



BIOGRAPHY OF T.V.SAMBASIVAM PILLAI AND AN ANALYSIS OF HIS CONTRIBUTION TO THE SIDDHA SYSTEM OF MEDICINE

Karuppiah Omprakash^{1*}, Rathinam Rathinamala², Subash chandran³

^{1*}Reader, Department of Pothu maruthuvam, Sivaraj Siddha Medical College, Salem, Tamil Nadu, India.

²Ph.D scholar, National Institute of Siddha, Tambaram sanatorium, Chennai, Tamil Nadu, India.

³Lecturer, Department of Pothu maruthuvam, Government Siddha Medical College, Palayamkottai, Tamil Nadu, India.

ABSTRACT

T.V.Sambasivam pillai, the acclaimed author, of the “Cyclopaedic Dictionary” is well known in the field of Indian Medicine especially Siddha medicine. “Cyclopaedic Dictionary” is considered as one of the great treasures of the Siddha system. Neither did he possess a basic medical degree nor he hailed from a family with medical background but his depth of knowledge in the Siddha system is highly commendable. He spent his entire life contributing and deciphering the ancient literatures of the Siddha system. This article is a tribute to his dedication, aspiration, devotion, and sacrifice for the Siddha system of Medicine and aids in highlighting the excerpts of the Cyclopaedic Dictionary.

Key words: Cyclopaedic Dictionary, T.V.Sambasivam pillai, Siddha Medicine.

INTRODUCTION

The name, ‘T.V.Sambasivam Pillai’ is very familiar among the practitioners of Siddha Medical System. His selfless dedication and contribution lead to the publication of the Tamil English Cyclopaedic Dictionary of Medicine to the Indian system of Medicine. It is deemed as one of the greatest treasure to the system, that provides vast and accurate information about Plants, Minerals, Metals and Animals used in the siddha system to whoever seeks for deep information. In Siddha literature there are many nigandus are available like Bogar nigandu, Sattamuni nigandu, Bingala nigandu etc. Among them, T. V Sambasivam Pillai’s Tamil English Cyclopaedic Dictionary of Medicine is the great work to explore the treasures of Siddha system.

The dictionary consists of five volumes, with a total of 6,500 pages. It contains nearly 80,000 words explained in detail. The dictionary provides synonyms for Tamil words in Latin/English. It also describes and explains any given word with appropriate annotations where required.



BIRTH AND ORIGIN

T.V.Sambasivam Pillai was born on 19th September 1880 in Bangalore. He hailed from a non-affluent family from a village named Kamuganchenthangudi near Tanjore and later migrated to Bangalore in search of greener pastures.

FAMILY HISTORY

T.V.Sambasivam Pillai was the eldest son of the family. His father was Thiru.Vilviah Manniar and his mother was Srimathi. Manonmani Ammal. His initials, T denotes his

native Tanjore and V denotes his father's name, Vilvaiah Mannaiar. While in Bangalore, due to an epidemic outbreak of plaque his family shifted to Kamuganchenthangu, but, TVS stayed in Bangalore as he was pursuing his education there.

As soon as he completed his schooling in Bangalore he was employed in a clerical job in the Madras City Police Commissioner's office. He got married to Srimathi. Duraikannu Ammal in the year 1903. She was a pious and kindhearted woman. They were blessed with 5 sons but unfortunately lost all the infants due to various reasons. Disastrously his wife also passed away in the year 1914 due to cholera. His parents coerced him to marry Smt Ammani Ammal in the year 1916 and disaster struck him again with the death of her during childbirth within a year. All the cataclysmic events in his life affected his mental strength and pushed him into depression. To overcome it, he poured himself into the huge collection of ancient palm manuscripts and books by his fore fathers.

The process of seeking solace enriched him with extensive knowledge that led him to be a valuable contributor to the Indian Systems of Medicine.

