

செங்கோட்டை ஸ்ரீ ஆவுடை அக்காள் பாடல்கள்

Songs of Ceṅkōṭṭai Srī Āvuṭai Akkāḷ

Tamil text, English translation and notes

*Tamil text and English translation of the ten songs
recorded on CD by Bombay Sisters,
Smt. C. Saroja and Smt. C. Lalitha*

Translated and annotated by:

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Foreword

How did Sri Avudai Akkal come into our lives?

There is an old saying that things happen for a reason. Others might contend that it is our *prarabdha* karma that takes its course. One may well ask, how did Sri Avudai Akkal come into our lives? Let me set out, as best I can, what happened.

The July-September 2019 (Vol.56, No.3) issue of the *Mountain Path*, a quarterly publication of Sri Ramanasramam, contained an article featuring the lives of two Saints, St Teresa of Avila (Spain) and Sri Avudai Akkal (Shenkottai, India). Both these women lived some 350 years ago and, though separated by geography, their spiritual outpourings, according to the author Dr Kanchana Natarajan, had similar mystical trajectories.

I had heard and read about Tamil women saints, Auvaiyar, Aandal and more recently Aandavan Pichai but not of Akkal. Dr Natarajan's article made reference to an earlier article of hers on Akkal in the January-March 2010 issue of the *Mountain Path*. Fortunately this was available online from the website of Sri Ramanasramam. That led me to consult, as we lightheartedly say, Swami Googleananda and thence many weblinks on Akkal including articles in the newspaper, The Hindu and references to the book *Transgressing Boundaries – The Songs of Shenkottai Avudai Akkal* (ISBN 978 93 81017 16 6) written by Dr Natarajan herself.

I ordered and devoured these readings and thanks to Dr Natarajan's advising people to contact her with any information on Akkal, I emailed her complimenting her on the book and asking for more details on the CD of Bombay Sisters featuring 10 songs of Akkal. Incidentally, it was these songs of Bombay Sisters and four pages (*Avvadayakkal*, pages 357-360) in *The Lives of Saints* (a publication of Sri Shivananda Ashram, ISBN 81-7052-095-9) that had set Dr Natarajan on her extensive field research on Akkal. At this point I would like to offer my sincerest thanks to Dr Natarajan and to Sri Ramanasramam for giving us permission to reproduce the bulk of the 2010 article by way of an introduction to the life and works of Akkal. See also *Acknowledgements*.

Much as I had googled and asked people here in Sydney and families well versed in Carnatic music whether they had this particular CD of Bombay Sisters, I was getting nowhere. To my utter surprise, none of the Carnatic music teachers I knew had heard of Akkal. I discovered later even our top tier musicians, male and female vocalists and accompanying artistes were

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all unaware of Akkal but were supportive of my enquiries and encouraged me to share with them whatever I had chanced to find of Akkal's songs.

As a last desperate act, I wrote to Dr Natarajan asking her to send me a song or two copied on to WhatsApp (even if it meant breaching copyrights for a larger purpose!) and the cover of the CD to track down. While no audio was made available, Dr Natarajan had kindly sent me the cover of the CD and the address of Sri Gnanananda Niketan in Tirukoilur, Tamilnadu to make enquiries as to their availability.

In parallel, I contacted my classmate, Sri R. Venkatraman, whose brother Sri R. Nagarajan, is the secretary of Rasika Ranjani Sabha in Mylapore, Chennai. I called Sri Nagarajan and sought his help to get the phone number for Bombay Sisters and called them. While polite with an international phone intrusion, their daughter took the call and asked that I send an email with the details I was looking for. Shortly thereafter I was advised that the sisters would ask their recording company and get back to me about their CD of Akkal songs.

Luck was turning in my favour now as the Niketan had the CDs and copies of the Tamil book of Akkal's teachings, *Paadal Thirattu*. These were promptly ordered and on arrival, I took to the Tamil book as a duck to water, absorbed in the uplifting philosophy and lyrics of Akkal.

I took the liberty to again contact Bombay Sisters saying I had found their CD of Akkal's songs as well as the book of Akkal's songs and that they might now be able to get them from the Niketan should they so desire.

With the CD with me and the lyrics of all the Tamil songs from the *Paadal Tirattu*, I made a copy of the lyrics and sent them to Bombay Sisters to help me identify the *raga* of each of the songs in their CD as a few seemed unfamiliar to me. They were kind enough to send me the *raga* of each track and that helped close a significant missing link.

I must add here that Track 1 of the CD has a beautiful Introduction to Akkal by Swami Nityananda Giri. Listening to him, the special reverence we all owe Akkal becomes abundantly clear, both for her Advaita teachings and songs. But for Swamiji's introduction, we would not know that many people had worked hard leading to the production of the CD and that our musical delight on hearing Akkal's songs is entirely due to vocalists Smt. C. Saroja and Smt. C. Lalitha and Sri L. Krishnan who arranged the music for the ten songs. This Introduction is reproduced in Tamil transcription and English translation in the main body of this book.

Readers may note that Akkal's first song in the CD is *Ettanai naal thedi vandeno* (*How many days have I searched for Thee!*). I can truly say that this is equally true of this search for Bombay Sisters' music of Akkal's songs!

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I had not only approached several musicians referred to earlier, but also learned scholars and Harikatha exponents. These people like the many musicians were also totally unaware of the teachings and songs of Sri Avudai Akkal.

By now it was clear that Akkal's songs were not known widely amongst Carnatic musicians, barring Bombay Sisters Smt. C. Saroja and Smt. C. Lalitha, and a select few vocalists who were personally made aware by Dr Natarajan of Akkal's songs. I was therefore convinced that much work needed to be done to 'mainstream' both Akkal's Vedantic work as well as her lyrics, which were well suited to the genre of Carnatic music.

Knowing that my friend Sri Robert Butler in London would find the Tamil lyrics of Akkal uplifting as I did, I suggested that if his time permitted, it would be wonderful if he could translate these verses into English, and perhaps have them published in the *Mountain Path*. Robert was delighted and invited Smt. Nalini Venkateswaran to work with us on this, to which she readily consented.

Let me now share with you an important family connection with Akkal. My wife's aunt (athai), Smt. Haimavathi Ammal (Haimavathi Ramanathan) is 95 years old and recalls sitting with the late Smt. Gomathi Rajangam and writing a bound notebook full of Akkal songs in Varanasi. Those Akkal songs that athai recollected and wrote down may well be in the *Paadal Tirattu*. We may never know unless the notebook is found somewhere, perhaps even in the Niketan archives!

You may well wonder why I harbour some hope that this notebook of athai's might be amongst the collection of manuscripts at the Niketan? Well, in a private correspondence with Dr Natarajan, she says:

'According to Swamiji, many years back when he went to Kashi, a big sack of texts was given to him by Gomathi. She wanted Swamiji to edit and then print the same. It was with Swamiji for many years. He finally edited and published the book.'

The book referred to above is the *Paadal Tirattu*, our source document for Akkal's Advaitic work and songs.

In the weeks prior to writing this note, we made a commitment, call it our 'sankalpa', to sponsor an Akkal program at Rasika Ranjani Sabha in Mylapore, Chennai in September 2020. We envisage a keynote address or two on Advaita and Akkal's teachings and a Carnatic music concert of Akkal's songs by both well-known and up-and-coming musicians.

Given the above family connection of athai and her Akkal songs, it seemed fitting to see if only we could prevail upon athai to pen a few words about her Akkal experience. We are all grateful that athai has now

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done this for us, thanks largely to the untiring efforts of her daughter Smt. Sankari Amrithakumar. We have now heard first hand from Smt. Sankari that she has vivid memories of school days in the late 1950s of her mother and a number of ladies visiting their home and singing song after song of Akkal's while she and her siblings were trying to study! Athai's account, in Tamil with English translation, forms part of the Introduction to this book.

Sri Robert Butler, Smt. Nalini Venkateswaran and I, pray that this project be successful and that all readers and listeners of Akkal's teachings and songs may benefit from it. To say that Akkal's works are largely an unexplored treasure would indeed be an understatement. It would be truly wonderful to dedicate further days to Akkal's teachings and songs beyond 2020. Towards this, we seek your support in joining us in this endeavour.

Swami Nityanandagiri of Sri Gnanananda Niketan has given his blessings, that the grace of Sadguru may help us with this Akkal project and guide us all on our spiritual journey within.

Cheenu Srinivasan
Sydney, Australia
10 November, 2019.

Introduction

This article is reproduced by the kind permission of Sri Ramanasramam and by its author, Dr Kanchana Natarajan. For further details see the Foreword to this book.

Avudai Akka of Chengottai – Dr Kanchana Natarajan

It was a cold January afternoon in 1946. A perturbed questioner, Mr. Joshi, said to Bhagavan, “I am a beginner. How should I start?”

Bhagavan replied in his characteristic way, “Where are you now? Where is the goal?... the Self is not somewhere far away to be reached. You are always that...”

This prompted Lokamma, a lady in the audience, to sing a Tamil song that Bhagavan immediately recognized as one by Avudai Ammal.

Bhagavan then reportedly said, “Mother used to sing this song very often. This repeats the very same thing we have been talking about now...”

Bhagavan continued, “Avudai Ammal has composed a great many songs. They are very popular in those parts [Madurai and other nearby districts]. Some of them have been published. Still, so many remain unpublished. They have been handed down orally from generation to generation, mostly through women, who learn them by heart, hearing them from others and singing them along with those who already know them.”¹ Some years ago, as I randomly browsed through Tamil books at the Shivananda Ashram Library, Rishikesh, reputed for its range of rare books in English, Tamil, Sanskrit and various regional languages, by sheer accident — and to my immense good fortune — I came across an old and brittle book of songs composed by Avudai Akka, this great woman Vedantic seer of the eighteenth century. The text left me electrified. Never had I come across works by any self realized woman seer so driven to communicate the powerful Vedantic truths that lead ordinary mortals to the path to liberation.

It took me some time to come to terms with Akka’s simple, direct, uncompromising, intense and profound songs. They are composed in simple spoken Tamil, carrying the Advaitic message of sarvatmabhava, (Oneness of Being) and the eternal bliss of final liberation. Anyone familiar with even colloquial Tamil can access these powerful utterances. Akka’s poems are public songs that address Tamil women as a community.

1. Mudaliar, Devaraja, *Day by Day with Bhagavan*, Sri Ramanasramam, Tiruvannamalai, 2002, pp. 95-97.

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Her song Vedanta Pallu was published as early as 1896 by Sarada Vilasa Publication in Tamil Nadu. In 1910 further attempts were made to publish her work. In 1953, a major endeavour was made by A. Venkatarama Sastri to personally collect some songs from widows of Chengottai (Akka's birthplace) and print them. Many more extant songs were later collected by Gomathi Rajankam who sporadically published them in the Tamil spiritual journal Sri Ramakrishna Vijayam. Swami Nityananda Giri of Gnanananda Tapovanam, Tamil Nadu, has published most of Akka's songs under the title Chengottai Shri Avudai Akkal Padal Tirattu (2002).

For over two hundred years, Akka's songs were sung, circulated and preserved for posterity by women, especially widows, who gained immense solace, comfort and knowledge from the lyrical compositions, and from the awareness that the sage herself had undergone the grim life of a child-widow prior to initiation by her guru. Akka explains the terse metaphysical truths of Vedanta in a simple yet unique way, using familiar motifs rooted in the daily activity of the women of those times.

