



WOMANISM DURING THE SANGAM AGE

Dr. G. Krishnakumari

Principal, Unique College of Arts and Science, Karapattu, Krishnagiri, Tamilnadu

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Abstract:

In the Sangam era, there was a patriarchal society. According to Sangam literature, women did not enjoy the same status as men. Sangam era was a time of conflict. They did not despise the birth of the female child, despite the fact that they needed more men to fight in the war. They eagerly anticipated the birth of a boy. In the society, the devoted women were held in high regard. During this time, the worship of devoted women began. Sangam women were talented musicians, dancers, and singers. People who were talented musicians were known as "Paanini." Avvaiyar was the era's most well-known poetess. The Sangam contains 58 of Avvaiyar's poems.

Key Words: Sangam literatures, Paanini, Pratiloma marriage, Mudin Magalir, Anuloma

Introduction:

In Tamil history, the Sangam era spans 600 years from the third century B.C. to the third century A.D. Among the works of Sangam literature are Tholkappiam, Aganaanuru, Kurunthogai, Pura-Nanuru, Madurai Kanji, Nartrinai, Nedunelvada, Tirukural, Naladiyar, and Silapathikaram. They have painted a precise picture of Sangam women's status. The Sangam era gave women a lot of responsibility. Despite her husband's income, she had a responsibility to keep it for her family's support. In the Sangam era, there was a patriarchal society. According to Sangam literature, women did not enjoy the same status as men. Many of the rules they had to follow were not intended for men. Punishing a man who left his wife and became a prostitute was not supported by any evidence. There are indications that Sangam age women received the worst treatment. For instance, during a war in Naladiyar, a Tamil king named Nannan imprisoned the wives of his adversaries. His shaving of their hair transformed it into a rope for tying the Sangam era was a time of conflict.

They did not despise the birth of the female child, despite the fact that they needed more men to fight in the war. They eagerly anticipated the birth of a boy. The Sangam age did not affect the women's marital ages. The parents arranged for their daughter to marry a brave man. According to tradition, the bridegroom paid the bride's price, with half of the money going to the bride and the other half to her father. The bride was free to use that cash however she pleased. According to Tholkappiam, a woman should be fearsome, understanding, shy, and intelligent.

Women in the Sangam era played a significant role, but there is no proof that they served as the king's ministers. According to the Sangam literature, queens accompanied kings and assisted them in judicious national leadership. Women were praised for their loyalty and virtue, which were seen as good qualities. According to "Kalithogai," virtuous women who are faithful could cause rain to fall.

They shared virtue as well. Virgins prayed to Lord Muruga in order to find a good husband. Married women worshiped Lord Siva in order to ensure the longevity and health of their husbands. For wealth, they worshiped Lakshmi. To win the war, they also worshiped the goddess of war known as "Kotravai." So, goddess worship existed during the Sangam era.

According to "Aganaanuru," Sangam women excelled in education. For instance, according to Sangam literature, there were 26 poetesses active at the time. Avvaiyar was the era's most well-known poetess. Avvaiyar contributed 58 poems to the Sangam literature. Atti Chudi, Konrai Ventam, Ulaka-Niti, Muturai Nalvazhi, Nanneri, Niti-Neri-Vilakkam, Niti-Venba, and Aranericharam are just a few of the ethical works she produced. Sangam women were talented musicians, dancers, and singers. Paanini were people who were talented musicians.

The king in the Sangam period gave the learned men priority. The mother would be more joyful than the day she gave birth to her son when she learned that he was a great learned man. It is said that it is the father's responsibility to provide for his son's education. Women were treated equally when it came to education. Women were instructed in literature, music, and drama, while men received training to improve their physical stamina. Women were referred to as "Mudukkuravai" when they were skilled in Iyal, Isai, and Natakam. Ilango Adigal refers to Kannaki as Mudukkuravai in his well-known Tamil epic, Chillapathikaram. On the field of battle, some of the educated women offered advice to the kings. They had courage and were on par with men in many other ways. Some of the famous sangam poetesses were Avvaiyar, Kakkai Pattiniyar, Okkur Masathiyar, Natchellaiyar, Nappasalaiyar, Nannagaiyar, Anjil Anjiyar, Adi Manthi, Paari Mahalir, Kopperum Pendu, Pon Mudiyar, Mudanthama Kanniyar, Vennikuyathiyar and Velliveedhiyar.

