INTRODUCTION
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Bluttacchan or Tuncattu Bluttacchan\(^1\) is acclaimed the 'father of modern Malayalam'. He is admittedly the most popular and honoured seer-poet in Kerala. The admiration of his country men has built a legendary mass of stories around him. His is an epoch making period. Malayalam poetry attained new heights, perhaps one of its zeniths, in his time. His creations sharpened the aesthetic sensibilities of generations; created a new awareness of classical characters and situations; set new standards in poetic diction; opened new vistas of creative excellence and metamorphosed the literary outlook of generations. No wonder, Malayalam still looks upon him for inspiration and imitation.

Bluttacchan was the architect of an age in Malayalam literature. The age in which he lived, in fact, badly required him. The language had deteriorated so awfully: with it the literature and culture and an overall redemption was indispensable. And, just then, he came.

The easy short-cut to feel Bluttacchan's importance is an examination of the state of Malayalam just before him. Society in general was the boiling pot of petty feuds and clan-rivalry. Vulgar middle class landlordism of the feudal type made society chaotic. Social disorder was the order of the day. Tuft-hunting and
philandering hobbledehoys of feudal ranks were quite a game for voluptuous women. Social standards deteriorated: poetry and literature had ebbed out of life. The advent of the western trading and commercial classes made matters worse. Their ventures, born out of profit-motive disgraced Hindu Society in many ways. The foreigners participated actively in the clan-rivalry and made capital out of the existing social ills. Hinduism was stifled in its internals. It was at this critical juncture in Kerala's social life that Eluttacchan was born. Nature had conspired with time to bring about his birth.

THE NAME OF ELUTTACCHAN

The name of 'Eluttacchan' has got a mist around it. Nothing definite is known about the "given name" of the poet. He is generally called Eluttacchan. This is not a personal name. It may have been a caste name or an honorific title. Eluttacchan is a compound of 'eluttu', 'letter' and 'acchan', 'father' or a 'venerable man'. Giving the meaning 'father' to 'acchan' scholars mistakingly interpreted the term eluttacchan as the father of Malayalam and graciously conferred the title upon the poet.

This is folk etymology. The name is derived quite probably from another source. Eluttacchan, strictly speaking, means a 'guru' initiating children into the first lessons of learning. 'eluttu' is synonymous with language. 'acchan' is derived from
Sanskrit 'aarya' through prakrit 'ajja', 'a respectable man. The term 'eluttacchan' thus means a professional village teacher. It is in fact a title conferred 'honoris causa'. It has nothing to do with the community known by the name 'eluttacchan'. The prefix 'tuncattu' indicates the poet's family name. Hence the name 'Tuncattu Eluttacchan'. It only means the preceptor belonging to the Tuncattu family. More popularly the poet was known later simply as Eluttacchan.

Here arises a pertinent question: Why cannot the name Eluttacchan be regarded as a mere caste denomination? There are two possibilities for such a postulation. The first is that even today there exists an Eluttacchan community. The second is that during Eluttacchan's period Kerala society did observe all distinctions and discriminations concerning caste, and community.

This does not, however, prove that Eluttacchan, the poet, was a member of the Eluttacchan community. The term 'Eluttacchan' need not be a caste label. The following arguments will drive home the point:

1. Terms like "Pilla", "Panikkär" and "Tarakan" are even today used both as caste names and as supplementary honorific titles. When non-members also enjoyed the privilege of such supplementary titles, it is illogical to assume that the term 'eluttacchan' should necessarily be a community label.
2. The community called 'luttoracchan', in general, did not take to the profession of teaching as their hereditary voca-
tion. 6

3. There is the well-known legend 7 that the poet 'Lut-
toracchan' enjoyed the privilege of temple entry. This has not been
disproved or disapproved.

4. But the Luttoracchan community did not have the right of
temple-entry until very recently.

5. The poet Luttoracchan, according to another legend, was
the son of a Nampuurtiri. 8 This would mean that he belonged to a
community of which the woman enjoyed rights of marriage with the
Nampuurtiri community. Marriage between the Nampuurtiris and the Lut-
toracchan women was strictly forbidden then. Luttoracchan, the poet, has
recently been described as 'Luuttacchan's-jam', an old-day lamp-light-festival, usually
revealed that he was a "Paadajan", a "Suudra". 9 There was no reli-
gious or social taboo then against a Nampuurtiri Brahmin marrying
a 'Suudra woman. It is, therefore, probable that a 'Suudra woman's
maternity made him a 'Suudra' by caste.

6. The poet, says another legend, was a 'cakkaalanaayar'. 10
'Cakkaala' s were a sub-caste of 'Naayar community'. The name derives
from 'cakkaal', 'oil-press'. There was no such oil milling business
done by Luttoracchan community. Luttoracchans and Cakkaal Naayars
were distinct castes. There is a story that
Deevanaaraayana, the king of Cempaka's seer, dismantled all 'cakkus' to the north of Ambalapula out of his personal esteem and regard for Eluttacchan, the poet. Oilmilking was a calling of low status and the dismantling was aimed at removing the traces of inferiority to which the poet may have been wedded by his birth. This shows that the term 'Eluttacchan' was not a communal surname.

7. The "Guru Matham", 'preceptor-house' at 'GiriRuur', it is said, was founded by Eluttacchan the poet, himself. This 'subsidiary temple' has a nine-day lamplight-festival, annually held during the Navaraatri season in the month of Kanni. The first day's illumination is still called "Eluttacchan vilakku", literally 'Eluttacchan-lamp'. Subscriptions from members of the Naayar community alone are used now to meet its expense.

To sum up:

(a) The term "Eluttacchan" is neither a communal surname nor a given name but a title conferred honoris causa.

(b) The poet's given name sank into oblivion and his family-name alone survives even to-day.

(c) The name Eluttacchan literally means the 'preceptor' not the 'father of Malayalam language'. The word only means a teacher par excellence.

(d) The word 'acchan' is derived from the Sanskrit 'aarya'.
through the Prakrit 'ajja'. The following arguments have

(c) Eluttacchan, the poet, was not a member of the
Eluttacchan community.

ELUTTACCHAN'S GIVEN NAME

We have practically no evidence to determine the given
name of Eluttacchan, the poet. The four names hypothetically
assigned are: 'Saṅkaran', 'Raaman', 'Raamaanujan' and
"Suuryanaaraayanan". None of these can be affirmed with cer-
tainty. There is absolutely nothing in support of the name
"Saṅkaran". One wonders how Eluttacchan's personal name could
have been "Saṅkaran", all because the term Eluttacchan was not
mentioned in "Candroothsava", a manipravala work ascribed to
14th Century A.D. The argument is this: The Candrootsavam men-
tions a poet named 'Saṅkara' and omits the name of Eluttacchan.
Since no poet of this name 'Saṅkaran has been identified, it is
presumed that it must refer to Eluttacchan. Eluttacchan could
not have been left out and yet apparently left out. All other
names except 'Saṅkara are identifiable and therefore, 'Saṅkara
must refer to Eluttacchan.

"Raaman" and "Raamaanujan" also are conjectures. Among
his names, it is true, that "Raamaanujan" is perhaps the most
popular. The term "Tuncattu Raamaanujan Eluttacchan" seen in
one of the editions of "Keeralootpatti" proves that this name
is more than a century old. The following arguments have
been advanced in defence of the name "Raamaanujan".

(1) Eluttacchan was the disciple of Raamaanujan, the exponent of the Vaisistadvaitam or 'qualified monism'.
How did he become Raamaanujan's disciple? There are some explanations:

(a) Eluttacchan, in the course of one of his tours, came into personal contact with Raamaanujan and thus became his
direct pupil.

(b) The people honoured Eluttacchan with the title "Raamaanujan", on account of his propagation and exposition of
Raamaanujan's philosophy.

(c) Eluttacchan had an elder brother named Raaman. Hence the name "Raamaanujan" which means the younger brother
of Raaman.

(d) The name was conferred on Eluttacchan for his
passionate devotion to Lord Raama. He was as devoted to Lord
Raama as Lakesana.

These hypotheses, no doubt, are the offspring of mere
imagination. Raamaanuja was a scholar of the twelfth century
A.D. If so how could Eluttacchan, who is believed to have
lived in the 2nd half of the sixteenth or first half of the

seventeenth century be a contemporary of Raamaanujan? No.

There is absolutely nothing to show that he was attracted to Raamaanuja's Vi'sistaadvaitam. It is, therefore, illogical to argue that Eluttacchan's affinity to Raamaanujan's qualified monism gave him the name "Raamaanujan".

