also there in which the ladies who were well-versed in different arts took respective positions in accomplishing the discourse. Chandrarēkha was a great dancer of the times and received several presents along with the title from

Vīravenkatapathirāya of Vijayanagar. She might have reached the court of Vijayarāghava Nāyaka by 1614 A. D. who took her as his queen. Vijayarāghava Nāyaka was addressed as the lover of Mudduchandrārēkha at the end of each canto in the Rājagōpalavilāsa of Chengalva Kāḷa Kavi, By this account it is evident that the court of Vijayarāghava Nāyaka was buzzing with activity by the poetic compositions, literary discussions, dance recitals and musical discourses.

Vijayarāghava Nayaka, besides patronizing Art and Literature, himself wrote many works numbering about thirty. They are :

Dramas :

1. Rājagōpalavilāsamu 2. Chengamalavallī pariṇayamu.
3. Gōvardhanōddharaṇamu 4. Ratīmanmadhivilāsamu
5. Rāsakriḍanavanitacōramu 6. Pārijatāpaharaṇamu 7. Rukmiṇīkalyāṇamu 8. Radhāmādhavamu 9. Dhanābhīrāmamu 10. Satyabhāma vivāhamu 11. Ushāpariṇayamu 12. Dakshinadwārakasthala Varṇanamu 13. Kāḷiyamardanamu 14. Raghunādhābhyudayamu 15. Prahlādacaritramu 16. Pūtanāharaṇamu 17. Vipranārāyanacaritramu 18. Samudramadhana Nāṭakamu 19. Krishna vilasamu 20. Mohinīvilāsamu 21. Jānakīkalyāṇamu 22. Praṇayakalahamu. 23. Kamsavijayamu.

Dwipada Works :

1. Padukā Sahasramu 2. Mohinīvilāsamu 3. Raghunādhānāyakābhyudayamu.

1. Gopikā Gīṭalu 2. Bhramaragīṭalu—(both translated from Sanskrit).

Choupada :

1. Phālgunotsavam—*in Ragada metre.*

Dandakamu :

1. Rajagōpālādandakamu.

Apart from the above mentioned works, he appears to have composed many kinds of songs like Vēḍukolu Vinnapamulu, Daruvulu, Ēla pāṭalu, Sankīrtanālu, Koravanji yakshagānās (Ref : prologue to Prahlāda caritra).

Among the works mentioned above only the following are available to us.

1. *Raghunādhā Nāyakābhyudaya* :

This is a work in Dwipada metre and describes the life and work of Raghunādhārāyaka, the father of the poet. It is available only in part with two cantos and a part of the third canto. This contains 2081 Dwipada lines and is printed. We do not know the extent of the work that we have lost. This work is dedicated to Rājagōpalaswāmi.

2. *Raghunadhābhyudaya* :

This is a Yakshagāna work of erotic sentiment and the theme describes the love episode of Raghunādhā Nāyaka. Raghunādhā loving a girl by name Citrarēkha, the parrot's mediation as his emissary, their union are the main incidents in the work. Apart from these, it furnishes a good amount of information about his literary activities which is very much of historical value.

3. *Vipranarayana Caritra* :

This is a Yakshagāna which deals with the story of Vipranārāyana otherwise called as Tondaradippedi Āḷwar, one of the twelve āḷwārs of Vaishnavite tradition. Two poets, Chadaluvāḍa Mallana and Sārangu Tammayya have already written works of the same theme and Vijayarāghavanāyaka dealt with the theme in his own way.

All these three works are published and available.

4. *Pūtanāharaṇamu* 5. *Kāḷiyamardanamamu* are available only in Manuscript. While the former deals with the story of Krishna's killing of Pūtana, the latter describes his killing of Kāḷiya, the dreadful serpent.

Chengalva Kāḷakavi :

Chengalva Kalakavi is an eminent poet who flourished in the court of Vijayarāghava Nāyaka. He was a great teacher and trained Ramabhadrāmba and Krishnāji in the poetic art. His

only work 'Rājagōpala vilāsamu' was dedicated to Vijayarāghava Nāyaka. Though he lived in the times of Raghunādhā Nayaka also, it did not happen that he composed any work dedicated to him. The reason might be that he was a close friend of the prince, Vijayarāghava and might have not aspired any eminent position in the court of his father, Raghunādhā. His father was Venkatayya who was a minister of Srikantha and wrote a work called 'Pārvatīparinaya' which is not available to us now. Kāḷa kavi was proficient both in Telugu and Sanskrit and was able to compose poems in them with considerable ease. He was capable of composing in all the four varieties of poetry (caturvidha kavitalu) namely Āśu, Madhura, Citra and Vistara. His Rajagōpāla vilāsamu is a poem in five cantos with 454 verses and describes the Sthalamāhātmya of Mannarguḍi which is famous as Dakshina dwāraka. The presiding deity of the holy place is Rājagōpala-swami. In the first canto of this great work, the poet describes the Tanjore Nayak dynasty upto Vijayarāghava in detail which is historically very important and gives many details of the Royal family. This part of the work was separated from the original and was also considered to be a separate work by name 'Vijayarāghava Vamśāvali.' The source of this great work is 'Agnikalpa' and the story that is found in it is elaborated in the Rājagōpala-vilāsa. As the theme deals with the love sports of Lord Krishna who dwells in Mannārugudi by name Rājagōpāla, the work is named after him as 'Rājagōpālavilāsamu'. The date of its composition is 1633, the very first year in which Vijayarāghava was enthroned as king.

Kōnēṭidī kshitacandra :

Kōnēṭidīkshitacandra is the author of a drama (opera) by name 'Vijayarāghava Kalyāṇamu'. He was the son of one, Rāmanujācharyā and a disciple of the Rajaguru, Chaturvēdi Srīnivāsa Tātācārya. He has received several gifts and grants of agrahārās from his patron, Vijayarāghava. It is stated that his work was composed when Vijayarāghava was seated on an elevated marble structure in the palace called 'Srirama soudha' in Tanjore. Though this work is available in Tanjore Saraswati Mahal library in manuscript, it is yet to see the light of the day.

The theme deals with the description of the marriage of Vijayarāghava with Kāntimati. Though the work is called a Nataka, its composition is in Yakshagāna (opera) style.

Purushōttama Dīkshita :

Purushōttama Dīkshita is also a poet who lived in the times of Vijayarāghava Nāyaka. He is the author of a work by name 'Tanjapurānnadāna mahā nātakamu'. Tanjore Nāyak kings were famous for their annadāna (feeding of brahmins). Vijayarāghava is said to have been feeding 50,000 brahmins every day in the various choultries that were caused by him and was hailed as a great 'Annadāta'. The work of Purushōttama Dīkshita describes the charity of Vijayarāghava Nāyaka in his pastime of feeding brahmins. It will be interesting to know that the dishes, that were being supplied at the feeding, were mostly Telugu dishes. It furnishes information that one Nelluru Yellaiah, who came from Nellore of Andhra Pradesh, was put in charge of the supervision of the choultries. It also reveals that the feeding was provided to brahmins irrespective of their religion.

Kāmarasu Venkatapati sōmayāji :

Venkatapati sōmayāji was called the 'Paṭṭapu kavi' (Royal poet) of Vijayarāghava and wrote a nāṭaka (opera) by name 'Vijayarāghava candrikā Vilāsamu, the theme of which is the love sport of Vijayarāghava with Līlāvathi, a theatre-artist on one moonlight night. The description of the Cola country and also of Vijayarāghava in this work are remarkable in composition.

Pasupulēṭi Rangājamma :

Rangājamma, otherwise called Rangājī, was a famous poetess in the court of Vijayarāghava, whose name is familiar to the literary world by her works. She has stated in the Gadya of her works that she acquired the skill in poetic composition by the grace of Rajagōpālādēva, the presiding deity at Mannārgudi. She was an expert śatāvadhāni and could compose verses in eight languages. She is the author of many padās (songs of erotic sentiment) to be sung in Bharatanāṭyam performances. She has also studied Rājanīti (Polity). Vijayarāghava, in appreciation

of her poetic skill honoured her by causing Kanakābhishēka (sacred bath with gold coins) to be performed in his court. It is a rare honour to be done to a poet and the fact that a poetess could have this honour done, is a positive proof for her skill in poetic composition and also the admiration that the king and people had towards her. Her works are 1. Mannārudāsavilāsamu (Prabandha) 2. Ushāpariṇayamu (Prabandha) 3. Mannārudāsavilāsamu (Nāṭaka-opera) 4. Rāmayaṇasangrahamu 5, Bhāratasangrahamu. Besides these, she has composed many padās. Among these, only three works. Mannarudāsa vilāsa (Prabandha), Ushapariṇaya and Mannarudasavilasa (Nataka-opera) are available and, except the last one, the other two are in manuscript only. Her other works mentioned above and her padās are not available. Her work Mannārudāsavilāsa Nāṭaka was printed in 1926 A. D. by the Andhra Sāhitya Parishat. The theme of the work is the marriage of Vijayarāghava with a princess by name Kāntimati. The story runs as follows:

When Rājagōpolaswami of Mannargudi was being taken in procession, a girl by name Kantimati, who arrived there to witness the festival; sees Vijayarāghava and falls in love with him. She could not withstand the pangs of separation and hence sent a messenger by name Vilāsavathi to the king, Vijayaraghava. She went to the king and narrated to him the condition of her maid. Vijayarāghava was very much pleased with the proposal and promised her that he would marry Kāntimati. In the meanwhile one erukatha (soothsayer-future teller) met Kāntimati and told that the king would agree to marry her. Vilāsavati too came and told her about the willingness of the king to marry her. While the king was suffering from the pangs of separation, the Rājaguru, satakratu Tātācharya, came to know about this. He went and met Rājachandra Mahārāja, the father of Kantimati and requested him to give his daughter in marriage to the king. Rājachandra also agreed to the proposal. Then the marriage between Vijayarāghava and Kāntimati was celebrated.