T.V Sambasivam Pillai was astonished by the treasure of knowledge lying behind them, without being brought into the Limelight. He came to the conviction that Siddha System is the lifeline for humanity. When he wanted to venture further into the subject, he found a vacuum and felt that there was no authentic guide available in English. Hence, he decided to create a Cyclopaedic Dictionary in English.

What we have today, as the "Cyclopaedic Dictionary" is the result of his sacrifices and untiring efforts, from the year 1916. Nearly for sixteen years he toiled day and night in reading, writing, collecting, and gathering the materials. With all the collected study materials, he created a library for the intended work. He spent major portion of his salary for this work and even sold his lands and other assets for preserving the documents. After ceaseless untiring effort, he compiled and published two volumes of his work in the year 1938 at his own expense. Then he could only publish a part of the third volume and the remaining part was published with partial help from the Government of Tamilnadu^[1].

Once the three-volume publication came out, his stupendous work was acknowledged and

the medical field, the government, and the teaching institutions started recognizing his work. He continued his work to create the fourth and fifth volume. In recognition of his high caliber work and depth of knowledge, the Government of Tamilnadu sanctioned Rs.5000 as financial assistance for his research (G.O 1228 – public health dated 4.4.1949) and provided him accommodation at Triplicane, Chennai. In addition, the University of Madras and Mysore University awarded him Rs.5000 each, in recognition of his work^[1].

DEMISE

T.V.S continued his relentless effort in creating the volume IV and volume V of the Cyclopedic dictionary. His entire life was devoted to only to this work and due to the rigorous nature, his health deteriorated and he demised on 12.November 1953 at the age of 73. He left with his unfulfilled dream of publishing the two remaining volume of the Cyclopedic dictionary.^[2]

The entire work of TV Sambasivam Pillai, consisting of 6,537 pages was reprinted and published by Department of Indian Medicine and Homeopathy, Government Tamilnadu. The concised foreword of the publication, named as The Greatness of Siddha Medicine was published in the II World Tamil conference which was held at Chennai in 1968 by the Department of Siddha, Directorate of Indian medicine and Homeopathy.^[4]

Republishing Efforts

After T.V.S's demise, there was a setback in publishing his collections. The Government of Tamilnadu took his collections into possession and no steps were taken to republish them. After some years Padmashri V. Subbiah Pillai (Owner of South India Saiva Siddhanta Publishing works) came to know about the Cyclopaedic dictionary and wrote an essay in July 1972 edition of "Senthamil Chelvi" magazine. Senthamil Chelvi was a monthly magazine published by South India Saiva Siddhanta publishing works of Tirunelveli, TamilNadu.^[4]

On knowing about this great work of "Cyclopaedic dictionary", the stalwart Mr.G.D. Naidu of Coimbatore volunteered to publish the next two volumes IV and V. It was unfortunate that Mr.G.D.Naidu passed away while the process of publication was in progress. After the demise of Mr.G.D. Naidu, his son Mr.G.D.N. Gopal published volume IV in 1977 and Volume V in

1978 under the aid of G.D.Naidu Charitable Trust. [5]

EXCLUSIVE FEATURES OF “CYCLOPAEDIC DICTIONARY”

Volume I

The size of the first volume published in the year 1938 was indeed large i.e. 25×16×9.5 cm¹. The reprinted book had 1982 pages out of which 240 pages were of Siddha research foreword. The 240-page foreword is considered as the best research notes of Siddha System of Medicine. This foreword has 27 headings elaborating on Tamil community, Tamilnadu's culture, Greatness of Tamil, Tamil medical systems, Yoga, Mind, Death, Religious chants etc. It also contained Macrocosm vs. Microcosm, Astrology in Medicine, Eastern Physiology, The Five Elements, Humoural Pathology, Science of Breath, Prana, Science of Pulse, Diseases and their cure, Ancient Chemistry, Alchemy, Rejuvenation, Immortality and the ethics of a good physician.

The first volume of Tamil- English “Cyclopaedic dictionary” has many detailed explanations, descriptions at appropriate places, with complete illustrations and footnotes. Further he has devoted 1637 pages for remedy materials and for ‘Sarakku Vaippu Murai’. We can see the main features of the chapters one by one.

