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HISTORY OF 118  
TAMIL LEXICOGRAPHY

SUNDARA SHANMUGANAR

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# HISTORY OF TAMIL LEXICOGRAPHY

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## P R E F A C E

Lexicography has now grown into a separate branch of study in European languages. In Tamil too we have had lexicons or dictionaries from time immemorial, but we have no book giving an elaborate account of all of them in Tamil. We find only a brief account of a few Nikandus and Dictionaries in the Tamil Lexicon of the Madras University, in the “கலைக் களஞ்சியம்” (Kalai Kallanchiyam) (Tamil Encyclopaedia) and in the research - articles of Thiru. S. Vaiyapuri Pillai.

So a book giving detailed information about the different lexicons written by various poets or scholars for three thousand years has been a desideratum. In order to supply this need, I undertake the task of doing some research in the field of Tamil Lexicography. I took great pains to collect as far as possible all the details relating to the different lexicons that are now available, and I have written a book entitled “தமிழ் அகராதிக்கலை” - Thamizh Akaraathi Kalai (Tamil Lexicography) which, I hope, will serve as a good reference book. This research work of mine is now being published. So far as I know, I think that no book of this sort has ever been published and that mine is the first great research work in the field of Tamil lexicography.

I have translated the above said book into English, and this English translation entitled “History of Tamil Lexicography” is very concise and it is only one tenth of

its original in size. I submitted this English version of my research work to the First International Conference-Seminare of Tamil Studies which was held in Kualalumpur in April, 1966.

This book consists of three parts. The first part, "History of Lexicon in Tamil", deals with the history of the growth of lexicography in Tamil. The second part, "Nikandus", gives an account of Dhivaakaram, Pinkalam and the other Nikandus in the form of verse. I have written about more than thirty Nikandus in this chapter. The third Part, "Dictionaries", deals with the dictionaries which are about more than hundred in number.

I hope that Tamil scholars will welcome my work and encourage me to undertake more research works of this nature.

I am greatly indebted to Mr. R. Rajagopalan, B.A., B.T., Instructor, Centre Pedagogique, Pondicherry, who helped me very much in translating this book into English. I take this opportunity to thank him for his kind help.

SUNDARA SHANMUGAM

## FOREWORD

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(Hon'ble C. Rajagopalachariar (Rajaji),  
Ex-Governor General of India was kind enough  
to give the following foreword to the original  
work in Tamil 'தமிழ் அகராதிக் கலை'—Tamil  
Lexicography :)

*Your தமிழ் அகராதிக் கலை is a  
most informative and useful publi-  
cation. I congratulate you on this  
valuable production.*

(Sd.) C. Rajagopalachari

## SOURCES

<i>Name of the Book</i>	.....	<i>Author</i>
Tholkaappiam	.....	Tholkaappiar
Tholkaappiam Illampuuranam	.....	Illampuuranar
Nannool	.....	Pavannanthiar
Nannool-Commen- tary	.....	Mayilai Naathar
<p>Various Nikandus and Dictionaries            Preface verses of some Nikandus            Introductions of some Nikandus and Dictionaries</p>		
Apithaana Cinthaamanni	.....	A. Singaravelu Mudaliar
Tamil Lexicon	.....	Madras University
Kalaik Kallanchiyam (Tamil Encyclo- paedia)	.....	Thamizh Vallarchik- kzhakam, Madras
Some Essays of Vaiyapuri Pillai	.....	S. Vaiyapuri Pillai
Thamizh Akaraathik Kalai (Tamil Lexicography)	.....	Sundara Shanmuganar

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## Transliteration Table

(தமிழ் எழுத்துக்களுக்கு நேரான ஆங்கில எழுத்துக்கள்)

### உயிரெழுத்துக்கள் — Vowels

குறில்	Short	—	நெடில்	Long
அ	a	—	ஆ	aa
இ	i	—	ஈ	ii
உ	u	—	ஊ	uu
எ	e	—	ஏ	ee
		—	ஐ	ai
ஓ	o		ஔ	oo
			ஔ	au

சார் பெழுத்து (ஆய்த எழுத்து)	—	Auxiliary Letter
ஃ	—	h

### மெய்யெழுத்துக்கள் — Consonants

வல்கினம் — Hard		மெல்கினம் — Soft	
க்	— k	ங்	— ng
ச்	— c, s	ஞ்	— gñ
ட்	— t, d	ண்	— nn
த்	— th, dh	ந்	— n, nh
ப்	— p, b	ம்	— m
ற்	— rr	ன்	— n

### இடையினம் — Medium

ய்	—	y
ர்	—	r
ல்	—	l
வ்	—	v
ழ்	—	zh
ள்	—	ll

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First Lexicon - Dum Dum Dum Dum.

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Nikandus - 18th century Nikandus - 19th century Nikandus.

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19th century Dictionaries - 20th century Dictionaries.

# HISTORY OF TAMIL LEXICOGRAPHY

## PART I

### HISTORY OF LEXICON IN TAMIL

When we speak of the “Art of Dictionary” we may wonder whether there is such an art. Yes, it is an art and another wonder of it is, the age of Lexicography in Tamil is more than three thousand years !

The art of dictionary (அகராதிக்கலை) or Lexicography as we call it in English has developed very much in the European Languages. Similar growth can also be perceived in Tamil Language.

