LITERARY CONTENT
Language is a tool through which one can express his basic ideas and thoughts. The primitive men used some signs and meaningless sounds to interact among themselves. In the course of time, the system of communication developed a variety of graphical representations depending upon the geographical and environmental variations; however these representations were based on what is known as phonetic system of the language. This view is expressed in the following poem of a Puducherry poet.

mozi enRaal olikkuRipp taane niiril
muTTaiyiTum miin kuuTTam karuttaik kaTTa
vaziyaaka olikkurippai vazankum taane (1)

[Language is a phonetic representation of ideas; even a fish in the water makes some sound to express its intention.]

mozi vaJarcii (Language development)
There are several equivalents to the term ‘word’ in Tamil; some of them are ‘col’, ‘kiLavi’, ‘patam’, etc. Language is not a creation by any individual on a particular day. It is an evolution and the growth of a language during several centuries make it to be called as a developed one (2). According to Caldwell, language is the instinct of a rational being (3). Freud is of the opinion that language elevates the human being from the level of animal to that of spiritual being (4). In fact there is no difference between a dumb and an animal as far as muteness is concerned.

There are several languages in the world varying from place to place and group to group, though all of them do the same function. It is absurd to say one language is superior and the other is inferior. Is there any meaning if the people speaking different languages quarrel among themselves in the name of language? A poet asks and answers this question in the following verse:
[It could be better for all to become speechless instead of quarreling in the name of language. The human minds, which cultivate such disputes, must be changed.]

Tamil poets have no animosity with other languages; on the contrary they respect all languages in the world. This can be understood from the poetic work of Bharati that is given below:

\[
\text{piRa naaTTu nallaRin\v{a}r caattirankaL} \\
\text{tamiz moziyil peyarttal veeNTum} \quad (6)
\]

[All literary works of excellence from other languages must be translated into Tamil.]

Even to know the merit of one’s own mother tongue, he must learn some other languages for the sake of comparison. At the same time, acclaiming alien language without giving importance to mother tongue is a treacherous attitude and is similar to a son being disloyal to his mother. The author of the poetic work ‘ezuka tamizinamee’ (O! Tamil race, arise) attacks such behaviour in his following poem.

\[
\text{inta maNNil vaLarnta} \\
\text{iniya moziyai otukkiviTTu} \\
\text{vanta moziyai varaveeRkum} \\
\text{vaaymai keTTa tamizinamee} \quad (7)
\]

[O! Tamil race, while rejecting your mother tongue you are welcoming an alien language. Are you so much ungrateful?]

\text{mozitonmai (Antiquity of language)}

Though there are thousands of languages in the world, only a few tongues still are alive; Tamil is one among those few. Moreover, no one is able to ascertain the age of Tamil. Bharati elucidates the antiquity of Tamil in the following poem:
[The scholars who are capable of deciding the age of even very ancient occurrences are unable to estimate the origin of Tamil.]

Tamil was supposed to have spoken throughout India before the arrival of Aryans. Afterwards they came to India through Kaiber and Bolen passes and a battle between the Aryans and the native Dravidians took place; the Tamil speaking Dravidians were pushed to south to concentrate on the entire Deccan Plateau (9). This is the perception of the historians.

According to mythology, Lord Shiva taught Tamil to the sage Agastya and sent him to south to spread the language. Abidana Chintamani, a thesaurus is also of the view that Tamil was once spoken in the entire Indian sub-continent and then it was restricted to the present Tamilnadu only.

Tamil, during Kalapra and Pallava period, was admired with Sanskrit and after 14th century with English; still Tamil has not lost its individuality. Tamil speaking society, which speaks the oldest language of the world, has every right to have attachment and bondage towards its language. This is what is emphasized in the following poem:

\[
\begin{align*}
ulaka & \text{ mutal mozi} \\
urimai & \text{ enum mozi} \\
\text{uTaiya tamizinam niitaanoo} \\
ulaka & \text{ mutalinam} \\
tamizar & \text{ enum pukaz} \\
\text{uTaiya uyirinam niitaanoo} (10)
\end{align*}
\]

[Your language is the first and the oldest in the world. You belong to the ancient race of the world. Don’t you know this fact?]
If Tamil is not protected and learnt by Tamils, what will happen? Bharati answers this question.

\[ mellttamizini caakum – puvi miitil \\
piRamozi meevum (11) \]

[Slowly Tamil will die and disappear while other languages dominate Tamils.]

Tamil thus will slowly disappear. Hence it is the duty of the people to develop their language on par with the improved languages of the world. Another poet asks the Tamils to shun the inferiority complex about their language and to strain for its growth.

\[ utavu mozi piRa \\
uyarvu enum manam \\
uTaiya ciRumaiyum uyakkeenoo \\
uyarvu tamiz peRa \\
uriya kaTamaikal. \\
puriya manam ilaiyeenoo (12) \]

[Why do you think other languages are superior and yours is inferior? Don’t you have the duty to strive hard in improving your language?]

Yet another poet requests the Tamils to sing the song of rejuvenation.

\[ muukkaik kizittu varum muzuttummal pool kavitai \\
ezutTavee vaarunikaL ezuccippaa taarunikaL (13) \]

[Come on, present the spontaneous poems and sing the songs of rejuvenation and renaissance.]

Another poet of Puducherry unfolds the literary excellence and antiquity of Tamil in detail as mentioned herewith:

\[ ............... ivvulakil \\
epRu piRantavaL enRuNaravoNNaataaL \\
manRil ciRantavaL maaRaa iLamaiyavaL \\
kaaliil cilampum kavin iTayil maNimeekalaiyum \\
kaiyil vaLaiyum kazuttil cintaamaNiyum \]

168
The age of Tamil is unknown, but Tamil still continues to be young and juvenile. Her legs are adorned with ‘cilappatikaaram’, here waist with ‘maNimeekalai’, her hands are graced with ‘vaLaiyaapati’, neck with ‘cintaamaNi’ and ears with ‘kuNTalakeeci’. Further Tamil is gifted with excellent works of ‘Tirukkural’ and ‘cahkam’ literature.

The poet is of the opinion that Tamil has literary works in abundance, which is the reason for its productiveness and luxuriance.

**The present state of the language**

Tamil not withstanding its literary wealth struggles for its survival. The reason for its exertion, as per the following poetic work, is the people’s craze for foreign languages and their being dishonest.

```
naaNayam illai
narikkuNam ellai
tamizukkut tollai
tarukinRa piLLai
ivan pakaikkoo viruntu
itaRkilaioo maruntu? (15)
```

[People lack honesty; they give trouble to the growth of Tamil; they betray their language and thereby offer feast for their enemies; is there no medicine for this pathetic situation?]

The politicians, officials, traders, general public and all of them are responsible for the present state of Tamil language. They pay only lip sympathy to their language. Many of those who speak about the development of Tamil on the platform enjoy their children speaking an alien language. The following poem condemns the mean mentality of Tamils and their fake love towards their mother tongue:

```
koLLaiyITavee koLkai
kuRikkooLoo tanmalankaL
```

169
Language Developers

At present Tamil needs to be developed. Because of the admixture of several foreign terms, the purity of Tamil is getting lost and this tendency must be arrested. At the same time, it must be kept in mind that the coinage of Tamil vocabulary for all concepts is an impossible task. Wherever, therefore, it is feasible and essential we need to go for pure terminology. The following couplet reveals this view:

\[ \text{tuuya tamizukkut toNTu puripavarait} \]
\[ \text{taayenap pooRRal talai (17)} \]

[One who contributes for the development of pure Tamil must be revered as a mother.]

It does not, however, mean we should be against modernism and be satisfied with only the past glory as mentioned in the poem given below:

\[ \text{pazamaip peeccai vTTiTuvaay} \]
\[ \text{paatai taniyee vakuttiTuvaay} \]
\[ \text{vizaavum kunuttum vTTozintu} \]
\[ \text{viLaiyum veRRi kaaNa ezu (18)} \]

[Abandon the conservatism; form a new path; don’t get satisfied with vain show and being vocal; work hard to achieve success.]

Those who struggle for the development of Tamil must know the worth and eminence of the language.

\[ \text{ulakamozikaL uL uyarntu toogRum} \]
\[ \text{kalaNkarai viLakkam; karuttupputaiyal} \]
Among the world languages Tamil seems to be a lighthouse and a treasure house of knowledge. One, therefore, can sacrifice everything including life, flesh, material, etc. for its protection.

The following poem wants to educate the people who are unaware of their native language:

Language is your life, body, mind and everything; if you are unaware of it, it will be slanderous and abusive for you.

Struggle for language

There is a struggle to keep our language alive. The fight is not between two languages but between the supporters and the opponents of the improvement of Tamil language. It is ironical that the Government order instructing all the officials to place their signatories in Tamil is issued in English. It is sarcastic that those who shout on the height of the tower for the cause of Tamil are running behind some foreign language. The following lines expose their hypocrisy:

People have no attachment towards their Tamil language; our dignity and honour are at stake; is our language placed in the administration? Is there respect to our language on earth?