Her other work, available to us though not published, is 'Ushaparinayamu'. In this work, only three cantos and a part of the fourth canto are available. The prologue to this work contains a detailed account of the Nāyaka dynasty upto Vijayarāghava Nāyaka.

Her third work, that is available to us though not published, is a poem by name Mannārudāsavilāsamu. In this work the devotion of Vijayarāghava to Mannarudēva, the presiding deity at Mannārgudi, Vijayarāghava's grants and gifts to the temple there, a detailed description of the grand festival (Tirunāl) in the phalguna month at Mannārgudi find place in this work and it is dedicated to Rājagopālaswāmy. It appears that she has composed a dandaka also in praise of Vijayarāghava.

Besides these, a few stray verses (cāṭupadyamulu) are available as the compositions of Rangājamma. The circumstances in which they were written are said to be as follows; Rangajamma belonged to the Dēvadāsi community. She studied various arts and became proficient in them. Vijayarāghava was very much attracted towards her. He used to be always in her company in enjoyment and totally neglected his queen. The queen got angry with Rangājamma and sent word through a maid that it was not proper on her part to keep him always in her house. In reply to this allegation Rangajamma sent to the queen a letter composed in verse, the meaning of which runs as follows. "Why should any lady find fault with us? Are they not women? Do they not have the skill to make their husbands love them so as to have them in their own company? When the king is in the embrace of the queen have I dragged him by entering into their house unlawfully saying 'Oh! Why did you not go to my house? and brought him here?'" There is also another verse composed in a similar circumstance which is in the form of a dialogue between her and her maid! Oh! lady with a handsome face which resembles the moon! you are too good a lady who knows the formalities in times like this. Then why did you weave the plait in a very loose way'. The maid questions: 'Do you want it to be more stiff than this?' Rangājamma replies 'Yes, you please make it more fit. There is a purpose for it.' The maid could guess the purpose which she hinted at and warned her saying 'No. No. It is very bad to do that. Vijayaraghava's body is as tender as a sprout.' Another verse, also in the form of a dialogue, is about Vijayarāghava perhaps by Rangajamma. 'Oh! lady! you please behold. Manmadha is seen seated on the bed' says a maid showing Vijayaraghava to her mistress. The mistress

replies bursting out in laughter saying 'Manmadha is bodyless (ananga). Don't you know this? He is Vijayarāghava in flesh and blood who is sitting on the bed. What a fool you are?'

Kriṣṇājī :

Kriṣṇājī, otherwise called Kriṣṇajamma, was also a poetess who lived in the court of Vijayarāghava Nayaka and was a disciple of Chengalva Kāla kavi along with Rāmabhadraṃba. Though no work is found available written by her, her skill in poetic composition is inferred from the mention of her in the Rājagōpāla vilāsamu of her master Chengalva Kāla kavi. It is said that she was capable of filling a samasya in Sanskrit in the metre required and was able to compose the other lines in the metre extempore and solve it to the satisfaction of one and all and could translate it into Telugu herself in any of the metres. To accomplish this she must be having a great skill in the extempore versification and a good scholar in both Sanskrit and Telugu.

Peddadāsari :

He was a great devotee of Lord Narasimha and was a good composer of padas both in Telugu and Sanskrit in the times of Vijayarāghava. It appears that Vijayarāghava used to see him in scant respect, the reason for which is not known. Except this scanty information about the poet in the work of composers of Karnatak music in English, we have no details about him, nor his padās are available to us.

Mannārudēva :

Mannārudēva is the son of the great Vijayaraghava Nayaka of Tanjore and was also a poet following the tradition of his father and grand father. He fought along with his father against the Maharashtrās who invaded Tanjore and died in action. He wrote two works, Vijayaraghavābhyudaya and Hēmābja Nayikā swayamvara and only the latter is available to us. Hēmābjayanayikāswayamvara is a yakshagāna nāṭaka, the theme of which describes the manner in which Vijayaraghava celebrated the marriage of Rajagopalaswami of Mannarugudi with the

female deity, Chengamala. Chengamala means red lotus and hence she is also called as Hēmābjanāyika or Raktābjanāyika. She is the daughter of the Milky ocean (Kshīrasāgara) and happens to hear about Rajagōpālaswāmi who was being worshipped daily by no less a person than Vijayarāghava in his house. She falls in love with Him and the pangs of separation follow. Her father comes to know about her love towards the deity and sends an emissary to Him inviting him for the Swayamvara that was to take place on the Aṣṭami day of the bright fortnight of the Chaitra month of the year Soumya. The Lord attends the Swayamvara and the marriage between them takes place. The Soumya year mentioned in the work about the date of the marriage corresponds to 1664 A. D. and hence the date of the composition of the work can be taken as A. D. 1664 itself. Vijayarāghava Nayaka is considered by the Lord himself as his son. After the marriage was over, the Lord expresses his happiness saying 'because of you, the wish of ours is accomplished and we are happy. I wish that you rule the country for ever.' The work might have been composed to mark the event of Kalyāṇotsava of Rajāgōpālaswāmi which Vijayarāghava instituted for the first time in the year 1664 to be continued every year on the same day at Mannarugudi which was considered the Dwaraka of the South.

In the war that ensued between Tanjore kings and the Maharashtra, the former lost the battle. Vijayarāghava Nāyaka and his son Mannārudēva were killed in action. The Nāyak kingdom ended with this war and the Maharashtra took control of their kingdom. The Maharashtra rule extended from 1674 A. D. to 1854 A. D. The Maharashtrian kings followed the tradition set up by their predecessors in patronising literature and arts. Under their patronage, Sanskrit and Telugu literatures flourished in a big way. Though they were Maharashtrians by birth and the country they ruled was the Tamil land, they adopted Telugu as their official (court) language and ran the administration. They acquired scholarship both in Telugu and Sanskrit and themselves wrote many works of merit besides extending their patronage to poets and scholars. Telugu language attained an eminent and prestigious position in their times and it enjoyed the envious posi-

tion of being the language of culture in that distant land. It was considered a fashion to write in Telugu, to speak in Telugu and to sing in Telugu. The Yakshagānās (operas) written in Telugu for entertaining the public gained popularity with the masses of other languages also. The credit of attaining such a situation should go to the untiring efforts and patronage of the Nāyak kings and the Mahārāshtrian kings of Tanjore who ruled the country in those days. The following account will present the amount of literary activity that prevailed under the Mahārāshtrian rule.

Śahajī (1684-1712 A. D.)

Śahaji is the son of Ekjōi alias Venkāji who was the first Maharashtra ruler at Tanjore. The reign of this king can be considered as the 'Golden age', as a vast literature both in Sanskrit and Telugu came into being in his times. He was hailed as 'Aparabhōja' in his patronage of letters and had a comparison only in Sri Krishṇadēvarāya of Vijayanagar and Raghunādhā of the Tanjore Nāyak dynasty. The number of Sanskrit scholars and their works will stand testimony to his generous and favourable attitude towards those literatures. He was himself a compiler of two lexicons in Sanskrit by name 'Śabdaratna samanvaya' and 'Śabdārtha samgraha' and also made many gifts and granted agraharas to Vedic and other scholars. Rāmabhadra Dīkshita, Srīdhara Venkatēśayāji, Bhaskara Dīkshita, Periappā kavi were only a few among the scholars who lived in Tiruvasanallūru, otherwise called Śāhajirāyapura, which was named after him. They were all great scholars in Sanskrit and wrote many works of merit. His patronage to Telugu is no way less. The number of Telugu works that he himself had written and the number of poets he patronised will reveal the fact. Śāhaji had written twenty works in Telugu among which Śankarapallaki sēvāprabandhamu and Vishnupallaki sēvā prabandhamu are very well known to the literary world and appeared in print also with musical notations. All his twenty or above works were yakshagānās (operas) named as Nāṭakās and each of them was dedicated to one deity or the other. Śāhaji had the titles of 'Sāhitīpumbhāva śārada' and 'Śakala bhāsha caturvidha sāhitī nirvāhaka',

Nivrtti seshacala kavi :

In Śāhaji's court, there were many poets and Seshacala kavi was considered the greatest among them. He was the Guru of one Nelluru Sivarama kavi who was the author of 'Kāmakaḷanidhi'. Through a reference about him in Kāmakaḷanidhi we learn that he had a title of 'Andhrapāṇini'. It appears that he was an author of a grammatical work in sutras for Telugu and also wrote a commentary on it and hence he was called 'Andhra Pāṇini'. In a sanskrit poem by name 'Bhosala kosaleeya' by Seshacalakavi which was dedicated to Śāhaji, it is mentioned that the poet had the honour of 'Kanakābhishēka' by Śāhaji and received from him many gifts like palanquin etc. etc. It appears that he could compose poems not only in Sanskrit and Telugu but in eight languages. Only three works of Seshacala kavi are available to us. They are 1. Sāharaja vilāsamu 2. Sasraswatī kalyāṇamu 3. Andhra Vyakaranamu. Among these, while the first two are Telugu works, the third one is in Sanskrit.