What is a Lexicon ? What is Lexicography ? What is its history ? We must have explanations for these.

**What is a Lexicon ?**

If the words in a language are arranged alphabetically and meanings are given to them in a book, then it is called a dictionary. For example if we take the following words, ஆனி, அறம், ஆடு, அணில், (Aani, Arram, Aatu, Annil) the words beginning with ‘அ’ (a) the first letter in Tamil like அறம், அணில் should be placed first and words beginning with ‘ஆ’ (Aa) the next letter like ஆனி, ஆடு should be placed next. If we look the second letter in அறம், அணில், the letter ‘ணி’ (NNi) comes before the letter ‘ற’ (RRA) in the Tamil alphabet. Hence we must have அணில் before அறம். So also in the words ஆனி, ஆடு the letter ‘டு’ (Tu)

precedes the letter 'னி' (Ni) in the Tamil Alphabet and hence the word 'ஆடு' (Aatu) should come before the word 'ஆனி'.

The book wherein the words are arranged in the way described above considering the 3rd, fourth, 5th and subsequent letters and their meanings are also given is called a dictionary.

The word 'அகராதி' (Akaraathi) is a combination of the two words அகரம் + ஆதி (Akaram+Aathi). 'அகரம்' (Akaram) means 'அ' (a). 'கரம்' (Karam) in அகரம் (Akaram) is augment. 'ஆதி' ('Aathi') means the first. As we begin this with the letter 'அ' (a) this is called as 'Akaraathi' in Tamil. It is even called by the name of 'Akara Series' or அகர வரிசை (Akara Varisai). As the words are arranged in the order அ (a), ஆ (aa), இ (i), ஈ (ii) with 'அ' (a) as the first it is called as 'Akara Varisai' or Akara Series in Tamil.

In English we call this as the Alphabetical order. This word originated from the Greek. 'Alpha' is a word; 'Beta' is another word. Alpha begins with letter 'A' and Beta with 'B'. 'A' is the first letter in Greek and 'B' is the second letter in it. Latin letters originated from Greek. Some European languages like English, French and German are written with Latin letters. So in those languages instead of calling it as the A B C D order they call it as Alphabet by combining the words 'Alpha' and 'Beta'. It is just like saying 'அணில் ஆடு வரிசை'—Annil Aatu *varisai* (series) instead of அ, ஆ வரிசை (A, Aa order). Is it due to the fact that we use the words Alpha and Beta to introduce the letters 'A' and 'B', we are introducing அணில், ஆடு (Annil, Aatu) in the first

standard books nowadays to introduce அ, ஆ (A, Aa)? Hence we can give a new name as (Annil Aatu Varisai) அணில் ஆடு வரிசை as we have the Alphabetical order in English ; or in short we can call it as அ, ஆ வரிசை (A, Aa Varisai). Its condensed name is (Akara Varisai or Akara order) அகர வரிசை. Hence the book wherein the words are arranged in அணில் ஆடு வரிசை (Annil Aatu order) and thier meanings are given is called as அகராதி (Akaraathi). We call this as dictionary in English.

#### Meaning of the Art of Dictionary :

The dictionary that began to give the meaning of words took many shapes in course of time. The following are a few of them:

1. Dictionaries that tell the origin of words, its form in the spoken form or in poetry, the name of the book wherein it is used, its subdivision in that book and the number of the poem etc., in addition to give meanings of words.
2. Special dictionaries that tell about things like electricity, Machines, etc., and about some specific industries like agriculture, with their meanings and origin.
3. Dictionaries that tell about the dialects in the Alphabetical order with the words used in various regions as different from the pronunciation in the words in the literary form.
4. Dictionaries that give in the beginning or at the end of a particular book the First line of the poems in the alphabetical order ; some may give the contents of the topics in the book.

5. Dictionary of rare (difficult) words that gives meanings for such words only at the end of the book.
6. Specific book-dictionary that gives an index of all the words in the book denoting their occurrence.
7. Concordance (dictionary) that denote the occurrence and the line of important words alone or with the matter dealt in it. The book that gives such words alone is called as Verbal concordance and that which provides the matter as Real concordance.
8. Glossaries that give explanation to rare (difficult) words with suitable pictures about arts and science.
9. Encyclopaedia that gives detailed explanations, information about persons, places and other things of the world.
10. Linguistic dictionaries that gives equivalent in another or other languages for a word in a particular language.
11. Dictionary of proverbs in a language that tells the proverbs in that language in alphabetic order.
12. Dictionary of poets that describes the life of great poets in a language in the alphabetic order.
13. Dictionary that describes the numeral grouping of certain things like இரு சுடர் (Iru Sutar)-(The two great lights), முக்குணம் (Mukkunnam)-(the three qualities), ஐம்பொறி (Aimporri)-(the five sense organs) etc.

14. 'Dictionary of rhyming words' which provides rhymes suitable to versification like அகம், மகம், முகம் (Akam, Makam, Mukam)-இன்னல், கன்னல், தின்னல் (Innal, Kannal, Thinnal) etc.
15. Dictionary which gives similar words mainly in pronunciation but have only one letter different in its counterpart, like அரம், அறம்; குலம், குளம்; மனம், மணம் (Aram, Arram ; Kulam, Kullam ; Manam, Mannam).