When will Tamils get happiness? It is possible only when Tamil language gets due share in its land.
viTikinRa eziRkaalai namakkaakumaa – tamiz
viTutalaiyil nammuLLam kaLippaakumaa? (22)

[Will tomorrow be ours? Will our mind be happy by seeing the liberation of Tamil?]

It is ridiculous that even those who studied Tamil, survive by it and teach that language hesitate to sign in Tamil, which is condemned in the below mentioned poem:

naRRamizil kaiyoppam iTuvataRkum
naaNukinRa tamizppulavar ceykai naŋRu (23)

[Even the Tamil teachers are ashamed to sign their name in Tamil. What a pity!]

Tamil medium education

The improvement of a society depends upon the education and the language through which it is given (24). The medium of instruction must be the mother tongue. The modern discoveries and inventions made by Tamil speaking people are almost nil. The reason is the present day Tamil speaking society gets the education through an alien language. If the medium of instruction is a language other than the mother tongue, it may help to seek job but not education in its real sense. Japan, which poses a challenge to the entire world by its new inventions through its native language, is the best example to prove the relevance of mother tongue in imparting education. The mother tongue education must therefore be encouraged. However, the following poetical works comments the present day situation of Tamilnadu in this field:

tamizkkalvi tanjil naaTTam tamizarkkilai

tamiz makkaL payilvatilum tamizee illai (25)

[Tamils are not interested in providing education to their children in their mother tongue.]

aañkilattai araciyalil kaNTaan oonkum
aalayattil vaTamoziyaiik kaNTaan paarum
tiĩkilaar icaiyarankil teluŋkaik kaNTaan
paanikuTaiya putuvaivyilee pireńcin aatci
koTi kaTTippaRappataiyum kaNTaan aanaal
English is dominating in politics and administration; Sanskrit in temples; Telugu in music concerts. In Pondicherry, French is felt everywhere. In Tamilnadu what is not to be found is Tamil.

The programmes of television and radio as mentioned below are no way different.

The public media of information and broadcasting in Tamilnadu give more importance to an obsolete language than Tamil.

The following poem, therefore, gives a call to the people of Tamilnadu to give prominence to their language:

Learn everything through your mother tongue Tamil and give the position of ruling to your language.

Enemies of our language

The enemies of a particular language will normally be those who speak some other languages. As far as Tamil is considered, its first and foremost enemies are Tamils themselves. The following two poems illustrate the same view:

[The people born in Tamilnadu and to Tamil speaking parents become enemies to their language Tamil. Bharatidasan saw such sub-standard people.]
Those who occupy the highest position in the name of Tamil and become rich by using Tamil do not hesitate to destroy the language.

Even the educated Tamils lack attachment and identification with their language; after climbing to the highest place, they kick the ladder.

The following poem satirically illustrates the position of Tamil:

O! Tamil, you occupy the second place not only in the hearts of Tamils, but also in the old paper mart.

The Tamils should strive hard to see that their language is used in all fields like education, administration, science, technology and so on. The poem mentioned below says what ought to be done.

All fine arts must be provided to the people in Tamil; scientific facts should be given to Tamils in their language; they are essential pre-requisites for the improvement for future Tamil society.
The aforesaid discussion in this chapter involves the views and thoughts of Pondicherry poets on the language development, antiquity of language, the present state of the language, language developers, its enemies and what must be the future course of action.

WOMANHOOD

There seems to be several definitions for womanhood. Sociologists considered woman as a property; the patriarchal society regarded her as a source for sexual pleasure. With hardly any exception, woman in the entire world was treated as a transferable commodity. During war she was taken away by the enemies; she was given as a presentation; she even happened to be a bet in gambling (33).

The concept of considering woman as a possession continued to remain till the beginning of the present century. In these situations, individuals like Vedanayagam Pillai, Bharati, Bharatidasan, Thiruvi.ka and the organisations like Dravidian Movement, Socialists and Communists entered the scene and started educating the people in Tamilnadu. They encouraged women literacy, widow marriage, shunning child marriage, avoidance of dowry, etc. and struggled for the welfare of women; the plight has now considerably changed to the extent that women themselves are fighting for their cause.

But the contribution made by men of literature in women’s liberation is unique and outstanding. Vedanayagam Pillai says that the birth of woman is actually due to a good fortune. Another poet Desika Vinayakam Pillai in his following poem says:

\[
\text{maňkaiyaraaakaap \ piRapparRkee nalla maatavam}
\]
\[
\text{ceyTiTal veenNTumammee}
\]
\[
\text{pankaiyak kainalam paarttalavee ippaari}
\]
\[
\text{aRaikal vaLarutammee}
\]

[It is divine austerity to take birth as a woman; ethical and religious values grow only through her hands.]
From childhood, woman grows as a grace and merciful mother and exhibits her unselfishness. Freud in his work says that woman is a fascinating creature of God; she is physically soft, ready to be submissive and hence she never considers herself equal to man (34). Bharati on the other hand wants woman to be bold and offensive against the evils:

\[
\begin{align*}
nimirnta namnaTai; \text{ neerkoNTa paarvai} \\
nilatit yaarkkum anicaata timirnta naanac \\
cerukkum iruppataal cemmimaatar \\
tiRampu vatillaiyaam \quad (35)
\end{align*}
\]

[The ladies who have straight walk, direct vision, fearlessness, boldness, wisdom and knowledge will never commit mistakes.]

On the footsteps of Bharati, his disciple Bharatidasan in a lullaby to female child sings as mentioned below:

\[
\begin{align*}
vaNmai uyarvu majitar nalamellaam \\
peNmaiyaal uNTenRu peecavanta peNNazakee \\
nayenRu peNNai navilvaarkum ippuvikkut \\
taayenTu kaaTTat tamizarkku vaayttavaLee \quad (36)
\end{align*}
\]

[O! lovely baby! People get all benefits, fineness, and well being through women; you are going to illustrate that women are not dogs as scolded by they are mothers of the human being.]

**World of women**

Bharatidasan, the native poet of Puducherry wrote several works on women and their improvement. His poetic compilation includes the following:

- peNkaLaippaRRi pernaaTshaa (Bernardshaw on women)
- kaimmaippazi (Abusing widows)
- kaimmaikkoTumai (Severity of widowhood)
- muuTattirumaNam (Absurd marriage)
- ezucciyuRRa peNkaL (Upsurged women)
- kuzantai maNattin koTumai (Severity of child marriage)
Bharatidasan condemned in no uncertain terms the brutal habit of shaving women’s head on their husband’s death and the barbaric custom of burning womenfolk alive in the funeral pyre of their husbands. He further says in the following poem that our nation was enslaved due to the captivity of women within the four walls of the house.

\[ \text{peNNaTimait tiirumaTTum peecun tirunaaTTu} \]
\[ \text{maNNaTimait tiiruntu varutal muyaRkompee} \] (37)

[Unless women are liberated, it is impossible to achieve the freedom of our country.]

Bharatidasan’s poem admires every stage of womanhood from its childhood. In his lullaby to female child he sings as follows:

\[ \text{muuTattanattin muTaituiaRRcan pookkak} \]
\[ \text{kaaTu kamaza varum kaRpuurappeTTakamee} \] (38)

[You are equal to camphor to eradicate the dirty smell of social superstitions.]

Ours is a society in which woman was considered as a devil. Even today there is a tendency to avoid female children in many families. It is not uncommon to see that female infants, after birth, are poisoned. To prevent such habits the government has to announce a scheme of ‘Government Cradles’ where the unwanted female babies may be handed over.

As we know, our social set up is based on rigid caste system, which too was disapproved by the poet. Bharatidasan believes that it can be banished only by womenfolk.

\[ \text{veeNTaata caati iruTTu veLuppataRkut} \]
\[ \text{tuuNTaa viLakkaayt tulankum perumaaTTi} \] (39)

[The female child is a powerful illumination to remove the unnecessary darkness of caste system.]
Women education

Bharatidasan is of the view that one educates woman is equal to ten schooled male members. His following song explains the necessity of female literacy.

peNkaLukkuk kalvi veeNTum
kuTittanam peeNutaRkee

[The education for female members of the family is essential to nurture and maintain the family itself.]

Bharatidasan further considers that a good family is an university; if that institution is to be developed the women literacy is a must; it will further enable her to maintain the literacy of her children too; otherwise there is every chance of her children remain illiterates.

kalviyillaata penkal,
kaLar nilam annilattil
pul viLaantiTalaam nalla
putalvarkaL viLaivatillai (40)

[The illiterate women are barren lands; they may yield grass like useless children but not clever ones.]

