PREFACE

Vedānta means the thought system based on the last part of the Vedas, known as the Upaniṣads. This latter part is philosophical enquiry into the nature of the Ultimate Reality and Truth (Brahmajijñāsa). In it can be found the highest flights of spiritual knowledge and philosophy leading to the non-dual, Infinite, Absolute, spiritual Reality, designated as Brahman. From which the whole universe and all its beings are derived. Brahman is not one against the many, but the one Real in the many.

Vedānta is the common philosophic basis of the various Hindu religious denominations in India. Vedānta is not a religion or religious philosophy. It is an investigation into the total existential Reality and the real nature of man's being. It is metaphysics, philosophy, axiology, epistemology, cosmology, religion, ethics, and psychology all in one. Vedānta on the other hand explores not only the material universe, but also both the animate and the inanimate universe and all our other faculties and experiences, both internal and external. Vedānta accepts the three types of basic proofs in its search for valid knowledge. Revelation by spiritual seers (ṛṣis), scripture (śrutis), reasons (yukti) and realization or experiential verification (svānubhūti).
Vedānta was an intellectual search for finding out the deep rooted secrets beyond the knowledge of five sense organs. There is an Ultimate Reality. We get release or Mokṣa through the knowledge of Ultimate Reality. When one gets Mokṣa he becomes like the self-lightning truth.

Śaṅkara propounded the theory of Advaita Vedānta. There are three main branches of Vedānta the result of three types of traditions, Advaita, Viśiṣṭādvaita and Dvaita. Among these Advaita seems to have been more popular and gathered great number of followers.

Tuńcattu Rāmānujan Ezhuttacchan has a prominent role in the history of Malayalam literature especially in the world of Malayalam poetry where he showed the courage in breaking the conventional concepts of so called rigid understanding of ancient Malayalam literature and then moved forward to enrich the Malayalam poetry giving it a new spirit of reformation. He is known as the father of Malayalam language. The genuine effort of Tuńcattu Rāmānujan Ezhuttacchan was in making Malayalam language free from other linguistic dominance and popularizing the language. So as to be used by any common man, should never go unnoticed.
The people of Kerala educationally and culturally were in dark, during the period between 16th and 17th century A.D. Tuñcattu Rāmānujan Ezhuttacchan was the pioneer among the great souls who had tried to elevate the people of Kerala to the height of cultural reformation. He realized the fact that Bhakti is the sole means through which he can change the mentality of the people, for developing tolerance and friendship among them. He gave more importance to Bhakti in his poems. For nourishing this purpose he has written and propagated Adhyātma Rāmāyaṇaḥ Kilippāṭṭu, Mahābhārataḥ Kilippāṭṭu, and Harināmakīrttanaḥ among the people. Through this the cultural renovation became possible.

Cintāratnamḥ has written by the demand of a studious and excited lady disciple of Tuñcattu Rāmānujan Ezhuttacchan. The lady who was yearned for spiritual freedom requested for Ātmatattva and he sanctified her. Cintāratnamḥ contains 2448 lines in Kekā vr̥tta. All the Advaita principles are subject matter to the whole lyrics. Cintāratnamḥ is a transformed work of Advaita Vedānta secrets that has described in the Upaniṣads. It has objectively described about Brahman, Māyā, ignorance (Avidyā), knowledge (Vidyā), creation (Sr̥ṣṭi), existence (Sthitī), dissolution (Layaṁ), Karma, Jīvanmukta, Mokṣa, etc. Real Knowledge is the
only way to attain *Mokṣa*. Through the Real Knowledge of Brahman every one attains realization as 'I am Brahman' (*Ahaṁ Brahmatāṁ*). This is the nut shell of *Cintāratnam*.

Tuṇcāttru Rāmānujān Ezhuttacchan was the first writer who wrote the book *Cintāratnam* containing the great principles of Advaita Philosophy, with the sole intention of teaching men to regard all as equals. This book helped to develop social awareness and unity in the minds of those who had read and taught it. No one has so far carried out any research, as I understand, on this book, which had exerted the greatest influence in the social history of Kerala. It is in this context that I decided to do research on this book.

This study includes nine chapters. The first chapter is an introduction to this thesis. The second chapter is a description of date, life, and works of Tuṇcāttru Rāmānujān Ezhuttacchan. The third chapter explains the Ultimate Reality and its different states. Appearance or the different types of *Māyā* and its effects are included in the fourth chapter. The fifth chapter is about the appearance of universe. The sixth chapter explains creation. The seventh chapter discusses the various *Karmas*. Liberation is the ultimate aim of Vedānta. The eighth chapter is a vast investigation about liberation or *Mukti*. The ninth chapter is an estimation of the work.
Dr. C. Poulose, Reader, Department of Vedānta, Sree Sankaracharya University of Sanskrit, Regional Centre, Thiruvananantapuram, guided me at every moment of my research work. I thank him.

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VINOVIN. V. A.