Giriraja kavi :

Giriraja kavi is one among the famous poets that adorned the court of 'Śāhaji'. He was proficient both in music and literature. He continued to live in the court of Śarabhoji, the brother of Śāhaji. He is the author of a few works like Śahendra caritramu, Rajamōhana kuravamji, Leelāvathī kalyāṇamu, Vādajayamu and Sarvāmgasundari Vilāsamu. The theme of Śeshendra caritramu tells that Śāhaji falls in love with a girl and marriaies her. Rajamōhana kuravamji is a type of yakshagana in which the soothsayer goes to the heroine 'by name Rajamōhini' and tells her that Śāharaja would marry her and the work ends with their marriage. His Lilāvathī kalyāṇamu describes the marriage of Śarabhōji with Leelāvathi, the daughter of Kīrti-candra Raja of Maharashtra. All these were dedicated to Śāharāja.

Venkatagiri alias kavigiri :

Venkatagiri is the brother of Girirajakavi mentioned above. He too was well versed both in music and literature. He was the court-poet of one, Khandoji Rao who was related to Śāhaji. He

has to his credit a few works like Rukmāngada caritra and Abhinaya darpana. His first work is a poem of three cantos in Dwipada metre and deals with the story of the famous devotee, Rukmāngada. His second work 'Abhinayadarpana' is a poetic translation of the work of the same name by Nandikēswara in Sanskrit. The poem contains three chapters called 'anubimbās' and was dedicated to his patron, Khandōji Rao.

Balakavi Subbanna :

A work, by name 'Lilavathī śaharajeeyamu' is said to be a composition of one, Bālakavi Subbanna. It deals with the marriage of Śahaji with Lilāvathi and is in Yakshagāna style. The aforesaid account reveals the extent of the literāry activity that existed in the times of Śāharaja. His service to Telugu on a different aspect is also to be noted here. Though the present manuscripts' Library which is housed in the Saraswati Mahal at Tanjore is established in the times of Śarabhoji and is named after him, most of the manuscripts in it were ordered to be written and preserved by Śāhaji only. The bulk of the manuscripts in the library contains mostly the copies of his various works.

Śarabhōji I (1712-1725 A. D.).

Śarabhōji I and Tulajāji, otherwise called as Tukkāji, the younger brother of Śarabhōji I ruled country after their elder brother and also patronised literature following his tradition. It appears that Sanskrit enjoyed an eminent position under his patronage and there are several works written in his times in Sanskrit. Anandarāyamakhi, who was a minister in the court from the times of his elder brother, wrote a work called 'Vidyāpariṇayamu', which was staged on the occasion of a festival to the deity by name Anandavallī in the presence of the king. Sarabhōji himself wrote a work called Rāghavacaritramu in Sanskrit which deals with the story of Rāmayāṇa in twelve sargas with the help of another poet by name Anantanārāyaṇa kavi who was famous by his title as 'Pancarātna kavi.' Jagannādhā kavi of his court was the author of a Sanskrit work called 'Ratīmanmadha Nātaka'. Paramānanda kavīndra's Śivabhāratam which deals with an account of Chatrapathi Śhivāji is a poem in Sanskrit of

historical importance. Thus only Sanskrit works were in good number and Telugu did not flourish much. But we have a few padās and kirtanās in praise of ‘Śarabhōji’ composed by Girirājakavi who continued to be in his court from the time of Śāhaji.

Tulajāji or Tukkāji (1728–1736 A. D.):

Tukkāji, who ruled the country after Sarabhoji I between 1728 and 1736, was also a patron of letters. He was proficient not only in literature but also in music. His ‘Sangītasārāmrita’ reveals his scholarship in Music and he was the person who first introduced the Hindustani tunes in Tanjore. He wrote a work in Telugu also by name ‘Śivakama sundarīpariṇayamu’.

Ekōji II (1737 A. D.):

Ekōji II was the son of Tukkāji and he ruled the country for one year. He also patronised Sanskrit and Telugu poets and himself composed a Rāmāyaṇa in Dwipada metre. All the six sargas are available in this work. His other work ‘Vigneśwara kalyāṇa nātakamu’ which is both in Sanskrit and Telugu is an adaptation of Śāhaji’s work by the same name.

Nellūri Sivarāmakavi (About 1740 A. D.):

Nellūri Sivarāmakavi was a poet in the court of Pratāpasimha who came to the throne after an interval of anarchy in the country and dedicated his work ‘Kāmakalānidhī’ to him. Kāmakalānidhī is a poem in four cantos and strictly follows the ‘Ratirahasya’ by the famous Kokkoka kavi. He has also translated the Ramagita into Telugu at the instigation of one, Marri Krishnabhūpāla and dedicated it to Lord Rama, the presiding deity at Ramakrishnapura.

Muddu Palāni (About 1740 A. D.)

Muddupalāni was a great poetess who lived in the court of Pratāpasimha and she was his spouse also. Her Rādhikā-santvanmu was a famous work, known to the literary world. Though she was born in a devadasi community, she was a great devotee of Lord Sri Krishna and identified herself with Rādhā,

the heroine of her poem. It is said that a few works were also dedicated to her, but they are not available to us. Her work 'Rādhikāśāmtvanmu' is a poem in four cantos and contains 585 stanzas. As the poem was full of erotic sentiment, it has been very popular with youth. This work is also called 'Iḷādēvīyamu.' She did not hesitate to describe in detail the physical aspects of the love-play by the hero and heroine and for this reason the work was proscribed for some time. She is said to have translated Andal's Tiruppavai into Telugu as 'Saptapadulu' of which only ten of them are published as her compositions along with the translations of the rest by late Srt V. Prabhakara Sastri. But it is subsequently proved beyond doubt that the 'saptapadulu' was the composition of Srīnivasadeśika of Suravaram estate. But the work still goes with the name of Muddupaḷani only as its author.

Matrubhūtakavi (About 1788 A. D)

Matrubhūtakavi who lived in about 1788 A. D. wrote a work by name 'Pārijātāpṛharana and dedicated it to Amara-simha who ruled at Tanjore after Tulajaji II on the instigation of his minister, Sivarāmaiah. He has also composed several padās and they are found published in 'Sangīta sampradāya pradarsini' as 'Mātrubhūtayya padamulu.'

Śarabhōji II:

Sarabhōji II is famous among Mahārāṣṭra kings who ruled at Tanjore. He knew several languages and was a patron of literature and arts. The Tanjore Saraswati Mahal library was organised and established by him and his statue in marble stone adorns the precincts of the Mahal. He is the author of a campū-kavya by name 'Kumārasambhava' in sanskrit and it contains four cantos.

Thyāgarājaswāmi:

Thyāgarājaswāmi was a musician-poet who lived in the times of Śarabhōji II and composed many kīrtanās in Telugu in which only about 600 are now available. Saint Thyāgarāja was one and the foremost among the musical trinity whose contri-

bution to Karnatak music is invaluable and the tradition that they have set in Karnatak music still continues. His disciples continued the tradition and passed it on to posterity to live for ever. His musical compositions are full of devotional fervour and poetic beauty which make the hearts of the listeners melt.

Sivaji Maharaj (1833-1855 A. D)

Sivaji Maharaj was the last Mahārāstra ruler at Tanjore. He was also a patron of letters like his predecessors and was himself a poet. He was the author of a work 'Annapūrṇāpariṇayamu' in which he describes the marriage of one, Konkanēs-wara with a girl by name 'Annapūrṇa'. The prologue to this work, contains a detailed account of his ancestors in the family.

Venkatakrishnakavi:

Venkatakrishna kavi was a poet who adorned the court of Sivaji Maharaj and wrote a work called 'Sivapārijātamū'. He belonged to the Mallu (wrestler) community who were called 'Jettis' in those days, his full name being Kanakājetti Venkatakrishna jetti. He took pride in calling himself a 'Telugu kavi' of Sivaji Maharaj. Though his poetry was not of considerable merit when compared to that of others, the king might have thought of encouraging him by his patronage as it is rare to have a poet in the lower strata of the society in those days with a few exceptions.

Rajagōpālakavi alias Pallavi Gōpālayya:

Pallavi Gōpālayya is a name to be reckoned with in the Music world because of his skill in rendering pallavi in a superb manner. He is also called Rajagopala kavi which was his full name and was a contemporay to saint Tyāgarāja. He wrote a poem by name 'Bhaktajanapārijāta' in four cantos which describes in detail the stories of great devotees. It appears that his ancestors came from Guntur District in Andhra Pradesh and settled down at Tanjore by the munificence of the Tanjore kings. The famous Merattūru Venkatarāma Sāstri belongs to the same family.

Merattūru Venkatarāma Sāstri (1807-1860 A. D.).

