



THE INFLUENCE OF SREE VIDHYADHIRAJA CHATTAMBI SWAMIKAL IN KERALA HISTORY

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Abstract: Brahmasri Vidhayadhiraja Theerthapadha Chattambi swami was born on 25th August 1853 (Mal. Month 11th Chingam 1029) on Thursday at Kannammola in Thiruvananthapuram city as the first son of Vasudevan Namboodiri of Thamarasseril Illam and Nangamma Pillai of Ullorkkottu house. Though he was formally named as Ayyappan, from child hood onwards he was known as Kunjan pillai. Though he could not join school and study initially due to the poverty in the house, through his own hard work he has acquired deep knowledge in languages like Malayalam, Sanskrit and Tamil and also in Mathematics. When he was a small child itself he was appointed for tying flower garlands in the Devi temple nearby his house. That boy was able to meet a monk unexpectedly who came to have Darshan in that temple and received “Balasubramanya” in vocation from him. He was about 13-14 years old at that time. By chanting this hymn and brought by divine power a noticeable took place in his mode of life. The chanting of hymn made him to get the name ‘Shanmughadason.’

Key words – Early life , spiritual education, Vedandikara nirupanam, Social reformer

Introduction: A religious reformer and a unique revivalist of 19th century Kerala, Chattampi Swamikal influenced the launching of several social, religious, literary and political organizations and movements in Kerala. At the age of fifteen about six months he was happened to join the school of pandit Ramanpillai Aasan at Pettah and learned music. Since he was ‘Chattambipillai ‘or Chatambi (now this work is being called as monitor or class leader), he got one permanent name Kunjanpillai Chattambi. Due to the starvation in the house he had to stop school education early. For relief from poverty he has worked as a labourer for some time later worked as an accountant in an aristocratic Brahmin family ‘Kallur madom’.

Early life

When he was 16-17 year old happened to go to a place called Neyyatinkara along with his elder brother (mother’s sister’s son) Krishna Pillai and worked as a document writer. In Bhoothapandy also for some time he was engaged in this work. Since he did not like the climate of that place without delay he has returned to Thiruvananthapuram. After wards he has worked as a lawyer’s clerk for few days and later for some time worked as an accountant in a Hagoor Kacheri (office of the

revenue Board- Secretariat of the present period). Since he was unable to tolerate the arrogance of a superior officer he has resigned from this second job. During that period in the Salthsanga Sabha (good assembly) 'Janaprajagaram' run by Ramanpillai Aasan of pettah, he got acquainted with a famous Yogi. 'Thaikkattu Ayyasway' and from him he was able to practice yoga rule. Due to the acquaintance with Swaminathadesikhan a Dravida language teacher of royal school, he got an opportunity to study the Veda books in Tamil deeply. Kunjan pillai was about 24 years old he came in to contact with the great pandit 'Subhajadapadikal' who came to participate in the Navaratri vidwal Mahasabha at Thiruvananthapuram. This acquaintance in a rather lengthy preceptor – pupil (guru- shishya) relationship. Jadapadikal has taken this intelligent youngster to his native place village 'Kallidai Kurichi' in Tamil Nadu and as a disciple educated him for three years period. Within this period this young man has studied all Upanishad sashtra books in Sanskrit and Tamil.

Area of Study: The present study the influence of chattambi swamikal in Kerala history highlighted the biographical sketch of the swamjis, the analysis and interpretation of the swamjis attitude of caste system, teaching about religions, Value education, Spiritual education and their relevance present.

Methodology: Methodology adopted in the study is mainly descriptive cum analytical. The study done with interdisciplinary perspectives.