Many such dictionaries took their birth and are yet growing. When the dictionary that began to give the meanings of words took many many shapes it became an 'art' by itself. Art is born generally when a science or a craft gets new and fresh status from its original state by means of imagination. When a *work* becomes an art people are captivated by it and begin to use in a variety of ways. Lexicography also comes under this general rule.

#### **The History of Tamil Lexicography :**

The lexicography in the Tamil language took its origin some three thousand years ago. Tholkaappiam, the greatest book on Tamil grammar which is considered as the first of the available old Tamil books and as of three thousand years old contains pages that tell the meanings of words.

#### **The First Tamil Dictionary :**

Tholkaappiam is the greatest book on linguistics and Social Science. In its first chapter 'Ezhutthathikaaram' (எழுத்ததிகாரம்) orthography finds its place ; In the second chapter 'Collathikaaram' (சொல் லதிகாரம்) Etymology is dealt with; In the third and last chapter 'Porullathikaaram'

(பொருளதிகாரம்) we can see prosody, rhetoric and sociology. The author Tholkaappiar had given meaning for 120 words in 'உரி யியல்' (uri iyal), one of the sections in the second chapter 'Collathikaaram'. In the self same chapter meanings are given to certain kinds of words in the section 'இடை யியல்' (Itai iyal). Such things are given also in 'மர யியல்' (Marapiyal), one of the sections in the third chapter 'Porullathikaaram'. But of all the three sections we can see the actual dictionary form only in the section 'உரி யியல்' (uri iyal). Hence we can say boldly that the 'உரி யியல்' (uri iyal) is the first Tamil Dictionary. But we must remember that the words for which meanings are given are not arranged in the alphabetical order like the modern dictionaries.

In the Tamil grammar words are divided into four namely 'பெயர்ச் சொல்' (Peyar-c-col), 'வினைச்சொல்' (vinai-c-col), 'இடைச்சொல்' (Itai-c-col) and 'உரிச்சொல்' (Uri-c-col). Words denoting names of persons or things are பெயர்ச்சொல் (Nouns). Verbs (வினைச்சொல்) are those that tell actions like go, come, etc. There are words that won't have meanings of their own, but will give meanings when suffixed with nouns or verbs like 'ஆவனே' (Avanee), 'செய்தானே' (Seythaanoo). The words 'ஏ' (ee), 'ஓ' (oo) which are neither nouns nor verbs but lie between them are called as 'இடைச் சொல்' (Particle). Words telling the qualities or state like black, red, perfection [கறுப்பு (Karruppu), சிவப்பு (Sivappu), முழுமை (Muzhumai)] are called as உரிச் சொல் (abstracts).

Blackness (கறுப்பு), redness (சிவப்பு) or perfection (முழுமை) are not individual or separate objects. So these are not the names of objects and hence not nouns.



They are not verbs as they do not tell the actions. These are all abstract things which can only be felt minutely by the mind and the five organs of sense. We can't see the blackness (கறுப்பு) without the association of an object ; but only with an object. Other abstracts (உரிச் சொற்கள்) also are like this. Such words denoting colour, quantity, quality and feelings were called as உரிச் சொற்கள் (abstracts). Some opine that உரிச் சொல் (uri-c-col) means that which is related to verses while others give so many explanations. If it is so, is there no relation between the nouns and verbs to the poetry ? So we must conclude that உரிச்சொல் (uri-c-col) denotes the various abstract things. We should not probe into why it is named as 'உரி' (uri). We must take it granted just as we call the noun as பெயர்ச்சொல் (Peyar-c-col) or verb as வினைச்சொல் (vinai-c-col) without knowing any reason.

Tholkaappianaar has given four divisions as Peyar iyal (பெயரியல்), Vinai iyal (வினை யியல்), Itai iyal (இடையியல்) and uri iyal (உரி யியல்), basing on Peyar (பெயர்) or Noun, Vinai (வினை) or verb, Itai (இடை) or Particle and uri (உரி) or word abstract. The author who attempted to give the grammatical definitions for the above said four kinds of words has given the kinds of nouns and verbs and their definitions in the chapters on Peyar iyal and Vinai iyal but has not collected the verbs and nouns separately to give their meanings. But in Itai iyal and Uri iyal he has given some இடைச் சொற்கள் or particles and உரிச் சொற்கள் or abstract words and their meanings. Probably he omitted this work with nouns and verbs assuming that people know these clearly. At the same time he explained Itai-c-corkkall (இடைச் சொற்கள்) or particles and Uri-c-corkkall (உரிச் சொற்கள்) or abstract words as these are rather difficult.

Even in this he has taken only difficult words leaving the easy terms. We know this from an aphorism given in uri-iyal (உரியியல்) of Tholkaappiam which reads as :

\* “வெளிப்படு சொல்லே கிளத்தல் வேண்டா  
வெளிப்பட வாரா உரிச்சொல் மேன.”

(i.e) It is not at all necessary to explain words that are easy to get at the meaning, but must do so with the difficult words of uri. Moreover, the author has concluded saying that it was not possible to give all the difficult words and the meaning for each and every word.

He advises to find out the meanings of such omitted words whenever we come across them. This information is given in an aphorism at the end of Itai iyal (இடையியல்) as :

† “கிளந்த அல்ல வேறுபிற தோன்றினும்  
கிளந்தவற் றியலான் உணர்ந்தனர் கொளலே”.

and in two aphorisms at the end of uri-iyal (உரியியல்) as :

\* \* “கூறிய கிளவிப் பொருள்நிலை அல்ல  
வேறுபிற தோன்றினும் அவற்றெடுங் கொளலே”.