Mothers in the Sangam age group had the courage to send their sons off to war with joy. The courageous woman is referred to as "Mudin Magalir" or "Maraikudi Magalir" in "Purananuru." Sangam mothers desired for their sons to have the valor to die as soldiers and leave behind a great name. Okkur Masathiyar, a poetess from the Sangam era who lived in Purananuru, wrote that a mother would be willing to have her breasts

amputated if her son fled the battlefield. According to Tholkapiyar, a brave mother saw her dead son on the battlefield with a wound to his chest and was overjoyed and proud of him. According to Sangam literature, a well-educated poetess named Avvayar received a rare, precious goosberry from a Tamil king named "Athiyaman" (which could extend life). This is proof of the respect educated women received from the society. The Tamil word for it is "Karpu." It is the moral purpose's shaky strength. According to Tolkappiyar, "Nanam" (Reservedness, shyness) is more than Nanam in terms of value. Ilango Adigal emphasizes that this is an internal taboo for women in Chillapathikaram.

Love is described as the unwavering affection shared by lovers. They are inseparable and connected like body and soul, serving as a symbol of unification. The husband of Kannaki, Kovalan, fascinated by Madhavi's grace and beauty despite the fact that she was a devadasi in the Tamil classic Chilapathikaram. At one point, Kovalan felt bad about treating his wife unfairly and went back to his wife, Kannaki, to ask for her forgiveness. "You had been living a life of moral turpitude condemned by men of wisdom," said Kannaki. But I pride myself on my unmatched loyalty. However, I agreed to travel with you to Madurai when you said you wanted to do so in order to make ends meet there. She loved her husband more than the entire world, the skies, and the ocean combined. The wife's devotion to her husband was so great that she died with him. Kopperumdevi, the Pandian queen, passed away as soon as she witnessed her husband's demise. In the society, the devoted women were held in high regard. During this time, the worship of devoted women began. According to "Chilapathikaram," King "Sengootuvan" prepared a statue for Kanaki and constructed a temple.

Seven stages make up the life of a woman according to Sangam literature. Paedai (the first five years), Pedumai (5-10 years), Mangai (10-16 years), Madanhai (16-25 years), Arivai (25-45 years), Therivai (45-60 years), and Perilam pen (over 60 years) are the age groups. The girl's marriage was consummated after puberty. Horoscope predictions were to be used to determine the wedding date. The day before the wedding ceremony, there would be a worship service. A garland made of "Sirissa leaves" and "Arugam Pul tuber" (a type of grass) would be worn by the bride. Both in Chilapathigaram and the Sangam literature, there was no support for the concept of "Thali." There was no sign of a fire or appraiser to officiate the marriage. The bridegroom was required to pay for the bride in the Sangam era, according to tradition. It was known as "Mulai Viali." In the Sangam era, love marriages were very prevalent. The wealthy men wed their daughters to the bullfight champion. Child marriages also occurred. This was demonstrated in the marriage of Kannagi and Kovalan. According to Chilapadigaram, Kovalan, who was sixteen, wed Kannagi, who was twelve. Their parents orchestrated this union. A wedding that took place in the Pandya nation was mentioned by Megasthenis, the author of the book "Indica." A girl who was either six or seven years old was married by her parents. The Brahmins of the Pallava era practiced polygamy and had multiple wives. For the purpose of marriage, they did not limit themselves to members of their own caste. Additionally, Brahmin women wed kshatriya, vaisya, and sudra. referred to as "Anuloma marriage" for girls. The offspring of these marriages were accepted by society and given particular professions.

Conclusion:

Education and Marriage were two of the many rights that women gained during the Sangam period. According to "Aganaanuru," Sangam women excelled in education. In the Sangam era, love marriages were also extremely common. Mothers in the Sangam age group had the courage to send their sons off to war with joy. Because devoted women were highly respected in this society, devoted women worship also began there.

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