Who was Avudai Akka? What took her to the great teaching of Advaita? Gomathi Rajankam, a prolific Tamil writer on spiritual issues, spent an extended period in Chengottai and other nearby villages gathering information about Akka's life and songs from the local women. The following brief account of Avudai Akka's life draws upon my conversations with an erudite scholar and school headmaster, Mr Janardhan, a resident of one of the agraharams in Chengottai village. I have also drawn from Gomathi Rajankam's introduction to the work Chengottai Shri Avudai Akkal Padal Tirattu (2002).

The name 'Avudai' is the Tamil form of Gomati Amman, the presiding goddess of the temple Sankaran Koil, some 40 kilometres from Chengottai. This massive temple is dedicated to Shiva, his consort Gomati and Shankaranarayanan. Akka was born into an orthodox Brahmin family of the Chengottai agraharam, and her parents raised her with love and care. In keeping with tradition, she was married off at a very young age to a neighbour's son; so young as to not know who her groom was, her formalised relation to him, or what marriage itself implied. Soon there was weeping in the house, and when she asked about the cause of the gloom and tears she was told that the neighbour's child had died. Her immediate reaction was, "Why cry so much for a boy who has died in another house?" With her first menstruation she was initiated into the numbing rites of widowhood, such as tonsure, breaking of bangles, mandatory white sari, and relegation to a dark interior room, unending chores, and lifelong stigmatisation as an inauspicious woman. She was inconsolable

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at the thought that such claustrophobic subjugation was to be her destiny. The famous scholar Tiruvisainallur Shridhara Venkatesa Ayyawal, who belonged to the tradition of namasankirtan, was invited by the then king of Travancore to conduct the worship of Shiva on Shivaratri day. The master set out with a group of disciples, walking from Kumbhakonam. On the way he passed through Chengottai, and was welcomed by the brahmins of the agraharam. As he passed Akka's house, where the threshold was neither swept clean nor decorated with the customary kolam because of the inauspicious presence of the child-widow, his legs became transfixed. He stood there singing the name of God. Akka flew out of the house like an arrow leaving the bow of a deft archer, fell weeping at his feet and begged him to save her from her fate as a widow. Ayyawal compassionately told her not to worry but to come to the riverside mantapam in the evening to receive initiation. The onlookers were outraged at Akka's audacity, and pushed her back into the house. They confronted Shridhara Ayyawal and rebuked him for encouraging the child-widow, saying that she was not eligible to receive any initiation from anyone, much less from a saint. Ayyawal is supposed to have retorted, "If she is not eligible, then no one in this village is eligible for anything. Desire to know the truth is the only criterion for knowledge, and not the nature of embodiment, male, female, widowed or married." Unhappy at this reply, the brahmins of the agraharam threatened Akka's parents with dire consequences if their daughter obeyed Ayyawal's instructions. Heedless of all this, Akka managed to escape the house in the evening, went to the mantapam and received the Upanisadic mahavakya from her guru. Needless to say, she was ostracised from the agraharam, but the master allowed her to accompany him to Travancore. The women of the palace objected to a young child-widow being part of his all-male retinue. But Ayyawal insisted that Akka was a jnani. He demonstrated this publicly by making her perform the Shivaratri worship. The king provided ceremonial golden bilwa leaves for the puja that Akka performed with great concentration. The next morning she collected the golden leaves along with the faded flowers and cast them all into the flowing waters of the nearby river. The fact that Akka made no distinction between ordinary flowers and priceless golden leaves was proclaimed by Ayyawal to be an instance of her absolute dispassion. Akka is supposed to have lived near her master by the holy river Kaveri for many years, experiencing the supreme Advaitic truth. She began singing songs about this experience of sublimity. Her state of deep samadhi is legendary. Once, while meditating on the Kaveri bank, there was a flash flood; many of Ayyawal's disciples ran for their lives. Akka, however, stayed totally oblivious to her surroundings; reportedly the surging river

piled mud around her in a circular heap, forming an island so she could continue her meditation uninterrupted. Akka was called an unmattha (one who wanders like a madwoman), spiritually intoxicated; she composed her songs while in this state. Her lament Anubhogaratnamalai, composed when she heard of the passing away of her master Ayyawal, stuns the readers with the heartwrenching intensity of its pathos. A few women devotees, probably widows, attended to her when she was in the state of divine inebriation; they followed her, learnt her songs and passed this treasure on to other women. Slowly her songs became known in every local brahmin household. There may have been a time, perhaps, when the women of all brahmin households in Tirunelveli district sang her songs. The story about Akka's departure from the world claims that she told her three intimate disciples to accompany her to Kuttralam; and when they all climbed the cliff by the Shenbaka aruvi (waterfalls) she gestured to them not to follow her further. She walked on, never to return. Her disciples waited for a long time and then searched for her, but there was no trace of Akka or her remains. All that was left was the priceless legacy of her songs, which were taught to younger women and thus kept in circulation.

I offer here a translated excerpt of Akka's song Paraparai Kanni.

Worshipping and offering flowers to Him,

Who emerged from the pillar²

I became free from ego and the three impurities,³

Paraparam.⁴

Adoring my Guru and venerating his lotus-like feet,

I performed penance to (know) my self, *Paraparam*. 1

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2. This refers to one of the incarnations of Vishnu who took the form of half-lion, half man to save his devotee Prahlada. See Pandeya Ramtej Shastri (ed.), 'Sri BadarayanaVedavyasavirachitam' in *Srimat Bhagavat Maha Puranam*, VII: 12-39 (Kashi Pandit Pustakalaya, 1952), pp. 620-23.
 3. Akka uses the Saiva Siddhanta term *mummalam* or 'three passions', i.e., those generated through ignorance, action and pride.
 4. This is also the title of the song. Akka's passion and intensity is affirmed throughout the autobiographical composition. The song is addressed to the *Paraparam*, the Absolute Being that transcends the duality of both *param* (Supreme) and *aparam* (non-supreme). The Tamil saint Tayumanavar, probably Akka's senior contemporary, has also composed *Paraparakkanni*, a widely-read work. This address to the Absolute is used to describe the spiritual journey of the author as well as to detail the nature of the world and its illogical social norms. While Akka uses the *Paraparakkanni* to express her spiritual attainment, she also relentlessly and powerfully criticizes the oppressive prevalent brahminical value systems that she understood well from personal experience as a child-widow.

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Mother, Saraswati, constantly honouring you,
I became Saccidanandam⁵ itself, *Paraparamē*.
The restless mind that surged like incessant waves,
Now rests unmoving in bliss, *Paraparamē*. 2

The gigantic tree stump of ignorance uprooted,
And devastated,
I stood as conscious witness,
As all-encompassing space, *Paraparamē*.
With the weapon of Self destroying the ego⁶
I attained the indivisible state, *Paraparamē*. 3

Understanding the Truth through the tortuous grief of the heart,
And from the words of the Master,⁷
I lost the mighty force of both sin and merit, *Paraparamē*.
Having annihilated the series of interminable births,
Severing the entanglements,
I crossed the city of delusion,⁸ *Paraparamē*. 4

Swimming across the ever-flowing ocean of birth and death,
And ascending the shore,
I became timeless eternity, *Paraparamē*.
Diving deep into the ocean of sorrow, reaching the other shore,
I shunned shame and disgrace,
And abandoned births, *Paraparamē*. 5

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5. Satchitanandam, or existence, knowledge and bliss, is the nature of the non-material Self that, even though present in the body, remains unaffected by it. According to Advaita Vedanta, this is the essential nature of one's self; however, we identify ourselves with the composite body-mind-intellect, mistaking this to be the self. This persistent fundamental error is what creates, reinforces and perpetuates existential suffering.
 6. The knowledge of the higher Self annihilates the ego-generated illusion of regarding the transient and defective body-mind complex as our true Self. Hence knowledge of the Self is a weapon that destroys the ego and its creations.
 7. Probably this is a reference to Akka's tortuous early widowhood and the subsequent arrival of the master who initiated her and gave her teachings on Vedanta.
 8. Akka here uses the term *mayapuri* (the city of delusion).

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The idle gossip, falsity and delusion of the world disappeared
And I became like the sky
Vast, indivisible, *Paraparamē*.
All the scriptures I had read became tattered and
Worn out like an old cloth,
While I became shoreless and immeasurable infinity,
Paraparamē. 6

Renouncing the self-conceit of 'I am the body',
I understood 'I am That',⁹
And I stood forever mute and resolute, *Paraparamē*.
One glimpse was enough to recognise
the treacherous ocean of *pravritti*,¹⁰ as I stood
As the beacon light
To those on the path of *nivritti*, *Paraparamē*. 7

The idols no more alluring, the three *gunas* hammered to *nirguna*,
The desires resolved,
I became forever exultant, *Paraparamē*.
Those immersed in *nada* and *bindu*¹¹ and other cosmic details
Will never know this omnipresent Being, *Paraparamē*. 8

While wide awake I slumbered (to the world),
As though in deep sleep,
Thus liberated from pollution and purity, *Paraparamē*.
On arriving There, anger and desire destroyed, I was alone,¹²
No-one to talk to, *Paraparamē*. 9

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9. Giving up the false knowledge 'I am this form' gives rise to the knowledge 'I am That', where there is a recognition or discovery of the true nature of the Self.
 10. *Pravritti* is the path of indulgence, relating to worldly attainments *Nivritti* is the path of the renunciation of worldly pursuits.
 11. *Nada* is the first movement of Siva-Sakti towards movement. The term is also used for ovum and sperm. *Bindu* is the undifferentiated point which is ready to manifest as the universe.
 12. With the attainment of the non-dual Absolute Self there is nothing more to be achieved; there is nothing other than the Self present everywhere. Hence Akka's declaration: "I was alone, none to talk to."

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The (three) states¹³ and their false support now having perished,
I remain the witness

Ever alone and one, *Paraparamē*.

After the demise of the six enemies¹⁴

I conquered death, *Paraparamē*. 10

Explain how the Infinite goes wandering

As though enclosed in six measures of length,¹⁵ *Paraparamē*.

Like celestial beings enjoying sense-pleasures,¹⁶

I too wandered for a while,

But then seeing the Truth I stood still, *Paraparamē*. 11

Feeding the hungry, feeling content,

I became satiated, *Paraparamē*.

Silencing the mind, becoming one with every other,

I now rejoice in the spring of my Being,

Paraparamē. 12

Father, mother, daughters and sons became

A crowd in the market place,

Just like a herd is no more than a number

For the cowherd, *Paraparamē*.

Just as an object slips from the palm of a sleeping man,

despondency slid away from me, *Paraparamē*. 13

Ignoring the rivers venerated by the uninformed fools,¹⁷

I dived deep into the perennial river of the Self, *Paraparamē*.

Did the crazy crab, the bulky whale, frog, tortoise,

All attain liberation thus,¹⁸ *Paraparamē*. 14

13. According to Advaita, the states on which we rely in this world for all existential transactions are three: waking, dreaming and deep sleep. We cannot conceive of a world or of social involvement in any mode other than these three.

14. The six enemies are passion, anger, covetousness, delusion, pride and hatred. With the destruction of the six enemies, one becomes immortal.

15. Perhaps Akka is evoking the paradox of the Infinite assuming human embodiment and moving about subject to physical limitations.

16. Celestial beings, such as Indra, are believed to be perpetually in search of sensual experience.

17. Akka is referring here to the ritual of bathing in holy rivers like the Ganga or Kaveri.

18. This verse satirises the religious belief that bathing in holy rivers will bring about liberation. Akka points out that if this were indeed the case, all amphibious creatures would automatically attain moksha.