‡ “அன்ன பிறவும் கிளந்த அல்ல  
பன்முறை யானும் பரந்தன வருஉம்  
உரிச்சொல் லெல்லாம் பொருட்குறை கூட்ட  
இயன்ற மருங்கின் இளைத்தென அறியும்  
வாரம்புதமக் கின்மையின் வழிநனி கடைப்பிடித்து  
ஓம்படை ஆணையிற் கிளந்தவற் றியலான்  
பாங்குற உணர் தல் என்மனார் புலவர்”.

\* Tholkaappiam - Collathikaaram - Uri iyal -2.

† Tholkaappiam-collathikaaram-Itai iyal : 48

\* Tholkaappiam-Collathikaaram-Uri iyal ; 94

‡ Tholkaappiam-Collathikaaram-Uri iyal ; 100

When we observe the above aphorism beginning with “ஆன்ன பிறவும்” it is clear from the phrases therein like “பன்முறையானும் பரந்தன வருஉம் உரிச்சொல்”, “இணைத்தென அறியும் வரம்பு தமக்கின்மையின்” that many abstract words (உரிச்சொற்கள்) were not taken into account in his book.

The last phrase “என்மனார் புலவர்” reveal a great truth. That means “Thus spoke the poets”. When Tholkaappianaar tells as “Thus spoke the poets” it is evident that numerous poets had written books on grammar even before Tholkaappiam. We don't inherit such treasures and if they were available we will be having access to many words and their explanations. Basing on this fact Tamil Lexicography had its origin even before Tholkaappiam written three thousand years ago (i.e.) even in the pre-historic age.

In the Uri iyal of Tholkaappiam that gives meanings to words, words having only one meaning and words giving many meanings are given; words of synonyms also find their place in it.

#### **Etymology (சொல் லிலக்கணம்)**

We saw that the ‘Collathikaaram’ (சொல்லதி காரம்) of Tholkaappiam deals with Etymology. In it not only the various stages and grammatical definitions of words are given but also meanings of words are given in Itai iyal and Uri iyal. So we can realise that the Lexicography is also a part of Etymology.

Thus the Lexicography which was a part of Etymology got itself separated and became an art by itself. This is the nature of all arts generally. Jus as Child Psychology and

Educational Psychology were formed from general Psychology which deals with the study of the mind, Lexicography was formed from Etymology.

The task of Uri iyal (உரி யியல்) of Tholkaappiam was taken later by the Nikandu books like Seenthan Dhivaakaram, Pinkalam, Cuudaamani, etc. In these there is nothing except words and their meanings. In Tholkaappiam Itai-c-corkkall (இடைச் சொற்கள்) or particles and uri-c-corkkall (உரிச் சொற்கள்) or words abstract alone are explained a little. But in those Nikandu books, words of nouns (பெயர்ச் சொற்கள்), words of verbs (வினைச் சொற்கள்), words of particles (இடைச் சொற்கள்), words of abstracts (உரிச் சொற்கள்), words borrowed in Tamil from the countries bordering the ancient Tamil land (திரைச் சொற்கள்-Thisai corkkall) and words originated from Sanskrit into Tamil (வட சொற்கள்-Vata corkkall) are explained in detail. In these Nikandu books also words are not arranged in the Alphabetic order like Tholkaappiam.

Scholars of Tamil language might have thought why Peyar-c-corkkall (Nouns) and Vinai-c-corkkall (Verbs) should not be explained and given synonyms like uri-c-corkkall (words abstract) and Itai-c-corkkall (Particles) in Tholkaappiam. Hence they began writing special books taking into account all the words. Thus only Lexicography might have formed out of Etymology. Though the Seenthan Dhivaakara Nikandu and Pinkala Nikandu were written in detail with such various words, we cannot find rather easier words in them like our modern dictionaries. Only difficult words found place in them.

So though Seenthan Dhivaakaram and Pinkalam were much enlarged as compared with uri-iyal of Tholkaappiam,

they are much condensed when compared with the modern dictionaries.

Further we must know that many centuries elapsed between Tholkaappiam age and the period of Seenthan Dhivaakaram and Pinkalam. Of the available such books Seenthan Dhivaakaram is the oldest. It was composed probably in the 8th century, (i.e.) 1200 years ago. It is even said that another book "Aathi Dhivaakaram" (ஆதி திவாகரம்) dates much earlier. Even before this it is assumed that another such book was written by a poet called "Kalai-koottuth Thandanaar" (கலைக் கோட்டுத் தண்டனார்).

If we consider in these lines, there is much scope to think that just as many books of Pre-Tholkaappiam age were not known, many might have also not been known after Tholkaappiam. If we are not to believe this, then we will have to assign a much earlier date to Tholkaappiam.

To sum up, Seenthan Dhivaakaram and Pinkalam are the two full books in tact in the field of lexicons after Uriyay of Tholkaappiam. They have assigned their date as 8th century. These are called as Dhivaakara Nikandu and Pinkala Nikandu under the common name "Nikandu". Subsequently Cuudaamanni Nikandu, Kayaathara Nikandu, Uritcol Nikandu and hundreds of other Nikandus came into being.