Even now the female members of some families are prevented to attend school after attaining puberty; parents are more interested to conduct their marriage instead of allowing them to complete their education. Ilakkiyan, a follower of Bharatidasan condemns this attitude in the following poem.

peNNaal paTittatu pootum; inimeelum
kaNNaay vaLartiTTa kanniyaip paLLik
kanyppaattee! inta aTuppaTiyaip paarkkaTTum
kalviattanaipeRRee ivalemma kunRuvaalLo?
kalyaaNam ceytiTuvoom! paiyanaippaarTTiTuvoom
enkinRa peeccellaam innum irukkanRatee
en ceyvoom? Manpataitaan maaRRam peRaattoo! (41)
["She attained puberty; what she studied so far is enough; don’t send her to school hereafter; if she studies more we don’t know what she will do afterwards, let her look after the kitchen; let us also search for a bridegroom and conduct her marriage.” What a pity! Such discussions are still going on! Will the plight woman not change?]

Tamilvel, another disciple of Bharatidasan considers that female literacy is a gateway to the liberation of the womenfolk as well as to the society on the whole. The woman education certainly ushers the disappearance of social evils like illiteracy, slavery, falsehood, rivalry, foolishness, irrationality and so on. The poet in his following verse requests male members of the society to help for women education.

\begin{verbatim}
  aatavar tam atimaikalay vazanta penkal
  avala nilaiyooTa vaziyuratitaaN kalvi
  teeTariya celvattai irupaalarkkum
  terintalittaal naaTu vaLarum (42)
\end{verbatim}

[Men should help their womenfolk to become learned. If there is no sex bias in the field of education, the national development will soon be achieved.]

Another follower of Bharatidasan by name Arimathi Tennagan strongly advocates for the development of women’s education in his following poem:

\begin{verbatim}
  mnniitu vilainta payir maNitar enRaal
  makizccikkum tuyarukkum poRuppu maNNee!
  kaiNniiitu ii moyttaal viralkaL aintum
  kaiyaakac ceerntooTTum purintaal poootum (43)
\end{verbatim}

[The yield of the crop depends upon the fertility of the land; so is the case with the children and their parents. If there are flies on our eyes the five fingers of the hand join together to drive them away; similarly all should unite and remove the illiteracy.]

All the poets of Puducherry are supportive of women’s education and their improvement in the society. Another poem of Bharatidasan, which is given below, supports the views of all the poets.
Women slavery

Woman was and is considered as a thing of beauty, joy forever and nothing more. Bharati and subsequently his disciple Bharatidasan first condemned this tendency. The latter has said in one of his poems that woman is equal to a fertile land.

\[ \text{pulam\(\vartheta\)Ra peetayaay peNNaic ceytaay} - \text{an} \\
\text{nilam viLaaita pai\(\ddot{\imath}\)kuz nilaimaiyum ammaTTee} \]

[If woman grows non-sensibly, her offsprings will also become stupid as the growth of the crop depends on its land.]

Further the poet wants that woman must have freedom in the family for its very development.

\[ \text{uumaiyenRu peNNa} \text{i uraikkumaTTum} \\
\text{uLLaTa\(\ddot{\imath}\)kum a\(\ddot{\imath}\)nma nilai\(\ddot{\imath}\)aan aaTavarkkum uNTu} \]

[As long as women are considered as mute beings, the improvement of men will also be not possible.]

Though sexually different, both men and women are human beings only; women too must have all privileges that are possessed by men and hence there needs no sexual bias. Bharatidasan wishes that members of both the sexes must unite themselves by means of inclination and kindness.

\[ \text{penkaLum aaNkaLtaaumum} \\
\text{pe rutamiz naaTu tan\(\ddot{\imath}\)nil} \\
\text{taNkaTal nikar\(\ddot{\imath}\)ta appaal} \\
\text{cam\(\ddot{\imath}\)na\(\ddot{\imath}\)attar aan\(\ddot{\imath}\)aar} \]

[Both men and women in Tamilnadu become united with a flood of affection and love.]
On the footsteps of Bharati and Bharatidasan, all poets of Puducherry disapprove and condemn women slavery with no inhibition whatsoever. Ilakkiyan’s poem is furnished herewith as an example:

\[
\text{peNNalamee ciRantatenRu peecuvoomee} \\
\text{maNNatanil peNNiRkee perumaiyuNTu} \\
\text{piNmaaLil aTimaiyuRRu vaazntataalee} \\
\text{peetamaiyum aRiyaamai izivum eeRRaar} \\
\text{ezilviLanikum peNNIŋattaik kaakka veeNTi} \\
\text{eeRRatoru kuTumba nalamum eeRkaveeNTum} \\
\text{kuzimuyalaay vaazntirukkum peNkaLellaam} \\
\text{kuvalayattil pukazmaNiyaa uyartal veeNTum (48)}
\]

[Let us speak the necessity of women’s wellbeing; woman is an excellent creation on the earth; due to the evils of women’s slavery, they became illiterates; the welfare of the family depends upon the improvement of womenfolk; hence they should be placed in a position of exaltation and dignity.]

Dowry

Another harmful evil in Tamil society is the demand of dowry. Initially, the bridegroom used to give gold to the bride for getting married; but later the system became interchanged due to various reasons like women’s illiteracy, increase in female population and so on.

Whatever may be the reasons both the acceptance and demand of dowry are uncivilized and inhuman. The dowry system leads to intentional abortion by pregnant women if they carry female babies and deliberate killing of female children. The proverb, “Even a king if he has five daughters, will turn to be a beggar”, is an indication to the amount of grief and suffereing experienced by the parents of female children. The marriage of the ladies depends upon the economic status of their parents. Only when the indecency of demanding money and materials for marriage is removed, womenfolk will be free from troubles and harassment. Many poets of Puducherry condemned this dowry system in their poetic works. The following is an example:
Another poet laments that even the human values are assessed on the basis of wealth.

peNkaLin kaRpum
aaNiN aRivum
kaacai vaittee
kaNakkiTappaTum (50)

[The virtue of women and knowledge of men are also assessed on the basis of the money they possess.]

Dowry is one of the most reactionary aspects of the society. If the marriage is conducted giving importance to money, then the life of the couple will be deceptive and worthless. It is unfortunate that the parents too, to some extent, encourage this evil. As soon as they gave birth to a daughter, the parents start saving money to give dowry and thereby indirectly encourage this evil system. One of the poets of Puducherry ridicules the hypocrisy of the parents in the following poem.

peN piRakkum pootee peruñcotton ezuti vaittu
maNpiRanta maappilLai kku eelam viTukiRaar
caati ozippatentac caaRRukiRaar maappillLai
tootenRaal tottukiRaar. tuu! tuu! tuu! (51)

[Immediately after the birth of a daughter, the parents start grabbing wealth to bid for a suitable bridegroom for her. The parents further change their views on castism according to their convenience. What a shame!]
Even the husbands, on the advice of their parents, behave harshly and inhumanly with wives. Another poet of Puducherry proscribes this attitude and its repercussions in the following poem.

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{vanca manattaal vataikkinRaar manaiyaaLai} \\
taay tantai coRkeeTTut ta\text{ng conta manaiyaaLai} \\
peeyaay ulukkukinRaar; peetaiyinaa vaaTTukinRaar \\
anRaaTam taRkolaikaL; aaraNa\text{\u00e6}ku tiikkLippu \\
manRil maNakkoTaiyaaL vaazum kulamaatar
\end{align*}
\]

[The husbands, on the advice of their parents, treat their wives inhumanly, due to which suicides and self-immolation have become the common scenes and day-to-day events.]

One of the most important reasons for more number of suicides in our country is dowry. What is the solution for it? A poet in his following verse asks the question:

\[
\begin{align*}
een\text{kitt tavikkinRa eentizaiyaar vaazvutanqi} \\
iihku cariceyya eetu vazi tampi?
\end{align*}
\]

[What is the remedy to see that women are happy in their lives?]

The answer is simple. Dowry is the root cause for the sufferings of women and it must be removed from the society. There is a law to punish both who accepts and demands dowry; but it must be strictly implemented in letter and spirit. Even individuals, politicians, sociologists and all well wishers of our country should put a joint effort and fight against the evil of dowry.

But unfortunately, many a public men lack sincerity. They think one, speak another and do yet another. A poet of Puducherry in the following verse condemns this hypocrisy:

\[
\begin{align*}
eppootum kaRpazippaan; veLiyee peNkaL \\
elloorum taay enpaan turookap paNpaal \\
uppiTTa nanRi ninai enum collai \\
orupootum ninaintaRiyaan uNmai collaan
\end{align*}
\]

[It is an irony that rapists speak high of womanhood on the platform; there are people, who have no decency, sincerity and never utter truth.]
The literary men of Puducherry, however, are very much excited and agitated against the dowry system and social evils. A number of poems have so far been discussed as illustrations.

CASTISM AND REMOVAL OF UNTOUCHABILITY

Caste

According to anthropologists, the Indian population is an admixture of Dravidian, Aryan, mongoloids and Scithian races (55).

Aryans who came to India a few thousand years ago fought with natives and established their domination. Though Aryans lost their identity and assimilated with local population, it is still not possible to evolve a common culture (56).

The expert's views on castism

1. According to a French scholar Cenard caste is a traditional institution, strictly following the established rituals, ceremonies on occasions like birth, death, marriage, etc.