Macrocosm vs. Microcosm

Man is said to be the Microcosm and the Universe is said to be the Macrocosm; because the elements in the universe exists in Man too; or in the other words, there is nothing in the Macrocosm of nature that is not present in Man. So man must be looked upon as an integral part of universal nature and not as anything separate or different from the later. This closely follows the Siddhars doctrine.

‘Andatthil ullathe pindam
Pindatthil ullathe andam
Andamum pindamum ondre
Arinthuthaan paarkkum pothe’
(Sattamuni gnanam)

When there is abnormality in the nature of these elements in humans, diseases are caused. Similarly, in the universe, when there is disturbance in the elements, disasters such as earthquake, storms, lightning, rainfalls resulting in floods are caused.

The science of pulse

The science of pulse forms a very important branch of the Indian system of Medicine. The origin and development of this science is a subject of very remote antiquity. It is a science peculiar to the Siddha system of Medicine. There are innumerable works on this subject written by different authors in Tamil namely, Agastiya, Tirumular, Sivavakkiyar, Yugimuni, Terayar, Punnakisar, Sudamuni, Machamuni, Pulipaani, Sattamuni, Bogar, Vara rishi, Ramadevar, Idaikkadar, Konganava etc. According to Tirumular's work on pulse, the following constituent parts forming the fundamental principals in the human body seem to play an important role in the variations of pulse an account of their interpenetrating nature.

- Dasa vaayu - The ten vital airs
- Thri Naadi - The three nerve channels
Idakala etc.
- Aaratharaam - The six nerve plexuses
- Moondru - The three regions of the
maandalam body named the Sun,
Moon and the Fire.

The following table shows the origin, the nature of movements, form, force, or energy etc., of the pulse waves as exhibited by the radial artery.

Table: 1: Origin, form, force movements of pulse

7	6	5	4	3	2	1
Matthirai (Degree of force)	Viral (Finger)	Naadi nadai (Movements)	Mandalam (Region)	Urppatthi (Origin)	Vaayu	Thathu (Humour)
1	Aatkatti Fore finger	Kozhi Fowl	Unthi Navel	Malam Faeces	Apanan Apana	Vatham Wind
½	Nadu viral Middle finger	Thavalai Frog	Maarbu Chest	Jalam Water	Prana Prana	Pitham Bile
¼	Mothira viral (Ring finger)	Paambu Snake	Utchi Head	Vinthu Semen	Samanan Samana	Iyyam Phlegm

The pulse according to Siddhar science is divided into five kinds viz.

- Vadha naadi - Pulse indicating wind humour.
- Pittha naadi - Pulse indicating bilious humour.
- Iyya naadi - Pulse indicating phlegmatic humour.
- Bootha naadi - Pulse felt between the thumb and the forefinger.
- Guru naadi - An intermediary pulse felt between fingers. (in 1, 2, 3, &4)

He also explained the sub division of pulse according to the nature, action and other characteristics. Some examples like Theevira naadi, Thulla naadi, Van naadi and about 25 varieties had been explained.

The Nature of Pulse

The physician should carefully study the nature of the pulse described in an intelligible manner in various ways according to the force, rate and movement by comparing them with the movements of those of animals like horses, snakes, frogs, etc, and birds like peacock, fowl etc. The idea of this comparison should be well borne in mind at the time of feeling the patients' pulse for purpose of corroboration.

Diseases and their cure

According to Siddhar's Philosophy, diseases in man do not originate in himself, but from the influences, which can act upon him. According to five elemental theory, the causes of the diseases are:

1. Derangement of the three humours
2. Astral influences
3. Poisonous substances
4. Psychological causes
5. Spiritual causes
6. Diseases originating from the soul

Cure of diseases

In this chapter, T. V. S has mentioned that treatment is an art, which cannot be acquired by mere reading of the books but must be learnt through experience. It is clearly stated in the Siddhar's science that a physician who has no faith and consequently has no spiritual power in him cannot face anything but failure, even though he is a well-versed academician or scholar.