The view that his devotion to Lord Raama gave him the name Raamaanujan can not be maintained either for other devotees of Lord Raama like Hanumaan, Laksmanan and Vibhiisanan are nowhere called Raamaanuja.

The theory that Eluttacchan had an elder brother named Raaman also lacks proof. It stems from the misinterpretation of a passage in Adhyaatma Raamaayanam (henceforth A.R.).

The passage is: "May my illustrious teacher, my elder brother, with his many disciples find a permanent niche in my tender heart, may all other veteran masters and my revered teacher Raaman occupy this niche". It is quite possible that the elder brother-preceptor and "Raaman" were two different persons. The expressions "my revered teacher" and "elder brother" are the bones of contention. These two expressions, if they do not indicate two different persons are tautological. Even if this argument is ignored, as trivial, the difficulty remains still.

We do not usually tag a senior brother's name to a reputed junior brother's. Examples like "Krisnaanujan" as the younger brother of "Krisna" or "Goovindaanujan" as the younger brother
of "Goovinda" are unknown. Therefore Raamaanuja cannot mean the younger brother of Raama. Perhaps all that can be inferred is that Eluttacohan had a veteran teacher named Raaman.

Eluttacohan had a reputed brother. He was a teacher by profession and very likely he may have been the first teacher of Eluttacohan, the poet.

But now arises a pertinent question: Why does the poet attach special importance to the preceptor Raaman alone? What was behind this singular distinction thrust upon him? There must have been something weighty enough. Is it not probable that this Raaman was the preceptor who initiated the poet into the study of Vedanta and other allied disciplines? And if the poet had such an affectionate enlightener named "Raaman" it is just probable that the poet was called "Raamaanujan". But this theory will not hold if the teacher and the disciple were blood-related.

There is another theory: Some scholars are of the view that Eluttacohan's given name was "Raaman". They cite two evidences:

(a) "Ekaada'sam", a work ascribed to Punnasserri Sree-dharan Nambi, has employed a term "Raamadaasan". This according to some, means 'the 'suudra, called 'Raaman'. daasa, 'vassal', it has been pointed out, is a term indicating the 'Suudra caste.

(b) Karunaakaran Eluttacohan, the author of Brahmaanda-
Puraana styles himself as the disciple of the Tuncattu "Raamadaasa".

Neither of these proves that Eluttacchan's real name was "Raama". Though it is true that the term 'daasa' has been employed in Smritis to mean 'Suudras, there is no evidence that it ever had been used in Kerala to mean a 'Suudra. The term "Raama Daasan" only means (a) a disciple of the reputed teacher Raaman (b) or a devotee of Lord Raama. It is not a personal name.

Secondly, the expression used by Karunaakaran Eluttacchan does not compel us to suppose that the poet had the name Raaman. Our ethical and spiritual literary traditions allow a disciple to take pride not only in his immediate master but also in his master's master. The expression "Raamadasssa" used by Karunaakaran Eluttacchan may have only hinted either that the poet was one of the many disciples of a reputed spiritual preceptor named Raama or a devotee of Lord Raama.

There is yet another hypothesis: The name "Raamaanujan" came into being in course of time, from the name "Raamaanandan" which the poet adopted when he was a religious ascetic. 22 But this is unacceptable for two reasons: First, there is no evidence that the poet ever had assumed the name 'Raamaananda'. Secondly, the laws of phonology do not justify this derivation.
To sum up:

(1) The given name of Eluttacchan, the poet, is unknown.

(2) "Raamaanujan" is decidedly the most popular name of the poet.

(3) Many of the interpretations of the names of Eluttacchan are questionable and take us nowhere.

(4) Eluttacchan was not a contemporary or a direct disciple of Raamaanuja. The 'Raamaayana' or the 'Bhaarata' contain no direct references to prove that he was a propagator of Vi'sisthaadvaita system of philosophy.

(5) The expression 'Raamadaasa' only means the devotee of Lord Raama or a disciple of the great teacher 'Raama'.

(6) The name Raamaanujan cannot have come from the name 'Raamaanandah'.

**ELUTTACCHAN'S BIRTH**

There are many legends, probably all mythical, about Eluttacchan's birth. There is a story that he was the son of an illicit union between a Naayar spinster and a Brahmin. It goes thus. A Nampuutiri Brahmin who was on his return journey from Trivandrum by a country craft after participation in the 'MuRajapa' festival was helplessly stranded at night in the locality known as Vettattunaadu. This Nampuutiri Brahmin, however, gained accommodation in a Naayar family for the night.
A spinster of the family, hearing from the guest that he was destined to be the father of a great and glorious son, yielded to him and thus the poet was born. Legends of this kind are very common; for all that, this story may be true.

There is another story. It substitutes a member of the community called "Muus" for the Nampuutiri Brahmin. Such legends easily multiply. There is every likelihood that a Nampuutiri Brahmin was Eluttacchan's father and that his mother was a Naayar woman. But the details given above of the legend are open to question.

(a) "MuRajapam" had its inception long after Eluttacchan's time. Maarthaanda Varma, a king of Travancore began it in A.D. 1751 as an atonement for his atrocities.

(b) Water transport between Trivandrum and Vettattumadu then was an impossibility.

(c) Eluttacchan has stated plainly that he had an elder brother, very scholarly and erudite. His mother could not have been a virgin or spinster when he was conceived.

There is also a legend about Eluttacchan's boyhood.

It says that in his early boyhood, one day, when Eluttacchan listened to the Brahmins in the sanctum sanctorum mechanically reciting vedas, he detected inaccuracies and pooh-pohed their ignorance uttering "kaatu, kaatu" 'jungle, Rubbish'. This comment, says the legend, infuriated the Brahmins
...and, in turn, they pronounced a curse that the boy be an idiot. Eluttacchan's father gave him liquor to cure him of his idiocy, and thereafter Eluttacchan took to drink and became a drunkard. 27

This is equally incredible. First, the entry of a non-Brahmin in the sanctum sanctorum of a temple in those days was strictly forbidden. Secondly, a teen aged 'Suudra boy however intelligent he might be, cannot detect lapses and errors in the recitation of vedas. Thirdly, there is no evidence whatever to make Eluttacchan's father as the evil genius who turned the poet a drunkard. The story of drunkenness was most probably thrust upon Eluttacchan, the champions of green-eyed jealousy, who, noticed to their despair, that even in boyhood Eluttacchan was a perfect specimen of intellectual precocity. Fourthly, Eluttacchan was not against Brahmins. He did praise Brahmins in the A.R.(K). 29 He might yet have had to face some opposition from a section of highly orthodox and conservative Brahmins at an early stage of his career. But certainly he must have had warm support and patronage from the more enlightened members of that community. The address to Brahmins in the A.R.(K) might thus be construed as the direct expression of his veneration to Brahmins.
THE BIRTH PLACE OF ELUTTACCHAN

The two facts absolutely un-disputed about Eluttacchan are: (1) he was born in Tuncan Parampu at Trikkandiyur, (2) he authored the A.R.(K) and the Mahaabhaarata (M.B).

The Tuncan Parampu is adjacent to the celebrated 'Siva temple at Trikkandiyur near the Tirur Railway Station in Malappuram District. The people link this place with Eluttacchan even to-day. And this is the site of Tuncan Mathom, "TunCan House" erected in memory of Eluttacchan, the poet.

THE PERIOD WHEN ELUTTACCHAN LIVED

The period of Eluttacchan's lifetime has not yet been clearly established. Various periods from the beginning of 7th Century M.E. to 9th Century M.E. have been suggested. The most probable date is 8th Century M.E.

Those who fix the seventeenth century A.D. 30 and the period around 600 M.E. 31 as probable have no corroborating evidence. But those who assign M.E.700-800 32 have, among other things, two bits of evidence:

(a) the contemporaneity of Eluttacchan and Melputtur-Bhattatiri. Melputtur Bhattatiri, according to the Kali calendar completed "Naarasyaniiyan", his magnumopus on the 28th day of Vrisiccom of M.E.762 33. Eluttacchan must have, therefore, lived between 700 and 800 M.E.

(b) The A.R.(K), says another Kali calendar, was brought to the king of Ambalapula in 737 M.E. by an alien Brahmin. 34
There has been a great deal of discussion on the question of the contemporaneity of Eluttacchan and Melputtuur-Bhattatiri. Nedumbayil Krishnan As'saan, a scholar of great repute, has stated that Melputtuur Bhattatiri was born in 735 M.E. and died in 841 M.E. This assertion, however, is questionable for the following reasons:

(a) Melputtuur Bhattatiri, in his 'carama slooka' 'mourning verse' on Trikkandiyuur Achuta Pisaarooti, his celebrated 'Guru', has mentioned that Pisaarooti died in 1621 A.D. But according to Krishnan As'saan Melputtuur Bhattatiri lived between 1560 and 1666 A.D.