2. Another scholar Nesfield considers that caste is a division of the society whose members will have no contact with other divisions especially in marriage, consuming food and water, etc.

3. Caste is an association of several families having some common title or name – it is the view of Sir. H.Rislie.

4. According to Hedgar caste is a social group consisting of two aspects, the first being the members of a particular group are having some privileges which are denied to other groups and the next is the members of one group cannot have marital relation with any other group.

The above mentioned discussion is about the caste system of Indian society by different scholars. Now, the caste system has become a hurdle to the development of India and
above all untouchability, the byproduct of caste system continues to be a shameful blemish in our society.

Untouchability
The system of untouchability starts with religious rites of our society. The priest class that conducts these rites naturally occupies the highest strata of our caste-based religion. The concept of untouchability, therefore, continues to remain as an indisposible part of our society (57)

The genesis of caste system
The caste system to have come into being to meet the basic requirements of the members of the group, to help mutually among themselves and to get protection from their enemies. Of course, there are several views about the origin of the caste system. According to encyclopaedia caste system came into existence on the basis of the differences on language, food, habits, physical features, natural environment, occupation and so on (58).

Later these differences were strictly followed and the entire Indian society was divided into 4 major sects, namely, Brahmin, Kshatriya, Vysya and Sudra. The rigid caste system later attacked the economic fabric of the society also. The untouchables, for instance, were forbidden to eat the materials that were supposed to be consumed by only the so-called high caste people. On 1st April 1936, at Savara, the high caste Hindus mercilessly assaulted the untouchables for having taken ghee along with their food. This clearly indicates that even the well-to-do low caste people were not permitted to eat rich food (59).

The growth of caste system
The caste system did not seem to have existed in Indus Valley Civilization and it would have been later addition. But during Sangam era of Tamils, the caste system seemed to have existed in our society, but followed not so rigidly as on today. This view is strengthened by the following 'puRanaanuuRu' poem:

185
Among the four major divisions of the society ...

Rigidity of caste system
The rigidity of caste system is based on religious rites, which differs from caste to caste. The so-called higher caste has different ritual customs, which are not allowed to be practiced by the low caste members. Further the caste system is based on birth in our religion. Such ritual based divisions are known as ‘varNam’.

Sociologists say that the profession of the members of a group evolved the caste system on two ways one on the basis of rituals as mentioned above and another by the profession of the members of a group. Whatever may be the argument, the caste system gave birth to the practice of untouchability and its impact is felt even today.

Castes based on occupation
The following titles and denominations clearly indicate the existence of castes based on occupations with which the members are proficient. Some of them are iTaiyar (cowherds), uzavar (farmers), kammiyar (blacksmiths), kuyavar (potmakers), kurumpar (shepherds), taccar (carpenter), paratavar (fishermen), paRaiyar (drum beater), paaNar (singer), porunar (warrior), vaNNaar (Dhoby), vaNikar (merchant), veeTar (hunter), and so on.

E.V.Ramasamy and castism
“Religion is a banyan tree accommodating devilish caste system” – it is the view of E.V.Ramasamy, popularly known as ‘Periyaar’ (the great man). He wanted to completely eradicate the caste set up from our society; it was opposed by the high caste Brahmins in Indian National congress and hence he had to exit from the party.
Subsequently E.V.Ramasamy attempted to unite the non-Brahmin low caste Hindus and give a tough fight against Brahmin domination. He started to oppose tooth and nail the religious works and epics ratify the caste system.

If the low caste Hindus, according to E.V.Ramasamy, want to improve in the society, attain equality and maintain their self-respect they have to raise against Aryan concepts of caste system and prevent its sway over them (63). Further he educated the low cast Hindus to be aware of the fact that on the basis of their caste sub-divisions they fought among themselves and got ruined.

E.V.Ramasamy struggled for the entry of the untouchables into the places of worship. At Vaikkam in Kerala he conducted an agitation over the issue and won the battle. He also fought for the reservation to the non-Brahmin Hindus in government jobs on the basis of their population. Till the end of his life, E.V.Ramasamy toiled for the welfare of depressed, oppressed and suppressed people of non-Brahmin community.

The opponents of caste system in Puducherry

The Dravidian movement founded by E.V.Ramasamy was welcomed in Puducherry too as in Tamilnadu. Like Annadurai, Karunanidi and others in Tamilnadu, in Puducherry too men of literature like Bharatidasan and political leaders like Subbaih gave their unconditional support to E.V.Ramasamy’s movement and condemned the evil of caste system. Through the newspaper, magazines and literary works, many scholars fought against communalism and caste hatredness.

Among the literary stalwarts who opposed caste system in Puducherry, Bharatidasan occupies a unique place. He was born and brought up in this region. He rumbled against the communal bigotry as it decelerated the growth and development of the society. The following poem illustrates his anger against the caste system.

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{iruT\text{\textbackslash}Raiyil} & \text{ uLLata} \text{\textbackslash}taa \text{ ulakam caati} \\
\text{irukkinRatenpaamum} & \text{ irukkinRaane} \\
\end{align*}
\]
The land is in utter darkness; people who advocate caste hatredness are still alive; the frightening religious leaders lead a luxurious life; when such chaos and anarchy will disappear?

He further considers, in the following verse, that religious works and epics will disintegrate the society.

The epics will disintegrate the people; the religious works will develop caste hatredness; they will never allow the society to improve; the religious heads and priests who promote and nourish animosity are more in number.

On the footsteps of Bharatidasan, another poet of Puducherry who waged a war against the caste evil is Arimathi Tennagan. In his ‘tamizkkanal’ (Tamil fire), he condemns the inhuman habit of untouchability in no uncertain terms in the following two poems:

O! Tamil race! You don’t get anger and furious when you are insulted by saying that your very entrance into the temple will spoil its holiness and sacredness. You are not at all a human race.

[O! Tamil race! You don’t get anger and furious when you are insulted by saying that your very entrance into the temple will spoil its holiness and sacredness. You are not at all a human race.]
[O! Tamil race! You are humiliated with the term Sudra; still you find sweetness on their feet; this is what the reason for your degradation and deterioration.]

Another poet Devamaindan is of the view that love marriages will minimize the arrogance of caste and wealth.

\[
\begin{aligned}
caati
ernumoru
neruppum \\
celvam
enRavoru
ninaippum \\
mooti
mitikkaaviTTaal – kaatal \\
maaNpuRRa
manpataikkee
\end{aligned}
\]

[The love marriages will put out the fire of caste and wealth.]

**The gravity of caste cruelty**

The caste system ultimately paves way for untouchability. It does not allow people to enter the temple even to worship God. A modern poem given below speaks about the indecent treatment towards the devotees

\[
\begin{aligned}
kaRppakirahattil \\
anumatiyiyiRi \\
ceruppu
viTum
iTattilee \\
nankaL
niruttappaTukiRoom
\end{aligned}
\]

[We are not allowed to enter into the temple, instead we are asked to stay in a place meant for sandals and foot rests.]

The following poem by Kalladan mentions about the origin and spread of this evil caste system:

\[
\begin{aligned}
naal
varuNa
peeta\text{\textendash}kaL
naaTTil
piRantana
kaaN \\
kaalil
oru
piRappu;
kaNTu
meel
oru
piRappu \\
tooLil
piRappum
toTaiyil
piRappumen\text{\textendash}a \\
naaLum
pala
caati
nammil
pirantana
kaaN \\
veetiyan
meeloon
viraintu
tozil
ceyvoon \\
caatiyil
kiizonnaam
caarRum
matakkoLkai
\end{aligned}
\]
niitiylaak kolkai nilaittataal kANTavarkkum
muntaTimaiippaTToom muRaiyaanga vaavvizantoom (70)

[The four fold division of society describes that those who were born on the face of the God are Brahmins, on the chest are Kshatriyas, on the thigh are Vysyas and on the feet are the low caste Sudras. It paved way for the Brahmins to escape from manual work and be luxurious while the Sudras have to do the entire manual and laborious jobs. Finally it facilitated the brutal habits of untouchability and slavery to exist.]

The caste system, according to the poet, destroys the entire society:
caatti vakutta camaiyam palavakutta
tiitalar camutaayam ciirkeTTuppoonatuvee (71)

[Th society engulfed by caste and religious sectarianism is on the verge of destruction.]

At present even this ugly caste system and fight among themselves sways the so called highly educated people. The following verses are furnished to confirm it:
caatippaTaikaLoo paaTTankaL koTukkum – kavitai
caakaram enap pukaz koTikalaip piTikkum (72)

[The caste associations are giving titles to the scholars and praise them on behalf of their castes.]

keeTanaitum tarumenRaan matattin peeraal
kilaittiTTa tiimaikaLai eTutturaittaan (IS)

[The religion and caste are the source for all evils in the society.]

The caste free society
The poets create their literary works with some amount of imagination. Whatever is impossible in true life becomes feasible in their imaginative world. No body knows where shall we go after our life, but the poets imagine that we shall reach a casteless world. One such poets of Puducherry in his work ‘kaataRkani’ (Fruit of love) says as follows:
caavenum paTiyil eeRi
caatiyee illaa naaTTai
meviya ceyti keeTTeen
miku tuyar uRReen (76)

[The hero comes to know that the heroine, after her death, has reached the caste free world.]