Objectives:

1. To trace the importance of life and Career in swamjis' Whole life.
2. The study is done with an interdisciplinary perspective
3. To trace religious reformer and a unique revivalist of 19th century Kerala

Shanmughadasan after leaving Kallidaikurichi, for few months he travelled around all over south India and visited plenty of pilgrimage places and sought blessings from many great souls. For certain period he was associated with a learned Muslim Thangal and studied about Muhammed religion thoroughly. (on later period surprising many Muhammadans he has expressed his decisive knowledge in Islam and his respect and reverence about that religion) for few days during that period stayed at *Maruthwamala* and learned higher rule from Yogeaswara' *Aathanadakumaravelu*. He has returned to Thiruvananthapuram when he was about 27-28 years old. After a little time his dear mother expired that son near his mother's death bed look care of his mother diligently, after his mother's death declared that 'I have served the connection with this house'. And left that house and he has not set his foot there at any time.

Spiritual education: Though he got scientific knowledge, the young man who was worried about not getting spiritual knowledge, after the death of his mother began started his travelling in search of Sanyasa Guru. (He was 28 years old at that time.) Unexpectedly he was able to meet one crudely attired and lunatic like Sanyasi and

again spiritual knowledge disconnecting worldly relations. After getting spiritual knowledge mostly the next one or two years swamiji has spent the time as a traveler in the northern areas of Thiruvananthapuram district. When he was about 30 years old at Aniyoor temple one young man called 'Nanu Aasan' from chempazhanthi approached him and accepted his discipleship. Later about three or four years spent as inspiring companions like Raman and Lakshmanan. It can be said that first Swamiji has given Mantropadesa and later spiritual instructions and changed Nanuaasan as Narayana Guru as we knew now.

After the first disciple left he after receiving knowledge Swamiji started travelling to the northern areas of Thiruvithamcoor and Kochi kingdoms. At that time he was about 35 years old once at Ettumannoor area he was threatened by a priest shouting 'wicked person' (Sarapsanthathi, Sinners' if immediately not ababdab' sanathanadharma' and seek refuge in Christ, you will fall in perpetual hell and as a reply to him he has written one book; 'Criticism of christianity' (Christumatha Niroopanam) during this period. Two household disciples Neelakanta Pillai and Karuva Krishanaasan were sent to various parts of Kerala like missionaries themselves for spreading Sanathana Dharma messages.

When swamiji was of about 39 years old a meeting took place with Vivekanda swami (ten years younger to him) As per Vivekannanda's desire the secret doctrine of 'Chinmudra' was explained to him during this context. Vivekananda Swamy opined that Sri. Vidhadhiraja swamikal is the one and only 'perfect intelligent person' (parinitha pranjan) in Kerala and Paramabhattachars Swamiji on Vivekananda' if Vivekanandan opined his mouth even granules of sand will taste sweet. At Moovattupuzha one intelligent boy Neelakanta Pillai from Maradi village came into acquaintance with swamiji and sought to be his pupil. He is the great person on later period in the name of Sri Neelakanta Theertha pasha swamikal and became famous even in the outside countries of India.

Vidhadhiraja Swamikal during this whole period travelled all over Thiruvithamcoor and Kochi kingdoms vigorously and worked hard untiringly to bring spiritual enlightenment in Hindu and for eliminating bad practices like caste thinking and blind domination of Brahmins. He was able to remove and throw the stump of superstition that even for practicing spiritual science, only caste Brahmin's are eligible and to raise the non-Brahmin Hindus to the height of spiritual awareness. He was able to eradicate the arrangement of certain missionaries with the covert support of the British Government despicable propagation about *Sanathana Dharma* and cheating the poor Hindus.

When Swamiji was about 47 years old another boy having the name Narayanan approached him at Paravoor and accepted his discipleship. He is the great person who becomes famous in the name of *Sreetheertha Pramahansa Swamiji*. The Theertha Padhasrams at Ezhumattoor in Tiruvalla Taluk and at Vazhoor in kanjirappally were established by this holy one. His disciple was Sri *Ramanada Theerthapada swamiji* the supreme preceptor (Guru) of Paramabhattacharsram in Puthenkuris, east of Thirippunithura. The householder disciple parampathu Raman Pillai later took

sanyasa in the name of Ramanada Theerthapador. This great soul who was having the luck to be alive for more than 100 years as *Srividhyadhiraj swamiji's* direct disciple who lived in this world till the most adjacent period.

