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P. 526-534

Buldana, Berar.
The 16th July 1938.

Dear Sir,

May I have your permission to encroach on your kindness for information of a nature that is of the utmost use in clarifying certain references in Tamil literature?

The point is "Was there an Imayam in the Palk's Strait?"

My identification of the Sambuttivu of the Puranas as the island of Naka Tivu, now known as Nayina Tivu in the Palk's Strait leads to Kimpurudam, said to have been situated between the Himalaya and Emakutam, being in Naka Tivu. Consequently there was a Himalaya as well as an (Imayam) ~~xxx~~/Emakutam (Gold Mount, Meru) in the Palk's Strait.

In Purananuru Nalliyakkodan is described as "Yal-illor Son-malai Nalliyakkodan" and king of Peru Mavilangai. Now,

Peru Mavilangai is certainly Lanka. Ceylon.
Yal-ill (Yal-illam) is Sarina which was formerly known as Veenakarakkiam (John's History of Jaffna p.5) & now Yal panam.
Son-malai (sorna-malai) is the gold mount, Meru.

Meru was therefore in the kingdom of Nalliyakkodan. Eyil-pattinam and Velur through which Nattattandar passed ~~xxxx~~ on his journey to the court of Nalliyakkodan as mentioned in Cirupanar-rupadai are identifiable as Naka Tivu, the fortified island of Mainaka as stated by Valmiki, and Velanai (the Island of Kayts) respectively. Moreover, Naka Tivu is the Tripuram destroyed by Sivan. The three castles severally of iron, silver and gold were there in Naka Tivu and Parvati took her name ^a Tripur/sundari from this island, in the Imayam of which, she was born. Thus she was called Imayavalli. The name Parvati itself is from the "PAR" of 'Par-ulagu' of the Skandapurana - the Satta Tivu of the Palk's Strait. Imayam was therefore in the Palk's Strait. There are several references to Imayam in Tamil literature, which have hitherto/interpreted to refer to the Himalaya mountain.

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But, I am led to think that some at least of these are refer-
ences to the Imayam in the Palk's Strait. For example, in
Manimekalai

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"நவரம் பெண்கள் முடி மறைத்து
செய்வகம்" p. 301.

(pon mudi micai)

The "tevvakk-kal" was on the crown. It must be a precious stone.
Now, Pattini Devi was worshipped in the form of an Anklet (hence
the name Cilappadikaram) not as an image of the person of Kan-
nakai. The stone (more probably stones, gems) of Imayam (Naka Tivu
Tivu: "Naka ratnam" ^{the name - see p 7 of John's History of Jaffna -} was commonly used for gems from Ceylon) was
for making the Anklet, the worship of which was inaugurated by
Senguttuvan in the Cera Nadu.

Moreover, the place where Senguttuvan defeated the kings (called
"arya" i.e. combined or united, as the resistance offered by
these kings was a collective resistance and not individually) ---
reached by ships "வங்கநாட்டில் ஈழன் வந்த கிழிநகரம்" (Mani-
mekalai p. 301). Surely, Senguttuvan could not reach the Hima-
laya by ships. Even if the kings were of the Aryan race, they
were not of North India. It is noteworthy that there were Arya
Chakkaravarties in Jaffna from the 10th century onwards (see
John's History of Jaffna).

These considerations among others lead me to think that the
"Oyma Nadu" of which Nallivakkodan was king is from "Imayam"
that was in the Palk's Strait. Imaya Nadu became shortened to
Ima Nadu which with the poetic expletive ~~கொ~~ 'O' became "Oyma
Nadu". Could you kindly let me know the Tamil ^{form} word/in which
this name appears in Cirupanarruppadai. I want this name in
Tamil letters.

It will strike you that Imayavar in Imayavaramban Ndunjera-
latan were the inhabitants of this Imayam (Naka Tivu) and not

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of the Himalayas. Two lines in Padirrupattu are significant

தூளங்கு விசுருடை யமங்கு கடன்க்கீக
கடம்புறுத் தியந் திய வளம்படு வியன்மனே.

"Mak-kadal" is the mother (ma) sea, the mother of Mainakan (Naka Tivu) and is the Palk's Strait. The ~~maxx~~ ^{equally} important clue to the identity of the kingdom subdued by Imayavaramban is in "kadamba" tree, the totem of the Islanders of the Palk's Strait. Kadamban is Skanda. Skanda was born in Saravanam Pond in the vicinity of Imayam. Now, Nattattanar says:-

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தீநல் வேணுதியிற் புகுந் தேண்
விநல் வேல வெண் ற் வேலுமிர். (Cirupamarrupadai).

which, I construe as meaning "the vict^{or}ious Velur of valorous (Ven) Velan (where lies) the POND that blossomed when the mighty Velan / (of Saravanam Pond) was born (uthi). Velur is Velanai where Saravanai/is situated. Velanai and Saravanai are current names. Kadambu was therefore the tree-totem of the kings of the Islands of the Palk's Strait and Skanda was a prince of these Islands. His mother too was of these Isles as we have seen ! Thus Imayam & Saravanam Pond are both traceable in the Palk's Strait. The poet's reference is therefore consistent with the identification of Ima Nadu (Oyma) with these islands which are in Lanka (Peru Mavilangai).

What I wish to emphasise is that all these references ⁱⁿ the Sangam works have a geographical value. A still later reference of great importance is furnished by Pughalendioppulavar

பாவலன் வாசலின் வந்திபம் வநங்கப்படி யரக்கூம்
கீவலந் தீந்கும்படி னாவத்தி வாங்குண்டி யென்பதினும்
மேவலந் தந் திண்கிணா னினுந் தும்பெண் டேடுவினாந்
சேவெழுதும் பெருமான் சிங்கை யந் திய சேகரினே.

(கண்டியென்பது.)

Here, "Navakandam" of Sambuttivu of the Puranas and the Golden Meru are referred to as being in the kingdom of Aryasekaran, no doubt an Aryachakkaravarti of Jaffna. There fore, Sabu dwipa of the Puranas was in the kingdom of Jaffna.

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I have written at some length about the proofs of an Imayam in the Palk's Strait to show that my conjecture that "Oyma Nadu", of which Nalliyakkodan was king, was the country where Imayam was situated is not without some justification.

I shall be highly grateful to you for your comments and for furnishing me the the Tamil form of the name "Oyma Nadu" as given in Cirupanarrupadai.

Pardon me for encroaching on your valuable time please.

Yours truly,

D. G. Somu

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