Venkatarāma Sastri hails from Merattūru, a village near Tanjore and hence called Merattūru Venkatarāma Sāstri. He was a descendant of the family of Pallavi Gopālayya about whom we have already discussed. He was not only a great musician but also a poet of great merit. He wrote 12 Yakshagānās in Telugu among which only 11 are available like Prahlādacaritra, Mārkaṇḍēyacaritra, Rukmāngada caritra etc. He was also well trained in the art of dance and he used to act himself in a role when his Yakshagānās were being staged. From the date of their composition which is 1825 A. D., they were used to be staged in villages around Tanjore when they celebrated Narasimha Jayanti every year. A mention about him and his poetic skill appears in the Sangītasampradāyapradarsini which furnishes details about the Musician-composers of Karnatak Music.

Besides the poets who wrote poems and Yakshagānas and who enjoyed the patronage of the rulers at Tanjore there were a few poets who visited their courts and composed poems in their praise. Among them the musician poet, Kshētrayya, is to be mentioned in the connection. He hails from the village 'Movva' in the Krishna District of Andhra Pradesh and visited many places in the south and composed 'Padās' on the deities of the local temples and the kings and benefactors from whom he received patronage. He visited the courts of both Raghunādhā and Vijayarāghava of Tanjore and the fact is evident from his compositions on them. Maṇḍa Narasimha kavi, the author of a grammatical work called 'Andhra kaumudi' quotes a stanza as a composition of Kshētrayya in praise of Raghunādhā, when he visited the latter, the meaning of which is as follows:

'Oh king Raghunādhā!' people who are in want prefer to go themselves without invitation to the benefactors. Does anybody invite the bees to go to the lotuses to take honey?'

Kavi Coudappa was another poet who knew about Raghunadha and the fact is evident by his reference to him in one of his poems. He was the author of a śataka called 'Kavicoudappa śataka' a poem of 100 verses which was addressed to himself. The meaning of the stanza is as follows: O! Kundavarapu Kavi Choudappa! Is it possible for even Brahman who is born in a lotus to speak in the presence of Raghunādhā of Tanjore with confidence.'—There are a few other stray verses also, the authorship of which is not known to us, in praise of Raghunadha of Tanjore.



Telugu Poets of Madura

Sthānāpathi of Viswanādhā Nāyaka (1530 A. D.):

Rayavachakamu of one, Sthānāpathi of Viswanādhā Nāyaka, appears to be the first work written in the times of Nayak kings of Madura. This is a prose work and deals with many things like an account of Vijayanagar in those times, Krishna-devaraya's expeditions and victories, the theory of polity which was said to be taught by Appaji to Sri Krishnadeva Raya and hence it is historically a very important work. The historical information, that is furnished in the work, corresponds well with the account found in the writings of the Portugese ambassadors. A later poet by name Kunāra Dhūjati has mostly followed this work in writing his Krishnaraya Vijayamu. The work under review is a report sent by the Sthānāpati of Viswanādhā Nāyaka about the activities at Vijayanagar and is written in the official spoken language of those times interspersed with a few stanzas from old classics. The verses that are found in the beginning of the work reveal that the Sthānāpathi was familiar with the poetic compositions also. The work is very important in the sense that it marks the beginning of prose writing in Telugu in as much as no independent prose work was written till then.

Among the Nāyak kings of Madura, Muddaiagiri, the foster-brother of Cokkanādhā Nayaka (1659-1682) and Vijayaranga Cokkanādhā (1706-1732), the grand-son of Cokkanādhā Nāyaka patronised the Telugu Poets and had some of their works dedicated to them. R. Satyanadha Iyer, while writing about Vijayaranga Chokkanādhā, observes as follows: 'His reign was only a record of sufferings of the country and its downward march to disruption and ruin. The fatal indifference of the king to the affairs of the state and his absorption in other work, gave a free hand to his ministers whose mal-administration hastened the break-up of the kingdom'. Though the observation

is correct in the political point of view, his indifference to the affairs of the state and his absorption in religious and literary activities found for him an eternal place in the History of Telugu Literature.

Muddāgiri, a scion of the Nayak dynasty who ruled at Madurai, was the son of Kumāra Muddu Veerappa Nāyaka (Muddu Veerappa Nayaka II) by Lingamba. Aḷagiri hardly ruled at Madura for one year and his rule ended by about 1675. Though his political career ended in misery, his patronage to literature and arts found him an eternal place in the History of Telugu Literature. The Nāyak kings of Madura were not very much interested in patronising literature at the beginning. They emulated the examples of the Nayak kings of Tanjore and began to patronise literature. The Nayak kings of Madura prior to Muddāgiri were only warriors and were engaged in building up their kingdom by waging wars with the neighbouring kingdoms; The credit of patronizing arts and literature must go to Muddāgiri. Of course, there is evidence to prove that Kshetrāyā, the famous musician-poet visited the court of Tirumala Nāyaka, the grand-father of Muddāgiri and composed a good number of Padas (Songs of erotic sentiment) in his praise and was profusely honoured by the latter. It was Muddāgiri that encouraged Telugu Poetry in the kingdom of Madura by his patronage. He also encouraged other arts like music, dance and painting. He was rightly addressed by a contemporary poet as 'Andhra Vacōnādhā' which means 'the king of Telugu letters' and also 'Bhavya Sāhitya Bhōja', a king like the great Bhōja in patronizing Literature. He has to his credit three works dedicated to him.

Linganamakhi Sri Kāmēswara Kavi :

Sri Kāmēswara Kavi is said to have lived in the times of Tirumala Nāyaka, Cokkanādhā Nāyaka and also Muddāgiri. He dedicated two of his works namely Rukminī Parīṇayamu and Sathyabhamāsantvanamu to Muddāgiri and the former is not available to us. The latter is a poem of four cantos with the story of Krishna's appeasement of Sathyabhāma. In

it he described in detail the family of Madurai Nayak kings of which his patron, Muddaḷagiri was a scion. The description occupies almost the entire first canto and throws much light on the History of Madurai Nayaks. He has also written another work in prose by name 'Dhēnumāhātmyamm' and it is available in manuscript in the Tanjore Saraswathi Mahal Library. In it Bhīṣma tells Dharmarāja about the greatness of the cow, It appears that he migrated to Madurai and settled down there, his original place being Kāḷahasti in Andhra Pradesh. He is said to have been honoured by the Great Tirumala Nāyak also by several gifts like white umbrella, golden palanquin etc. He was a great poet both in Sanskrit and Telugu and was proficient in Veena as he was called 'Vallakī Vādanadhurīṇa'. He also had to his credit a few musical compositions and the fact is known by the title referred to in the Gadya as Varnagītādigāndharva swarakalpapraveena'.

Gaṇavarapu Venkata Kavi:

Muddaḷagiri patronised another poet by name Gaṇavarapu Venkata Kavi. He was a poet of great merit and also a grammarian. He composed a work by name 'Vidyāvathī Dandaka' in dandaka meter and dedicated it to Muddaḷagiri. A dancer by name Vidyāvathi was in love with Muddaḷagiri and the latter arranged a dance performance in his court. In appreciation of her excellent performance of dance at his court, he honoured her with rich presents towards the end of the performance and later it seems he enjoyed in her company. This work is dedicated to him while he was at Madurai. He wrote another work by name Peddaḷagiri Vijayamu in which he described at length the success he achieved over Ekoji, a general of Idalkhan of Bijapur when he attacked the fort at Tanjore. It is in the form of four big utpalamālikās called Tūrpu mālika, Dakshina mālika, Paḍamati mālika and Uttarapu mālika which in total run into five hundred and thirty lines. This big utpalamālika was inscribed on the four walls of the Tanjore fort. Prof. N. Venkata Rao is of the opinion that this might have been written in praise of Muddaḷagiri when he conquered Ekoji, a general of the Bijapur Sultan in his first encounter with the general. Peddaḷagiri Vijayamu (The great victory of Aḷagiri) was published in the Govern-

ment Oriental Manuscripts Library Bulletin in 1952. The poet mentions in his major work 'Prabandharāja Vēnkatēśwara Vijaya Vilāsamu' that he was profusely presented by the Pāṇḍyādhiśa (King of the Pāṇḍyan country) and other kings of his times with huge elephants, horses, palanquins, gems, valuable ornaments, garments etc. But it is not known who that Pāṇḍyadhīśwara was. It is quite likely that he might be Muddaḷagiri to whom he dedicated his work.

Vikata kavi Gopāla kavi :

Gopāla Kavi appears to be a poet who lived in the times of Mangammāl who ruled as a regent for Vijayaranga Cokkanādhā (1689-1706 A. D.). It appears that the poet was affected by Mangammāl for reasons not known to us. He, in order to take revenge on her, took no pains in describing at length the atrocities, misdeeds, immoral acts etc. of Mangammāl in his work called 'Madura Mangā pumscalī līlā vilāsamu' which means the love sports of the debauchee, Madura Manga. It is stated that he used to chant the Rama mantra as long as he was writing that work of ill-fame to have his sin extinguished. This is a prose work and stands as a sample of the colloquial usage in Telugu in those times.

Vijayaranga Cokkanādhā (1706-1732 A. D.).