(b) Melputtuur Bhattatiri, it is said, began composing Maanaveedoodayam, a basic text on Mimaamsa, but died before completing it, and that one 'Naaraayana Pundita' completed the book later under orders from Maanaveedan, the king of Calicut. King Maanaveedan is believed to have ruled between 1655 and 1658 A.D. It, therefore, seems established that Melputtuur Bhattatiri must have died before 1658 A.D.

Those who surmise circa 700 M.E. as the probable date rest Eluttacchan's 'Guru', if he were such a teacher. Strictly speaking, on the following proofs:

(1) The availability of a Kali date mentioning the date of the execution of the deed of gift purporting to have been executed by Eluttacchan in favour of certain Brahmins granting them plots of land. The record is said to be still available in the "Chi...
(2) The mention of one Niilakantha Guru in the "Hari-
naamakirttana", a work ascribed to Eluttacchan.

The Kali Dina afore mentioned shows clearly that the
gift or donation of land was effected on the eleventh day of the
month of Tulaam, in 729 M.E. Niilakantha Guru mentioned in "Hari-
naamakirttana" is identified with "Niilakantha Soomayaaji", the
author of "Aarya Bhatiyam" and he is said to have composed it
in 676 M.E. 40

The evidence based on the record of the gift of land said
to be now available in the Chithoor Mathom cannot be accepted
implicitly. No authentic evidence is available to establish that
the deed was actually executed by Eluttacchan. We may also reason-
ably doubt whether Eluttacchan himself was the author of "Harinaama-
kiirttana". Nothing is mentioned about Niilakantha Guru in the
A.R. (K) where Eluttacchan makes his obeisance to number of 'saccaar-
yas' 'preceptors'.

Definitely Eluttacchan must not have ignored the name of
Niilakantha Guru, if he had such a teacher. Strictly speaking,
a 'guru' means a spiritual preceptor. The omission of the name of
Niilakantha Guru, is therefore, a positive proof against the exist-
ence of any relationship between them.

The palace library at Trivandrum has a palm-leaf copy of the
Adhyatma Ramayana dated 685 M.E. The original, it is surmised, must have been in vogue at least for fifty years before this date. This, according to P.K. Narayana Pillai, establishes two facts:

1. Eluttacchan must have composed the A.R.(K) before 685 M.E.
2. and he must have lived between 600 and 700 M.E.

Some scholars affirm that Eluttacchan was born in 661 M.E. and died in 732 M.E. They cite two grounds:

(a) The record of one Kalyana Sundaram, a Telugu hermit believed to be a contemporary of Eluttacchan. This work, very probably, is a fake document, fabricated by one P.R. Menon. Nothing definite can, therefore, come out of this un-genuine record.

(b) A stanza of Suurya Naaraayanan Eluttacchan, on the 'Samaadhi', 'emancipation' of his 'guru', presumably the poet. This 'sloka', making use of the Kali calendar, mentions that the 'Samaadhi' occurred on Tuesday Uttrom, the twenty-fourth day of the month of Dhanu in M.E. 732.

The acceptability of this interpretation is doubtful. Nothing is available to show that the "Guru" referred to is Eluttacchan. However, this day is considered important and is observed even now as a festive day at Chikkoor Gurumathom.
"KILIPPAATTU" SCHOOL

Kilippaattu or bird-warbled song is one of the most extensively used literary conventions in Malayalam especially ancient Malayalam. This is one of the tricks of the trade with poets. The poet calls upon a bird to tell what he wants to tell and in epic poetry this convention is nearly always kept. Eluttacchan is one of the early pioneers if not the inventor of kilippaattu which in turn has established itself as a perfect genre. Naturalness and spontaneity, the characteristics of bird-song, said to be the chief virtues of Kilippaattu. Making the bird his mouthpiece, the poet lends his brain, heart, and spirit to it and transfers his individuality to the imaginary parrot. Eluttacchan's Kilippaattu has even been hailed as an "innovation" in literature. This convention invites comparison with other conventional forms such as Kuñoan Namibiar's Tullal and Cherusseri's "Gaatha".

Why did Eluttacchan choose kilippaattu medium? Many hypotheses have been advanced.46

(1) DESIRE TO AVOID ARAM

The poet employed this device to save himself from what is called "aram. Aram is the common belief of the recoil on the poet of an ominous statement made in his work. Fear of divinely ordained punishment for casual statements in fiction is superstition: the poet, perhaps, had this in his blood. So, in his anxiety to escape any harm of this kind, the poet invented the medium of a parrot to sing what he wanted to sing himself.
(2) TRIBUTE TO GODDESS SARASVATI

Eluttacchan employed Kilippaattu to remind us of the pet-parrot of goddess Sarasvati. The Hindu tradition regards Sarasvati as the goddess of Vidya, 'learning'. Sarasvati corresponds to Urania of Greek mythology. Sarasvati, according to mythology, has a gentle bird, whom she fondles and caresses with the utmost solicitude. Eluttacchan, is supposed to invoke Sarasvati's patronage and inspiration by making the pet of the Goddess his own appointed mouthpiece in poetry.

(3) COMMEMORATION OF SAGE 'SUCA

Kilippaattu is made in honour of sage 'Suca, the narrator of the Bhaagavatam. This hypothesis stems from the resemblance of the terms 'Suca 'bird' and 'Suca, the hermit.

(4) IMITATION OF TAMIL METRES

Eluttacchan employed kilippaattu in imitation of Tamil metres "PARAAPPARAKKANNI" & "PATAMKILIKANNI" both of which are suggestive of the names of birds.

(5) RESULT OF BEATIFIC VISION

Eluttacchan had a beatific vision in which God appeared before him in the guise of Suca, a bird to inspire him. Hence the name kilippaattu.

(6) ALLEVIATION OF THE FEAR OF SIN

Kilippaattu is an attempt to make a bird sing because
Ehrttcohan does not want to take any responsibility for what is said in his work especially regarding certain matters of religion in which, being a 'Suudra, he had no right to speak. The poet, therefore, invented the medium of making the parrot sing out on his behalf.

(7) IMITATION OF PADMA PURANA

Kilippaattu is said to be in imitation of Padmapuraana. "Padma Purana", an epic, mentions two lovely little parrots in Vaalmiiki's hermitage which communicated to Siita everything about Vaalmiiki.

(8) APOLOGY FOR HIS VENTURE ON TRANSLATION

Ehrttacchan, in his modesty, employed parrot-device to signify that his translation of the A.R.(K) and the M.B. are mere parrot-like repetitions, not original works.

(9) OBSERVATION OF SUBJECTIVITY

Kilippaattu is made to obviate all subjective elements from literature. Objective narration, being the character of classics, the poet when he wanted to express personal opinions could safely do so, by making a parrot his mouth piece.

(10) IMITATION OF PREVIOUS LITERARY FORMS

Kilippaattu is the imitation of patterns like "Vanti-vantinpaattu" 'beetle song' and "Hamsappaattu" 'swan-strains' which had existed in the language long before Ehrttacchan.
We can adduce many more such hypotheses. Eluttacchan may have been influenced by the belief that Goddess Paarvati kept a parrot as a pet and so he makes a parrot tell the story, in the A.P.(K) which is written in the form of a discourse between Lord Siva and his consort Paarvati. The desire to put forward some logic in defence of the poet's trick, however, seems to have been the prime reason for all such arguments. Needless it is to emphasize that they lack conviction.

Nothing is absolutely new in literature. Every writer takes something from his predecessors and adds something of his own. This is the law of literature. He mingle and integrates existing systems, and makes improvement upon them. The genius cultivates new styles of sensitivity. This applies to Eluttacchan also. Ancient Malayalam, long before Eluttacchan, had certain undeveloped literary forms reminiscent of kilippaattu. Early Tamil poets, for example, made birds their listeners. Eluttacchan appears to have stood upon the shoulders of these obscure traditions when he began initiating his paattu. Works like "Gurudaksinappaattu" 'Song offering to the preceptor' and "Seetubandhanampaattu" 'songs on embankment' ascribed to the fifteenth century A.D. show that an obscure form of kilippaattu was in vogue before Eluttacchan. 'Tiruvaaymoli' 'sacred saying' and UntipoRâsay of Tiruvaacakam of Maanikkavaacakar prescribe the practice of apostrophizing birds and narrating...
to them what they had to sing out. This convention of employing parrots as listeners was well known in Eluttacchan's time.