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When the house called the body became
Another object (worthy of rejection),
I forgot the cows, calves and relatives, *Paraparamē*.
The delusions of *jati-linga* (caste and gender) gone,
I set my eyes on and worshipped
the *jyoti linga* (engulfing light), *Paraparamē*. 15

As the lower doors closed, the middle one opened,
The upper door ¹⁹
Became great Space, *Paraparamē*.
That Truth became all forms, and all forms became me,
I knew that “every form is but Your”,
So I became compliant, *Paraparamē*. 16

In the centre of the upper region I raised the *dhvani* OM,
Lingering alone, I became the melody OM, *Paraparamē*.
Through worship, at the very core of breath,
I was initiated
Into the sublime by Manonmani,²⁰ *Paraparamē*. 17

19. This refers to the three chakras: the *muladhara* at the pelvic region, the *anahata* at the heart and *sahasrara* at the cranium. The *muladhara* is activated for base sexual propensities; the *anahata* for the intensification of exalted emotions like devotion to the Supreme; and the *sahasrara* for the final beatitude. All spiritual exploration is made possible only with the closing of the lowest chakra and the opening of the middle chakra. The final union with the Absolute is enabled through the highest centre.

20. Manonmani is the name of Sakti the consort of Sadasiva in South Indian Saivism. In the Tamil Siddha systems, Manonmani is the supreme goddess who reveals the truth of alchemical transmutation. Hathayoga texts such as *Gheranda Samhita* posit Manonmani as a state of transcendental bliss. See Rai Bahadur Srisa Chandra Vasu (trans.), *Gheranda Samhita* VII, 14-15 (Delhi: Oriental Books Reprint Corporation, 1975), p.58.

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The Advaita of Avudai Akkal

In the book *Conscious Immortality*, a series of *satsang* notes with Sri Ramana Maharshi, compiled by Paul Brunton, the following exchange takes place:

Ramana: Eliminating the ‘not I’ is not enough. The process is only intellectual. The Truth cannot be directly pointed out. Hence the process. Now begins the real inner quest. The I-thought is the root now to be sought at its source. Find out who it is and abide there.

Devotee: Is the analytic process merely intellectual or does it exhibit feeling predominantly?

Ramana: The latter.

So what is this ‘feeling’ that remains over once the analytic process, the work of the mind, has reached its limit and which now becomes the focus of our quest? It is simply the sense of being, the sense simply that one is, one exists.

There are innumerable works on Advaita that are perfectly valid on the intellectual level but relatively few are the works that, in addition to providing a guide to what we call the state of ‘real’isation of the Self on the level of the intellect, also succeed in conveying some actual sense or foretaste of that state and which, through bringing us to focus uniquely on that sense of being, spur us on and make us dare to aspire to attain it for ourselves. Amongst such works in Tamil, selecting those that are most suited to the mind-set of an individual living in the 21st century, we might mention the *Ulladu Narpadu* of Sri Ramana Maharshi, the *Ozhivil Odukkam* of Kannudaiya Vallalar, the *Vairagya Catakam* of Santhalinga Swamigal and the songs of Avudai Akkal.

In the aforementioned category of spiritual texts the songs of Akkal hold a special place, conveying a sense of immediateness, an almost breathless excitement, as if she is unable to contain the irresistible desire to communicate her realisation of her true nature as the Self to others and thereby put an end to their suffering also, just as her own torment has come to end. A typical, one might almost say archetypal, example of such a song is song 64 of *ñāṇa rasa kīrtanaikaḷ* (track 4 on the Bombay Sisters’ CD) beginning with the words *āṭaṭi māṇē*. In this Akkal sings at some moments as if she is speaking to a girlfriend engaged in an ecstatic dance and at others, as if she is herself the dancer. The sense of breathless excitement in the song is underscored by the *Pallavi*, the refrain which is repeated after each verse of the *Saraṇam*, the main body of the song:

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āṭaṭi māṇē akaṇṭameṇru āṭṭi māṇē

Dance, my dear, as the undivided One, dance my dear, dance on.

In the first verse of the *Saraṇam* we learn what was the nature of the dance she had formerly danced, for she describes it as:

nāṇāvāy pārttu pirapaṅcattil nāṇ inṇat[u] eṇr[u] āṭiya kūttu

The dance which I danced in accordance with my perception of the world as manifold.

The ‘dance’ she is referring to is the chaotic whirl that ensues when we try to exercise control over the illusory world of the mind and senses, convinced that we ourselves are the doer. Manikkavacagar in Hymn 50, *Āṇanta mālai* compares such a state to that of a puppet, tossed about helplessly by its strings, which are the ego-mind and senses:

cīlam inṇi nōṇp[u] inṇi-c
cerivē inṇi ariv[u] inṇi-t
tōliṇ pāvai kūttāṭṭāy-c
cuḷaṇru viḷuntu kiṭappēṇai
mālum kāṭṭi vaḷi kāṭṭi
vārā ulaka neṇi-y-ēṇa-k
kōlam kāṭṭi āṇṭāṇai
koṭiyēṇ eṇrō kūṭuvatē?

*Of love and wisdom,
virtue, penance, all bereft,
like leathern puppet in the dance,
I whirled and fell, yet as I lay,
you showed me my delusion,
and the righteous way;
revealed to my your holy form,
that I might journey to that world
from which [to birth] there's no return.
With Him who came to rule me thus,
when, O when
shall I, a wicked wretch, be merged?*

In the third line of this first verse we learn the reason for Akkal’s elation. It is the realisation, brought to fruition by the teaching imparted by her guru, Sri Venkatesha Ayyawal, of the truth that this apparent frenetic whirl of *maya* is something that takes place within her own consciousness only

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and that this sensate world, once it is seen for what it is, is powerless to harm her, just as the snake, formerly seen in the rope, can never reassume its form as a snake:

‘tat tvam’patārtta svarūpamē cittu.

The Self, the Reality of ‘Thou art That’ is only consciousness.

This is a momentous realisation for the spiritual aspirant, who, after puzzling over the meaning of formulations such as ‘Thou art That’ and having gained a sound intellectual grasp of them, suddenly comes to fully ‘real’ise in the deepest seat of her being, that the ‘That’ which she has been making the focus of her attention is nothing other than her own consciousness, her own being.

Verses two and three of the *Saraṇam* go on to explore the further ramifications of this realisation. She sees now that if the Real is only her own consciousness, then the world and all the *jivas* that inhabit it are only an appearance within her own Self:

cittē jakattu tēham eṇakk[u] eṇṇa pratakku?

World and body are consciousness only.

What else exists, apart from me?

She finds herself inhabiting now a state which is entirely free of the ego-mind and senses, all the conditioning factors which were formerly the cause of her bondage. If she is all that is or ever could be, then her freedom is absolute and if there is no ‘other’ to threaten her, then fear is banished forever. The state of absolute freedom and fearlessness transports her into a state of blissful ecstasy:

nirckuṇṇāntattil koṇṭu oṭuppikkum

It takes me to merge with ecstasy, of all attributes entirely free.

The frenetic dance at the mercy of the ego-mind and senses is now transformed into a dance of bliss in which she remains perfectly still as the *lila* of the world and its activities plays out upon the screen of the Self. She typifies this state as:

āṭāmal āṭum inta āṇanta kūttu

This dance of bliss in which I dance without dancing.

Finally In verse four she describes the final term in this process of transformation, which is beyond even bliss, in which there is no longer any trace of ‘I’ or other. It is described by Sri Ramana Maharshi in the following terms:

That is the state of the *jñāni*. It is neither sleep nor waking but intermediate between the two. There is the awareness of the waking

Introduction

state and the stillness of sleep. It is called *jagrat sushupti*...Go to the root of thoughts and you reach the stillness of sleep. But you reach it in the full vigour of search, that is, with perfect awareness.

Talks with Sri Ramana Maharshi, 609.

In this state the experience of bliss is totally transcended and she has become bliss itself, merging with the Self in the state of *jnana*. Like Sri Ramana she too characterises this state as *tūnkāmal tūnkum kūttu* – *the dance in which I sleep with out sleeping*:

tāṅ pīrar arṛu tatākaramē vaṭiv[u] urṛu

ēṅkāmal etu vantālum nilaittu

tūnkāmal tūnkum sukāṅanta kūttu.

Dwelling in the form of 'That', free of [thoughts of] 'I' and 'other', abiding firmly, come what may, [in the Self] without dismay, deeply sleeping, but wide awake. this is the dance of joy and bliss.

Songs of Avudai Akkal

என் கடந்த கால அனுபவம்
ஹைமாவதி அம்மாள்

எனக்கு அப்பொழுது வயது 30. நான் ஒரு வயதானவரை சந்தித்தேன். அவர் மூட்டுவாதத்தினால் அல்லல் பட்டுக் கொண்டிருந்த போதிலும் அவரைத் தேடி வந்தவரிடம் ஊஞ்சலில் படுத்தபடியே பேசிக்கொண்டிருப்பார். அப்படிப்பட்ட அவருடைய “பளிச்” என்ற தோற்றம் என்னை அவரது அருகில் செல்லத்தூண்டியது. அவர் என்னைப் பார்த்தபடி தன் புன்சிரிப்பை உதிர்த்துவிட்டு என்னைத் தன் அருகில் அமரச் சொன்னார். பின்னர், “ஆவுடை அக்காளின்” பாடல்களை எனக்குப் போதித்து என்னைப் பாடக் கூறினார். பல வேதாந்தப் பாடல்களை எனக்குப் போதித்து என்னைப் பாடக்கூறிக் கேட்டார். நான் ஒரு புத்தகத்தை எடுத்து அவர் கற்பித்த பல பாடல்களையும் அதில் எழுதி, அப்பாட்டுக்களை தினமும் அவரிடம் பாடிக் காண்பித்தேன். “ராம நாம ஜபம்”; எடுத்துக் கொடுத்து தினமும் தியானம் செய்வது எப்படி என்றும் அவர் எனக்குப் பழக்கிக் கொடுத்தார். ஆவுடை அக்காளின் “ராம நாமத்தைப் போல நாவிற்கு இன்பமான வேறு பதார்த்தம் உண்டோ!” என்ற பாடலின் பொருளை எண்ணி தினமும் அவற்றை அனுபவித்துப் பாடுவேன். அது முதற்கொண்டு “இகபர சாதகம்” எனக்கு நன்றாகவே அமைந்தது. அதன் மூலம் மன அமைதியும் கிடைக்கப் பெற்றேன். அங்கு புதியதாக வரும் அனைவரும் என் புத்தகத்தைப் பார்த்து நான் எழுதியிருக்கும் பாடல்களை எழுதிக் கொள்வார்கள். வேதாந்த அர்த்தத்துடனும் (பொருளுடன்), ராகத்துடனும் பாடல்கள் பலவற்றை என்னை மனப்பாடம் செய்ய வைத்து ராம நாம மகிமையை நான் நன்கு அறியும்படி செய்தவரும் அவரே. ஸ்ரீதர ஐயாவாளைப் பற்றியும், ஆவுடையக்காள் அவர்களைப் பற்றியும் எண்ணற்ற செய்திகளை தினம் தினம் அவர் என்னிடம் கூறுவார். ஆன்மீகப் பாதையில் என்னை அழைத்துச் செல்ல, அவருடைய அந்த சிறந்த கருத்துகள் எனக்கு முன்னோடியாக விளங்கியது.