The dream of Mahatma Gandhi

Mahatma Gandhi struggled to see India with no caste and religious conflicts; he wanted independence both politically and socially to the people of our country. According to him social liberation is that no individual should be treated, as a slave and individual freedom must be protected. Mahatma Gandhi’s expectations still remains to be distant dream, which is expressed, in the following poem:

caaati vakutta camayam pala vakattu
tiitaal camutaayam ciir keTTup poonatuvee
aanNTaaNTuk kaalam acaiyaatiruntu vanta
tiiNTaamaip pookkat tiynam uzaittaar nam kaanti
caaa tiilaiyenRu caaRRip palavakaiyl
niitti eTutturaittaar neeraar vaziyurattaar (77)

[The society is spoiled by the introduction of several castes and religions; Mahatma Gandhi struggled hard to remove the social evils like caste discrimination and untouchability; he preached moral, spiritual and ethical values to the mass.]

The present day society uses different scales such as wealth, culture, cleanliness, dressing, food habits, etc. to define high caste and low caste. But all of them seem to be meaningless. This concept is emphasized in the under mentioned verse:

inahkaLilee taaznta inam enpataRkoor
eellaiyenRa uLLatoo? collukinRa
manahkaLilee taazviruntaal taazvee tooNrum
matiyataaapi pRuvareel uyarvee tooNrum (78)
[Is there any demarcation to differentiate between low caste and high caste? If one’s mind is mean and wretched he will consider others, as low, otherwise he will respect everyone as equal.]

The human birth has no differences; it makes no sense to discriminate the people on the basis of their birth. Another poet regrets and enrages to see the caste variations among human beings in the following poems:

\[ \text{uyarvum taazvum uyirukkillai} \]
\[ \text{uNmai purintaayaa? (79)} \]

[Is it not true that the high and low are not applicable to life?]

\[ \text{maTamaiyenum nañcai maRupaTiyum paayccap} \]
\[ \text{paTameTuttiínkup patuñki varukiRatu} \]
\[ \text{tantai periyaar taTikoNTaTítapiñnum} \]
\[ \text{paarppaníiyam paayntu varukiRatu eccarikkai (80)} \]

[The foolish caste system raises its poisonous hood like a cobra; even after E.V.Ramasamy’s beatings with his stick, the cobra like Brahminism bounces back, beware!]

The Tamil poets since Bharatiar advice children not to give any significance to the caste / communal theory. Bharatiyar wrote children poems on the absurdity of caste variations. In the same way Ilakkiyan in his following poem advises the children to ignore the caste differences:

\[ \text{caati enpaar perum puRRu} \]
\[ \text{caarnta matattai nii akaRRu} \]
\[ \text{ootti uNaraarai eRRu} \]
\[ \text{uNmaiyaalaraip paRRu (81)} \]

[Ignore the religion, which has the cancerous caste disparities; neglect the uncivilized caste supporters and follow the truly educated ones.]
Ways and means to remove caste system

One should possess the feeling of equality with all beings in the world whether animate or inanimate. Vadalur Ramalinga Swamikal felt annoyed even to see the dried crops; Tamils are expected to have such tender and compassionate feelings. At least if all human beings are treated equally many problems will be solved.

\[ \text{enta uyirum camamenum} \]
\[ uyiriyamee nanRaTaa (82) \]

[The humanism, which considers all beings equal, is always good.]

Almost all poets are against the cast evils and the cruelty of untouchability. If the country is to be developed it is possible only through the burial of the devilish cast philosophy. Let us look into a poem written in this direction:

\[ \text{camutaayac cintanai naaTTin teevai} \]
\[ carittira maaARRamee inRaiya ceevai \]
\[ cenRavazi illaamil putiya vazi camaippiir \]
\[ onRee inamemen ulakaaTci amaippiir \]
\[ caati veRiyin camaracam peecaNum \]
\[ cati ceyum vaatattaal tunyarai eecalum \]
\[ ivatiyena aakkiya muracenap paaTu \]
\[ eeRRiTum veRRiyin makizciyaay aaTu (83) \]

[The social awareness is today’s essential requirement as also a change in the history. Let us not walk in the same old paths; let us form a society where all are equal; let us follow equality and remove cast fanaticism; let the communal conspiracy be defeated and finally let us celebrate the victory.]

Incidentally, the caste is strictly followed by poor and middle class people while the rich and affluent section of the society give least importance to this system. As a poet mentioned, the caste system is admixed with the blood of the Tamils:

\[ caatiyee nii \]
\[ tamizanin taaz \]
\[ irattattooTu \]
kalantu viTTa
cempulap peyal niir (84)

[As mud and water are inseparably mixed together, the caste system is mixed with the blood of low cast Tamils.]

Another couple of poems also deserves to be mentioned here to understand what is going on today in different public conferences:

caaNiyllaam camutaayattai
kaaNal onRee kaLippena vaaznta
paaratitacaappaa paTTaat tiRantaar
uuree erivataay uLLam erintatu (85)

[Bharatidasan spent his whole life to remove the caste system from the society. When his portrait is displayed, many have felt irritated............]

aanaal avarkaLoo, oRRumai illaata ovvoru caaTiyyum
piRppaTToor eTuum peyaraaL kuuTInar
ammaa naaTTil avaravar caati
parappuvar poolee paTaikaL tiRantaar (86)

[...but the same people are happy when the portraits of their caste leaders have been displayed in their strife torn caste conferences.]

One among the several reasons for the survival of caste system seems to be the encouragement given by the rulers. The government legalizes and legitimizes the communal based segregations like forward, backward, most backward and scheduled castes. Many castes hoping to get more shares in the government jobs prefer to be known as backward communities. The caste distinctions remained for several centuries must be removed at any cost. One poet says we can do anything to destroy the caste barriers.

eRikinRa viiTTinil iruppavai kaappaaRRa
etu ceyiinum kuRaityum unNToo?
ettaaiyoo muuRaaNTaay
izinilaiyai uNaraata (87)
The rigidity of caste arrangement is due to the strong force of religion. A few in the society, in the name of religion, enslaved the majority. Mahatma Gandhi struggled throughout his life to remove untouchability and religious bigotry. The pain, agony and exertion suffered by Mahatma Gandhi will have some meaning only when the foundations of caste structure is weakened and demolished. Another poem given below ascertains this view:

\begin{quote}
\textit{canku kazuttaLee! caati ozintaalee}
\textit{appu perukum; aRam tazaikkum enke\text{\textk}kum}
\textit{inpam nilavum; inavezucci meeloonkum}
\textit{camutaaya meegmaikkuc caati ozippee cari} (88)
\end{quote}

[Only on the expiry of caste system love and affection will grow; ethical values and good conduct will be amplified; bliss and joy will overflow and social development will be possible?]

\section*{Intercaste marriage}

The intercaste marriage may be one among the several ways and means to weaken the caste rigidity and maintain equality among different castes. A poet of Puducherry region encourages this type of marriage in the following poem:

\begin{quote}
\textit{caati tolaintataa? niiti pizaittataa?}
\textit{aaN\textk Taan aTima\textk enum accam tavirntataa?}
\textit{veeNTaata caatimata maaRRamum ooyntataa?}
\textit{In\textk num kalappu maNattiRku etirppuNTu} (89)
\end{quote}

[Has the caste system been removed? Is the human justice established? Is the difference between the master and the slave reduced? Have the unnecessary religious and caste barriers been curtailed? Still there is so much opposition to intercaste marriage.]

Many scholars of Puducherry including Bharatidasan and Vanidasan support the same opinion. Some of their poems are furnished herewith:
caati camayac cazakkukaL tamalam

A caste and religious differences are established to maintain the greediness and selfishness of a few individuals.

muuTacceyalkaLai muRippatum enRoo

When shall we get rid of superstitious beliefs? When shall we remove cast systems? When shall we be free from the absurdity and foolishness of this land?

maNmiitu vaLarnta payir manitar enRaal

The yield crop depends on the fertility of the land. So is the case with the children and their parents. If there are flies on our eyes, the five fingers of the hand join together to drive them away. Similarly, all should unite and fight.

So far, the origin of the caste system, its development, cruelty and evilness, the necessity to eradicate this system, the views of Puducherry poets on this matter, etc. have been discussed in this part.

LABOURERS

As long as the human race was leading a harmonious life with nature everything went well with little difficulty and no problem. When paddy was cultivated and agriculture was developed, the human beings started becoming selfish and greedy. This, finally resulted in vast majority to do laborious work and a few to exploit others.
Those who undertook manual work and followed honesty and morality in their lives were easily duped while others who committed atrocities, followed rowdism, did unjust actions, and earned wealth by foul means were honoured by the society. A labourer, therefore, was known for his gullibility and getting deceived.