While describing the essential qualities of a noble physician, he emphasizes that in depth knowledge alone cannot cure a patient. He also highlights that the physician's first step is to gain the trust of the patient to confide in him. He adds that experience and deep understanding of the five senses are also important.

The following quote from Agastiyar's Paripooranam reiterates the character of a good physician.

"Palithidavae venumendral pultthiyanee iyya
Parilulla uyirkalellam thannuirpo lenni
Chalithida yorupothum tharumam cheyya
Chanthayangal cheyyathe sathisey yathe
Chalitthidavae karumatthaal piravi kittum
Tharumatthal sayutchaya pathavi kittum
Chalitthidai sarguruvai aduthuk kaaru
Sadhakaalam sadhasivanai pootrip pare"

Ancient chemistry chapter deals with the usage of Metals, Minerals, Poisons and other materials used by the ancient Siddha rishis. In the chapter of Alchemy, he describes the processing methods and related indications. Chapter on Rejuvenation and Immortality deals with the herbs, yoga, geriatrics and steps to immortality. This part of this book can be described as the 'key' to unlock the secrets of Siddha system of Medicine.

In the first chapter for the Tamil letter 'Aa', about 17 descriptions are given. In this he has cited the works of 'Agasthiar Meyngana Soothiram', 'Sigamani 800', 'Macchamuni Deeksha gnanam', 'Thirukkural' etc as the evidences for his descriptions. He also has given detailed explanations of 'Medicine' (Owdatha vaguppu). All these 27 chapters are illustrated in an affluent manner for easier understanding of the fundamentals of Siddha system of medicine, even by a lay person. [6]

Volume II

This volume consists of categories under the Tamil alphabets 'Ka' to 'Kow' in 774 pages. T.V.S has explained about various types of "Eye Diseases" and has described 69 types of herbal ingredients in detail for the treatment methodology. He also has explained 43 types of groceries, which can be used as medications and another 64 types of different remedial ingredients. He has elaborated of Kasthuri

(Musk) and its varieties, possible available sources, tests for genuineness and those items, which have compatibility. He also has given a detailed description of 17 varieties of Kadukkai (Nutmeg) and 16 varieties of Sulphur. [7]

Volume III

This volume categorizes the chapters from the Tamil alphabets 'Cha' to 'Chi'. He has explained about 23 different varieties of conch and its 19 different meanings. viz., Salanjalam, Mootchangu, Patti, Soorsangu. He also has depicted in details about the 64 types of arts. He also has given detailed descriptions about various sexual disorders, sexual desires and other sexual problems arising in humans. [8]

Volume IV

After T.V.Sambasivam Pillai's demise, in 1977 this volume was published with the support of G.D. Naidu Charitable trust. This chapter has categories from the Tamil alphabet 'Si' to 'Now'. He has explored different varieties of medicines as well as diseases. E.g. Seethopalathi chooranam, which is specifically given for burning sensation of the body due to fever. He also has explained 'Sikakai premekam' in page number 83 in which urine smells like the soap pods.

He has listed the digestive period of various food items as well as medicines (Siddha), and quoted Agasthiar as evidence

Table: 2: Digestive period for various internal medicines

Time	Medicines
1 ½ hours	Decoction
3 hours	Jeyaneer
1 ½ hours	Parpam
5 hours	Chooranam
5 hours	Oil
5 hours	Legume

He has categorized 12 varieties of plasters and their constituents, which are applied to wounds. [9]

Volume V

This volume was published in the year 1978. It contains 1,292 pages, comprising of categories from the Tamil alphabets 'Pa' to 'Jo'.