**My past experience
Hemavathy Ammal**

At that time I was 30 years of age. I met an elderly lady. Although suffering from joint pains, she spoke to those who came to see her reclining on a swing. Her radiant presence captivated me and drew me close to her. She looked at me, smiled gently and told me to sit next to her. Then she taught me “Avudai Akkal’s” songs and requested me to sing them. She taught me several vedantic songs and listened to me sing them. I took a notebook, wrote down many songs that she taught me and sang those songs back to her every day. She initiated me into the chanting of Rama’s name (Rama nama japa), taught me to meditate, and helped me practise every day. I used to reflect on the import of Avudai Akkal’s “Is there anything else as ecstatic upon the tongue as Rama’s name!” and sing it daily with feeling. From then on, my spiritual practice to attain happiness in this world and the next (iha para sadhaka) became well established. I obtained mental peace through this process. All who came there for the first time looked at the notebook and copied the songs I had written down. It was she who made me memorise many of these songs, including their vedantic meaning and ragas and clearly understand the greatness of Rama’s name. She shared with me innumerable accounts of Sridhara Ayyaval and Avudai akkal every single day. Her pre-eminent doctrines set the precedent for my spiritual path.

Songs of Avudai Akkal

அன்று முதற்கொண்டு “நானும் ராம நாம ஜபம் செய்து சித்தி அடைய வேண்டும்” என்ற எண்ணம், என் உள்ளத்தில் மிக ஆழமாகப் பதிந்தது. அதன் பின் என் குரு ததாகார மாமி இறைவனடி அடைந்த பின்னரும் நான் அவரால் போதிக்கப் பட்ட அனைத்துப் பாடல்களையும் அவர் முன்பாகப் பாடி அவருக்கு ஆராதனை செய்வேன். இது எனக்கு மிகுந்த மன நிறைவைத் தருகின்றது.

எடுத்துக்காட்டுப் பாடல் ஒன்று:

பல்லவி

நாமப் பழம் ராம நாமப்பழம்

அனுபல்லவி

ராம நாமத்தைப் போல நாவிற்கு இன்பமான வேறு பதார்த்தம் உண்டோ?

[நாமப்பழம் ராம நாமப்பழம்]

சரணம்

இகபர சாதக இன்பமான பழத்தை
எட்டிஎட்டி பார்த்தாலும் தட்டி தட்டிப் போகுதே
கலவங்கீரை பறித்து கஷ்டப்படுவார் போல்
காலத்தை கழிக்காதே வீண் காலத்தை கழிக்காதே
ராமநாமத்தை மறவாதே

[நாமப் பழம் ராம நாமப்பழம்]

இதை கொள்வாருண்டோ - இதை உண்பாருண்டோ
காட்டுக்குப் போக வேண்டாம் கஷ்டங்கள் படவேண்டாம்
ஆத்திலே தானிருந்து அனுதினம்
பூஜித்தால் அனந்தமான இந்த சம்சார
சாகரம் தாண்டலாம்

[நாமப்பழம் ராம நாமப்பழம்].

Introduction

From then on, the thought, “I too must chant Rama’s name and attain realisation,” became deeply entrenched in me. Then, even after my Guru “Thathakara Mammi” (“Auntie who is of the form of That”) attained the feet of the Lord, I sang all the songs she had taught me in front of her, to honour her. This fills my heart with joy.

An example of a song:

Pallavi

The fruitful name is Rama’s fruitful name

Anupallavi

*Is there anything so ecstatic upon the tongue
as Rama’s name?*

[*The fruitful name is Rama’s fruitful name*]

Saranam

*Sadhana’s ecstatic fruit in this world and the next,
though we glimpse and strive to snatch,
will slip away and evade our grasp.*

*Don’t waste your time. Don’t spend it in vain,
as one who struggles, plucking meagre greens.
Don’t forget [to chant] Lord Rama’s name.*

[*The fruitful name is Rama’s fruitful name*]

Who will accept and digest this truth?

No need to retreat to a forest lair.

No need to endure hardships there.

If in the home we simply stay

performing puja every day

samsara’s boundless ocean cross we may.

[*The fruitful name is Rama’s fruitful name*].

Songs of Avudai Akkal

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The Carnatic musicians for their encouragement.

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Listening to the songs

The entire CD as recorded by Bombay Sisters has been uploaded to the Internet by Sri Gnanananda Niketan and can be heard on Youtube at the following link: <https://youtu.be/yhzc-0TpfDI>. Alternatively simply type 'Sri Avudai Akkal Songs' into the Youtube search box.

The book செங்கோட்டை ஸ்ரீ ஆவுடை அக்காள் பாடல் திரட்டு and the CD from which the following 10 songs were taken can be obtained from:

Sri Gnanananda Niketan
Thapovanam P.O.
Villupuram R. P. District
Tamil Nadu, India.

Website: <http://www.srignananandaniketan.org>
Email: gniketan.office@gmail.com
Phone: 04153 224938/224124
Mobile: 94866 29866

CD Playlist

Track 1: Introduction of Akkal in Tamil with English translation
by Swami Nityananda Giri of Sri Gnanananda Niketan

Track 2: *ettaṇai nāḷ*. In rāga mālīkā (Garland of rāgas):
bhairavī, kaṇṇaṭā, pantuvarāḷi, hindōḷam, sāma,
behāg, ending with bhairavī again.

Track 3: *vārārō*... In rāga kalyāṇī

Track 4: *āṭaṭi māṇē*... In rāga nādanāmakriyā

Track 5: *paripūrṇāṇanta*... In rāga pīlu

Track 6: *saccitāṇanta*... in rāga begada

Track 7: *oru pāpiyākilum*... In rāga mōhaṇa

Track 8: *Guru: cīrperukum*... in rāga chenchurutti

Track 9: *cērvatum eppaṭiyō*... in rāga jaunpuri

Track 10: *aiyā nī tantatu* .. in rāga dhanyasi

Track 11: *Maṅgaḷam: pavapayaṅgaḷ*... in rāga madhyamāvati

ஆவுடை அக்காள் பாடல்

Track 1

ஓம்

ஈஷ்வரோ குருராத்மேதி முர்த்தி பேதவிபாகிணே
வ்யோமவத் வ்யாப்த தேஹாய ஸ்ரீதக்ஷிக்ணாமுர்த்தயே நமஹ்

ஆவுடை அக்காள் தமிழ் நாட்டின் பெருமைமிக்க பெண்டிர் ஞானிகளில் ஒருவர் ஆவார். சுமார் 350 ஆண்டுகளுக்குமுன் திருநெல்வேலி ஜில்லாவில் செங்கோட்டையில் அந்தணக் குடும்பத்தில் அவதரித்தார். பால்யத்திலேயே கணவனை இழந்த அவர், செங்கோட்டைக்கு விஜயம் செய்த திருவிசநல்லூர் ஸ்ரீ வெங்கடேச ஐயாவாள் என்ற புகழ்பெற்ற மகானின் அனுகிரகத்தை பெற்றார். அவரிடம் மந்திர தீஷையும் வேதாந்த ஞான உபதேசமும் பெற்று, குரு கிருபையால் ஆன்மீக வாழ்வில் வெகுவிரைவாக முன்னேறினார். ஆத்மானுபூதியில் இலயித்து உன்மத்தியாக திகழ்ந்தார். பண்டித பாமரர்கள் எல்லோராலும் போற்றப்பட்டு, மிகப் பிரபலமானார். நெல்லை வட்டாரத்தில் வீடுகளில் அக்காலத்தில் பேச்சுவழக்கிலேயே இருந்த, மிகவும் எளிமையான தமிழ் நடையில் உள்ள அக்காளின் பாடல்கள், ஆன்மீக அனுபவங்களையும் வேதாந்த உட்கருத்துக்களையும் அள்ளிக்கொட்டும் ஊற்றுக்கள். அவை சாதனா மார்க்கங்களை கூறுவதுடன் ஆன்மீக நிறைவையும் அமைதியும் தருகின்றன. திருநெல்வேலி ஜில்லாவில் வீடுகள்தோரும் கர்ணபரம்பரையாக கேட்டு பாடம்பண்ணி காலாகாலங்களில் உள்ளக்கழிப்பழிக்கும் பாடல்களாகவும் பூஜா காலங்களில் பாராயணமாகவும் ஓதப்பட்டு வந்துள்ளன. ஒவ்வொரு பாடல்களும் தமது குருவை வணங்குவதோடும், குரு கிருபை இல்லாவிடில் ஆத்மானுபூதி ஏற்படாது என்பதையும் அடிக்கடி குறிப்பிடுகிறார்.

வேதாந்த குறவஞ்சி, வேதாந்த வித்யா சோபணம், சூடாலை கும்மி போன்ற பல தொடர் பாடல்களும், வேதாந்த ஞானரச கீர்த்தனைகள் இவை யாவும் மிகவும் பிரசித்தி பெற்றவை. அவற்றின் ஒரு தொகுப்பை திருக்கோவிலூர் ஸ்ரீ ஞானநந்த தபோவனத்தில், ஸ்ரீ ஞானநந்த நிகேதனம் வெளியிட்டுள்ளது. ஞானரச கீர்த்தனைகள் சிலவற்றை பம்பாய் சகோதரிகள் என்று புகழ் பெற்ற ஸ்ரீமதி சரோஜா, ஸ்ரீமதி லலிதா அவர்கள், இசை அமைப்பாளர் ஸ்ரீ ல.கிருஷ்ணன் அவர்கள் உதவி கொண்டு பாடி ஒலி நாடாவில் அளித்திருக்கிறார்கள். அக்காளை அறிமுகப்படுத்தும் வகையில் இந்த உயர்ந்த கைங்கரியத்தை புரிந்த அவர்களுக்கும் இதை வெளியிடுவதில் உதவியளித்த அனைவருக்கும், இவற்றை கேட்டு உட்பொருளை சிந்திப்போர்க்கும், சத்குருநாதர் சகல ஸ்ரீ சௌபாக்கியங்களிலும், பக்தி ஞான வைராக்கியத்தையும் அருளவேண்டுமென பிரார்த்திக்கின்றோம்.

ஓம்

Songs of Avudai Akkal

Track 1

Om

*Obeisance to Dakshinamurti whose form is all pervading
like the heavens, To him who exists as God, guru, and
Self without any distinction.*

Avudai Akkal is one of the most distinguished women jnanis of Tamil Nadu. She was born about 350 years ago into a Brahmin family in Chengottai, Tirunelveli district. Having lost her husband at a very young age, she was blessed by the presence of the famous saint Sri Venkatesa Ayyaval of Tiruvisanallur who was visiting Chengottai. By the grace of her guru, after receiving initiation by mantra and exposition of vedantic knowledge from him, she made very swift spiritual progress. Immersed in a flood tide of bliss and intoxicated by a love of the divine, she was praised by all, both illiterate and erudite, and became very popular. She composed songs in the very simple household Tamil vernacular existing at the time around the Nellai (Tirunelveli) area, which are overflowing wellsprings of spiritual experiences and profound vedantic truths. These songs, in addition to imparting instructions on the path of *sadhana*, also confer spiritual fulfilment and stillness. Memorised and passed on by oral tradition in most households of Tirunelveli district over a long period of time, they were sung to bring joy to the soul and also recited ceremonially at puja times. In every song she not only reveres her guru but also affirms that without guru's grace attainment of realisation of the Self is impossible.

The most famous songs are the many long works like *Vedanta Kuravanji*, *Vedanta Vidhya Sobanam*, *Soodalai Kummi* and the collection of short works called *Vedanta Gnanarasa Keerthanaigal*. A compilation of these songs has been published by Sri Gnanananda Niketanam of Sri Gnanananda Tapovanam in Tirukovilur. Some of the *Gnanarasa Keerthanaigal* have been sung and recorded on audio tape by the renowned Bombay sisters, Srimathi Saroja and Srimathi Lalitha with the help of music director L.Krishnan. We pray that our Lord Sadguru may bestow dispassion born of devotion and true knowledge, along with all auspicious blessings, upon those who have performed this great service of introducing us to the works of Akkal, upon all the rest who have participated in bringing it about and upon all those who hear these songs and reflect on their inner meaning.