Here we have a striking difference. Eluttacchan deviates from the Tamil pattern in one respect. Tamil poets address the bird; Eluttacchan goes a step further and makes the bird, the narrator, not the listener and thereby creates a new convention. This, in fact, is a dual achievement: (a) deviation from an established practice and (b) the introduction of a new literary convention.

Eluttacchan's bird is a divinely inspired representative of spiritual wisdom. It has mystic knowledge of man's relations with God and of man's past, present, and future. His parrot, thus, is the keeper, the custodian and the exponent of infinite treasures of spiritual wisdom. Indeed the poet soared to the height of art and fancy and made his song mellifluous.

Some scholars are sceptical of the influence of Tamil tradition on Eluttacchan. History shows that ancient Malayan and Tamil have a lot in common. Even in modern times the works of Vaisnava and Saiva writers of Tamil have coloured the thoughts of mighty minds like Chattampi Swaamy and Narayana Guru. Their psalms show the direct influence of Tamil. There is nothing improper then in attributing to Eluttacchan some affinity with Tamil traditions and conventions. Eluttacchan's
indebtedness to Tamil was indeed, significant.

The notion that kilippaattu refers just to one metre is wrong. The device has nothing to do with metres or rhetorical embellishments. Metres like "Painkilikkanni" and "Paraaparakkanni" of Tamil are entirely different from Eluttacchan's kilippaattu. It was centuries after Eluttacchan that Thayumaanavar composed Painkilikkanni and Paraaparakkanni. They are merely the names of two metres. Eluttacchan's convention is absolutely novel. It is a literary form, a type of poetry not confined to metre or rhetorical flourishes. Eluttacchan made his parrot warble out the melodies which sprang from the depth of his own heart, laden with effervescent ideas and fancies.

Kilippaattu, as a genre, makes use of eight distinct metres. None of them was invented by Eluttacchan; yet he employed them in a new way. Nearly all these metres are traceable to old Malayalam folk-songs, but there is not one song which is written entirely in one metre. Eluttacchan used them with a difference: He chiselled, polished and perfected many styles and imparted a unique grace of flow and melody to what was originally clumsy. Before Eluttacchan, there was hardly any lengthy literary composition entirely composed in any metre used by him. He took up something old and re-fashioned it, making it altogether new. Eluttacchan chose one metre for one 'adhyaaaya' and another for another according to the content of
the 'adhyāya' losing nothing in this process of all the fine emotional pitches and the subtle musical effects of the old folk-songs. His genius absorbed everything attractive and renovated the entire enchantingly. So he came to be called, even though it is erroneous, the inventor of a new literary medium. 

The content of kilippaattu, in general, is religious and spiritual. Devotional songs always have a universal appeal and become very popular. Eluttacchan made capital out of this truth. He set in motion an enchanting mode of poetry and was followed by legions of imitators. If imitation is the expression of admiration, Eluttacchan had it immensely.

Kilippaattu is a distinct and exclusive type of poetry. According to some scholars, this genre is an integral part of the Saṅkīrtana Movement, 61 'School of devotional poetry'. India between 1400 and 1700 A.D. witnessed a wave of religious reformation known as the Second Bhakti Movement which attached the greatest importance to the Saṅkīrtanaas or hymns to God in which His names were repeated ad nauseam. The poets of 'bhakti' developed a type of religiousness centred on devotional hymns and thereby cultivated a new religious consciousness. It was, in fact, a renaissance in religion. Eluttacchan channelised this religious fervour profitably to Kerala. Though
this does not explain the origin of Kilippaattu, it is a fact that when Eluttacchan perfected Kilippaattu, Sanskritta became one of its characteristics.

**ELUTTACCHAN'S LITERARY OUTPUT**

Scholars are least unanimous in identifying the literary works of Eluttacchan. When an author becomes highly popular, later generations of adorers generally attribute to him works he never composed. Posterity thus palms upon exact authors the credit of having written books, which they never wrote. This was, perhaps, the case with Eluttacchan too. To him has been assigned the authorship of a number of books on subjects ranging from Ayurveda, the Indian system of Medicine, to Kerala history. Eluttacchan may have had some small part in the production of some of these books.

Among the books ascribed to Eluttacchan we may summarily dismiss "Brahmaanda Purana", "Satamukha Ramayana", "Bhaagavata", "Iruttinaaluvrittam" and "Kaivalyanavaniita" none of which bears the stamp of his genius. Even "Harimaamakiirttana" and "Cintaaratna" which have perhaps a greater claim to be considered Eluttacchan's contain passages which make one suspect whether they are entirely his works. These compositions, it is argued, belong to his youth: viz. before his ascending the throne of a supreme poet. "Harimaamakiirttana", an introduction to advaita philosophy, may
have been one of the earliest works of Eluttacchan.

The A.R.(K) and the M.B. are unquestionably the compositions of Eluttacchan. No stubborn biographer, no die-hard critic has ever questioned this view. But neither of them bears his name nor do they show any internal evidence of their authorship. Nevertheless, both are universally considered as the glittering towers of Eluttacchan's poetic genius. Kerala, proudly claims these two books and their author as the dearest assets nearest to her heart and soul.

The A.R.(K) and the M.B., technically, are not the original works; but translations of Sanskrit classics. They are composed in the form of kiliappattu and have all the marks of original works.

The M.B., in fact, is the ambrosia churned out of Vyasa's Bhaarata. The A.R.(K) is a re-vitalised new creation. The original A.R.(K) in Sanskrit is not in itself a very attractive work of art. It has neither profundity of thought nor felicity of language. Eluttacchan's rendering was not a slavish translation but a "recreation". The M.B.(K) is a splendid CONFLICT of poetical excellence, profound philosophy and piety-kindling spirituality. It came at a time when all moral and spiritual values were nearly lost sight of and Kerala was a hotbed of vice and sin. The M.B.(K) thus effected a signal change in Kerala's culture.

The A.R.(K) thus marks the emergence of the poet in the Kerala scene. It marks the end of the official-death of the earlier vănavasams and the beginning of a new stage in which the poet is not only inspired by the traditions of the past but also by the inner essence of the epics. The A.R.(K) is a splendid conflict of poetical excellence, profound philosophy and piety-kindling spirituality. It came at a time when all moral and spiritual values were nearly lost sight of and Kerala was a hotbed of vice and sin. The M.B.(K) thus effected a signal change in Kerala's culture.
The A.R.(K) and the M.B.(K) do not display perfect parity in literary excellence. The M.B. is superior in many ways to the A.R. It is a perfect product of perfect genius whose graces made diamonds out of charcoal. Elut-acchan's literary alchemy transformed the translations non-pareil.

THE RAAMAYANA

The story of the Raamaayana has been popular in India from time immemorial. The catholicity of its appeal has not been dimmed by time or familiarity. Vaalmiiki prophesied that the Raamaayana would remain as long as oceans and mountains endure. India had thousands of literary and cultural streams flowing down the fountain of the Raamaayana's infinite expanse. This epic has provided matter for scores of masterpieces. The story of Raama, to a great extent, has moulded India's cultural legacy.

The Raamaayana is the story of Raama. Poets began drawing a halo of divine radiance around him whom Vaalmiiki pictured as an embodiment of all human excellences. This resulted in the multiplication of Raamaayanas and in the idealization of the hero according to the fancy of each writer. The story thus changed with the "changers" and assumed new shapes which the individuality of the poets thrust upon its skeleton-frame by imparting eloquence to Vaalmiiki's 'silences' and filling the
lacunae with the ore of imagination. This premier epic has been looked upon as the summed-up expression of all that the human race prized as its own. This story supplied materials even for the Buddhist works like "Da' saratha-Jaataka" and the "Jaina Raamaayana". The list given in appendices I & II show the distribution of Raama literature in Sanskrit and Malayalam.

THE ADHYAYAATA RAAMAAYANA

The A.R. is a Sanskrit composition based on Vaalmiiki-Raamaayana. Its antiquity is controversial. It is generally believed to be a part of the Brahmaanda Puraana. The story is seen narrated in 61 of the Brahmaanda Puraana. But this does not affirm that the A.R. is a part of the Brahmaanda-Puraana. The following are the other arguments:

(a) Brahmaanda Puraana is an epic in 1200 stanzas having sub-divisions like "Elucidation of themes", "Exordium", "Proof" and "Peroration". The A.R. is too long to be any part of it.