**Nikandu—the reason for its name :**

All the Nikandu books belong to the field of dictionaries that give meanings to words. If it is so it is our duty to find out why such books were called generally as Nikandu (நிகண்டு).

Niruttham is one of the six 'Angas' (or parts) of the vedas in Sanskrit ; Nikandu is a part of this and in it meanings of words and explanations are given. In lieu of this all books that provide meanings to words are called as Nikandu in Sanskrit. The word 'Nikandu' might have adhered (come) to Tamil like the words 'Puraannam' (புராணம்), 'Prapantham' (பிரபந்தம்), etc. Some are of the view that all the books that give meanings of words are called by the common name 'Nikandu' (நிகண்டு).

Nikandu in Sanskrit means group or a collection. As the words are collected, grouped and given meanings they might have been called as 'Nikandus'.

\* Besides the view that Nikandu is a Sanskrit word some are of opinion that it is a Tamil word. Those who advocate this say that Nikandu means 'truth' and that the Tamil word for 'happened' 'நிகழ்ந்தது' (Nikazhnthathu) became 'Nikandu'. We can also find another reason for this.

We often hear some people pronounce the word நீளம் (Niillam) as நிகளம் (Nikallam) and the word நீண்டது (Niintathu) as நிகண்டது (Nikantathu). There is this kind of usage also in literature. If we observe these usages we can say that the meaning for Nikandu is Niintathu or lengthened (நீண்டது-Niintathu). The name 'Nikandu' might have been assigned to such books as the words or the list of words are given at a length or as they are lengthened. நிகளுவது (Nikalluvathu) நிகண்டு (Nikandu). We can also see the use of the word 'Nikandu' in the colloquial speech or the slang of the common people.

\* See the introduction of "Seenthan Dhivaakaram" edited by Saiva Sitthantha Noorppathippu-k.kazhakam, Madras (1958) - Page : 3

In the South Arcot District, there are certain colloquial regional speeches like “எனக்கு இந்த வேலை ஒரு நிகண்டு இல்லை” (This work is not at all a ‘Nikandu’ - big or large for me); “அவன் அந்த வேலையை ஒரே நெகுண்டாய் முடித்து விட்டான்” (He finished the work at a stretch or at a Nekundu); “நான் வழியில் நிற்காமல் ஒரே நெகுண்டாய்ப் போய்ச் சேர்ந்தேன்” (I went at a stretch or at a Nekundu without stopping enroute). Such things may be found in other districts also. In these conventional speeches, the word ‘Nikandu’ is spoken of as ‘Nekundu’ - நெகுண்டு in its colloquial form in the meaning ‘great length’ or ‘stretch’. Some used to say ‘ஒரே நெட்டாய்ப் போய்ச் சேர்ந்தேன்’ instead of ‘ஒரே நெகுண்டாய்ப் போய்ச் சேர்ந்தேன்’. ‘நெட்டாய்’ (Nettaay) and ‘நெகுண்டாய்’ (Nekundaay) mean the same (at a stretch). Is it not a fact that the words ‘நெடுமை’ (Nedumai) and ‘நிகளம்’ (Nikallam), the basis for the two words ‘நெட்டாய்’ (Nettaay) and ‘நெகுண்டாய்’ (Nekundaay) respectively have the same meaning ?

Hence the book where words are given at a length was called as Nikandu. If we consider in these lines Nikandu (நிகண்டு) is a Tamil word. If it is taken as a Sanskrit word it will mean a collection or gathering. If this reason for its name suits why not the word Nikandu as a Tamil word suit it since a list of words are given at a length in the book ? Hence we can very well conclude that which lengthens or நிகளுவது - நீளுவது (Nikalluvathu-Niilluvathu) is a Nikandu (நிகண்டு).

#### Uri-c-col (Abstract word)

In the later ages only, the books that give meanings for words like Dhivaakara Nikandu, Pinkala Nikandu, Cuudaamanni Nikandu, Kayaathara Nikandu, etc., were called

by the common name of Nikandu. Originally they were called as uri-c-col or உரிச்சொல் (abstract word). Even as we now call the books that give meanings for words as dictionaries, they were once called as 'உரிச்சொல்' or 'உரிச்சொல் பனுவல்' (uri-c-col Panuval)-(book of abstract words). In course of time the word 'உரிச்சொல்' (uri-c-col) disappeared and 'நிகண்டு' (Nikandu) took its place.

Let us now see why these books that furnish meanings for words were called as 'உரிச்சொல்' or book of abstract words.

Giving meanings to words finds its origin from the section on 'உரிச்சொல்' (uri-c-col) on the Tholkaappiam. Seeing that the உரிச் சொற்கள் (abstract words) were explained in it, the authors of the later ages wrote special books that give meanings to words and they called these as உரிச்சொல் or books of abstract words. Hence the word உரிச்சொல் (uri-c-col) was borrowed from the 'உரியியல்' (uri iyal) of Tholkaappiam. Tholkaappia 'uri iyal' was called as such as it gave meanings to உரிச்சொற்கள் (abstract words). But later on all books that gave meanings not only to உரிச்சொற்கள் (abstract words) but to others as well were called as உரிச்சொல் (books of abstract). This is the real reason for the name உரிச்சொல் (uri-c-col). We can here show a similarity to this: In the later ages, only the 'நெய்' (Ney) or oil (gingili oil) taken from 'எள்' (Yell) or sesame was called as (எள் + நெய்) 'எண்ணெய்' (Enney); Nowadays all the oils taken from various materials such as coconut, ground-nut, castor seed, etc., are called as 'எண்ணெய்' (Enney). Like this name 'எண்ணெய்' (Enney) also the name 'உரிச்சொல்' (uri-c-col) was then utilized.