Acquiring individual property is due to neither to the will of God nor historical accident. It is due to the growth of economic production and exchange of commodities (93). Such of those who were interested to possess personal property conspired to exploit others. Initially people worked to earn for their self-livelihood and later they had to work for their masters also. Ironically, those who worked were befooled and hence remained poor while their masters became rich and controllers.

**Work**

Work involves heart, mind and body to produce goods and enjoy benefits derived from them. The work can further be divided into natural and artificial. The works done with the support of natural environment belonged to the first group while the other group consists of those done with the help of scientific and technical methods. However, all the works yield some products.

The ancient man did farming and cattle breeding to meet the food requirement. Later, he became selfish and wanted to save wealth and materials not only to his self and family but also to his offsprings. He started exploiting the innocent; he became finally a capitalist and wanted others to serve him and tried to enslave them.

**usahaikkinRa kuuTTam utiram cinta – ataic**

**cuvaikkinRa kuuTTam cukam taenenum puumi** (94)

[Those who toil spill their blood and the capitalists enjoy on the tillers suffering and labour.]

**Labourer**

The cunning intelligentsia and capitalists started exploiting the less educated manual workers in yet another way also. They divided the labour class on the basis of their work
and confirmed the division in the name of castes. One who did manual work with wood was known as ‘taccan’ (carpenter) by caste. Similarly ‘paRaiyan’ (drumbeater), ‘vaNNaan’ (dhoby), ‘karumaan’ (black smith), and many other castes came into being.

This system did not hesitate to force the members of the same caste also to fight among themselves; they became economically weak and sufferers because of their internal fights. A poet of Puducherry advises such people to avoid meanness with their fellow beings:

\[
\text{uyara ninaittaal uyarvaay uyarvaay} \\
\text{oruvaraiyeenum uyarttippaar} \\
\text{ozikka ninaittaal ozivaay ozivaay} \\
\text{ozintavar kaNakkai ningittuppaar (95)}
\]

[If you want to be a great man in the society be noble and helpful to others; instead if you are bad and wicked you will attain the destruction.]

**Poor labourer**

"There is no slave and the poor in the society”. So goes a poem of Bharati. There is no acceptable definition to poverty. One who does not get what he wants is supposed to be a poor man. The poverty may be due to the paucity of wealth, character, culture, etc. But normally poverty means shortage of material and money.

In the capitalist society, the worker does not get what he deserves and thereby he is cheated. He becomes a ladder to elevate the exploiters. This is what is said in the following verse:

\[
\text{evaree yaayimum} \\
\text{eeRRam peRaRkee} \\
\text{eeNi aavaayee - itanai} \\
\text{evarkkum uraippaayee (96)}
\]

[You are a ladder to the upliftment of others and thus you are exploited. Let it be known to everybody.]
How is the residence of this poor worker? The following poem answers this question and exhibits his absolute state of poverty.

naaŋkee kuuccukaL
naTuviL muunkil
kaaynta ilai muuTu – atuvee
kaŋaka maNi viiTu (97)

[The house is made out of four sticks, a bamboo in the middle, few dry leaves as the roof; it is a golden house of this poor fellow.]

Cheating

Almost all workers in the entire world are cheated in one way or the other. The exploiters become owners and those who are cheated remain poor and destitute. But the owners must be aware of the fact that if the workers start agitating they cannot withstand and the situation will be volcanic. The following poem suggests the capitalists to give workers their due share and rights.

uzaippavar tuũkuvar ena ninaiyaatee – puliyum
uRaŋkutal uNTu atai maravaatee
poRuppatu naaLai ezuvataRkaaka – niitaan
cirippatum orunaL azuvataRkaaka
avanaugh maŋitan vaazaviTu – nii
aziya ninaittaal vaavatiTu (98)

[Don’t think that workers will always be mild and soft; even the tiger will sleep for sometime; the workers will stand erect if they unable to bear the torture; you may laugh now, but one day you have to weep also; the worker too is a human being and let him also live; otherwise you will have to face the consequences.]

The owners, who are supposed to protect the labourers, behave cunningly and exploit them. Not withstanding his poverty, the worker is gentle and soft. Ironically, one who exploits becomes high and who gets cheated remains poor. The following poetic work describes it.
[One who does his duty is silent; he who cheats becomes happy; he who has sympathy is depressed; he who has gone up kicks the ladder.]

It is a mockery that the worker’s stomach never becomes full while the exploiters want to grab more and more. Such being the case, how a labourer can whole heatedly concentrate on his work? If a single man goes without food, according to Bharati, the entire world must be taken to task. The same view is reflected in the following poem of a Puducherry poet:

\[
\text{uzukiroom vitaittoom taNNiir} \\
\text{uuRRinoom payantaan iinkeee} \\
\text{azuvatee enRaal maNNai} \\
\text{azippatum niyaayamtaanee} \quad (100)
\]

[We plough, plant and supply water to the crop; but our harvest is only the tears; can we keep quiet against the evil?]

Socialism

\[
\text{ellaarkkum ellaam enRiruppataanya iTam nookki} \\
\text{nakarukinRatinta vaiyam} \quad (101)
\]

[This world is moving towards the concept of everything for all.]

It is the expression of Bharatidasan. There should be no differences among the people in consuming whatever they need; class differences must be removed (102). These differences destroy the whole society.

Even to educate the poor workers, we have to depend on rich people. The following verse clearly exposes the dependence of the poor on the rich.
The poetic works to educate the oppressed people need money to be published and distributed and as such the communist songs also need the support of capitalists for propagation.

The society, therefore, is under the control of wealthy and rich people. The labour force should not consider it is their fate and they have to struggle to redeem the society. The following poem establishes the same view.

Don’t be lazy; work hard and fight against the evil.

The workers will not always be mild and meek and if they start fighting, the situation will be reversed. This is what Bharatidasan says in the following poem:

The master now chases their servants; if the servants retort back, then there will be no differences between them and all will be equal.

Another poet of Puducherry in the footsteps of Bharatidasan writes as follows:
All should be treated equally; there should be no slave and master and there must be no exploitation, to achieve this aim there is nothing wrong to use force by even taking the weapons. This is the view of Bharatidasan.

If we can achieve equality by spilling the human blood, the workers need not hesitate to do so. This is what is emphasized in many of the poems, which have been discussed in this part of the thesis.

**NATURE**

Nature is beyond the imagination of human beings. At the early stage man was afraid of natural phenomena like thunder, rain, storm, fire, earthquake, etc. Later he went to the extent of measuring sea and mountain and he could find the earth being in a global shape. Because of his intuition, man could answer many puzzling questions and solve mysterious problems.

After prolonged research, Darwin published his theory of evolution. According to this theory, the first living being in the world had been single cell amoeba from which, during the course of time, multi celled beings such as plants, animals and human beings evolved. This research is still going on continuously.

Darwin’s theory, however, is not accepted into especially by religionists. When many beings evolved one after the other, why is further evolution stopped after human beings? For instance, if man is evolved from monkey why so far no other being is evolved from human race? These questions deserve to be answered (107)
Change in nature
We come across several natural calamities such as cyclone, earthquake, hailstorms, volcanoes and so on. Why do they happen? Who is responsible for such natural disasters? The religious men reply that these misfortunes are due to the Almighty god, who is supposed to be omnipotent, omnipresent and omniscient and who can create, protect and destroy the universe. The rationalists on the other hand say that these setbacks are due to natural imbalances and disruptions. Whatever may be the argument non can clearly explain and avoid the creations and destructions in the world.

The poet
The natural happenings in our world are indeed fascinating, attractive and delightful. The poets with their charming imagination present the natural occurrences in attractive and alluring language what is known as poetic works. The following verse from the poem by Kavimani deserves a mention here:

*uLLattuLLLatu kavitai - inpa
uruveTuppatu kavitai
tellatteLinta tamizil - uNmai
terintu uraippatu kavitai* (108)

[The poem comes from the heart of the poet; the form of the poem provides pleasure and enjoyment; further the style of the poem must be in simple and lucid Tamil and above it must speak truth.]

The poetic works that are strong will be ever lasting while the feeble and weak will disappear. From time immemorial, the poets contribute their creations on river, mountain, sea, tree, breeze, blood and other natural objects in the world. A poem from 'mukkuuTaRpaLLu' given below speaks about the flood of a river.

*aARRu veLLLam naaLai varat tooRRutee kuRi malai
yaalLa minnal iizaminmal cuuza minmutee* (108)

[There is a symptom of heavy rain through which the river will be full of flood; also there is heavy lightening from the directions of Malayalam and Eelam.]
Simplicity of poems

Among the 20th century Tamil poets Bharatiar happens to be the first one to introduce simplicity and frankness in poetic works. His involvement in nature is astonishingly remarkable. Let us look into a sample of his poem:

kaakkai kuruv e nkaL caati – niiL
kaTalum malaiyum e nkaL kuTTam
nookum ticaiyellaam naamani veeRillai
nookka nookkak kaLiyaTTam (109)

[The sparrows and crows belong to our family; the sea and mountain belong to our group; wherever we go, we come across our people; seeing them is splendid and magnificent.]