(b) Raamaamanda, an accomplished saint made the Raama cult practically universal in Northern India in the 14th century A.D. His distinguished disciple Kabir popularised it. This was probably the period when the A.R. was composed. The Marathi poet Eknatha (1548-1598 A.D.) has recorded that the A.R. is a book of modern times.
(c) The Bhavisya Purana mentions Raamaananda or Raama'sarma as the author of the A.R.

(d) The A.R., according to P.D. Bachi, may have been composed to make a solid foundation for the popularisation of the Raama cult and the fostering of veedanta philosophy.

Our conclusion, therefore, is: The A.R. was probably composed by some pious votary of Lord Visnu at a time when people desired and demanded a popular work depicting Lord Raama as an incarnation of God. Naturally its author elevated Raama of Vaalmiiki into a god and designed the whole work as a moral and religious guide. Such a book, in fact, was the need of the day. The author of the A.R. must have thought to educate and edify the human community by providing a book to "soothe the cares and lift the thoughts of man". He must have devised the whole work as a guide to Advaita Philosophy.

**ETYMOLOGY OF THE NAME "ADHYAATMA RAAMAAYANA"**

The term "Adhyatma Raamayana" means the Raamayana meant for the propagation of "adhyatmaavidya", knowledge pertaining to self. The word 'adhyatma', evolved from adhi + aatma, means the knowledge relating to 'aatma' 'self'.

The word 'Raamayana' etymologically means the 'Raamasya-way'. It is a compound of Raamaa + aayana where aayana means the legend perhaps implies the following: The lord Raama

The term 'Raamaayanam' thus means the book depicting the way of Lord Raama.

THE VOLUME OF THE TEXT

A comparative study of the A.R. (K) with other Raamaayanas would reveal that Eluttacchan's epic is not as voluminous as Vaalmiiki Raamaayana. Roughly speaking, including "Uttara-Kaanda" it has altogether seven cantos, 500 sargas and 24000 slokas. The number of slokas varies with editions, quite substantially. Vallattol's rendering in Malayalam, has only 23400 verses. The details of the number of sargas, slokas etc. in Vaalmiiki Raamaayana, Adhyaatma Raamaayana and Eluttacchan's Raamaayana have been given in appendix. This list does not include details on Uttara Raamaayana.

THE BACKGROUND OF ELUTTACCHAN’S RENDERING

There is a well-known legend on how Eluttacchan made his rendering of the A.R. Melputtuwar Bhattatiri, says the legend, introduced Eluttacchan whom he esteemed, to his patron, the King of Ambalapula. The royal court of Ambalapula was, then, a nursery of learned men. When a Telugu scholar brought a copy of the Sanskrit Adhyaatma Raamaayana in Telugu script, King asked Eluttacchan to make out a Malayalam transliteration. He, accordingly, made it out first and later made a translation.

The legend perhaps implies the following: Eluttacchan could read
Telugu: the king of Ambalapula was the driving force behind the translation; Melputtuur was the contemporary of Eluttacchan and held him in high esteem.

The patronage of Devanarayana, the king of Ambalapula, seems misplaced. If he had, he would surely, according to custom, made mention of it. The absence of it speaks for itself. Eluttacchan does not mention any patron in the A.R.(K) or the M.B.(K). The A.R.(K) begins with invocations of Ganapati, Sarasvati, Vyaasa and Vaalmiiki in profusion. The poet seeks ardent inspiration and benediction from them. He makes obeisance to Brahmins and Scholars as well. But there is no mention of a king or a patron. Eluttacchan who wrote over sixty lines as invocation should never have omitted the king Deva Naarayana, if he were his patron. The omission proves two facts:

(a) The A.R.(K) was not composed under instructions from Devanarayana, the king of Ambalapula.

(b) The A.R.(K) must have been the first major literary work of Eluttacchan. He must have become sufficiently known when he composed Bhaaratam. Hence the absence of any self-introduction and salutation in Bhaaratam.

The motive behind the translation requires close-inquiry. Having obtained primary education, Eluttacchan, a 'paadajan' may have ventured out of his native village into "fresh woods and
pastures new. Higher enlightenment in Sastras may have been the motive behind his extensive roamings. Eluttacchan may have had bitter personal experiences of Brahminical conservatism which may not have taught him Sastras. Eluttacchan, naturally, may have felt vindictive against the Brahminical monopoly of Hindu Sastras.

Eluttacchan’s native village, Trikkantiyur, was a centre of Sastric learning then. Acyuta Pisaaroti and Vasudeva Pisaaroti lived here; they authored ‘Pravee’sakam’ and ‘Govindacaritam’. Acyuta-Pisaaroti was also the ‘Vyaakarana Guru’ of Melputtur Bhattatiri, the renowned grammarian. They were patronised by king Ravi Varma of Vettattunatu. Had Eluttacchan had any such privilege he would have proudly admitted it. There is no mention explicit or implicit of his having had any instruction from these profound scholars. Hence we conclude: Eluttacchan, after primary education, may have travelled extensively in the region of Chola, Karnataka and Tamilnaadu in quest of higher knowledge. These extensive roamings enriched his knowledge and made him an accomplished poet and an accredited seer.

These roamings perhaps, may have made Eluttacchan acquainted with the A.R. It may have exercised its silent but effective spell upon him. Eluttacchan must have earnestly desired that a great Hindu Renaissance Movement set in motion earlier by Srii Sankara may have its exclusive counterpart and tributary in the limited regions between
the Sahyaa mountain and the Arabian sea.

Eluttacchan preferred the A.R. to Vaalmiiki Raama-yanam. The poet obviously must have had his own reasons: He must have felt the inadequacy in some respects of Vaalmiiki Raamaayanam. Vaalmiiki depicts Raama, his hero, not as an incarnation of God but as an ideal man. The A.R. depicts Raama as an 'avatar' of God. It narrates His life as the way to mukti or 'salvation'. The availability of Kannais'sa Raamaayana, a close translation of Vaalmiiki may also have made him convinced that there was no point in making another translation of Vaalmiiki.

There may have been two other reasons: The first was his commitment to 'bhakti'. The second was his zeal for social purification.

The A.R. is definitely more philosophical than Vaalmiiki-Raamaayana. Eluttacchan found in it what the society needed most then. The poet, in fact, ameliorated it through spiritual enlightenment. The A.R. is, above everything else, a work written with the object of inculcating 'bhakti'. It is a hymn on Bhakti. Vaalmiiki made bhakti subsidiary. But Eluttacchan made it the leitmotif of his work. He outlined simple and austere ways of earthly life, prescribed golden recipes for self-purification and exhorted to make life sublime.

There may be yet another reason. The 'modernity' of the A.R. may also have attracted Eluttacchan. It is more modern and less
popular than Vaalmiiki.

**POLITICAL AND SOCIAL CONDITIONS - A RETROSPECT**

The period of Eluttacchan further demanded such a book. The period was unique in many respects. Society in general and political conditions in particular had made it crucial. Social life had degenerated. Threads of harmony had remained well-nigh snapped. Many independent principalities, claiming the rank of kingdoms had cropped up. The fall of Kula'sekhara Empire rendered Veenaa, Koolattunaatu, Cochin and Koolikkott as independent kingdoms. There had been innumerable feudal chieftains claiming the reins of political developments. While, Kerala had only fourteen "independent kingdoms" in 1100 A.D, it had thirty-five in 1500 A.D. Alien forces also had made their political escapades and emerged as destiny makers. There was no powerful central authority. Petty social feuds and political disputes were quite common. Such leaders had allegiance to more powerful chieftains. There were also the powerful Nayar chieftains. They exercised their bullyism everywhere. They organized kalaris or military nurseries. Neither the "monarchs" nor the feudal chieftains had really any control over the trainees. The feudal chieftains, mostly Nayars pulled the wires of political and social power very easily. Local administrators, in times of war, unscrupulously made use of these improvised militia. The local militia thus gained power and influence in society. Even in politics they wielded power. Their service was decisive and made them critically powerful. The social
and political life of then Kerala, in short, presents a bizarre picture of tragic potentialities.

There was yet another social anomaly. The Namboodiri Brahmins who occupied the highest rank in the social hierarchy exploited the weaker and humbler tenants. They made laws. This, in turn, begot curious social customs. Polygamy and Polyandry were quite common. The Namboodiri Brahmins chose wives from Nayar women and Nayars themselves regarded it a piece of luck. Marriage lost all sanctity. This generated a parallel impact in men. They championed the interests of Namboodiris, fought for them and sacrificed their lives. Women outnumbered men. This, in fine, brought about a social degeneration.