But some are of opinion that many meanings for (உரிய-  
uriya) a word and the various names for (உரிய) a thing are  
given it was called as உரிச்சொல் (uri-c-col).

Now there are concrete proofs to show that the books  
Dhivaakaram, Pinkalam, etc., were once called as 'உரிச்  
சொல்' (Books of abstracts).

(1) Many Centuries after Dhivaakaram and Pinkalam  
(written), Pavannanthi Munivar, the author of 'Nannool'  
(நன்னூல்), a book on Tamil grammar of the 13th century  
had included a part under the caption 'உரியியல்', (uri iyal)  
in the chapter on words (Collathikaaram) and had also given  
explanation of words as the similar section in Tholkaappiam.  
At the end of the section he had written the following  
aphorism which means that it is not at all possible to provide  
meanings of all the words and for this, books of uri-c-col  
(abstract words) like 'Pinkalam' might well be referred to:

\* “இன்னது இன்னுழி இன்னணம் இயலும்  
என்றிசை நூலுட் குணிகுணிய் பெயர்கள்  
சொல்லாம் பரத்தவிற் பிங்கலம் முதலா  
நல்லோர் உரிச்சொலின் நயந்தனர் கொளலே.”

From this aphorism we can observe that Pinkalam and other  
such books were called as உரிச்சொல் (uri-c-col). The age  
of Dhivaakaram and Pinkalam is the 8th century. Even  
after five centuries (i.e.) in the 13th century the author of  
Nannool (நன்னூல்) has mentioned the book Pinkalam as  
உரிச்சொல் (uri-c-col) and not as கிகண்டு (Nikandu).

(2) Mayilai Naathar (மயிலைநாதர்) who wrote  
commentaries to Nannool (நன்னூல்) has expressed in the

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\* Nannool-collathikaaram-uri iyal-19.

explanation of the above said aphorism, "You can know well these things from the 'books of abstracts' (உரிச்சொல் பனுவல்கள் -uri-c-col Panuvalkall) written by great poets like Pinkalam (பிங்கலம்).

(".....அவை பிங்கல முதலான புலவர்சுளாற் செய்யப்பட்ட உரிச்சொல் பனுவல்களுள் விரும்பி அறிந்து கொள்க".)

observe that Mayilai Naathar (மயிலைநாதர்) has not mentioned 'நிகண்டு' (Nikandu) but only 'உரிச்சொல்' (uri-c-col) in his commentary.

Moreover according to another aphorism in the Nannool (நன்னூல்)

\*("எட்டுபொருள் எச்சொலின் எவ்வாறு உயர்ந்தோர் செப்பினர் அப்படிச் செப்புதல் மரபே.")

which says that it is the custom to say as it was said by the great, the commentator Mayilai Naathar (மயிலைநாதர்) has mentioned these books as 'உரிச்சொல் பனுவல்' - Books of abstracts.

("...விரிந்த உரிச்சொற் பனுவல்களுள்ளும் உரைத்தவாறு அறிந்து கொள்க".)

Panuvai means book and so 'உரிச்சொல் பனுவல்' means உரிச்சொல் நூல் (Books of abstract words).

Further there are proofs to show that the word உரிச்சொல் (uri-c-col) alone was used in the prefaces to the books like Pinkalam

(3) In the preface verse (சிறப்புப்பாயிரம்-Sirappup Paayiram) to Pinkalam it is mentioned only as உரிச்சொல் (uri-c-col) as in :

“பிங்கல முனிவன் எனத்தன் பெயர்நிறீஇ  
உரிச்சொற் கிளவி விரிக்குங் காலை.”

(4) In the preface verses of Kayaatharam written by Kayaatharar

† [ “.....தேவைக் செயாதரன் தொல்  
வேதியன் சொற்ற உரிச்சொற் பனுவலு மேம்படுமே,”

‡ “.....உரிச்சொல் கிளர் பனுவல்  
நடக்கும் படியாக் செயாதரம் என்றுபேர் நாட்டினனே”.]

and in the last verse of the same book

x (“விரும்பிய கோவை உரிச்சொல் பனுவல் விரித்  
துரைத்தான்  
பெரும் பொருள் கண்ட செயாதரன் தேவைப்  
பெருந்தகையே”).

it is told only as உரிச் சொல் பனுவல் (Book of abstracts).

(5) Just like Dhivaakarar, Pinkalar, Kayaatharar, etc. another poet by name Kaankeeyan has written a book that gives meanings to words. He has named it only as ‘உரிச் சொல்’ (uri-c-col). We learn this from the old verse:

“உத்தம சீலத்துக் காங்கேயன் சொன்ன  
உரிச் சொல் தன்னை.”

† Kayaatharam—Preface verse : 2

‡ Kayaatharam—Preface verse : 4

x Kayaatharam - (last) verse : 566

Besides, in the last page of the palm leaf-book above mentioned it was written by a person who transcribed the original manuscripts from the old Palm-leaves as :

“ 950-ம் ஶ்ரீ புரட்டாசி மீ 14வ ஆழ்வார் திருநகரி  
மாசித்தெரு தேவர் பிரான் கவிராயர் உரிச் சொல் நீடுழி  
வாழ்க.....”