Vijayaranga Cokkanādhā was the son of Muddu Vīrappa Nāyaka III and ruled the Madurai kingdom from 1706 to 1732 A. D. after the regency of Mangammāl, his grand mother. He continued the tradition set up by Muddalagiri of his dynasty in patronising letters and in his patronage flourished Telugu literature in high magnitude. Besides being the author of two prose works called 'Srirangamāhātmyamu and Māghamāhātmyamu, he patronised poets like Samukham Venkata Krishnappa Nāyaka, Śēsham Venkatapathi, Bunige Krishna Kavīndra, Velagapūdi Krishnayāmātya, and Velidandla Aḷagiri Kavi. While only poetical works were being written quite in tune with the practice of the times that preceded him, he set up a tradition of writing in prose. Both his Srīrangamāhātmyamu and

Māghamāhātmyamu are prose works which are still unpublished. His Srirangamāhātmya contains ten chapters while there are fifteen chapters in Māghamāhātmya which is dedicated to Lord Srīranganādhā.

Samukham Venkatakrishnappa Nāyaka :

Samukham Venkatakrishnappa Nāyaka was at the court of VijayarangaCokkanādhā and received from him rich presents in recognition of his services to the state. Besides being a general of remarkable ability, Venkatakrishnappa Nāyaka was an author of a few works, like Jaiminibhāratamu, Ahalyāsankrandanamū, Sārangadhara caritramū and Rādhikāsantvanamū. Among these the first and the third are prose works while the other two are poems. Among the works of this poet, Jaiminibhāratamu is dedicated to Vijayaranga Cokkanādhā. In the prologue to this work, he described in an elaborate manner the family history of his king, Vijayaranga Cokkanādhā. Jaiminibharatamu is a prose work of five cantos. The poet dealt with the theme in accordance with that available in the Sanskrit Jaimini bhārata and also the work of the same name by Pillalamarri Pinaveerabhadra Kavi. Though a prose work, this contains the prologue in verse and a few verses at the end. His Ahalyāsankrandanamū is a poem of three cantos and contains 403 verses on the whole, including three vacanas. Indra holding his court in Sudharma and discussing about the most beautiful lady on the earth, the introduction of a new character, Yogini, to mediate between Ahalya and Indra, Indra's calculated attempts to have his desire fulfilled and a detailed description of their pangs of separation are a few innovations made by the poet in the work. His Sārangadharacaritra is a prose rendering of a poem composed by Cēmakūra Venkata Kavi of Tanjore. He composed his Radhikāsāntvana following the Sathyabhāmāsāntvana of Līnganamakhi Sri Kamēśwara Kavi and dedicated it to Gopāladeva. It is a small work of about one hundred and twenty verses interspersed with small vacanas. This is a poem of erotic sentiment and the theme deals with the appeasement of Rādhā by Srī Krishna. It is considered that the

Rādhikāsantvana of Muddupaḷani is an elaborated version of this poem in as much as it contains the same verses found in this poem. But this contention is refuted and it is established that Muddu Paḷani was earlier to this poet and the commonness of verses might be due to Venkatakrishnappa Nāyaka's adoption of them into his work. Besides these works we have a few stray verses also written by this poet in praise of Vijayaranga Cokkanādhā.

Śēṣamu Venkatapathi :

Śēṣamu Venkatapathi is one of the poets who lived in the times of Vijayaranga Cokkanādhā and was a good friend of Samukham Venkatakrishnappa Nāyaka. His Śaśānka vijayamu is a famous work known to the literary world among the works of the south and was dedicated to one Vangala Seenaiāh who was a minister in the court of Vijayaranga Cokkanādhā. We do not have any details of the poet except that he was a devotee of Śrīranganādhā and his father was Śēṣam Krishnaiah. Kandāḷa Ramanujachārya was mentioned to be his 'Guru'. The poem contains five cantos and the theme deals with the love episode of Tāra, the wife of Bruhspathi and Chandra, his disciple. This poem has been attracting people even from the time of its composition and C. P. Brown, naturally, attracted by the beauties of its poetic composition, caused three commentaries to be written on this work namely Cakorīyamu, Tārakamu and Tārābhāvaprakāśika. The publication of this work was proscribed by the Government at one time and it was subsequently lifted.

Vangala Seenaiāh :

Vangala Seenaiāh, to whom the famous Śaśānka-vijayamu by Śēṣam Venkatapathi was dedicated, was himself a composer of great merit. From the prologue to Śaśānkavijayamu, we learn that Vangala Seenaiāh was a great scholar both in music and literature and it is stated that he was very good at Veena. It appears that he had written a poem by name 'Ramanuja Caritra' describing the life and work of the Great

preceptor of Viśiṣṭadwaita and dedicated it to Lord Venkatēswara. But unfortunately the work is not available to us. Śeṣam Venkatapathi, in the prologue to his work, equates Seenaiyah with Bhōja, the great patron of letters and he is described as 'Sarasagadyapadya Racanā bhōja'. Besides Ramanujacarita we have many pada compositions composed by him addressed to Mannāruranga. It appears he lived in the village Mannārurpōlur in the North Arcot District towards the end of his life and his pada compositions addressed to the local diety Mannaru Ranga which are termed as 'Mannārurangani Padamulu' are available in the collection of the padas preserved in the Government Oriental Manuscripts Library at Madras. The famous Pada in Kuravanji rāga which begins with Sivadiḱshāparuralanurā' sung at time of Bharatnatyam performance is stated to be his composition. Thus Vangala Seenaiyah, a minister in the court of Vijayaranga Cokkanādhā, was not only a patron of letters but also a poet and musical composer.

Kundurti Ventācalakavi :

Kundurti VenkatācalaKavi is another poet who was famous in the court of Vijayaranga Cokkanādhā. He was said to be proficient in the four kinds of Poetic Composition (Caturvidha Kavitalu) by name āśu, madhura, citra and vistara. He is said to have written many yakshagānās (operas), Caṭuprabandhas and prose renderings of Bhārata, Bhāgavatha and Rāmāyana, but none of the above is available to us. He composed a poem by name 'Mitravindāpariṇayamu' in six cantos and it deals with the marriage of Sri Krishna with Mitravinda. He had a title 'Kathāśukavi' which means he was capable of extempore composition of any given story. Kārtikamāhātmyamu is his another work which he wrote at the instance of one Venkatācala Reddy of Turalyur. He dedicated it to Gōpālaswamy. This is a poem of six cantos which describes the sacredness of the month of Kārthika.

Baddepudi Yerrabhūpathi :

Yerra bhūpathi wrote a work by name 'Yuvajana hṛdayānandamu' the theme of which is the same as that of Śaśānka Vijayamu'. It is strange to note that two poets wrote works of

the same theme at the same time, though under different titles. This Yerrabhupathi also lived in the times of Vijayaranga Cokkanādhā.

Velagapūdi Krishnayāmatya:

Velagapudi Krishnaiah was also a poet who lived in the times of Vijayaranga Cokkanādhā. His father, Naraharaiyah, was profusely presented by Vijayaranga Cokkanādhā and he was the brother-in-law of Boppūdi Sambaiyah, the Dalavay (Commander) of Vijayaranga Cokkanādhā. The poet hails from a family of scholars who wrote many works among whom Velagapudi Vengayāmatya, the author of Krishṇakarūṇāmṛta was one. Velagapudi Krishnaiah wrote a poem by name Bhānumadvijayamu with the theme found in Kāśīkhanda. This is a work in five cantos and it describes how a young brahmin by name Bhānumanta marries Padmāvathi, the princess of Ujjain. In this, the fifth contains many details about yoga śāstra. The greatness of this work can be known by the fact that it was translated into Tamil also at the same time.

Śyāmarāya Kavi :

Śyāmarāyakavi is a poet who also lived in the times of Vijayaranga Cokkanādhā and wrote Rāmāyana in prose. The Telugu rendering for Bāla and Ayodhya Kāṇḍas and upto seventy five sargas in Araṇya Kāṇḍa in this work only are available to us. The poet has taken up this composition on the instigation of one Subbarāya Chetty, a big businessman in the times of Vijayaranga Cokkanādhā.

Viligandla Aḷagiri Kavi

He is also a poet who belonged to the times of Vijayaranga Cokkanādhā and was a contemporary to Sēṣam Venkatapathi and Samukham Venkata Krishnappa Nāyaka. His poem 'Sudantāpariṇayamu' which deals with the marriage of Sudanta with Sri Krishna is dedicated to Sriranganādhā at the instance of Vijayaranga Cokkanādhā.

Tirumala Kavi :

Citrakūṭa mähātmyamu, a Yakshagānā (opera) by Tirumala Kavi is one among many of its kind that were composed in the times of Vijayaranga Cokkanādhā. This work deals with

the episode that happened at Citrakūṭa otherwise known as Tilla. One day Lord siva asked his Pramathagaṇās about the whereabouts of his consort, Pārvathi. They told him that she was dwelling at the Citrakūṭa. On hearing this, Lord Siva goes there under the pretext of hunting and joins Pārvathi which ends in their marriage.