The repercussion was tragic. The polyandry-minded women and the philandering Namboodiri Brahmins begot a chaotic social order. Kalyaanam became a Sambandham, a formality. The powerful Namboodiri Brahmins exercised their sovereignty over a society which had no alternative but to yield. The social life became a tragic medley. It yearned for a redemption. This was exactly the period when Eluttaccochen lived.

The religious persecution and torture let loose by the Portuguese aggravated the situation. They were a menace to Hindu society. They demolished temples; plundered everything sacred to the Hindus and set in motion a policy of destruction. All the political
chaos in Kerala consequent on the lack of a central authority and the tyrannical violence of petty chieftains culminated in the atrocities of the Portuguese. They allured the local chieftains: made them their agents: set one against another and created internal dissensions. The Portuguese dictionary of transactions had no word for religious tolerance. Their religious persecution and the heinous proselytizing tactics rendered Hindu society frustrated. Everything was in the offing for an all-round social, religious and moral re-armament.

The Maavanveedas of Calicut and the Deevanaaraayanas of Ambalapula saw the danger of the growing Portuguese power and did their best to make the national mind for a general Hindu-re-armament. They extended their munificent patronage to persons and institutions stood for the propagation of Hindu ideals. This, of course, went a long way.

The period was unique in another way. The Bhakti cult had swept like a tidal wave throughout India and also had its impact in Kerala. North India shook off its lethargy and vitalized itself against all Satanic influences imposed on it by the fanaticism of Mohammedanism. The Bhakti cult vivified Hinduism and planted into its mind a spirit of protest against alien influences and a zeal for an all-out popularization of Hindu ideology. Among the leaders of this new movement Raamaananda was the most conspicuous. He was considered a southerner and was a votary of "Raama Cult".
He was above all narrowness of casteism and is supposed to have had twelve disciples including a barber, a cobbler and a weaver.  

The Bhakti movement attached the greatest importance to provincial idioms, in which, people, sick of alien influences, chose to express themselves. The 15th and 16th centuries of A.D. witnessed this movement of renaissance all over India. And it was Muttacchan's role to make Kerala also share the glory in the awakening of Hindu culture. This is how he became the poet of the time.

THE ADHYAATNA RAAMAYANA IN MALAYALAM

The lofty motive which prompted Muttacchan to take up the A.R., as has been said, was not merely his desire to familiarize a great Sanskrit classic but to inculcate and propagate 'bhakti' among the masses. He, above all, was a poet of absolute devotion.

Muttacchan, was a poet of 'bhakti'. He wanted man to realize that "living in the perpetual present", blind to the future and impervious to the sacred ideals of dharma was sub-human. "Man partly is and wholly hopes to be" was the golden lesson he taught. Like other poets of Bhakti movement he universalized the Bhakti cult through his mother tongue. History confirms that Muttacchan's motive was appropriate.

The A.R.(K) is not a mere slavish rendering. It is a robust masterpiece illustrative of Muttacchan's imaginative fertility and penetrating vision. The poet has altered the original to such an
extent as to make his work almost original. Eluttacchan's creative acumen made it a work non-pareil.

**Uttara Raamaayana**

Any study of the A.R.(K) must deal with the question of the authorship of the "Uttara Raamaayana Kilippattu" (U.R.(K)). Many scholars regard the U.R.(K) as an integral part of the A.R. and thereby as Eluttacchan's. We differ and exclude it from this study for the following reasons:

1. The U.R.(K), since the days of P.Govinda Pillai,¹⁰⁶ the first great historian of Malayalam, is not considered to be Eluttacchan's own composition.

2. The U.R.(K), in its general design, faithfully follows Vaalmiiki¹⁰⁷ rather than the A.R. It is impossible to believe that Eluttacchan who has not drawn much from Vaalmiiki in other cantos blindly followed him in the U.R.(K) alone.

3. The author of the U.R.(K) closely imitates "Kanna's Raamaayanam".¹⁰⁸ Eluttacchan too reminds us here and there of Kanna's "Raamaayanam."¹⁰⁹ But in the U.R.(K) the indebtedness to Kanna's sa almost amounts to plagiarism. The slavish imitator of Kanna's sa Raamaayana cannot be Eluttacchan.

4. Habitual readers of the A.R. who recite it ritually in the Mandalam season, beginning with the first day of Vri'scikam, very seldom read the U.R.(K). They read only up to Yuddhakaanda,
'war-canto'. They consider it complete when it ends with Raama's investiture at Ayodhya at the end of the war. Had the U.R.(K) been regarded as an integral part of the A.R.(K), devotees would never exclude it. This exclusion itself throws grave doubts on Eluttacchan's authorship of the U.R.(K).

5. The prefatory parts of the U.R.(K) and the A.R.(K) have substantial differences. The latter is in the form of a dialogue between Lord 'Siva and his spouse, Paarvati. The U.R.(K) has no counterpart to this; nor does it contain the frequent lengthy praise of Lord Raama found in A.R.(K). Himself intensely pious, Eluttacchan made it a rule with him to guide his readers along the path of 'bhakti'.

6. The U.R.(K), in artistic perfection, is inferior to the A.R.(K) and has many serious flaws in the translation. It is hard to believe that both were by the same author.

7. The U.R.(K) and the A.R.(K) make use of different names for "chapters". The former calls a chapter an "adhyaya" and the latter a "kaandam".

8. The stylistic features demarcate both the U.R.(K) and the A.R.(K) as distinct compositions. The A.R. pinpoints bhakti as its leitmotif and this is conspicuous by its absence in the U.R.(K). The descriptions of the A.R.(K) often betray the cold and lifeless verbiage of its author.
9. The 'Yuddhakaanda' of the A.R.(K) has a 'phala- 
'sruti', 'the fruits of hearing', which most usually concludes 
a religious work. Further the expression 'atmiiti', 'reposed' 
found at the close of 'Yuddhakaanda' seems particularly sugges-
tive and implies that the U.R.(K) actually ends with it.

10. Descriptions of war in the U.R.(K) will deny its 
authorship of Eluttacchan. In the account of the battle between 
'Mandhava' and 'Smaali', within the space of six lines, there 
are three jarring repetitions of the verb 'caattiitineen' 'threw-
he'. Compare Eluttacchan's descriptions of the fight between 
'Baali' and 'Suttiiva' in the A.R.(K). It must convince any-
one that Eluttacchan cannot be the author of U.R.(K).

11. The U.R.(K), further, has some idiosyncratic expre-
sions foreign to Eluttacchan's style. One example: some editions 
of the U.R.(K) have a passage wherein has the obscene expression 
"Pulayasti", 'a whore'. Eluttacchan nowhere descends to this 
low level.

To sum up:
(1) The U.R.(K), in all probability is not the work of 
Eluttacchan.

(2) The U.R.(K) betrays nowhere the characteristic qua-
lities of Eluttacchan's poetry.

(3) The U.R.(K) is ascribed to Eluttacchan only because 
its theme and metre are the same as of the A.R.(K).
THE ADHYAATMA RAMAYANA

Let us now turn to the A.R. (K). It has had several editors and publishers. Almost all reputed publishers have their editions. Details please see in the appendix.

PROSODY IN THE EPIC

There are certain metrical principles in Malayalam. 

Maatra, mora, is the metre-criterion. It is the time required for the enunciation of a short vowel. Long vowels and short vowels preceding stressed consonant clusters and -m have two moras. 

A light syllable, laghu, consisting of one simple vowel has only one maatra, while a long syllable, 'diirgha' have two maatras. The symbols - and -v denote guru and laghu respectively. 'Ganam' and 'yatiti' are two other technical terms used: ganam is the metrical unit and yati is the metrical pause.

DETAILS OF METRES USED IN A.R.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>S.N.</th>
<th>NAME OF CANTO</th>
<th>NAME OF METRE</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Baalam</td>
<td>Keeka</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Ayoodyha</td>
<td>Kaakali</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Aranyam</td>
<td>Keeka</td>
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<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Kiskindha</td>
<td>Kaakali</td>
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<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Sundaram</td>
<td>Kalakaañci + Manikañci</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Yuddham</td>
<td>Kaakali</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
METRES EXPLAINED

KEEKA

Two lines constitute one unit in Keeka. Each line has six ganams and fourteen aksarams having the pattern of 3-2-2-3-2-2. Each line must have at least one guru and must have a yati after seventh aksaram. If the first line begins with a guru, the second should follow suit. e.g.