Even in this ‘உரிச் சொல் (uri-c col) alone was used. We can cite many more example to substantiate this.

Since the word உரிச் சொல் (uri-c-col) was used even in the books like Kayaatharam, uri-c-col Nikandu (உரிச் சொல் நிகண்டு) which were written after a few centuries of Pavannanthi’s Nannool of the 13th century, we can understand that the word was in vogue in the 16th, 17th and 18th centuries:

Even before the word ‘உரிச் சொல்’ (uri-c-col) disappeared (i.e.) while it was in usage, it seems that the word ‘நிகண்டு’ (Nikandu) also came into vogue! The poet ‘Mandala Purutar’ (மண்டல புருடர்) the author of Cuudaa manni Nikandu (குடாமணி நிகண்டு) which was written later than Dhivaakaram and Pinkalam and learnt by many and of which some fix the date as 16th while some date it rather earlier, has named Cuudaamani as a நிகண்டு (Nikandu) even in the preface verses as :

x “மன்னிய நிகண்டு குடாமணி யென ஒன்று சொல்வன்  
இந்நிலந் தன்னின் மிக்கோர் யாவரும் இனிது  
கேண்மின்”.

All the books written after Cuudaamani (குடாமணி) to give meanings of words were generally or mostly called as

Nikandus. Thus the word 'நிகண்டு' (Nikandu) which arose as a rival to the word 'உரிச் சொல்' (uri-c-col) swallowed the old one and got itself well established.

**Akaraathi (அகராதி) :**

The Nikandus are in the poetic form and the words are not arranged in order like the modern dictionaries. Besides the words are not even arranged in the alphabetical order in the Nikandus. It is rather quite easy to find out a word in the dictionaries of the present day. But this is not so easy with the Nikandus. At the same time it is not possible to memorise the contents of the present dictionaries, whereas it is possible to do so the Nikandus as they are in the poetic form. Students of those days learnt Nikandus and there was no learning at all without Nikandus. Nikandus occupied a very important position in the field of education.

The scholars in Tamil realised the chief defect or the greatest difficulty in finding out a word easily from the Nikandus and this was rather pricking their minds. Consequently attempts were made to set them right.

The earlier Nikandus Dhivaakaram and Pinkalam were not written in the alphabetic order by their authors. But after a few centuries the teachers and learners of these Nikandus set them in the alphabetic order and wrote them as such. Those who printed them also did the same.

Though the authors of Dhivaakaram and Pinkalam did not set the words in the alphabetic order, it is noteworthy to find that the author of the much practised Cuudaamanni Nikandu, Mandala Purutar had followed this method a little. He classified the words according to their எதுகைகள்- Ethukaikall (rhymes). Rhyme (Ethukai-எதுகை) here

means that the second letters of those words will be the same. For Example 'க' (Ka) is the same second letter in பகவன் (Pakavan), பகல் (Pakal), மகரம் (Makaram) and அகம் (Akam). Such words are called as 'ககர எதுகைச் சொற்கள் - Kakara Rhyming words'. Kakara Rhyming words will mean all the words that have a letter of the 'க' series from 'க' to 'கௌ' (Ka to Kau) as the second letter of those. Words having the 'ன' (Na) series (i.e.) from 'ன' to 'னௌ' (Na to Nau) as the second letter as in மனவு (Manavu), தனி (Thani), முனை (Munai), இனம் (Inam) are called as 'னகர எதுகைச் சொற்கள் - Nakara Rhyming words'.

All the words used above for illustrations are taken from the Cuudaamanni Nikandu. In this way Mandala Purutar, the author of Cuudaamanni Nikandu has classified words into eighteen kinds as ககர எதுகை (Kakara Rhyme), னகர எதுகை (Ngakara Rhyme), சகர எதுகை (cakara Rhyme), ஞகர எதுகை (Gnakara Rhyme), டகர எதுகை (Takara Rhyme), ணகர எதுகை (Nnakara Rhyme), தகர எதுகை (Thakara Rhyme), நகர எதுகை (Nhakara Rhyme), பகர எதுகை (Pakara Rhyme); மகர எதுகை (Makara Rhyme), யகர எதுகை, (Yakara Rhyme), ரகர எதுகை (Rakara Rhyme), லகர எதுகை (Lakara Rhyme), வகர எதுகை (Vakara Rhyme), ழகர எதுகை (Zhakara Rhyme), ளகர எதுகை (Llakara Rhyme), றகர எதுகை (Rrakara Rhyme) and னகர எதுகை (Nakara Rhyme). These too were set in order from ககர எதுகை to னகர எதுகை (Kakara Ethukai to Nakara Ethukai). Is this also a method of alphabetic order ?

To find out a word from the Cuudaamanni Nikandu, we must know the second letter of the word and trace in that

series. This is equally convenient like the modern dictionaries. Some are of opinion that the Cuudaamanni Nikandu was written in the 16th century while some assign the date as much earlier. Whatever it may be, one thing is quite certain: Lexicography in alphabetic order was known to us even five hundred years ago.