Sri Vidhaydhiraja was having plenty of household disciples in addition to sanyas, disciples. Advising the householders to full fill the house hold affairs as per rules and as per dharma, he was not having the habit of giving Kashyam and Kamadalam(water- jug) to everybody whom he met and make them to become ascetics. If we observe Swamiji involved in child- play with small children for so much time and talking authoritatively for hours with house- wives about house management and cooking, no one will believe that he is the same Sri *Vidhaydhiraja Theerthapadhar* who has bathed wholly in the ocean of Holy Scriptures.

He was having unique inborn aptitude feat dexterity in music and painting. He has displayed skill in veena, Mridangam, Ganjira, Chenda etc which used to create surprise in the people who have made their profession by using them. There are stories about the people who were attracted to become his disciples, who were not having the efficiency or preparedness to grasp his spiritual instruction, only seeing his too dazzling and golden beautiful figure or hearing his enchanting singing or playing of veena or surprised by seeing his knowledge in medical science or astronomy. He had ability in many surprising divine power. But he never desired to fascinate the viewers by expressing this or to achieve the reverence of the world. But many people were surprised to see common creatures like crows, dogs, ants etc and wild animals like snakes, leopards, bears etc. so many times when Swamiji called them, came peacefully and sat near to Swamiji expressing respect and following his instructions as it is Due to the compulsion of certain noble devotees, as a joviality he has shown certain surprising skills occasionally.

Vedandikara nirupanam :Though Paramabhattraka Swamiji has written many books, as a compulsion that he will not touch the money with hand and with the reluctance to accept the magnanimity of rich people has not taken any action to publish his own books even then with the good luck of the Keralites, his certain works though in complete were published. In these following three books deserve more importance. Advaida chintha padhathi (cunilateral thinking plan),Pracheena Malayalam (ancient Malayalam) and Vedadhikara Niroopanam . Though these books were written in a little difficult prose- style which was existed in the Malayalam literature earlier in the three fourth part of a century, it is an excellent example of swamiji's complete strategic non- yielding intellect, extra ordinary scholarship keen and analytic approach, amazing explanatory skill of the sub of the subject, all these are the best examples. Ancient Malayalam, Scripture power criticism (Vedhadhikara Niroopanam) are the declaration of war against the blind domination of Brahmins, it is not wrong to say that the periods, lasted is there in exceeds in all these books. But the non-duality though plan(Advaithe Chintha Padhathi) as along as the mankind exist, the creations referring the spiritual subjects having unending values, it is a great book transcendent in time and country limits.

Swamiji's sixteenth birth day was celebrated as a great occasion in the year 1913. Its organizer was his dear disciple, the 32 years old Theerthapadha Swamikal. This advent youth ascetic used his full enthusiastic thrill for making this festival spectacular. Paramagurupadhar who disliked all type of publicity and commotion, due to the fondness towards the disciple he has participated in the sixteenth birth day celebration beginning to the end happily. The remaining part of swamiji's life was joyful the position 'Kerala's supreme preceptor' was vested in him on its own accord a great series of disciples and disciples was formed when he was alive it self. One very knowledgeable monthly by name 'Sadhyugum' was started in this name by his disciples and run beautifully during his life and later for some time. His life story by nae 'Sadhaguru Sarvaswam' as a Sanskrit poem was published form kasi. But just like 'Nalinedhalagatham' can be said that drop of water in the ornamental lotus, in all this present or not present ,he has lend a sage's life. In August 1921 his main disciple the great scholar and poet. Sree Neelakantatheertha padha Swamikal expired. On that occasion parambapattambi swamiji came there and participated in the funeral rates with interest.