Following his footsteps another famous poet Desika Vinayakam Pillai too wrote several songs on nature. The following is an example:

veyiRkeeRRa nizaluNTu
vicum tepRai kaarRuNTu
kaiyil kampan kaviyuNTu
kalacam niRaiya matvuNTu
teiva kiitam palavuNTu
terintu paaTa niyuNTu
vaiyantarumiv vaLamiRi
vaazzum corkkam veeRuNToo? (110)

[There is a shadow for sunlight; gentle breeze to enjoy; Kamban’s poem for the pleasure of reading; divine songs to utter; you are here to sing them; is there any other heaven than these richness?]

Many poets of Puducherry region also made outstanding literary contributions on nature, the chief among whom is Bharatidasan. His ‘azakin cirippu (Smile of beauty) is a praise worthy and remarkable work on nature. Let us consider the following humourous poem from that work as an example:

kiLaiyiniR paampu tonka vizutenRu kuraŋku toTTu
viLakkingait toTTapiLLai veTukkena kutittataippool

204
[a snake is hanging on the branch of a banyan tree; a monkey touches it considering it as an ariel root; knowing the fact, the monkey gets afraid, jumps branch after branch, finally reaches the top of the tree and looks back its own tail as a snake.]

Bharatidasan is known for his modern thoughts, newness and novelty. The following poem is given as an example to illustrate this view:

\begin{verbatim}
muzumai nilaa azaku nila
muLaittatu viNmeele – atu
pazamaiyilee putu ninaivu
paayntezuntaaR poole (112)
\end{verbatim}

[The beautiful full moon raises on the sky as if modern thought appears in a conservative mind.]

It is not an exaggeration to say that many poets of Puducherry followed the style, views and content of the poems written by Bharatidasan. He happens to be a guiding star to several poets of this region.

**Breeze**

Hardly there is any poet who has not written about the gentle breeze. The Saiva saint Appar, when he was imprisoned in lime chamber, prayed the God Shiva and felt as if he was surrounded by a cool and a gentle breeze. The song is as follows:

\begin{verbatim}
maacil viiNaiyum maalai matiyamum
viicu tenRahum viNkiLa veegilum
muucu vaNTraip poykaiyum poonRatee
iican entai iNaiyTi nizalee (113)
\end{verbatim}

[The feet of Lord Shiva is similar to the musical sound of Veena, evening moon, gentle and cool breeze, spring season and tasty water of a pond.]
Another poet in the following poem describes how the breeze makes him to feel happy and delightful.

kuRinci tavazntu kuLirmukil tooyntu
naRuńcuviyil aATi nati tazuvi - mullai
karumpu malartti atan teen kavizttu
karumpu nanaippaay, aTar ciRaku nankulartti
vaanil paRakka viTTu vaali pTintiTuvaay
teenin injmai mikku tenRalee (114)

[Starting from the mountain, passing through the cloud, taking bath in the river water, accepting the sweetness of sugarcane, travelling in the sky with musical sound and finally the breeze sweeter than honey reaches me.]

Tree
The monsoon often fails and the quantity of rain is insufficient for us. The trees, rain and agriculture are all interdependent. If trees are cut and removed, the land will become desert and no cultivation can take place. The same view is said in the following poem:

viiTTukku viiTu marankaLai vaLarppoom
viitikku viiti amaiya viLaippoom
tooTTam vaippatu toTarpaNiyaakum - itu
toNTu ceyvatil maNimuTiyaakum (115)

[Let us grow trees in each and every house and street; gardening is a continuous process; it is an essential service to the society.]

The main reason for the failure of the monsoon is the destruction of forest wealth. The tree and its shadow happen to be heaven for many during the hot summer. The following verse describes it:

enRum kooTaiyil koTumaityai vella
iyaRkai annaikku varaveeRpu colla
uLLańkai iTTatilum oru kiirai vitaippoom
ulakil pańcantaan tarum tiimai citaippoom (116)
[To escape from the summer heat and to welcome the mother nature, let us plant at least green leaf in every inch of land. It will solve the problems of famine and scarcity.)

A small seed later becomes a huge banyan tree. It protects and gives asylum to hundreds of birds. This is what is to be considered humanism. The following poem expresses the same view:

\[
\text{kiLLai}a\text{L} \text{nu}a\text{Ru} \text{ila}a\text{L} \text{ko}a\text{Ti} \\
vizutuka\text{L} \text{paar cu}R\text{Ri}lum \text{ata}a\text{N} \\
kiiziru\text{kum} \text{nizalil uyirkaL} \\
iru\text{kum maki}zu \text{pe}RR\text{r}u\text{kum} \\
aL\text{avillaam}al \text{paR}a\text{n}tu \text{ki}T\text{akkum} \\
aalamara\text{t}a\text{N} \text{muulamaam vitai} \\
aN\text{u}vai \text{nina}v\text{i}l \text{kaaTT}u\text{m} \text{aL}a\text{vee} \\
atu\text{vee ulaka neeyamaam} \text{(117)}
\]

[A banyan tree from a small seed has hundreds of branches, thousands of leaves, several ariel roots; it gives protection to hundreds of lives; it is the humanitarianism.]

**Rain**

There is a Tamil proverb “if rain fails there can be no charity”. With the help of trees, rain continues to pour; if there is scarcity for woods, natural calamities cannot be avoided. A poet of Puducherry says so in the following poem:

\[
paTippa\text{iyaay mara}nkaL – meekam \\
paTintu varum vazikaL. \\
veTTi veTTic caaykinRoom, viRa\text{kaakki makizkinRoom} \\
iRa\text{nki}v\text{ara mazimaTTu}m iru\text{k}kaatu \\
iyaRkai \text{mangan niiNTa kaalam po}R\text{ukkaatu} \text{(118)}
\]

[Trees are gateway for the clouds and rain; we cut them and use as firewood; if we continue to do so there will be no rain and nature will not tolerate it.]

The importance of rain is emphasised by another poet in the following poem:
vaaninReel cuRarillai tiŋkaLillai
vaLiyillai mukilillai, mazaiyum illai
teeŋinReel malarnaaTum vaNTumillai
teviTTaata cuvaiyumillai uNarvumillai
oppillaa vaazvillai uyarvumillai
ulakattil yaatonRumillai, illai (119)

[If there is no honey in the flower, no bees and taste; if there is no sky, there will be no sun, moon, air, cloud and rain; also there is no life and nothing in the world.]

Another poet sings about rain in the poem quoted here under, which can be appreciated for its imaginative skills:

vaana makizccitaan kaNNiirt tuuRaloo
vaay viTTazuvatu mazaiyn miIRaloo
maanam kaattiTa iTiyna veTikkumee
mayaṭṭin kotippingaal miṇṇalaayt tuTikkumoo (120)

The happiness of sky comes as drizzling; if there is no rain then there will be tears; the honour and dignity sound as thunder and the boiling of human mind appears to be lightening.]

Lake water
A lake in the village is a public property and benefits one and all. The following poem speaks about the beauty of lake water:

cittirai tiŋkaL nilaverikka eeri niir
pattarai maaRRup pacumpomaaayt toonRiTume (121)

[The lake water reflects the full moon of April month and it glitters like pure gold.]

Another poet compares the water of the lake with the heart of the benevolent people in the following verse:

nalloor uLampoola noaLum nalum payantu
ellaarkkum uuTTiya eeriyin ciirmaiyaaic
collil uraittal eLitaamoo (122)
Is it possible to describe the advantage and merit of the river water which can be compared with the kind and tender heart of charitable people.

Philosophy of nature

It is very difficult to understand the philosophy of nature. As far as life of living beings are concerned, it is the same for all from an ant to an elephant. This view is described in the following poem:

\[ p\text{ayar}\text{marattin}\ u\text{yir}\ a\text{tupool}\ u\text{yarntatan}\Ru \\
 p\text{aRantu}\ v\text{arum}\ k\text{ocuvinyir}\ k\text{uTTaiyan}\Ru (123) \]

[The life of palm is not very big nor that of a mosquito too tiny.]

Another poet describes the natural love of mother bird with its chick, in the following poem:

\[ e\text{ea}\text{ziyaippool}\ i\text{runtaalum}\ i\text{Raiyai}\ u\text{uTTum} \\
 e\text{ziRpaRa}\text{vai}\ a\text{ppiRkoor}\ a\text{Lavum}\ u\text{NToo}? (124) \]

[The love of mother in a poor family is not low. Can the love and affection of the bird while feeding its chick be measured?]

Some mothers even die naturally as soon as they give birth to their off-springs. This wonder is described in the following poem:

\[ a\text{aziyin}\ c\text{ippi}\ m\text{aayntuviTum}\ a\text{zakiya}\ m\text{uttam}\ i\text{iintavuTan} \\
 v\text{aaazai}\ k\text{anRaal}\ a\text{zintuviTum},\ n\text{aNTum}\ a\text{tupool}\ a\text{zintuviTum} (125) \]

[As soon as the pearl comes out, the shell dies away; so is the case with plantain and crab.]