Om

ஆவுடை அக்காள் பாடல்

Track 2: Song 24 of ஞான ரஸ கீர்த்தனைகள்

பல்லவி

எத்தனைநாள் தேடிவந்தேனோ அடியே ஸகியெந்தன்
குரு ஸேவை கிடைக்க

அனுபல்லவி

ஸத்தியம் பிரம்மவஸ்து வென்றும் ஸகலலோகம் மித்தியை என்றும்
யுக்திசொல்லி யருள் தந்து முக்திவழிதந்தவரை
மனது புத்தி சித்தமென்றும் வாஞ்சையுள்ள ஸகி கேளாய்
மூலபிரகிருதி என்னும் மாயைதள்ளி பாதசேவை தந்தவரை

[எத்தனைநாள்...]

சரணம்

நித்திய கர்மம் செய்துவந்தோமோ – அடியோ ஸகி
நீதிவழி பார்த்து வந்தோமோ
ஸத்தியவிரதம் தபோதானம் ஸாதனங்கள் செய்தோமோ
நித்தியவஸ்து பிரம்மமென்றும் நிலைதந்த குருபாதம்

1

[எத்தனைநாள்...]

கோடிநதி ஆடிவந்தோமோ – அடியோ ஸகி
கோவிலெல்லாம் சுற்றி வந்தோமோ – தேடி ஸப்த
கோடிமந்திரம் ஜெபித்தோமோ விதிப்படி
மோடி மாயைதள்ளி ஜீவன்முக்தி நிலைதந்தவரை

2

[எத்தனைநாள்...]

நாமபாராயணம் செய்து வந்தோமோ – அடியோ ஸகி
நல்ல நல்ல கதைகள் கேட்டோமோ
காம்யமில்லா கர்மபலன் காரணர்க்கு ஈந்தோமோ
கர்மமென்னும் காடுவெட்டி கைவல்யம் தந்தவரை

3

[எத்தனைநாள்...]

Songs of Avudai Akkal

Track 2: Song 24 of nāṇa rasa kīrtanaika!

Pallavi

*Oh, how many days have I journeyed, adiyē saki,¹ seeking
to serve my Guru*

Anupallavi

*'Brahman is the only truth and all the many worlds are false,'
this assurance with his grace he gave, showing liberation's way.
Listen, dear, you who're ever filled with lust of intellect, mind and will,
Maya, nature's Primal Cause, he razed, granting us his feet to praise.*

[*Oh, how many days...*]

Saraṇam

*Daily rites have we performed, adiyō saki.
We've seen and followed virtue's path.
Fasting, penance, acts of charity we've surely done. [Yet only]
at my guru's feet I learned, Reality is Brahman, the eternal One. 1*

[*Oh, how many days...*]

*In a thousand rivers did we bathe, adiyō saki.
All temples have we circled, seeking, lips
seven crore mantras in prescribed form repeating. [But only he]
did haughty maya slay, granted jivan mukti's eternal way. 2*

[*Oh, how many days...*]

*His holy name we did repeat, adiyō saki.
Good many holy epics did we heed.
Fruit of selfless action to the Creator offered we. [But only he]
felled the forest of our deeds, the state that's ever One decreed. 3*

[*Oh, how many days...*]

ஆவுடை அக்காள் பாடல்

சிவபுனை விஷ்ணுபுனைகள் – அடியோ ஸகி
செய்துவந்த பலன் தானோடி
பவவியாதி தன்னை போக்கி பக்குவருக்கு பண்டிதராய்
அவதாரம் பண்ணிவந்த ஆத்மசக்தி பலத்தினால் 4

[எத்தனைநாள்...]

ஆதரவாய் அன்னவஸ்திரங்கள் – அடியோ ஸகி
ஆத்மநிஷ்டாள் கையிலீந்தோமோ
வேதவேதாந்தங்க ளெல்லாம் வெளியாக்கி சிரவணத்தால்
நேதிநேதி வாக்கியம் தள்ளி நிலைதந்த குருபாதம் 5

[எத்தனைநாள்...]

வேதசாஸ்திரம் படிப்பாருண்டு – உலகத்தில்
வேணசக்தி பெறுவாருண்டு
வாதமோடு மதமடக்கி வஸ்துமயமாக்கி வைத்து
பூதவிகார மொழித்து பூர்ணநிலை தந்தவரை 6

[எத்தனைநாள்...]

பார்த்த பார்த்த இடங்களெல்லாம் – அடியோ ஸகி
பரபிரும்ம ஸ்வரூப வடிவாய் சேர்ந்தபின்பு
நாமரூபம் சின்மயமாய் தன்மயமாய் தோற்றிவைக்கும்
வேங்கடேசுவரர் ஸ்வயம் ஜோதி ஸ்வரூபத்தை. 7

[எத்தனைநாள்...]

-
1. The phrases *aṭiyō saki*, *aṭiyē saki*, which occur throughout this song, have not been translated. *aṭi* is used in addressing women in a familiar manner and the *ō* and *ē* are emphatic particles. *saki* or *caki*, from the Skt. *sakhī* means *female companion, confidante*. If we were to translate it we would say, perhaps *my dear, dear friend*.
 2. *nēti nēti vākkīyam taḷli*, literally *driving away the words 'Not this, not this.'* As long as the disciple is unable to free his consciousness from its tendency to identify itself with the world-illusion of *māyā*, he must continually remind himself of its fundamental unreality, rejecting those unreal phenomena, saying *neti, neti – not this, not this*, < Skt. *na iti – not this*. Akkāḷ affirms here that her guru has established her irrevocably in the

Songs of Avudai Akkal

*Could this the fruit of pujas be, adiyō saki,
to Shiva and Vishnu, my dear,
that through the Self's power manifesting, banishing the woes of birth,
for mature souls he came and wore the guru's mantle here on earth?* 4

[*Oh, how many days...*]

*Offerings of food and cloth with love we gave, adiyō saki,
to the One who ever in abidance as the Self remains.
[In return], his guru's feet he gave, all Veda and its end explained,
through his teaching placed us in the state beyond
'neti neti's verbal game.²* 5

[*Oh, how many days...*]

*Some in the Vedas' holy writ are versed,
others, the power to fulfil desires have earned.
But he the state of fulness granted, all religions and beliefs supplanted,
banished the senses' constant changes and installed me in Reality's state.* 6

[*Oh, how many days...*]

*When once I Parabrahman gained, Selfhood's state,
where'er I cast my gaze – adiyō saki
was nought but Venkateshwara's Self-shining form,
all names and forms within Himself as consciousness absorbed.* 7

[*Oh, how many days...*]

2. [Cont'd] state of the Self, Reality, beyond any risk of any such contamination by the world of *māyā*.

ஆவுடை அக்காள் பாடல்

Track 3: Song 43 of ஞான ரஸ கீர்த்தனைகள்

பல்லவி

வாராரோ என்னைப்பாராரோ, முக்தி
தாராரோ என் ஸ்வாமி

அனுபல்லவி

ஆறாருள்ளம் தன்னில் சேரார் உலகெங்கும்
கூறாகியே நின்ற நூறாயிரம் கணங்கள்

[வாராரோ...]

சரணம்

சண்டமாருதம்போலே அண்டம்பொடி தூளாக்கி
வண்டமாயையை அவர் விண்ட விமலபோதர்
தொண்டர் மனதில்நின்று கண்டபவ மறுத்து
அகண்டானுபவத்தை விண்டே வாக்குகள் கொண்டு

[வாராரோ...]

ஸத்துசித்தானந்த அத்வையே இவர்
ஒருத்தர் எதிரில்லாத வஸ்து இவர் என்று
பக்தி செய்தவர் ஜீவன் முக்தியடைய நல்ல
சத்தியமாய் இவர் முக்திஸாதனம் கொண்டு

[வாராரோ...]

ஸத்துசித்தானந்தர் அபரிச்சின்னர் அருளினாலே
ஈசரே இவர்க்கொரு நாசப்பிறவியில்லை
ஈசர் அவர் ஸ்வபிரகாசர் என் குரு
பிரரம்ம வேங்கடேசுவரர் இங்கே.

[வாராரோ...]

1. This couplet expresses in a forceful manner the way in which realisation of the Self radically transforms consciousness, annihilating the entire conceptual universe that is founded upon the ego-mind. Sri Ramana Maharshi explains:

The spark of *jnana* will easily consume all creation as if it were a mountain heap of cotton. All the crores of world being built upon the weak (or no) foundation

Songs of Avudai Akkal

Track 3: Song 43 of nāṇa rasa kīrtanaikaḷ

Pallavi

*Did he not come, did he not upon me cast his gaze?
Did not my Lord the state of liberation to me vouchsafe?*

Anupallavi

*He dwells not in those who know no repose within their minds
nor in the myriad moments that make up the flow of time.*

[*Did he not come...*]

Saraṇam

*Like a powerful hurricane reducing the universe to dust,
he is the flawless sage who evil maya's net asunder burst.¹
Dwelling in his devotees' minds, he the sense of separate being purged,
revealing the undivided state [of Selfhood] through his words.*

[*Did he not come...*]

*Seeing in him the Non-Dual ocean of being-consciousness bliss,
the One, the Reality apart from which naught else does exist,
they show their love, to attain salvation before the body dies,
believing that in Him the means of liberation, true and fair, does lie.*

[*Did he not come...*]

*By the grace of Him who's boundless being-consciousness-bliss,
for them O Lord, the body's birth and death no longer can exist.
God he is, shining here through his own effulgent light,
as Brahman, Venkateswara, my guru [in his might].*

[*Did he not come...*]

1. [Cont'd] of the ego, they all topple down when the atomic bomb of *jnana* comes down upon them... This knowledge that there is nothing but God or Self, that I and mine don't exist and that only the Self exists is *jnana*.

Day by Day with Bhagavan, 22-11-45 Afternoon.

ஆவுடை அக்காள் பாடல்

Track 4: Song 64 of ஞான ரஸ கீர்த்தனைகள்

பல்லவி

ஆடடி மானே அகண்டமென்று ஆடடி மானே

அனுபல்லவி

ஆடடி மானே, அஸங்கோஹம் நானே, பார்வையில்
வேற்றற பிரத்தியக் பிரம்மம்.

[ஆடடி மானே...]

சுரணம்

நானாவாய் பார்த்து பிரபஞ்சத்தில்
நானின்னதென்றாடிய கூத்து தானாக சைதன்யம் வேறாக தீர்த்து
'தத் த்வம்' பதார்த்த ஸ்வரூபமே சித்து

[ஆடடி மானே...]

சித்தே ஜிகத்து தேஹம் எனக்கென்ன ப்ரதக்கு
நித்தியானந்தோஹம் நிலையிப்போ எனக்கு
நிர்க்குணானந்தத்தில் கொண்டு ஒருப்பிக்கும்

[ஆடடி மானே...]

பற்றுதலற்று பரானந்தமேலிட
உற்று மானாபிமான மயக்கத்தை
தீர்த்து ஆடாமலாடுமிந்த ஆனந்தகூத்து

[ஆடடி மானே...]

தான் பிறரற்று ததாகரமே வடிவுற்று
ஏங்காமல் எது வந்தாலும் நிலைத்து
தூங்காமல் தூங்கும் ஸுகானந்த கூத்து.