3 2 2 3 2 2
'Sriiraama/naamam/paati/vannapai/akili/vpennee/

KAAKALI

A unit in Kaakali consists of three aksarams of five matras in all. Each ganam must have two 'gurus' and one 'laghu'. The first 'paadam', 'line', has four ganams: viz. twelve aksarams and twenty matras. The first and the second line must be similar. e.g.

Saarika/ppaitalee/caarusii/teevari/

Kalakaanci is a modification of Kaakali. Two or three ganas of the first paadam of Kaakali are made laghu in Kalakaanci.
The first 'paadam' has sixteen or eighteen aksarams and the second twelve aksarams. e.g.

V V V V V V V V V V V V V V
Nirupamene/meyana/vyaktam/aakalun/

**MANIKAAHCCI**

Manikaañci also is a modification of Kaakali. The first ganam of the first and second paadams of Kaakali is made laghu in Manikaañci. No canto in the A.R.(K) is entirely written in this metre. e.g.

V V V V V V
Nirupamene/meyana/vyaktam/aakalun/

**THE MODE OF TRANSLATION**

The A.R.(K), as has been said, is a translation: but Eluttacchan's art makes it his own. Eluttacchan's art of translation broadly falls under four patterns: (1) Verbatim Translation (2) Re-inforcement of idea (3) Expansion of Meaning (4) Individual Imaginativeness. Please see appendix for details.
ELUTTACCHAN'S CONTRIBUTION TO LANGUAGE AND LITERATURE

Eluttacchan is the most beloved poet in Kerala. No poet has so far eclipsed him. He is the "epitomized life of the lives of the Malayali race". Prof. A.R. Rajaraja Verma has summed up Eluttacchan's contribution as follows:

(1) Eluttacchan practised and popularised the use of Sanskrit case ending words in 'paattu' as in "Manipravaala".

(2) He gave currency to the 'Aarya script' and thereby paved the way for the large scale employment of Sanskrit Phonemes.

(3) Eluttacchan popularised the practice of juxtaposing Sanskrit words with Malayalam case suffixes.

(4) He effected a change in prosody and evolved kilippaattu.

These contributions in fact are not strictly Eluttacchan's own. Most of them were in vogue before Eluttacchan. He has not reformed Malayalam script; nor did he introduce the 'Aarya' script. Malayalam had works like the "Unnuniilisandee'sam", "Raamaayana-campu" and "Krisna Gaatha" besides the compositions of "Niranam" poets before Eluttacchan and are all written in Malayalam script. "Liilaatilakam" also precedes him.

Eluttacchan, again, has not done much in suffixing Sanskrit case endings to Malayalam words. Kanna's 'az Panickers, the pace-setters of Eluttacchan, had also given currency to such usage.
They had introduced the practice in paattu genre already.

Nor can Eluttacchan be called the innovator of Kilippaattu metres. Traces of metres like "Keeka", "Kaakali" and "Kalakaanći" can be seen in earlier works.

Now a pertinent question arises: Are the views of Keralpaanini totally ridiculous? No. His views also have weight and value. They occur even in prose narratives. He had also employed Sanskrit case ending words much more frequently in the A.R.(K) than any of his predecessors had done.

(1) Eluttacchan employed Sanskrit case ending words much more frequently in the A.R.(K) than any of his predecessors had done.

(2) The number of such words in earlier works is found negligible. But the case is different in the Adhyatma Raamaayana.

(3) He infused certain characteristics of Manipravaalam into paattu and they become more and more close in his hands.

Eluttacchan's contribution to metrical refinement is also not negligible. Even though metres used by him had been employed here and there by earlier writers, no major composition had ever made their consistent use. Eluttacchan used these metres with consistent efficiency and demonstrated their creative potentiality. He was a rejuvenator of Malayalam metres. He imparted the sweetness of music to the country strains and revolutionized existing metrical patterns.
ELUTTACCHAN’S DICTION

The unique excellence of Eluttacchan’s diction merits intensive study. Language functioned under his command. He gave Kerala a legacy quite un-precedented.

Eluttacchan’s diction, it is said, is technically Manipravaala.\(^{115}\) Manipravaala, the ‘yooga’ or judicious mixing of Sanskrit and Malayalam, can occur even in prose structures.\(^{116}\) Eluttacchan’s language is the ‘yooga’ of Sanskrit and Malayalam, and his style is Manipravaala. His works may be described as “Manipravaala compositions in Malayalam metres”.

Nevertheless, we do not generally call Eluttacchan a Manipravaala poet. There may be some reasons:

(a) Eluttacchan’s world lacks the “Manipravaala atmosphere” characterised by the display of tense erotic sentiments.

(b) Manipravaala works of Sanskrit metres must have created the impression that paattu works written in Dravidian metres are different from them. The word “paattu” in Kilippaattu, further, had nullified their Manipravaala traits.

The truth is that paattu and Manipravaala literature were two independent streams flowing more or less on parallel lines. Ever since the “Liilaastilakam” these two streams showed the tendency to merge into each other. Miranam poets refused the phonemic
The restriction of "paattu" and tried to merge it with Manipravala.

Elutacchan perfected and fructified this endeavour.

The following, in brief, are the other features of Elutacchan's diction. The peculiarities detailed elsewhere in this disquisition are excluded. All details are given in appendix.

(1) The employment of verbs in sentence initial-positions. This practice enables us to make descriptions very graphic. It makes us feel that the incidents described are actually happening before our eyes.

(2) The repetition of the same word for emphasis. This creates a poignancy of effect in the reader's mind to grasp the gravity of a given situation. Shapes and forms conceived by the poet lose nothing when they appear in language.

(3) The impeccable mastery over the medium. The language, we feel, is most suited to the occasion and to the sentiments. Sentiments assume life when they are clothed in words. He draws plentifully from Sanskrit and Malayalam as contexts demand. Even when scholarly words are mixed with native vulgar expressions the desired effect is produced: we do not feel that there is any incongruity in the expression. This shows the poet's control over the language. Figures of speech for mere embellishment, have no use for him. Generally he avoids rhetorical language; but when he describes battle scenes he deviates from his rule. These are all his general traits: hence no specific illustration.
(4) The profusion of "lengthy compounds": It proves the poet's liking for Sanskrit. This array of inordinately long compounds reminds us of the poet's early diction. The A.E.K has a plethora of "lengthy compounds". His language in the M.B. is more elegant and his poetry is more enchanting.

(5) The excessive use of Sanskrit and naturalised verbs. The A.E.K has many examples. His fondness for Sanskrit verbs, however, is seen less in the M.B.

**EMPLOYMENT OF SANSKRIT AND NATURALISED VERBS**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>S.N.</th>
<th>PASSAGE</th>
<th>LITERAL MEANING</th>
<th>GLOSS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Papračchaniyaara-yaccuvannu kepee</td>
<td>asked-you-who-by-sent-came-you-monkey</td>
<td>asked, sent by whom did you come here, Oh monkey</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Vidhippuurvakamu-paniccitubaelan-maare</td>
<td>as instructed-initiated-boys</td>
<td>as laid down (in the scriptures) he initiated boys</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>ittaram vilaapioccu sarvarum</td>
<td>thus-lamented-all-they</td>
<td>everybody cried thus</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>taapam muluttu vilapioccu pinnaalee</td>
<td>agony-having mounted-cried afterwards</td>
<td>with increased agony(she) wailed afterwards</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Vriksapravaranam bhasmamasayduuliccu</td>
<td>tree-mighty-he even having become powdered-scattered</td>
<td>even the mighty trees crumbled to powder.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(6) The use of unconventional forms: perhaps this tendency is due more to the linguistic trends of his time than to his taste for
violating conventional usage. Such recondite expressions betray his awareness of the cultural main-currents of the language of his times.

(7) The qualifier-qualified concord. The concord between the qualifier and the qualified in respect of case or gender is not common in Malayalam and is in accordance with Sanskrit grammar. Bluttacchan occasionally observes it. e.g.

"da'savadanasauteanamuhurasakumaaranē"

(Son of ten-faced-him, aksakumaaran (C.C.)

The qualified as well as the qualifier has the objective marker -e. The plural marker of which is not grammatically regular. Bluttacchan uses plural gradations in such structures. e.g.

(8) The use of "'Sithilasamaasaas", 'incompatible compounds'. The language of Bluttacchan is characterised by the use of a type of compound, called "'sithilasamaasa", the employment of which is not generally sanctioned by conventional grammarians. The desiderative compounds do not admit of the meaning of the attributes used before the first member of the compound which itself is a qualifier.