There are hundreds of enchanting, charming, delightful and fascinating experiences in nature, which, of course, is impossible to list them all. Many poets in all over the world created outstanding literary master pieces on nature to the best of their knowledge and experience. A few of them in Tamil language have been furnished in our discussion.
### Footnote:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Reference</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Arimathi Tennagan, manitam paaTukireen</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>Velmurugan, S., vaanitaacan paaTakaLil urukkaaTci</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>Caldwell, moziyiyal</td>
<td>41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>Freud, uLaviyal</td>
<td>67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td>Arimathi Tennagan, manitam paaTukireen</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.</td>
<td>Bharatiyar, paaratiyaar kavitaikaL tokuppu</td>
<td>181</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.</td>
<td>Arimathi Tennagan, azuka tamizinamee</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8.</td>
<td>Bharatiyar, paaratiyaar kavitaikaL tokuppu</td>
<td>201</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9.</td>
<td>Sir Ramasamy, apitaana cintaamaNi</td>
<td>887</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10.</td>
<td>Arimathi Tennagan, manitam paaTukireen</td>
<td>121</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11.</td>
<td>Bharatiyar, paaratiyaar kavitaikaL tokuppu</td>
<td>161</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12.</td>
<td>Arimathi Tennagan, manitam paaTukireen</td>
<td>121</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13.</td>
<td>Ibid</td>
<td>106</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14.</td>
<td>Arimathi Tennagan, peecum vizikaL</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15.</td>
<td>Arimathi Tennagan, kavitaikaL</td>
<td>53</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16.</td>
<td>Arimathi Tennagan, manitam paaTukireen</td>
<td>73-74</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17.</td>
<td>Arimathi Tennagan, azuka tamizinamee</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18.</td>
<td>Ibid</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19.</td>
<td>Ibid</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20.</td>
<td>Ibid</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21.</td>
<td>Ibid</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22.</td>
<td>Ibid</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23.</td>
<td>Ibid</td>
<td>54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24.</td>
<td>Editorial board, Annamalai University Publication</td>
<td>71</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25.</td>
<td>Arimathi Tennagan, azuka tamizinamee</td>
<td>54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26.</td>
<td>Tamilvel, paaveentan maanPpu</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>27.</td>
<td>Arimathi Tennagan, azuka tamizinamee</td>
<td>54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>28.</td>
<td>Ilakkiyan, paaTuka kuyilee</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>29.</td>
<td>Tamilvel, paaveentan maanPpu</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30.</td>
<td>Arimathi Tennagan, poorkkuyilee nii vantu paaTu</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
31. Murugesan, C.S., malarkkaNaikaL p.53
32. Arimuthi Tennagan, ezuka tamizinamee p.31
33. Panchankan, K., PeNmai p.15
34. Sigmund Freud, uLaviyal p.23
35. Bharatiyar, paraaratiyaar kavitaikaL p.106
36. Bharatidasan, paraaritaacan kavitaikaL p.108
37. Ibid, canciivi parvatattiN caaral p.4
38. Ibid, peN kuzantai taalaTTu p.18
39. Ibid, p.23
40. Bharatidasan, paaveentar kavitaikaL p.163
41. Ilakkiyan, paaTuka kuyilee p.99
42. Tamilvel, paaveentaan maaNpu p.42
43. Arimuthi Tennagan, ezuka tamizinamee p.21
44. Bharatidasan, iruNTa viiTuu p.6
45. Bharatidasan, paaveentar kavitaikaL p.103
46. Bharatidasan, canciivi parvatattiN caaral p.9
47. Bharatidasan, paaveentar kavitaikaL p.72
48. Ilakkiyan, paaTuka kuyilee p.99
49. Arimuthi Tennagan, maNittam paaTukirreen p.82
50. Arimuthi Tennagan, kiLarccikkuyiilN kaatitai p.36
51. Ilakkiyan, peecum mozikaL p.69
52. Ibid --
53. Ibid p.62
54. Arimuthi Tennagan, maNkai p.22
55. Ambedkar, tiitNTaaaimai p.6
56. Ibid p.6
57. Ibid p.9
58. KalaikaLaNciiyam p.561
59. Ambedkar, tiitNTaaaimai p.59
60. Sangam Poets ‘puRanaantuuRu’ poem 183, line 69
61. Aranga Murugaiyan, caatiyum p.32
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No.</th>
<th>Reference</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>62.</td>
<td>K.K.Pillai, Tamizaka varalaaRu</td>
<td>p.61</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>63.</td>
<td>Yogeswaran, P., tamizk kavitaikāL camutaayaccikkalkaL</td>
<td>p.116</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>64.</td>
<td>Bharatidasan, paaratitaacān kavitait tokuppu</td>
<td>p.73</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>65.</td>
<td>Bharatidasan, cāṇciivi parvatatiin caaral</td>
<td>p.23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>66.</td>
<td>Arimathi Tennagan, tamizkkanāl</td>
<td>p.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>67.</td>
<td>Ibid</td>
<td>p.17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>68.</td>
<td>Pasupati, A., pulveLi</td>
<td>p.10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>69.</td>
<td>Arokiyanathan, viNNaittoTum vizutukaL</td>
<td>p.38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>70.</td>
<td>Kalladan, peecum vizikaL</td>
<td>p.43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>71.</td>
<td>Ibid</td>
<td>p.43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>72.</td>
<td>Arimathi Tennagan, ulakiyam paaTuvoom</td>
<td>p.22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>73.</td>
<td>Ibid</td>
<td>p.64</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>74.</td>
<td>Panneer selvam, pannjirp puukkaL</td>
<td>p.25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>75.</td>
<td>Tamilvel, paaveentān maaNpu</td>
<td>p.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>76.</td>
<td>Arimathi Tennagan, tamizaracān</td>
<td>p.21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>77.</td>
<td>Ibid</td>
<td>p.32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>78.</td>
<td>Ibid</td>
<td>p.84</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>79.</td>
<td>Arimathi Tennagan, ulakiyam paaTuvoom</td>
<td>p.44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>80.</td>
<td>Ibid</td>
<td>p.30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>81.</td>
<td>Arimathi Tennagan, tennakan kavitaikāL</td>
<td>p.117</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>82.</td>
<td>Ibid</td>
<td>p.118</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>83.</td>
<td>Arokiyanathan, viNNaittoTum vizutukaL</td>
<td>p.40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>84.</td>
<td>Arimathi Tennagan, maṇitam paaTukireṇ</td>
<td>p.70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>85.</td>
<td>Ibid</td>
<td>p.70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>86.</td>
<td>Ibid</td>
<td>p.77</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>87.</td>
<td>Kalladan, peecum vizikaL</td>
<td>p.47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>88.</td>
<td>Ibid</td>
<td>p.73</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>89.</td>
<td>Ibid</td>
<td>p.74</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>90.</td>
<td>Arimathi Tennagan, ezuka tamizinamee</td>
<td>p.41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>91.</td>
<td>Ibid</td>
<td>p.117</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>92.</td>
<td>Selvam, N., camuukaviyal</td>
<td>p.6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
93. Andreavo K.V., Engel’s kutumpam, aracu, taniccottu p. 104
94. Arimathi Tennagan, manitam paaTukireen p. 52
95. Ibid p. 32
96. Ibid p. 83
97. Ibid p. 56
98. Arimathi Tennagan, kilLaikaLee keeLuNkaL p. 21
99. Arimathi Tennagan, peecum vizikaL p. 3
100. Arimathi Tennagan, manitam paaTukireen p. 88
101. Bharatiyar, paaratiyaar kavitaikaL p. 103
102. Andreavo, K.V., Engel’s kutumpam, aracu, taniccottu p. 105
103. Arimathi Tennagan, kilarccikaLin kiitai p. 27
104. Arimathi Tennagan, ezuka tamiziNnamee p. 23
105. Bahratidasan, paaratitaacan kavitaikaL p. 42
106. Tamilvel, paaureen panNpu p. 14
107. Benjamin, iRaivan maaNpu p. 82
108. Kavimani Desika Vinayakam Pillai, ilakkiya varalaRu p. 110
109. Bharatiyar, paaratiyaar kavitaikaL p. 72
110. Kavimani Desika Vinayakam Pillai, ilakkiya varalaRu p. 110
111. Bharatidasan, azakin cirippu p. 9
112. Ibid p. 19
113. Apparadikal, appar teevaaram --
114. Kalladan, peecum vizikaL p. 15
115. Arimathi Tennagan, tennakan kavitaikaL p. 115
116. Ibid p. 115
117. Arimathi Tennagan p. 115
118. Ibid p. 16
119. Arimathi Tennagan, kilLaikaLee keeLuNkaL p. 38
120. Ibid p. 38
121. Kalladan, peecum vizikaL p. 21
122. Ibid p.22
123. Arimathi Tennagan, manitam paaTukireen p.26
124. Ibid p.21
125. Kalladan, peecum vizikaL p.56

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