[ஆடடி மானே...]

Songs of Avudai Akkal

Track 4: Song 64 of ñāṇa rasa kīrttaṇaikaḷ

Pallavi

Dance, my dear¹, as the undivided One, dance my dear, dance on.

Anupallavi

*Dance my dear, for I am the unfettered One.² All I see
is Brahman, clearly manifest, apart from which naught can be.*

[*Dance, my dear...*]

Saraṇam

*The world³ as manifold did I see and danced my dance accordingly.⁴
But now, apart from all of this, I as the Self, pure consciousness, exist.
The Self, the Reality of ‘Thou art That’⁵ is only consciousness [at last].*

[*Dance, my dear...*]

*World and body are consciousness only. What else exists, apart⁶ from me?
‘I am eternal bliss’ is now the state in which I dwell.
It takes me to merge with ecstasy, of all attributes entirely free.*

[*Dance, my dear...*]

*As supernal bliss ever greater grows, free of clinging [to the world],
experiencing this, the delusion of pride and attachment goes.
This dance that knows no dancing is the dance of bliss.*

[*Dance, my dear...*]

*Dwelling in the form of ‘That’, free of [thoughts of] ‘I’ and ‘other’,
abiding firmly, come what may, [in the Self] without dismay,
deeply sleeping, but wide awake. this is the dance of joy and bliss.*

[*Dance, my dear...*]

ஆவுடை அக்காள் பாடல்

1. *āṭi(u) aṭi māṇē* – *dance, my dear*. Unlike in Song 24, the refrain here has been translated. For the term *aṭi* see note 1 to that verse. The word *māṇē* – *deer* also means *woman* and is often used of Śiva's consort, Parvatī. உணாமுலை ஆம் தாமரை பொருந்தும் மான் உள் வாழ் சோணசைலனே – *Lord Sōṇasailaṅ, within whom dwells the maiden Uṇṇāmulai, she of the unsuckled breasts, like lotus [buds]. Sōṇasaila Mālai, v. 81.*
2. *asaṅkōham* – *I am free of attachment*. *asaṅkam* Skt. *asaṅga* means *freedom from attachment, impediment, ties, hindrances*. The *jñāṇi* is necessarily *unattached, without any ties* because in the Self there exists no 'other' to which she might become attached.
3. *pirapañcam*, Skt. *prapañca* means *expansion, development, manifestation, manifoldness, diversity*, referring to the manifold world which appears to arise in conjunction with the ego-mind.
4. *nāṇ iṇṇāṭi eṇru āṭiya kūttu* literally, *the dance which I danced, thinking, 'It is so.'* Until the reality of the apparent 'world' is questioned and found to be ultimately unreal, we must necessarily dance to its tune, trying to meet the impossible demands and constraints of the ego based mind and senses.
5. *tat tvam patārttam* – *the expression 'Tat Tvam'* is of course a reference to the Upanishadic *mahāvākya* '*Tat tvam asi – Thou art That*'. It originally occurs in the *Chandogya Upanishad* 6.8.7, in the dialogue between Uddalaka and his son Śvetaketu; it appears at the end of a section, and is repeated at the end of the subsequent sections as a refrain. See the *Maṅkaḷam* song on p.34, which contains references to all four of the most common *mahāvākyas*.
6. *pratakku*, Skt. *prtak* means *separately, differently*. *eṇakku eṇna pratakku?* – *What exists that is other than, apart from me?*

Songs of Avudai Akkal

ஆவுடை அக்காள் பாடல்

Track 5: Song 4 of ஞான ரஸ கீர்த்தனைகள்

பல்லவி

பரிபூர்ணானந்த சுகம் தந்த குருநாதா
பவக்கடலைத் தீர்த்து வைத்தீர், வெங்கடேசா

அனுபல்லவி

ஹரிஹர ப்ரம்மாதியுடன் அண்டமெல்லாம் ஏகமென்று
த்ருடம் சொல்லி¹ என்னை யழைத்து எனது வலச்செவியில்
'அஸி' வாக்கியத்தை யுபதேசித்தீர்

[பரிபூர்ணானந்த...]

சரணம்

ஆகாச மலரதுபோல் அகிலம் தன்னையுரைத்தீர்
லாகாஸத்துணிவதனால் ஜின்மம் தன்னை துலைத்தீர்
மோகாந்தகாரம் நீக்கி முக்தி தன்னை கொடுத்தீர்
ஏகாந்த வெளி தன்னிலே எப்போது மிருத்திவைத்தீர்
இன்னமுண்டோ ஸ்வாமி இன்னமுண்டோ என்றபயம் சொன்னதை
கேட்டபின்

[பரிபூர்ணானந்த...]

கல்பனையால் காண்பதெல்லாம் கருத்துக்குள்ளே தானே
கானல் ஜலம்போல் கண்டு களித்திருக்கலானேன்
அல்பமிந்த மனுஷியரென்று அறிந்துகொள்ளலானேன்
யாருக்குள்ளே அடங்குமிந்த அவனிக்குள் தானே
ஸ்வப்னமாய் கண்டதெல்லாம் சொல்லிக்கொண்டிருந்தாலும்
சோகமுண்டோ மோகமுண்டோ தாபமுண்டோ தன்மயமானபின்

[பரிபூர்ணானந்த...]

1. *truṭam colli* – asserting firmly. *truṭam, tiruṭam*, Skt. *dr̥ḍha* means fixed, firm, hard, strong, solid, In native Tamil we would say *uruticolli*.
2. In initiation it is customary in some traditions for the guru to whisper the *mantra* of initiation into the disciple's right ear.
3. *ākāca malar* – a lotus in the sky is another metaphor for the illusory nature of *māyā*, like the snake in the rope, and the water in the mirage.

Songs of Avudai Akkal

Track 5: Song 4 of nāna rasa kīrtanaikaḷ

Pallavi

*Guru Lord, you who the joy of infinite bliss conferred.
Venkatesha, you who banished quite the ocean vast of birth.*

Anupallavi

*Asserting that all the worlds with Hari, Hara and Brahmā
and all the other gods were only One, you drew me unto you,
and in my right ear² vouchsafed the teaching, 'You alone are!'*

[Guru Lord..]

Saraṇam

*You said the universe was like the phantom of a lotus in the heavens.³
Towering up within me, as deathless Being you banished birth forever.
The minds delusive faculties erased, you granted liberation's state,
and in the heaven of solitude sublime did me forever place.
When once I heard those three short words, 'Do not fear!'⁴
what more, my Lord, what more, could there be for me to hear?*

[Guru Lord..]

*Seeing within my mind all the world's imaginary creation
as a shimmering mirage, my heart was filled with deep elation.
This female form a mere nothing was I surely came to know.
In whom does this world subside entire? It is in Him,⁵ the Self, alone.
All this world, I did avow, dream-like still, occupied my sight,
but can sorrow, suffering or delusion be, once the Self is realised?*

[Guru Lord..]

-
4. *abhayam enru conṇatai kēṭṭa piṇ*, literally after [I] heard his saying 'Abhayam'. *abhayam* mean *fearlessness*, and is associated with the *mudra* in which the palm is held upright, facing outwards. It is the position held by the lower right hand of Lord Śiva in statues of Naṭarāja.
 5. The word *avaṇ* has been added to complete the sense here, i.e. *yārukuḷḷē aṭaṅkuṁ inta avāṇi? avaṇukkuḷ tāṇē* – *In whom does this world subside. In Him alone indeed.*

ஆவுடை அக்காள் பாடல்

Track 6: Song 9 of ஞான ரஸ கீர்த்தனைகள்

பல்லவி

ஸச்சிதானந்த ஸ்வரூபம் தானடா நீதானடா
ஸம்சயாதி பிரமை போனால் ததாகாரம் நீயடா

அனுபல்லவி

உள்ளும்புறமும் நீயடா ஜிகத்தொன்று மில்லை பாரடா
நிகில பேத ஸ்தூலசூக்ஷ்மதேகம் ரஜ்ஜு ஸர்ப்பம் போலடா

[ஸச்சிதானந்த...]

சரணம்

கல்பித பிரபஞ்சமிது கானல் ஜிலம் போலடா
காணுமதிஷ்டான மாத்திரம்தானே உற்று பாரடா
ஸ்வப்னமாம் மாயைகடந்த ஸ்வஸ்வரூபம் நீயடா
ஜீவபிராந்தி பிரமை போனால் சிதாகாசம் நீயடா

[ஸச்சிதானந்த...]

பொய்யும் மெய்யாக தோன்றும் புத்தி கல்பிதமே தானடா
பூரணமாய் நிறைந்த தத்போதமே நீயடா
நிர்குணத்தில் குணமுண்டோ உற்றுணர்ந்து பாரடா
நிரம்சத்தில் அம்சமுண்டோ நீடானே உற்று பாரடா

[ஸச்சிதானந்த...]

Songs of Avudai Akkal

Track 6: Song 9 of nāna rasa kīrtanaika!

Pallavi

*You are the eternal Self, existence consciousness bliss, you are, my dear!
You are the substratum when doubt and all delusion disappear, my dear!*

Anupallavi

*You are within and without, there really is no world, you see my dear!
The whole body, both subtle and gross, is naught but the snake in the
rope, my dear!*

[*You are the eternal Self...*]

Saraṇam

*This imagined world is like a mirage, my dear!
What's seen is the substratum alone, if you look closely my dear!
You are your own true Self, awakened beyond maya's dream, my dear!
You are awareness' clear sky, when the ego's whirl subsides, my dear!*

[*You are the eternal Self...*]

*The intellect which makes the false seem real is all imagination, my dear!
you are Self knowledge's absolute fullness, my dear!
When you clearly perceive, in the attribute-free Absolute, no qualities
can ever be, my dear!
When you clearly see, in the indivisible One, can there ever divisions
be, my dear!*

[*You are the eternal Self...*]

ஆவுடை அக்காள் பாடல்

மலடிமைந்தன்போல் அவித்யை வந்திருந்து போனதும்
அஹோ விசித்திரம் நிர்மலத்தி லனேக உபாதியானதும்
நிரதிசயானந்த சுகம் பாவனை பண்ண பயின்றதும்
அதையனுபவித்து பார்க்கும்போது அகம்பதமென்றறிந்ததும்

[ஸச்சிதானந்த...]

அக்ஷய அகண்ட ஸுகானந்த ஸ்வரூபனே ஆசை
காமக்ரோதலோப மற்றதே உந்தேகமே
திரிபுடி மூன்று மற்றுபோனால் தேசிகர் தன்பாதமே
ஹீமத்குரு வெங்கடேசர் சின்மய ஸ்வரூபமே.

[ஸச்சிதானந்த...]

Songs of Avudai Akkal

*Like a barren woman's son, after ignorance has arisen, reigned and gone,
when all conditioning factors merge, what a wonder; into the*

unsullied One,

*when the joyful experience of unsurpassable bliss has been fully shown,
and through tasting that bliss, the pure state of 'I' is finally known,*

[You are the eternal Self..]

*Your body will be the deathless, undivided, blissful Self,
free of desire, lust, anger, greed [and all the rest].*

When knowledge, knower, known, all have gone, Your Master's feet

you shall own.

[You'll be] the Self, Srimad Guru Venkatesa, consciousness's very form.

[You are the eternal Self..]

ஆவுடை அக்காள் பாடல்

Track 7: Song 11 of ஞான ரஸ கீர்த்தனைகள்

பல்லவி

ஒரு பாபியாகிலும் பரமார்த்தங்களைப் பாரானோ
முக்தி சேரானோ

அனுபல்லவி

தேவநரதிர்யகாதிகளுக்குளிந்த தேகத்தில் வேறாகி
ஜனித்தவர்களுக்குள்ளே

[ஒரு பாபியாகிலும்...]