Sripathi Rāmabhadra Kavi :

He was a resident of Madura and wrote a work in prose by name Hālasya Māhātmyamu' which contains eight cantos. Though it is not mentioned any where in his work that he was a contemporary of Vijayaranga Cokkanādhā, it is presumed so, by the fact that he wrote a prose work in the fashion of those times and also the fact that he was a resident of Madura. He also mentions in his Gadya that he obtained the skill in poetic composition by the grace of Goddess Meenākshi and Lord Sundarawara.

Besides Madura and Tanjore, there were a few other principalities less in importance like Pudukkōta, Turaiyur and Talamala in the south. The rulers at those places also in the Nayak period extended their patronage to Telugu and considerable amount of Telugu Literature flourished under their patronage. As it does not fall under the purview of the subject the details are not furnished here.



General features and Characteristics.

On a close study of the literature that flourished both at Madura and Tanjore we can know some of its trends and general characteristics in theme and composition. Most of the poets selected stories from Purāṇās in which they can describe in full measure the erotic sentiment and adopted them as the themes of their works. A few poets attempted to render some of the old classics into prose in order to make common people of less scholarship understand the contents of the works and as a result a few prose works came into being for the first time in Telugu literature. We have record of the colloquial usage also in a few works written in those times. Besides poets, a good number of poetesses also who were proficient both in Sanskrit and Telugu took to composition and wrote many works. The kings too, besides patronising letters, themselves composed works. There were poets not only from the privileged community but also from other communities as well. There were also a few historical poems called 'Nāyakābhyudaya Kāvyaś' which described the life and achievements of the Nāyaka (hero) of the poet's choice. There existed a few Sāntvana Kāvyaś in this period like Satyabhāma Sāntvana and Radhika Sāntvana, the theme of which is the appeasement of the heroine by the hero when the former was in love – quarrel with the latter. Above all, a good number of Yakshagānās (operas) were written by poets and they were made to be written for purpose of staging them in the court and elsewhere to provide entertainment to the masses. As the rulers patronised the other art, dance, also in their courts a good number of Pada compositions came into being to be used in the dance performances. In this age, the stress was more on employment of ślēṣa and Sabdacitra (Gimmicks of words) than on sense

and sentiments. The poets seemed to have identified themselves with the people and the land into which they have migrated and developed love and reverence towards the places of worship in these parts. The fact is evident by their poems like Srīranga-māhātmyamu etc. The Mahārāstrians, who ruled the Tamil land from Tanjore, adopted Telugu as their court language and themselves wrote many works by acquiring sufficient scholarship in the language that they loved most.



Patronage of Nayak kings to Tamil

The Nāyak kings of Madura and Tanjore, besides patronising Telugu poets in their times, also encouraged Tamil which was the language of the people of the land, they ruled. A considerable amount of Tamil literature seems to have flourished under the patronage of these rulers and also under the local chiefs whom the Tamil poets approached for support. Kumāra Guruparar, a famous Saivite poet wrote many works in Tamil and one among them viz., Meenākshi Ammai Pillai-t-tamil is a work of great eminence. Pillai-t-tamil is a popular type of Tamil literature. This will be in praise of childhood in all its varying stages whether the child be a male or a female. It starts singing of the child from its third month when usually we have the prayer offered for the child's welfare. One Tamil poet remarks about this type of literature thus. 'Even when singing of the omnipotent divinity, it is more charming and enchanting to sing of it as a child.' Kumaraguruparar's Meenākshi Ammai Pillai-t-tamil is a famous work of this type and describes the childhood of Goddess Meenākshi in all its varying stages. The poet belonged to the period of the great Tirumala Nāyaka of Madura and it is said that this work was first read at his court by whose name the Tirumala Nāyak Mahal-his palace-still remains as a monument and is being visited by people from all regions. It is in this palace that this work was first read before an assemblage of great scholars and poets. It is said that Goddess Meenakshi herself appeared in the court in the form of a little girl and took out the pearl necklace from Tirumala Nāyaka and put it around Kumara Guruparar's neck as an act of her appreciation. The Nāyak also honoured the poet with rich presents. Prof.

T. P. Meenākshisundaram writes, ‘We do catch a glimpse of the innocent but divine love in the words of Kumara Guruparar. He has sung of God with love and reverence and with an incomparable joy, worshipping him in the form of the divine mother in her childhood, Meenākshi—He was an ascetic, but probably enjoyed the beauties of the life of a child.’—This Kumara Guruparar has visited Banaras and in fact established a Saivite Mutt there and spread the Saiva Siddhanta Philosophy through his discourses. He is said to have visited the court of Aurangzeb, the then Sultan of Delhi. There are a few Hindustani words in his poems which are explained as occurring there because of his association with north. The fact that Kumara Guruparar read out his work in his court and was richly presented by Tirumala Nāyak stands as an example for the impartial treatment of the Nāyak kings towards the languages of the South.



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5. Telugu works of the poets of Madura and Tanjore.



Appendix I—Genealogy of Tanjore Nayak kings.

Krishna Nāyakudu

Timma Nāyakudu—Gōpamāmba

Timmanāyadu—Bayyāmbika

Pinacevvappa Nāyakudu

King of Tanjore

Mūrtimāmba [Wife]

[1550—1580 A. D]

Achyutappa Nāyakudu

Mūrtimāmba, 1580-1600 A.D.

Achyuta Nāyakudu

Achyuta

Rāma Bhadrudu

[1631-1633 A.D.]

Raghunātha Nāyakudu

[Kalāvati]

1613-1631 A. D.

Vijayarāghavanāyakudu

Raja Gōpālāmbika

1633-1673

Mannāru Dāsu

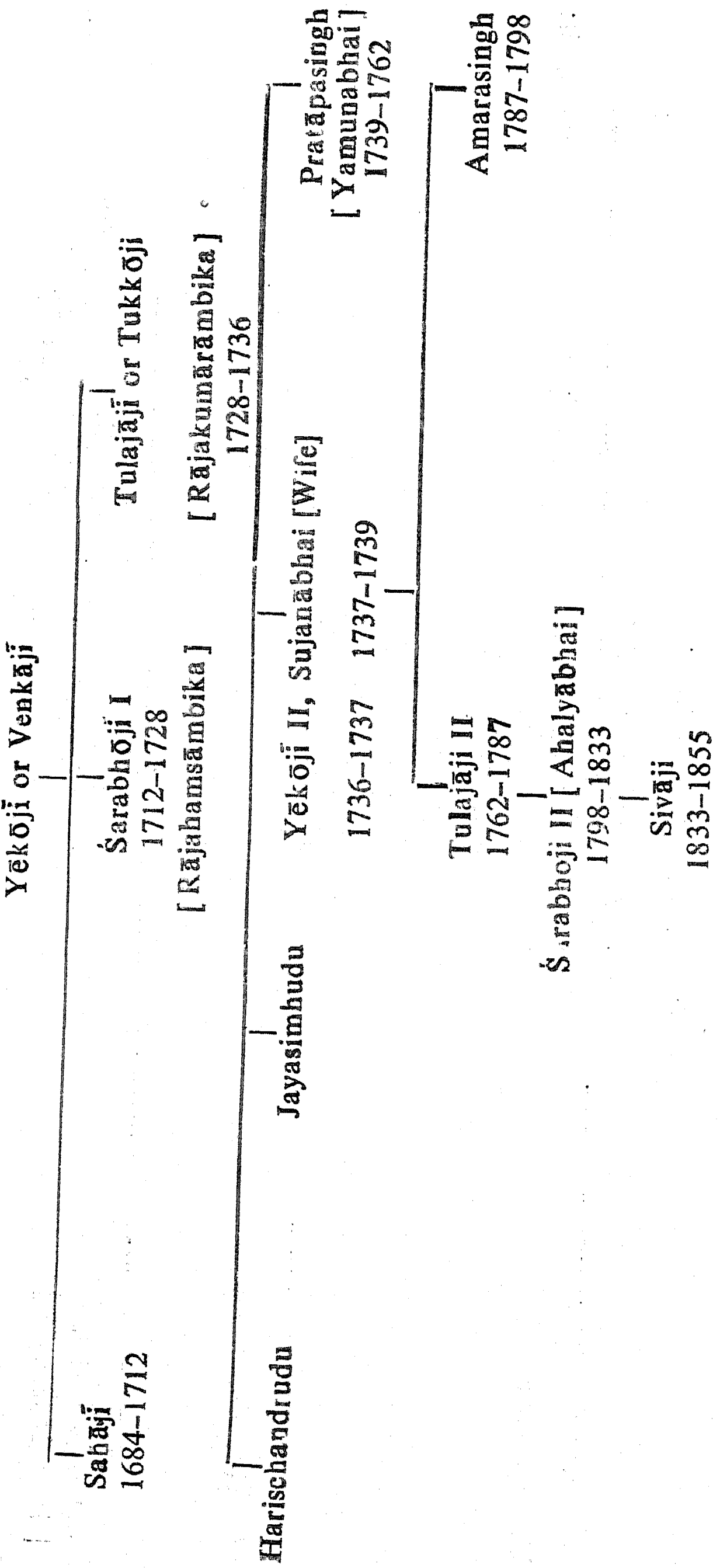
Chengamala Dāsu

Pedamalla

Pinamalla

Pedacevvappa

Appendix II—Genealogy of Maharashtra Rulers at Tanjore.



Appendix III—Genealogy of Madurai Nāyak kings.