At the end stage of swamiji's life the Yuvakesari sri Kumabalathu sankara pillai got acquainted with him. The old bhattaraka Guru and the young Sri sankara Pillai exactly like father-son relationship originated between them. As a result of this Swamiji foundout a Samadhiplace in Panmana' near to the native place of Sri Sankara pillai and he has promised that when the time comes he will reach there. In the starting of 1924 itself Swamiji started preparation for the Mhasamadhi. After bidding farewell to his disciples at Thiruvananthapuram city, along with sri kumalathu Sankara pillai through Kollam reached prakkulam and later reached at Panmana. Since he has predicted tht he will not see the first Edava sun earlier itself to his disciples, all of them expecting Mahasamadhi come there and saluted Paramaguru. The famous photo in which Sreenarayana guru on the right side and Paramahamsar on the left side and Pramabhataraka Swamiji sitting in the middle was taken when Sree Naryana Guru and Theerhapadhaparamahamssa Swamiji came to see their Guru little earlier to the Samadhi day at the end of .

In April 1924 itself Swamiji, though in a hidden way informed every body which is the Samadhi Day. When few devotees form Thiruvananthapuram approached him and requested to have Samadhi in Thiruvananthapuram and told him to proceed with them, the essence of his prophecy away way let it be 23rd Medam, on that day surely I will come to the south' they could not understand at that time that the prediction become fruitful like that only. Without seeing the first view of Edavasun, on May 5th 1924 Monday itself (Medam 23rd 1099) he has merged with Brahma salvation.

Social reformer : The Mahasamadhi of Sri Vidhadhiraja Swamiji was a big blow for Malayalabhoomi itself. Like nature it self wept with worry, for some period due to too much frightening torrential rain and unprecedented flood Kerala wholly bathed in the ocean of mourning. Though half a century is over after this incident as on today, even now also the Malayalees will be able to remember the ' flood of ninety nine ' with a shock only. Three Rishis Sreenaryana Gurudevan, Sri. Neelakanta Theerthapadha swamiji and sri Theerhtapadha Pramahamsa Swamiji were the

Sanyasa disciples of swami Thiruvadi. Without doubt we can say that these three persons have put indelible label in the history of Kerala culture, Sree Narayanaguru Devan's propagation activities for the social justices very famous. Sri Neelakantapadhaswamiji was great soul, who due to his talent, scholarship and yogic observance achieved and unrivalled position. Sri Theerthapadha swamiji when he was very young it self lucky to get Sanyasa Deeksha from swami Thiruvadikal. So many Grahastha Disciples of Swamiji were the most respectable great souls of their generation .Sri Kaliyankal Neelakanta Pillai and Sri. Karuva Krishnanaasan have gained Swamiji's discipleship in some other way. They were the two warriors Swamiji has brought up to defend the attack from other religious propagandist against Sanathana Dharma. Each house Srividhyadhiraja Swamy Thiruvadikal visited each person he has touched and all the families he has blessed have attained property as per the record of the persons experienced. Even in this period also who ever is worshipping him keeping his picture or reciting his holy name, it is seen that they have progressed in their life.

Conclusion: Among Swamiji's series of disciples some are still living among us blessing the land of Kerala are the disciple' disciple of various disciples like Sri Aathuradas Swamikal (Kurichi) Sri Nithyachiathanyayati (shivagiri) etc. Swamiji's divine history, fame, message etc be remaining in the memory of good folks as long as the moon and the stars exist. Sri Vidhayadhiraja swamikal has led a worldly life depending on solution rather than action. He has considered it was his duty to advise the truth seekers a way to find out the light of knowledge. Sri vidhaydhiraja swamiji liked a pomp less and quiet life. Sree ramakrishna Devan and Ramanamaharshi have adopted fully pomp less and quiet life and same what lonely life style. Sree Vidhaydhiraja Swamiji also liked the same quiet life. But for these three great souls were having important disciples who were able to attract the world with their active and continuous activates. These great disciples have revealed the greatness of these preceptors. The reorganization of the society could be made real only through dismantling of Brahmin hegemony he insisted. He worked for emancipation of women and encouraged them to come to the forefront of the society.

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