சரணம்

பக்தி வைராக்கிய பாதையிலே என்ன பாராக்காரருண்டோ
முக்திமார்க்கத்தில் நடக்கிறபேர்களுக்கு முள்ளுகள்
போட்டதுண்டோ
சித்து ஜடங்களை சிந்திக்கும் பேர்களுக்கு சிரசிலே
கொம்புமுண்டோ
தத்வஞானத்தால் தன்னையறிந்தபின் தானவனாக தடையுமுண்டோ
பக்தி என்னும் பரிபாகத்தினால் ஜீவன்முக்திவேணும்
என்ற தாகத்தினால்
யுக்திகளா மொரு வேகத்தினால் நித்தியாநித்திய விவேகத்தினால்

[ஒரு பாபியாகிலும்...]

அல்பமாகு முடலழிந்துபோகு முன்னே யறிந்தா லாகாதோ
ஸ்வப்னஜாக்கிரம் சுஷுப்தி மூன்றையும் சோதித்தாலாகாதோ
கல்பனையாமிந்த காரியகாரணத்தை கண்டிதா லாகாதோ
அப்புதமாம் தன்னையாரென்று பார்த்தா லழியாப்பதமங்கே
யாகாதோ
கல்பனை செய்கின்ற மோகத்திலே வந்து உத்பன்னமாகும்
தேகத்திலே
பிற்பன்னமாம் விவேகத்திலே யிது கல்பனையாமிந்த லோகத்திலே

[ஒரு பாபியாகிலும்...]

Songs of Avudai Akkal

Track 7: Song 11 of ñāṇa rasa kīrttaṇaikaḷ

Pallavi

*May not even sinners the ultimate truths attain?
May they not liberation gain?*

Anupallavi

*For the gods, men, beasts and all the rest, who're born
in their variously embodied forms,*

[*May not even sinners...*]

Saraṇam

*What guards are there to block the path of bakti and dispassion?
Beneath the feet that walk on liberation's path are sharp thorns scattered?
Are the heads of those who reflect on the nature of god and inert matter
weighed down by heavy logs?
When they've known themselves through knowledge of Reality
to becoming one with Him, what impediment can there be?
Through ripeness of devotion, through thirst for embodied liberation,
through power of argument and discrimination between eternal and
temporal,*

[*May not even sinners...*]

*Should they be not able to know [the truth] before the worthless body dies?
The states of waking, dream and sleep, should they be not able to analyse?
Should they be not able to chastise the [illusion of] cause and effect
that through the mind's imagination arises?
Should they be not able, through the enquiry, 'Who is this wondrous I?' to
reach the state in which they do not die?
In this body which arises in the delusion that spawns false imagination,
in this world that sees only that false imagination in wise discrimination,*

[*May not even sinners...*]

ஆவுடை அிக்காள் பாடல்

வேதம்புகழும் வெங்கடேசுவர நாதரை வேண்டாத குறைதானோ
பாதகராயிந்த பாரில் பிறப்பதும் பிரதிபந்தவகைதானோ
மாதவராமிந்த மகத்துக்கள் சாபமோ மாயையின் குணம்தானோ
ஏதுவகையோ யிது நானறியேனிந்த ஏழைகள் பாக்கிய மிதுதானோ
பேதமில்லா பரிபூரணமாய் பிந்து நாதங்களுக்கொரு காரணமாய்
சேதனமாய்
ஐகக்காரணமாய், அதை சோதனை செய்திடும் சூரனுமாய்

[ஒரு பாபியாகிலும்...]

Songs of Avudai Akkal

*Is it through the fault of not beseeching Venkatesan, whom the Vedas
praise?*

*Or through the obstacles that through being born on earth a sinner are
raised?*

*Or through the curse of rishis in penance great? Or is it simply maya's
natural state?*

Whatever it is, I do not know. For these poor folk, is it just their fate?

*But as the Absolute, in which no differences arise, as the cause of [cosmic
sound and seed] nada and bindu,*

as the world's creator and destroyer and the Sun that over them presides,

[May not even sinners...]

ஆவுடை அக்காள் பாடல்

Track 8: குரு

- சீர் பெருகும் ஸச்சிதானந்த தேசிக சின்மயனே – குருநாதா
பார் முழுதும் பரமாகி நிறைந்திடும் பாக்கியமே – குருநாதா 1
- பேரறிவாகிய பிரம்ம நிலைக்கடல் பேசறியேன் – குருநாதா
ஆர் அறிவார் எனக்கருளின அனுபவம் ஆண்டவனே
– குருநாதா 2
- மரமேறிக் கைவிட்ட மானிடர் போலவே மாண்டு பிறவாமல்
– குருநாதா
திறமெனக் கீந்ததும் தேவரீரல்லவோ தேசிகனே – குருநாதா 3
- பந்தமோக்ஷமெனும் பேச்சறியாததோர் பேதையாம் என்னை
– குருநாதா
ஸந்ததம் அனுபவமாக வேதாந்தம் சாற்றி வைத்தாய்
– குருநாதா 4
- ஸரஸபேச்சினிலே ஸச்சிதானந்த நிலை தந்த சாச்வதனே
– குருநாதா
பக்திவைராக்கிய பதமெனக்கருளின பாக்கியமே – குருநாதா 5
- அந்தகன் போலவே அலைந்து திரிந்த என்னை ஆண்டவனே
– குருநாதா
சிந்தை மகிழ்ந்திட சிவபதம் அருளிய தேசிகனே – குருநாதா 6
- புத்திக்கும் ஸாக்ஷியாய் போதமாகிய பரிபூரணனே – குருநாதா
அனைத்திற்கும் ஸாக்ஷியாய் அறியும் அனுபவம் ஆர் தருவார்
– குருநாதா 7

Songs of Avudai Akkal

Track 8: Guru

- Most glorious Teacher, Sat-chit-ananda, Consciousness' form*
– O Guru, my Lord !
Blessed Fortune supreme, pervading all the world
– O Guru, my Lord! 1
- Enduring ocean of Brahman, knowledge supreme, words fail*
– O Guru, my Lord!
Master, who can know the state of grace that to me you gave
– O Guru, My Lord! 2
- When you granted that I should no more die and be reborn, like those
who ever climb a tree, let go and fall – O Guru, my Lord!
did you not then become my God and Preceptor?*
– O Guru, my Lord! 3
- A simple girl I was, knowing naught of bondage and liberation's talk*
– O Guru, my Lord!
*Expounding the Vedanta's essence, you imbued in me the eternal
experience of their import – O Guru, my Lord!* 4
- Eternal one who, with gracious and impassioned words,
sat-chit-ananda's abiding state conferred – O Guru, my Lord!
Blessed destiny, who in grace imparted devotion and compassion's
abiding state – O Guru, my Lord!* 5
- As blind I wandered suffering, till you subjected me to your rule*
– O Guru, my Lord!
*Teacher who, filling my mind with bliss, granted me in grace Civan's
state – O Guru, my Lord!* 6
- Fullness of Reality, the Consciousness that to my understanding is the
witness – O Guru, my Lord!
Who else might grant the experience of being the Seer of all that is?*
– O Guru, my Lord! 7

ஆவுடை அிக்காள் பாடல்

முக்தி பரமசுகம் தனக்குள் தானே என்றும் இருந்தாலும் – குருநாதா
பரம ரஹஸ்யம் பழ மறை நூல்களின் பரம் பொருளே – குருநாதா

8

சுத்தியில் ரஜிதம் போல் பிரபஞ்சம் மித்தையென சொன்னீரே
– குருநாதா
சுருதி யுத்தியனுபவம் சொல்லி உலகப் பேயை ஒழித்தீரைய்யா
– குருநாதா

9

நித்ய நிரஞ்ஜின நிர்குணமாகிய விமலனே – குருநாதா
ஸத்திய ஞானானந்த மதாகிய சாகுவதனே – குருநாதா

10

பர்வதமாம் பிரதிபந்தம் அறுத்ததுன் பாதமல்லவோ – குருநாதா
ஸர்வமும் தானாக ஸமரஸபதம் தந்த ஸர்வேச்வரனே – குருநாதா

11

அந்தரங்கமறியாது அலைந்து திரிந்தேன் – குருநாதா
ஸந்ததம் குருபக்தி அருளிய அன்புருவே – குருநாதா

12

துர்விஷயங்களைத் துரத்தி தூளாக்கிய என் துரைநீர் தானே
– குருநாதா
நிரதிசயானதம் எனக்கீந்த நிர்மலனே – குருநாதா

13

காசம் படர்ந்த கண்ணுக்கு ஒளி காட்டி வைத்த காரணனே
– குருநாதா
நாசபிறவி நீக்கி நாடெனக் கருளின நாயகனே – குருநாதா

14

பாசமகற்றி பதி தன்னில் சேர்த்து வைத்து பண்டிதனே – குருநாதா
தேசமேங்கும் புகழ் ஸ்ரீ வெங்கடேசுவர தேசிகரே – குருநாதா.

15

Songs of Avudai Akkal

*Although The supreme bliss of liberation in the Self eternally abides
– O Guru, my Lord!*

*You alone are the Reality [who reveal] the supreme Mystery that in the
ancient Vedas' writ resides – O Guru, my Lord! 8*

*The world is unreal like the silver in an oyster's shell, you did assert.
– O Guru, my Lord!*

*Master, conveying the experience of the Veda's import, you abolished
quite this ghost-like world – O Guru, my Lord! 9*

Flawless One, eternally pure and of all qualities free

– O Guru, my Lord!

Eternal One, who are true knowledge's ecstasy – O Guru, my Lord! 10

*Did not your divine feet cut away obstacles that a mountain high did
grow – O Guru, my Lord!*

*Lord of all, who granted me the equanimous state, in which everything
as one's own Self is known – O Guru, my Lord! 11*

In anguish wandering, my inner truth I did not know – O Guru, my Lord!

*Embodiment of love, who in grace undying devotion to Yourself
did bestow – O Guru, my Lord 12*

My liege, the evil sensate world you pulverised and drove away

– O Guru, my Lord!

Immaculate, bliss unsurpassed to me you gave – O Guru, my Lord! 13

*A cataract o'erspread my eyes till you, the Universe's Cause, healing it,
revealed your light – O Guru, my Lord!*

*Supreme Being who in grace the toils of birth did put to flight
– O Guru, my Lord! 14*

*Learned One, you who my worldly bondage erased and established me in
your dwelling place – O Guru, my Lord!*

*Sri Guru Venkatesha, whose praises are sung in every land
– O Guru, my Lord! 15*

ஆவுடை அக்காள் பாடல்

Track 9: Song 65 of ஞான ரஸ கீர்த்தனைகள்

பல்லவி

சேர்வதும் எப்படியோ ஸ்ரீஸத்குருபாதம்
சேர்வதும் எப்படியோ

அனுபல்லவி

மங்களமான மஹாராஜி ஸ்ரீ குரு
மலையாசலம் வந்து மகிமை யறியவென்று
இங்கிதமாகவே எடுத்து உரைத்திடும்
மங்களமாகவே கேட்டு புகழ்ந்திட

[சேர்வதும் எப்படியோ...]

சரணம்

அன்னைக்கருக்குழியை கடத்தி வெளியில்
வந்து சொல்லப்படாத துக்கத்தை அனுபவித்து
வெல்லப்படாத மஹத்துக்கள் சரணத்தை
காணப்படுமிந்த கருத்துக்கள் அறிவை

[சேர்வதும் எப்படியோ...]