"ahamakilajagadadhipanamaraguru'saasanaal"

The A.R., however, has some forms which do not fit into this pattern. e.g.

(i) The use of "'Ai' in word final position: The A.R. has (I, by the instruction of 'deeva-preceptor' (Indra), the leader of the military example -the of this rather select category all words...) The expression 'akhilajagadadhipan' (all-world-lord) is used to qualify 'maraguru' which, in fact, grammatically qualifies sometimes are grammatically used as nouns. Very likely this shows
only "'saasenaal" since the compound is "sashtiitalpurusa". This does not allow 'amaraguru', the first member, to take the meaning of the attributes prefixed presumably to it.

There are many such examples. Some scholars may find fault with such compounds and 'brand' them as idiosyncratic. Poets have made use of such compounds in early periods and hence they can not be called 'ungrammatical'. And Eluttacchan need not be blamed for using such compounds.

(9) The use of plural predicates: There are certain nouns 'balam' 'army', 'janam' 'people', 'vargam' 'race' which assume a plural character though they are grammatically singular. Eluttacchan uses plural predicates in such structures. e.g. "kaaminiivarggamvilaapamtutanninaar", literally women-group-cry-began-they.

(10) The unique use of 'eto' : Eluttacchan uses this vocative clitic both in masculine and feminine genders. The term inherently implies the masculine gender though its epicene character is seen in colloquialism. Perhaps it shows the influence of colloquialism on Eluttacchan.

(11) The use of 'ai' in word final position: The A.R.(K) has one solitary example -ilai- of this rather obsolete phenomenon:

(12) The use of 'non-causals' as causatives: Non-causals sometimes are syntactically used as causals. Very likely this shows
the influence of Sanskrit. e.g. 'suuciccu' 'indicated', contextually, 'caused to mean' 'dahiccu' 'burnt' is used to mean 'caused to ablaze'.

(13) The use of relative participles instead of participal nouns and vice versa. The phrase 'upadee'sicca'seesam, is used in the sense of 'upadee'siccatinRe'seesam 'after having advised'. 'upadee'sicca' is R.P. even though 'upadee'sicca'seesam' is R.P. + 'seesam' construction. It is used in the sense 'upadee-siccatinRe'seesam' that which was used-of-afterwards which is a PaN + P.C + 'seesam' construction. This peculiarity is traceable in colloquial language.

(14) The use of "translation loans" : e.g. muppura <tripura. tri means three.

(15) The use of Sanskrit words with anaptyxis. Eluttacchan generally adopts Sanskrit words as such. The A.R.(K), however, has some examples of "anaptyxis". e.g.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sanskrit</th>
<th>Malayalam</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>taalpariyam</td>
<td>taatpariyam</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>varisam</td>
<td>versam</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>kaariyam</td>
<td>kaaryam</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(16) The use of negative relative participles like iitaata, ollaata, ooraa.ta and pookaata.

(17) The verbs in the A.R.(K) deserve careful study. The table given elsewhere lists the finite verbs of the A.R.(K). In
146 out of 430 the subject-verb-concord is absent. This table further shows that the omission of personal endings in verb had its beginning in III Person.

(18) Retention of obsolete forms: The A.R.(K) is not a repository of ancient Malayalam forms. Its language is fairly modern although, in some respects, it differs greatly from the language of to-day. It, however, has certain forms which deserve comments.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>WORD</th>
<th>GLOSS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>arakkan</td>
<td>demon</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>amulttuka</td>
<td>to fix</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>alinila</td>
<td>ruin</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>sa'si</td>
<td>blessing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>itam</td>
<td>space</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>itam</td>
<td>pleasure</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>iyanna</td>
<td>having borne</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>uutu</td>
<td>inside</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ennean</td>
<td>said-he</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>crutu</td>
<td>bullock</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>eeRi</td>
<td>mounted</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>eeRRu</td>
<td>hit</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>claa</td>
<td>ought not</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ovvaa</td>
<td>ought not</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WORD</td>
<td>PASS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--------------</td>
<td>------</td>
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<tr>
<td>kanakkku</td>
<td>angi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>kuttalar</td>
<td>en</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>kuuka</td>
<td>to</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>kolli</td>
<td>fire-brand</td>
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<tr>
<td>nasiyan</td>
<td>reason</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>taydkkuka</td>
<td>to beat</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>tuta</td>
<td>turn</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>teenkuka</td>
<td>to understand</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>toolvi</td>
<td>failure</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>tooRRam</td>
<td>thought</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>nallan</td>
<td>good-he</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>palavu</td>
<td>many</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>panam</td>
<td>bet</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>paRRalar</td>
<td>enemies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>poikkkuka</td>
<td>to extinguish</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>maRivu</td>
<td>secret</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>maRukuka</td>
<td>to grieve</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>mittaal</td>
<td>alluvial land</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>miiluka</td>
<td>to redeem</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
(20) The lengthening of final vowels in finite verbs. The difference between finite and non-finite verbs in modern Malayalam is decided by context. Ancient Malayalam had two other devices: (1) the addition of the pronominal marker and (2) the lengthening of the final vowel. The second is probably a compensation for the loss Malayalam sustained when it dropped personal markers in finite verbs. The A.R. (K) has many such examples.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>FORM</th>
<th>GLOSS</th>
<th>REFERENCE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>irunnuu</td>
<td>sat</td>
<td>76-31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>jainnii</td>
<td>descended</td>
<td>112-9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>janicccu</td>
<td>was born</td>
<td>242-14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>tiirnnuu</td>
<td>finished</td>
<td>98-23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>vannuu</td>
<td>came</td>
<td>108-31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>viinuu</td>
<td>fell</td>
<td>77-6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
ELUTTACCHAN'S ORIGINALITY

Eluttacchan is an inspired poet. This thesis, being an exclusive study of the A.R.(K) as a representation of Eluttacchan's language is not a serious attempt to study his poetical skill in detail. Nevertheless, a discussion on the propriety of the title 'bhasayutepitaavu' which his countrymen conferred upon Eluttacchan cannot be avoided.

The expression 'pitaavu', 'father' is metaphorical. He eclipsed all his predecessors and shaped the destinies of Malayalam for centuries.

He created no new characters or developed a plot of his own. He depicted and narrated Sanskrit classics. He has not displayed much creativity in his translations. Eluttacchan was not an ideal translator either. He did not render the originals verbatim. Nor did he conceive a single thrilling situation or context or anecdote which the originals did not contain. Yet he is considered the greatest poet of Kerala.

There is perhaps not a single homestead of a Hindu anywhere in Kerala which does not preserve a copy of the A.R.(K). Its reading or listening is considered sacred. It has become almost a ritual of every Hindu to devote a few minutes of the day for its perusal. Eluttacchan's compositions provided a stable foundation for Kerala's cultural life.
Eluttacchan is an institution in literature. Kerala witnessed in him a seer-poet, a spiritual guide, a religious reformer and a prophet. Eluttacchan educated his countrymen; purified their minds and instructed the purpose of their earthly life. No wonder, Kerala discerned his sage-like propensities first and his poetical talents next. Cattampi Swami and Narayana Guru in modern times completed the social revolution started first by Eluttacchan.

Eluttacchan is a poet with a social motive. The legend on the dismantling of "cakkus" described elsewhere is a case in point. Sympathy for fellow beings is the key-note of Eluttacchan's poetry. His wide popularity is ultimately traceable to the leadership he gave to the society. People loved him and accepted him dearest to their selves. His language became more acceptable medium of 'paattu'. Eluttacchan set a standard poetical dialect acceptable to the common man. He made 'paattu' an effective medium. His diction is marked by musical quality, easy understandability and heart-melting appeal. Language became talismanic to enchant and enslave the commoner.

The A.R. is not the magnum opus of Eluttacchan. It may be his first great literary venture. The inordinately long compounds and the use of jarring Sanskrit verbs remind us of Manipravala. His effort to effect a confluence of Manipravaalam and paattu finds
its realisation only in the M.B.

Eluttacchan's influence on succeeding generations is remarkable. The general appeal he made even compelled the common men to keep them away from good poets like Kanna'sasan. Even to-day his supple verses invite ready reaction from them.

Eluttacchan's rank as an epic poet is certainly high. He earned the rank not just because he translated great Sanskrit classics. His greatness is chiefly that of a poet and a teacher of morality and religion. He taught his people the quintessence of sastric intricacies.

Kerala's culture is deep as the Arabian sea and lofty as the Sahya ranges. Eluttacchan's works are equally deep and lofty. Can we name another poet equally qualified to be called 'bhasa-yute pitaavu'?