Nāgama Nāyakudu

Viswanātha Nāyakudu [Nāgamma (Wife)] 1529-1564 A. D.

Krishnappa Nāyakudu I [Lakṣamma (Wife)] 1564-1572 A. D.

Vīrappa Nāyakudu [Tirumalāmba (Wife)] 1572-1595 A. D.

Vissappa

Kastūri Rangappa

Krishnappa Nāyakudu II
1591-1601 A. D.

Muddu Krishnappa Nāyakudu 1601-1609 A. D.

Muddu Vīrappa Nāyakudu I
1609-1623 A. D.

Tirumala Nāyakudu
1623-1629 A. D.

Kumāra Muddu Nāyakudu

Muddu Vīrappa Nāyakudu II 1659 A. D.

Cokkanātha Nāyakudu
1659-1682 A. D. [Mangamma (Wife)]

Muttulinga Nāyakudu or
Muddaja Giri

Mudduvīrappa Nāyakudu III [Muddamma (Wife)] 1682-1689 A. D.

Vijayaranga Cokkanāthudu 1706-1732 A. D.

Mīnākṣi (Wife) 1732-1736 A. D.

Appendix-IV Annotated index of Tanjore Poets
a. Telugu Poets of the Tanjore Nāyaka period

1. Raghunātha Nāyaka	1613-1631 A. D.	1. Vālmiki Caritra	Prabandha	Printed	A. P. Sahitya Akademy, Hyderabad. Andhra Sahitya Parishat, Kakinada Publication No. 40.
		2. [Raghunādhā] Rāmāyaṇamu	-Do-	-Do-	
		3. Pārijātāpahara-ṇamu	-Do-	Not available	
		4. Gajendra Mōkṣamu	Yakṣagāna	-Do-	
		5. Rukmiṇī Krishna vivāham	-Do-	-Do-	
		6. Jānakī pari-ṇayamu	-Do-	-Do-	
		7. Achyutābhyu-dayamu	Dwipada	-Do-	
		8. Nala Caritra [Dedicated to Sree Rāma]	-Do-	Printed	Late Celikāni Laccā Rao, Sree Rāma Mudrākṣara Sāla. Sṅgāra Grandhamāla (1928)
		9. Sṅgāra Savitri (?) Raghunāthā-bhyudayamu	Prabandha	-Do-	Madras University Publications, Oriental Research Institute, Sanskrit Department Publication No. 2.
2. Rama Bhadrāmba	-Do-				

3. Madhuravāni

-Do-

Ramāyana
Kāvyaṃ
[Sanskrit]

Prabandha

Printed

1. Vāvilla Rāma-
swamy Sāstrulu &
Sons

-Do-

4. Cēmakūra
Venkata kavi

1. Sārangadhara
Caritra

2. Edited by Dipāla
Piccaiah Sāstri
with (Jatakasi)
commentary.

3. A. P. Sāhitya
Akademy Hyd.

1. Vivēka Kalānidhi
Printing Press
(1860).

-Do-

2. Vijaya Vilāsamu
[Dedicated to
Raghunātha]

2. Printed with Tika
By Barūri Tyāga-
rāya Sāstri (1883).

3. Amudrita grantha
cintāmaṇi (1894).

4. By kocerla Rāma-
chandra Venkata
Krishna Rao

(1900).

5. By Vēdam Ven-
kataraya Sāstri
(1911).

6. By Vāvilla Rāma-
swāmy Sāstrulu &
Sons with Tika by
Bulusu Venkata
Ramaiah (1952)
7. Hṛdayōllāsa Vyā-
khyā By Tāpī
Dharmā Rao
(1968).
8. A.P. Sābitya Akā-
demy (1966). —

5. Krishnādhvari 1600-1631 Nāṣadha Pārijāti-
A. D. yamu Dvyarthi Kāvya Not Printed

(Dedicated to Raghu-
nātha)

6. Vijayarāghava- 1633-1673 1. Raghunātha --Do-
nāyaka A. D. yamu
2. Vipranārāyana Yakṣagāna --Do-
Caritra
3. Pūtanāpahara — Not Printed
namu
4. Kāṣya Marda- Drama --Do-
namu.
5. Raghunāthābhyu- --Do-
dayamu
6. Prahlāda Caritra — Not Printed

Printed Tanjore Saraswathi
Mahal Library.

--Do-

Not Printed

--Do-

Printed

Tanjore Saraswathi
Mahal Library.

Not Printed

—

7. Cengalva Kāla Kavi	1633-1673 A. D.	Raja Ōpala Vilāsanu	Prabandha	Not Printed	Tanjore Mahal Library.	Saraswathi Mahal Library.
1.		—	—	-Do-	-Do-	No: 222.
2.		—	—	-Do-	-Do-	No: 223.
3.		—	—	-Do-	-Do-	No: 398.
8. Koneṭi Dikṣita Candruḍu	-Do-	Vijayarāghava Kalyāṇamu	Yakṣagāna	-Do-	-Do-	No: 701.
9. Puruṣhōttama Dikṣita	-Do-	Tanjāpurāna-dāna Mahā Nāṭakamu	Drama	-Do-	—	—
10. Kāmarasu Venkatapati Sōmayāji	-Do-	Vijayarāghava Candikā Vilāsanu	-Do-	-Do-	Tanjore Mahal Library.	No: 603
11. Pasupuleṭi Rangājamma	-Do-	1. Mannārudāsa Vilāsanu	Prabandha	-Do-	-Do-	—
		2. Ushā Parinayamu	-Do-	-Do-	-Do-	No: 140
		3. Mannārudāsa Vilāsanu	Yakṣagāna	Printed	Andhra Sābitya Parishat, Ed. by Jayantī Rāmaiah Pantulu.	—
		4. Rāmāyana Sāgrahamu	—	Not Printed	—	—
		5. Bhārata Sangrahamu	—	-Do-	—	—
		6. Bhāgavata Sangrahamu	—	-Do-	—	—
12. Pedda Dāsari	-Do-	Pada Compositions	—	Not available	—	—
13. Mannāra Dēva	1673-1674	1. Vijayarāghava bhyudaya	Prabandha	-Do-	—	—
		2. Hēmābja Nayakā Svayamvaram	—	—	—	—

b. Telugu poets of the Maharashtrian period of Tanjore

Name of the Author	Date	Name of the work/ works	Type of Com- position	Yakṣagāna	not available	Tanjore Mahal Library	Saraswathi Nos: 501 to 504 -Do- Nos: 505-506	Printed/Not Printed	Publishes/Manuscripts
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1. Śāhājī	1684-1712 A. D.	Kirāta vilāsamu [Dedicated to Siva]	-Do-	Yakṣagāna	not available	Tanjore Mahal Library	Saraswathi Nos: 501 to 504 -Do- Nos: 505-506	Printed	
2.		Krishnalīla Vilāsamu [Ded. to Krishna]	-Do-						
3.		Gangā Pārvati Sam'ādamu [Ded. to Siva]	-Do-						515 to 518
4.		Jalakrīdalu [Ded. to Krishna]	-Do-						521 to 527
5.		Tyāgarāja Vinoda Citra Prabandha Nātakamu	-Do-						530 to 534
6.		Draupadī Kalyā- ṇamu	-Do-						535 to 538
7.		[Ded. to Siva] Panca Ratna Pra- bandha Nata- kamu	-Do-						540
8.		[Ded. to Siva] Pārvatī Kalyā- ṇamu	-						545 to 553

[Ded. to Parameswara]					
9. Ratī Kalyāṇamu	Yakṣagāna	—	-Do-	561 to 567	
[Ded. to Gaurī]	—	—	-Do-	572 to 577	
10. Rāma Pattābhi- sēkamu	—	—	-Do-	583 to 586	
[Ded. to Sree Rama]	—	—	-Do-		
11. Rukmiṇi Satya- bhāmā Sam- vādam	—	—	-Do-	590 to 596	
[Ded. to Sri Krishna]	—	—	-Do-		
12. Vallī Kalyāṇamu	Yakṣagāna	—	-Do-		
[Ded. to Sival]	—	—	-Do-		
13. Vighnēswara Kalyāṇamu	—	—	-Do-		
[Ded. to Siva]	—	—	-Do-		
14. Sankarapallaki Sēva praba- ndhamu	-Do-	Printed			
[Ded. to Parvatī parmēswara]	—	—	-Do-	620-624	
15. Śachī purāṇamu	-Do-	—	-Do-	628-630	
[Ded. to Siva]	—	—	-Do-		
16. Śantha kalyā- ṇamu	-Do-	—	-Do-		
[Ded. to Siva]	—	—	-Do-	644-650	
17. Sati patidāna vilāsamu	-Do-	—	-Do-		
[Ded. to Krishna]	—	—	-Do-		