அஞ்ஞானகாயம் அழுக்கை விலக்கியே
அந்தகாரமான மாயை துலக்கியே
பிரக்ஞானமான பிரகாசம் ஜீவலிக்கவே
பரபிரம்ம ஸ்வரூபத்தை பார்த்து பணியவே

[சேர்வதும் எப்படியோ...]

வலைக்குள் அகப்பட்டு தயங்கு மத்ஸ்யம் போல்
ஸம்ஸாரதுறையிலே ணுஷுப்தி போல் முழுகாமல்
நிவிருத்திக்கரையில் நின்று நினைவை தெளியவைத்து
நிர்க்குண பிரம்மத்தை நிலையாக நிறுத்தியே

[சேர்வதும் எப்படியோ...]

Songs of Avudai Akkal

Track 9: Song 65 of ñāṇa rasa kīrttaṇaikaḷ

Pallavi

*O how to reach Sadguru's splend'rous feet?
O how with them united be?*

Anupallavi

*Auspicious mighty king, radiant guru,
like a mountain still he came his greatness to reveal,
so that we might hear and praise on high
the bless'd teachings that he gave for our common weal.*

[*O how to reach...*]

Saraṇam

*Crossing the bounds of a mother's womb, venturing outside,
sorrow you endured that no words can describe.
Now at the holy feet of that invincible and lofty being
you'll come to know the inner truths that are there revealed.*

[*O how to reach...*]

*Cleansing the stain of ignorance that's with the body born,
in maya's dark delusion shining forth your light,
see and worship Parabrahman, Selfhood's very form
so that the light of pure awareness shines radiantly bright.*

[*O how to reach...*]

*Not drowning, as if fast asleep, in worldly bondage's sea,
like a fish that thrashes to and fro, caught within a net,
stand motionless upon the shore, of every thought bereft,
established in the Brahman that of all attributes is free.*

[*O how to reach...*]

ஆவுடை அக்காள் பாடல்

ஹீ வெங்கடேசுவர குருவையனுதினம்
பாதாரவிந்தத்தில் பணிந்திடுவாயே
பரமகுருவின் பாதம் பணிந்திருப்பாயானால்
நித்யானந்த ஸுகம் அனுபவிப்பாயே.

[சேர்வதும் எப்படியோ...]

Songs of Avudai Akkal

*At the lotus feet of radiant guru Venkateshwara
in worship daily bow down low.
Thus worshipping the supreme's guru's holy feet
the joy of bliss eternal you'll surely come to know.*

[*O how to reach...*]

ஆவுடை அக்காள் பாடல்

Track 10: Song 62 of ஞான ரஸ கீர்த்தனைகள்

பல்லவி

ஐயா நீர் தந்தது ஆனந்தமானாலும்
அதிசயமாகவே தோணுதையா!

அனுபல்லவி

மெய்யான குரு வெங்கடேசுவர நாதனே! வேதாந்த வேத்யனே!
நாதாந்தமுர்த்தியே!

[ஐயா நீர் தந்தது...]

சரணம்

கண்டமில்லாமல் அகண்டமாய் தோணுது
கருவி கரணங்கள் கண்டாலும் வீணுது
அண்டமுனிவர்க்குள்ளும் தானென்று தோணுது
அடிநடுமுடிவுயில்லாமல் வான் தன்னை பூணுது

[ஐயா நீர் தந்தது...]

பழகப்பழக மெத்த பாக்கியம் வருகுது
பரமஸுகானந்தம் பரவசம் தருகுது
அழகான அறிவுத்தீயால் அங்கமெல்லாம் உருகுது
ஆனந்தவெள்ளம் கங்குகரையற்று பெருகுது

[ஐயா நீர் தந்தது...]

கருணைமிகுந்த கடாசுஷத்தினால் வந்த
காசுஷியைகண்டு கலந்து உல்லாஸமாகி
அருணபிரகாசம்போல் அண்டமெல்லாம் ஜொலிக்குது
அவருடைய மகிமையை யாரிடம் சொல்லுவேன்.

[ஐயா நீர் தந்தது...]

Songs of Avudai Akkal

Track 10: Song 62 of nāṇa rasa kīrtanaika!

Pallavi

*O, Lord, this blissful state you bestowed upon me!
Yet a wondrous miracle it seems to be!*

Anupallavi

*True one, O Guru Venkateswara my Lord, knower of the Vedas final import!
Divinity, beyond even primordial nāda transcendently installed!*

[O, Lord, this blissful state...]

Saraṇam

*Without any divisions as One He appears.
The senses and intellect are useless, although them I see.
Of all the world's rishis he's the unique one it seems.
Untouched by the heavens, no end, no beginning, no middle has He.*

[O, Lord, this blissful state...]

*With constant abidance great blessings are felt.
The joy of supreme bliss, ecstatic rapture, He grants.
In jnana's fair flame, the whole body melts
as the floodtide of bliss without limit expands.*

[O, Lord, this blissful state...]

*Looking upon me with his most compassionate gaze,
my suffering he saw and with me joyful union made.
Bright as the red sun at dawn the whole universe shines.
His greatness to whom might I dare to confide?*

[O, Lord, this blissful state...]

ஆவுடை அக்காள் பாலல்

Track 11: மங்களம்

பவபயங்கள் போக்கிவைத்து பரமபதம் தந்தவர்க்கு
பக்தி வைராக்ய நிலை தந்தவர்க்கு
நேதி நேதி¹ வாக்கியத்தால்
நிச்சயங்கள் காட்டி வைத்த நிர்மலர்க்கு
ஜெயமங்களம் நித்ய சுபமங்களம்

அக்ஞானம் போக்கி வைத்து ‘ப்ரக்ஞானம் ப்ரும்மம்’ என்று
‘அஹமஸ்மி’ பதம் காட்டி வைத்த ஆத்மாவுக்கு
‘தத்வமஸி’ வாக்யத்தால் தன்வடிவை என்வடிவாய்
தானாய் நிறைந்திருந்த சாக்ஷிஸ்வஸ்துவுக்கு

[ஜெயமங்களம் நித்ய சுபமங்களம்]

‘அயமாத்தமா ப்ரும்மம்’ என்று அனுபோகத்தை காட்டி வைத்து
ஆதியந்தமில்லாத அனந்தருக்கு
ஸத்து வடிவாய் விளங்கும் தரணி பதினாலுக்கும்
சித்தாய் நிறைந்திருந்த சின்மயருக்கு

[ஜெயமங்களம் நித்ய சுபமங்களம்]

In this song all four of the major *mahāvākyas*, one from each of the four Vedas, are quoted by Akkāḷ. The *mahāvākyas* are terse statements on the nature of Brahman, the Real, used as objects of reflection, meditation and contemplation by aspirants on the Vedantic spiritual path and their teachers. The method of *neti neti*, described in note one, is a strategy employed by aspirants during this process.

1. *neti neti*, meaning, *Not this, not this*, is the method of Vedic analysis of negation. It is a keynote of Vedic inquiry. With its aid the *jñāni* negates identification with all things of this world which are not the Ātman, in this way she negates the anātman. Through this gradual process she negates the mind and transcends all worldly experiences till nothing remains but the Self. She attains union with the Absolute by denying the body, name, form, intellect, senses and all limiting adjuncts and discovers what remains, the true ‘I’ alone.
2. *prajñānam Brahma– Consciousness is Brahman*. This is called the *svarūpabodha vākya* or the sentence that explains the nature of Brahman or the Self. This is contained in the Aitareya Upanishad of the Rigveda.

Songs of Avudai Akkal

Track 11: Maṅkaḷam

*To Him who the state supreme conferred, abolishing all fears of birth,
To Him who the condition of devotion with dispassion granted,
To the Flawless One, who through the words, 'Not this, not this!'¹
those certain truths firmly implanted,
may there victory and forever auspicious blessings be.*

*To the Self, who, saying, 'Brahman is awareness'² false knowledge slew,
ensuring that the state 'I am [Brahman]'³ I clearly knew,
To the Eternal Witness, who with the words 'That thou art,'⁴
as the Self, all pervading, his own true form did to me impart,*

[may there victory and forever auspicious blessings be]

*To the Blissful One, without beginning or end, who to me true joy did show,
saying, 'This Self is truly Brahman,'⁵[this should you know,]
To Him whose form's the consciousness that embraces all,
shining as the Real throughout the fourteen worlds,⁶*

[may there victory and forever auspicious blessings be]

-
3. *aham brahmāsmi – I am Brahman.* This is the *anusandhāna vākya*, the idea on which the aspirant tries to fix his mind. This is contained in the Brhadāranyaka Upanishad of the Yajurveda.
 4. *tat tvam asi – Thou art That.* This is the Upanishadic *vākya* contained in the Chāndogya Upanishad of the Sama Veda. It is through this *vākya* the guru initiates the disciple.
 5. *ayam ātmā brahma – This Self is Brahman.* This is the *anubhavabodha vākya*, the sentence that gives expression to the inner intuitive experience of the aspirant. This is contained in the Māṅḍūkya Upanishad of the Atharva Veda.
 6. In the Purāṇas and in the Atharvaveda, there are 14 worlds, seven higher ones (*vyāhṛtis*) and seven lower ones (*pātālas*). The earth (*bhu*) is the lowest of the upper seven.

ஆவுடை அக்காள் பாடல்

சாக்ஷிநிலை கண்டவர்க்கு தன்மயமாய் ஆனவர்க்கு
ஸத்து சித்தானந்த ஸத்குணருக்கு
ஆனந்தத்தால் விளங்கும் அவனி பதினாலையும்
அற்புதமாய் பார்த்திருந்த ஆத்மாவுக்கு

[ஜெயமங்களம் நித்ய சுபமங்களம்]

வேதமென்னும் தன்விளக்கை விஸ்தரித்து தானெடுத்து
சாஸ்திரமாம் காட்டில் ஜடிதியிலே புகுந்து
ஞானமென்னும் தீபத்தால் காடு பஸ்மமாக்கி
கர்மபந்தம் போக்கிவைத்த கார்த்தாவுக்கு

[ஜெயமங்களம் நித்ய சுபமங்களம்]

ஹ்ருதயமென்னும் மண்டபத்தில் எந்தனுட ஸத்குரு
வெங்கடேச பெருமானை ஏத்தி வைத்து
நித்தியமாய் பூஜைபண்ணி இஷ்டமாய் ஸ்தாபிக்க
திடமான பக்தி தந்த நிர்மலருக்கு

[ஜெயமங்களம் நித்ய சுபமங்களம்].

Songs of Avudai Akkal

*To Him who dwells in Selfhood's state, established as the pure Witness,
To Him who in his nature pure is being consciousness and bliss,
To the Self which I beheld in awe,
illuminating with bliss the fourteen worlds,*

[may there victory and forever auspicious blessings be]

*To Him who revealed and spread abroad the Vedas' light
and, plunging swiftly into the forest of the sastras,
with jnana's flame reduced them to ashes,
to the Creator, who banishes quite the bondage of our deeds,*

[may there victory and forever auspicious blessings be]

*To the Flawless One, who to me unwavering devotion did afford,
to sing praises to Venkatesha, my Sadguru and my Lord,
in the pavilion of my Heart raised up on high,
to hold him there, forever performing puja, my one design,*

[may there victory and forever auspicious blessings be]

Bibliography

செங்கோட்டை ஸ்ரீ ஆவுடை அக்காள் பாடல் திரட்டு

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Posted: 2014

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