He has illustrated cattle diseases in detail under the heading 'Pasuragam'. He also has explained about Patthiyam, the desirable food intake during patthiyam. He has given

about 25 varieties of jasmine and 11 varieties of pomegranate in detail. [10]

It is amazing to understand that TV Sambasivam Pillai has done the enormous task from collection materials to publish, solely. We are indebted to TV Sambasivam Pillai for this stupendous achievement spending his time, energy, finance and his whole life working on this project for 35 long years.

In 1985 Thiru Devaneyya Paavanar published "Senthamil Chorpirappiyal" compendium Part- I, which contains 6,500 words. But he has mentioned that nearly 1250 words were adopted from TVS Pillai's Dictionary. In subsequent volumes also Devaneyya Paavanar has adopted many ideas from TVS Pillai's work Thiru Devaneyya Paavanar has praised TV Sambasivam Pillai very highly in his foreword. [11] Mr. G.D. Naidu has paid rich tributes to TV Sambasivam Pillai as a Genius and he also has said that his stupendous work is a "Treasure Trove" of Tamil and Siddha. [12]

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, the "Cyclopaedic dictionary" of five volumes of TV Sambasivam Pillai is an incredible work and an incomparable reference material for Siddha System of Medicine for many generations to come.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

We would like to express our sincere thanks to Dr. S. Vijaya, Mr. Shanmuganathan (Retd DSP) and Mr. K.V. Subramanyan for their support and guidance towards the work.

REFERENCES

1. Rajabhoosanam Mannayar. Siddha Maruthuva Methai T.V.Sambasivam Pillai. Chennai; Guruvarul Press; 2002. p 5 -30.
2. A.R. Venkatachalapathy. 'Maruthuva Agarathi Thantha Methai' 2007. cited in (2010 May18) www.kalachuvadu.com
3. Rajabhoosanam Mannayar. Siddha Maruthuva Methai T.V.Sambasivam Pillai. Chennai; Guruvarul Press; 2002. p 50-72.
4. Subramanya Iyer. 'Padanthokkuthalir Pattarivu' 'Senthamil Selvi' Tirunelveli;

- South India Saiva Siddhanta publishing Work. 1972.
5. Rajabhoosanam Mannayar. Siddha Maruthuva Methai T.V.Sambasivam Pillai. Chennai; Guruvarul Press; 2002. p 85.
 6. T.V.Sambasivam Pillai. 'Cyclopedic Dictionary' Vol I. George Town, Madras; The Research Institute of Siddhars Science, 1938.
 7. T.V.Sambasivam Pillai. 'Cyclopedic Dictionary' Vol II. George Town, Madras; The Research Institute of Siddhars Science, 1938.
 8. T.V.Sambasivam Pillai. 'Cyclopedic Dictionary' Vol III. Chennai; The Directorate of Indian Medicine, Arumbakkam, 1977.
 9. T.V.Sambasivam Pillai. 'Cyclopedic Dictionary' Vol IV. Chennai; The Directorate of Indian Medicine, Arumbakkam, 1977.
 10. T.V.Sambasivam Pillai. 'Cyclopedic Dictionary' Vol V. Chennai; The Directorate of Indian Medicine, Arumbakkam, 1977.
 11. Devaneyya Paavanar. "Senthamil Chorpipappiyal peragaramuthali" Part I; Chennai. Tamilnadu paadanool niruvanam; 1985.
 12. Rajabhoosanam Mannayar. Siddha Maruthuva Methai T.V.Sambasivam Pillai. Chennai; Guruvarul Press; 2002. p 5.

Cite this article as:

Karuppiyah Omprakash, Karuppiyah Omprakash, Rathinam Rathinamala, Subash chandran. Biography of T.V.Sambasivam Pillai and an Analysis of his Contribution to the Siddha System of Medicine. Int. J. Ayur. Pharma Research. 2014; 2 (2): 66-71.

Source of support: Nil, Conflict of interest: None Declared

***Address for correspondence**

Dr. K. K. Omprakash

Reader, Department of Pothu maruthuvam

Sivaraj Siddha Medical College

Salem, Tamil Nadu, India.

Email: kkomprakash@gmail.com

Phone: +919444216007