Saraswathi
Mahal Library
Nos: 610-616

18. Saraswatī Kalyāṇa- ṇamu [Ded. to Krishna]	-Do-	-		651 to 657
19. Seeta Kalyāṇamu [Ded. to Sree Rama]	-Do-	-		663 to 672
20. Sati dāna Śūramu [Ded. to Siva]	-Do-	-		638 to 643
1. Śāhārāja Vilāsa- mu	Prabandha	-		--
2. Saraswathi Kal- yāṇamu	-	-		--
1. Śāhendra Cari- tramu	Yakṣagāna	-		--
2. Rāmamōhana Koravanji	Kuravanji	-	Tanjore	Saraswathi Mahal Library Nos: 500 to 510 No: 587
3. Leelāvati Kalyāṇa- mu	-	-	-Do-	
4. Vāda jayamu	Yakṣagāna	-	-Do-	Nos: 598 to 601
5. Sarvāṅga Sundari	-Do-	-	-Do-	Nos: 658 to 662
1. Rukmāṅgada Caritra	Dvipada	Not Printed	Tanjore	Saraswathi Mahal Library No: 353
2. Abhinaya darpa- ṇamu	Poem	-Do-	-Do-	No: 718
3. Ghaṭikācala Māhātmyamu-	-	-		
Leelāvati Śāhārā- jīyamu	Yakṣagana (Drama)	-	-Do-	Nos: 588-589
2. Śēshacala Kavi About 1700 A. D.				
3. Girirāja kavi	-Do-			
4. Kavigiri or Venkata giri About 1700 A. D.				
5. Balakavi Subba- nna	-Do-			

6. Yēkōji II	1737 A. D.	1. Rāmayanamu 2. Vighnēswara Kalyāṇamu 1. Kāmakaḷānidhi 2. Vasundharā Pariṇayamu 1. Radhikā Sāntva- namu	Dvipada — Drama Kāma śāstra — Printed Printed — Praban- -Do- dham	-Do-
7. Nellūrī Sivarāma kavi	1740 A. D.			
8. Muddu Paḷani				
				1. Sreedhāma Mudrākṣara śāla, Madras (1887) 2. Sree Pārijāta Mudrāk ṣarasāla, Madras(1907) 3. India Mudrākṣarasāla Madras (1910) 4. Sīngāra kāvya Grandha mandali, Masulipatnam (1936) 5. Sree Satyanārāyana Publishing House, Raja- hmundry (1937) 6. Vavilla Ramaswāmy Sastrulu & Sons, Madras (1950) 7. Emesco Ess 18 Masuli- patnam (1972)
9. Matr bhūta Kavi	About 1789		Dvipada —	
10. Sivāji Mahā Raju	1833-1855	Parijatāpabaraṇamu Annapūrna Pari- ṇayamu	Drama —	

11. Venkata Krishna
Kavi

12. Pallavi Gopalaiah
or Rajagopala
Kavi

13. Meratturu Venka-
tarāma Sāstri

Siva Parijātamū

Bhaktajana
Parijātamū

1. Prahlāda Caritra

2. Mārkandēya
Caritra

3. Rukmāngada
Caritra

4. Ushā Pariṇayamū

5. Harischandra
Nātakamū

6. Rukminī
Kalyāṇamū

7. Siva Rātri
Nātakamū

8. Satsanga Rāja
Nātakamū

9. Asatsanga Rāja
Nātakamū

10. Seethā
Kalyāṇamū

11. Jaganmohana
Vilāsa Nātakamū

Tanjore Saraswathi Mahal
Library
Nos: 636-637

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Appendex-V Annotated index of Maduri Poets

Name of the Author	Date	Name of the work/ works	Type of Composition	Printed/Not Printed/Not available	Publishers/Manus- cripts.
1. Sthanāpati of Viswanātha Nāyaka	1530 A. D.	Rāya Vācakamu	Vacana	Printed	Andhra Sahitya Pari- shat Kakināda (1933)
2. Linganamakhi Kāmēswara Kavi	1670 A. D.	1. Dhēnu Māhā- tmyamu 2. Rukmiṇī Pariṇa- yamu 3. Satyabhāmā Sāntvanamu	-Do- Prabandha Daṇḍakamu	Not Printed Not available Printed	Tanjore Saraswathi Mahal Library — Sṅgāra Grandhamāla, Bandaru Govt. Oriental Mss. Library Bulletin (1948) -Do- Vol. V (1952)
3. Ganapavarapu Venkata Kavi.	-Do-	1. Vidyāvati Daṇḍakamu 2. Peddaḷagiri Vijayamu	Utpalamālikā Cāṭu Kṛti Prabandha	-Do- Not Printed	Govt. Oriental Mss. Library
4. Vikatakavi Gōpālakavi.	1680 A. D.	Madhura Mangā Pumscālī līla Vilā- samu			

5. Vijayaranga Cokkanātha	1706-1732 A. D.	1. Srīranga Mahāt- myamu	Vacanam	-Do-	Andhra Sāhitya Pari- shat, Kakināḍa
		2. Māgha Mahāt- myamu	-Do-	-Do-	-Do-
6. Samukham Ven- kata Krishnappa Nāyaka	-Do-	1. Jaimini Bhārat- amu	-Do-	Printed	Andhra Sāhitya Pari- shat, Kakināḍa
		2. Ahalyā Sankra- ndanamu	Prabandha	-Do-	1. Sṛṅgāra Grantha- mala, Bandaru 2. EMESCO, Masuli Patnam (1971)
		3. Sārangadhara Caritra	Vacanam	Not Printed	Andhra Sāhitya Pari- shat, Kakināḍa
		4. Radhikā Sāntv- anamu	Prabandha	Printed	Sṛṅgāra Grandhamāla, Bandaru
		5. Cāṭuvulu	—	-Do-	Cāṭu Padya Ratnaka- ramu
7. Śeṣamu Venkat- apati	-Do-	Śaśānka Vijay- amu	Prabandha	-Do-	1. Bharati 2. EMESCO, Masuli Patnam (1972)
8. Vangala Sina- iah	-Do-	Mannāru Rang- ani Padamulu	Padam (s)	-Do-	Amudrita Grandha Cintāmani (1888)

9. Kundurthi Ven- katācala Kavi	Before 1732 A. D.	1. Mitravindā Pariṇayamu	Prabandha	Not available	—
		2. Bhāratamu	Vacana	-Do-	—
		3. Bhāgavatamu	-Do-	-Do-	—
		4. Rāmāyanamu	-Do-	-Do-	—
		5. Kartika Māhā- tmyamu	Prabandha	Not Printed	—
10. Baddepūdi Yer- ra Bhūpati	-Do-	— Yuvajana Hīd- ayānandamu	-Do-	-Do-	Andhra Sāhitya Parishad
11. Velagapūdi Kri- shnayāmātya	Before 1705 [1530 A. D. ?]	1. Bhānumad- vijayamu	-Do-	-Do-	Oriental Manuscript Library
		2. Krishna Karpāṣ- mṛtamu	Translation	Printed	
12. Śyāmarāya Kavi	1706-1732 A. D.	Rāmāyana Vacana mu	Vacana	Not Printed	—
13. Velidenḍla Alagiri Kavi	Before 1732	Sudantā Pariṇaya- mu	Prabandha	-Do-	—
14. Tirumala Kavi	-Do-	Citrakūṭa Mahatm- yamu	Yakṣagāna	-Do-	Tanjore Sarswathi Mahal Library
15. Sreepati Rāma- bhadra Kavi	1106-1732 A. D.	Hālāsya Māhātmy- āmu	Vacana	-Do-	Andhra Sāhitya Parishat No: 170

could give no answer as they knew their limitations quite well. On that night itself, Srirāmacandra made his appearance in his dream and enlightened him like this. 'You have in your court a brilliant lady-scholar Madhuravāṇi who is very good at poetic composition. It is you that have bestowed on her the title 'Madhuravāṇi' in appreciation of her sweet tongue. It will be nice if she translates your work into Sanskrit.' After having said like this He disappeared. The next day Raghunādhā invited her to his court and expressed his wish that she should translate his Rāmāyaṇa into Sanskrit. She agreed to do so with pleasure and did it extempore. We do not know the authenticity of this account and at the same time we cannot deny the Śloka altogether which mentions about this. On examination of both Raghunādhā Rāmāyaṇa and the Sanskrit Rāmāyaṇa of Madhuravāṇi it is difficult to say that the latter is a translation to the former, the reason being that the Sanskrit work is an elaborated one, while the other is written in a brief manner. It is quite possible that Madhuravāṇi composed her poem quite independently elaborating the incidents in the original. We see the yati and prāsa of Telugu adopted into Sanskrit by her also as in Ramabhadrāmbā's Sanskrit composition 'Raghunādhābhyudaya'. This reveals that she was capable of composing poetry in Telugu also. There is evidence in Raghunādhābhyudaya to prove that she was capable of Samasyāpūraṇam in prakrit also. Both Rāmabhadrāmbā and Madhuravāṇi were considered to be Laxmi and Saraswati of the Nayak's court at Tanjore.

Cēmakūra Venkatakavi :

Cemakūra Venkatakavi, who adorned the court of Raghunādhā Nāyaka, is a poet who is known to the literary world more than anybody among the poets of the south through his famous work 'Vijayavilāsamu'. It is said that he was born of an inferior caste, but it did not stand in his way in attaining an eminent place in Telugu Literature. The fact that the great grammarian, Appa kavi, who purposefully avoided quoting from Vasucaritra of Rāmarājabhūṣana simply because he belonged to an inferior caste, quoted verses from this poet's Vijayavilāsa in his Appakaveeyamu is a positive proof to establish the greatness of the work.