# SYNOPSIS
## THE STORY VARIATION OF THE LEGENDS OF THE SIXTY THREE SAIVA SAINTS

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The sixty three Saiva saints are the holy men of Saivism who sacrificed their lives for the sake of Saivism and few of them were great poets. Their poems or hymns were collected as twelve Thirumurais. These sixty three Saiva saints who are called the canonical saints of Saivism were drawn from every important section of Tamil society such as kings, brahmins, chieftains, merchants, farmers, shepherds, potters, weavers, hunters, fishermen, untouchables etc., Women devotees like Punithavathiyar and Mangaiyarkkarasiyar are also included in this list of saints. The epic **Periapuranam** of Sekkizhar which is included as the twelfth Thirumurai describes the lives of these great saints.

## Aim of the Work:

There are so many variations of the life histories of these saints obtained from various sources. Since these stories vary from literature to literature and from language to language, it is very essential to find the different forms of variations and to discover the various reasons and modes of diffusion of these stories. Because of the reasons of local patriotism, cultural diffusion, religious changes, mutual influences of languages and the circulation of folk tales, folk songs and stories, the variations may arise, the causes of which can be brought out clearly by a thorough analysis of all the different versions of the stories.

## Types of Data:

The variations of these stories of Saiva saints are found in Tamil and non-Tamil sources. Since these saints are the exponents of Saivism, every book of Saivism gives details about these stories. Of all, **Periapuranam** is a comprehensive account of the sixty three Saiva saints. It is to be mentioned here that **Periapuranam** is the explanatory literature of Tiruttondattokai by Sundarar and Tiruttondar Tiruvantati by Nambiyandar Nambi. So these three books give full details about these sixty three Saiva saints with subtle diferences between each other.If we come to non-Tamil sources, the sixty three stories of Saiva saints are available in Kannada, Telugu, Malayalam and Sanskrit languages.

Especially in Kannada, the written literary genre like **Hariharana Ragalegalu** by Harihara, **Trisastipuratana carithram** by Suranga kavi are the important Kannada works which deal with the stories of the sixty three Saiva saints with much variations.

## Survey of Earlier Works :

Except some deep study by the scholars like Dr.T.P. Meenakshi Sundaram, Dr.M. Rajamanickam, Dr. Durai Arangasamy and Dr.D.V. Veerasamy no body has attempted a comprehensive and exhaustive study of these story variations. But in Kannada, very few scholars like Dr. Hiremat and Dr. Vidyashankar have made attempts in this field. Dr. Hiremat has prepared a detailed charta bout the books and the authors who deal with these stories. Dr. Vidyashankar compared **Nambiyannana Rágale** with the story of Sundaramurthy Nayanar in **Periapuranam**. In Telugu, Dr. Atilakshmi did her Ph.D., on the topic, "Tamil Nayanmars in Telugu Literature". With the aim of finding the variations of the different versions of the stories correctly, the sixty three stories in **Periapuranam** were analysed structurally by the present scholar for her M. Phil in 1976 as a first step to the present attempt.

## Scope of the Study :

The study is restricted to the comparison of **Periapuranam** and **Hariharana Ragalegalu** to find out the story variations. Since all the stories of the sixty three Saive saints are not availale in **Hariharana Ragalegalu, Trisastipuratana carithram**

which gives complete account of these stories has been consulted for the stories that are not available in **Hariharana Ragalegalu.**

## Methodology :

Since this research is mainly aimed to find out the variations of the stories of sixty three Saiva saints by comparing **Periapuranam** and **Hariharana Ragalegalu,** as the first step, the poetic form of these stories in **Periapuranam** were converted into prose form and the abstract form was made out and divided into different motifs. In the same way, the poetic form of **Hariharana Ragalegalu** was translated from Kannada to Tamil prose version and the abridgements were taken and the structure of the stories were divided into differnt motifs. In this way, 46 motifs were found out in Tamil and Kannada Versions. A structural model was evolved based on the analysis of Antti Aarne and Stith Thompson with necessary modifications.

## Structure of the Dissertation :

The first part of the dissertation is a long chapter which includes the introduction and proceeds with the classification of the structure of the stories of sixty three Saiva saints in Tamil and Kannada with 46 motifs such as 'peyar' (name of the person, place etc.), 'taricitta uurkal' (places of worship), 'nikalcci natanta uurkal' (places of happenings), 'cantitta atiyaarkal' (meeting of saints), 'peyarkkaaranam' (reason for the names), 'maaRu Veetam' (disguise), 'katai vivaram' (description of the story), 'cootanai' (test or experiment) etc. These 46 motifs are identified and then classified on the basis of these three types as follows:

i)        Contradiction:

(eg.)        Problem

⬇

Positive action

⬇

Problem

⬇

Negative action
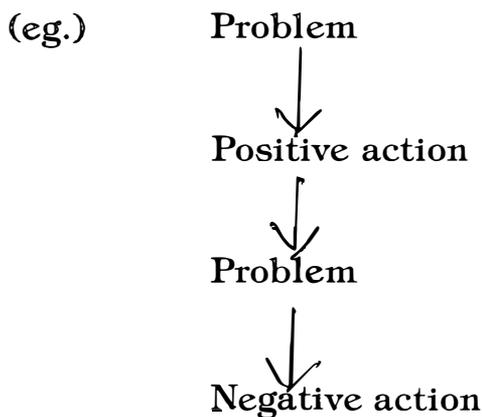
ii)        **Common features:**

| (eg.) | Name of the person |
| | Name of the place |
| | Name of the caste |
| | Solution |
| | Heaven etc. |

**iii)**       **Contrasts:**

| (eg.) | Literary Quotation |
| | Using the numbers |
| | Exclamation etc. |

The second part of the dissertation elucidates the motifs and their occurrences with full details. Then the variations in the motifs between Tamil and Kannada versions are found out and studied in detail. It is identified that the type of literary discourse (eg. epic form,prose narrative form), and the folkloristic aspects (such as tales, songs) of oral transmission are the main reasons for the versions and variations of the stories. Cultural, social and philosophical differences also have played a role in the creation of different versions and variations of the stories.

The motifs are classified according to the common salient features and are studied in detail in a particular chapter. Thus 46 motifs are studied in nine chapters, i.e.,

1.     Story techniques
2.     Test or experiment
3.     Principles of the religion
4.     Folk beliefs
5.     Customs and habits
6.     Principles adopted by the saints
7.     Political informations
8.     The stylistic feactures of the author
9.     Solution and heaven

In the tenth chapter, a brief account of the variations between Tamil and Kannada sources are classified into five divisions and given in a summarised form. A select bibliography is given at the end. An annexure is also enclosed.

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