Many Nikandu authors adopted the same rhyme method as followed by Mandala Purutar in his Nikandu. Still we cannot take this method as the exact alphabetic method. In this rhyme method the second letter of a word alone was considered and not the first as in the modern dictionaries. So if we want to find out the word 'முதலை' (Muthalai) we have to go to the 'தகர வரிசை' (Thakara Series) in the Cuudaamanni Nikandu. In that section all the words in the 'தகர எதுகை' (Thakara Rhyme) will be there and they are not arranged in the alphabetic order of the first letter. So the word in question 'முதலை'—'Muthalai' can be traced out somewhere after reading many words in that series. This amounts to too much waste of time and energy.

#### THE FIRST LEXICON

There arose a strong desire or feeling to arrange the words in the alphabetic order. Consequently a poet by name Chidhambara Reevanna Sithhar wrote a book by name 'அகராதி நிகண்டு'—'Akaraathi Nikandu' in the year 1594 A. D. in this alphabetical order. He has mentioned that in the preface to his book as:

\* "அரிய சகாத்தம் ஆயிரக் கைஞ்ஞாற்று  
ஒருபத் தாறென உரைத்திடும் ஆண்டினில்  
... .. அகராதி நிகண்டென  
ஓதினன் யாவரும் உணர்ந்திட நிகண்டேத."

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Akaraathi Nikandu—Preface verse

which means “with the intention that all should read I wrote a book by name ‘Akaraathi Nikandu’ in the year 1516 of the Saka Era.”

He has given the year as 1516 of the Saka Era and if we add 78 years to it, we can get the equivalent year in the Christian Era. Hence it is certain that Akaraathi Nikandu was written in 1594 A. D. or 1516 of the Saka Era.

The words were arranged in alphabetic order (i.e.) in the Akara Series அ, ஆ, இ, ஈ (a, aa, i, ii) and hence this book was called as அகராதி நிகண்டு--Akaraathi Nikandu. This is the first அகராதி Akaraathi in Tamil and moreso it is this which also gave the word “அகராதி”--Akaraathi. This is the source and cause for our calling all the books that give meanings to words as ‘அகராதி’--‘Akaraathi’.

### World’s First Lexicon

Akaraathi Nikandu--அகராதி நிகண்டு is not only the first lexicon in Tamil but also the first in the world according to the results of the various researches. Though the Assirians had books that gave meanings to words even 2500 years ago like Tholkaappia-Uri-iyal in Tamil, Lexicons in the alphabetic order were first written only in the 17th century in the west. The first possible lexicon in the alphabetic order of the west was written only in 1612 A. D. in the Italian Language. Don’t we have such a lexicon in alphabetic order in Tamil in 1594 A.D. (i.e.) eighteen years before the Italian lexicon? That is why we stress that the Akaraathi Nikandu--அகராதி நிகண்டு is the first lexicon in the world.

It would have been very much better if Chidambara Reevanna Sitthar, author of Akaraathi Nikandu had named



the full Tamil name ‘அகர முதல்’ (Akara Muthal) instead of introducing the word ‘அகராதி’ (Akaraathi) in 1594. We have got the beautiful words ‘அகர முதல்’ (Akara Muthal) in the first verse of Thirukkurrall (திருக்குறள்) of 2000 years ago as

\* “அகர முதல எழுத்தெல்லாம் ஆதி  
பகவன் முதற்றே உலகு.”

and in the Tholkaappiam written 3000 years ago as:

† “எழுத்தெனப் படுப  
அகர முதல் னகர இறுவாய்  
முப்பஃ தென்ப  
சார்ந்து வரல் மரபின் முன்றலங் கடையே.”

we can very well use this phrase ‘அகரமுதல்’ (Akara Muthal). It is even probable that Chidambara Reevanna Sittar coined the word ‘அகராதி’ (Akaraathi) with the help of the phrase ‘அகரமுதல்’ (Akara Muthal).

### ‘Dum-Dum-Dum-Dum’

There is a story for the children in which a monkey had a long tail and it exchanged the tail for a knife, the knife for a mango, the mango for rice and finally the rice for a drum. The monkey was then continuously beating the drum as ‘Dum-Dum-Dum-Dum’.

Even as this, the word ‘உரியியல்’ (Uri-iyal) gave way to ‘உரிச்சொல்’ (Uri-c-col), உரிச்சொல் to ‘நிகண்டு’ (Nikandu) and அகராதி (Akaraathi) took the place of Nikandu. Nowadays we are getting the name ‘அகரவரிசை’

\* Thirukkurrall—Paayiraviyal—Katavull Vaazhthu-1.

† Tholkaappiam—Ezhutthathikaaram—Nuunmarapu-1.

—“Akara varisai” slowly for அகராதி (Akaraathi). In Sanskrit also Nikandu, Abidhaanam, Koosam, Naama-maalai denote the changed names of dictionaries. This is so in the European languages as well:

The word “Dictionary” is in usage now only after bearing so many names. They are: Nominale (பெயர்ப் புத்தகம்), Medulla grammatices (இலக்கணத்தோழன்), Ortus Vocabulorum (சொற்களின் தோட்டம்), Promptorium Parvulorum (சொல்லெடுத்துக் கொடுப்போன்), Catholicon Anglicum, Manipulus vocabulorum (கையடக்க அகராதி), Alvearie (சொற்களின் தேன் கூடு), Abecedarium (ஆரம்ப ஆசிரியன்), Bibliotheca (சொல் நூல் நிலையம்), Thesaurus (சொற்கருவூலம்), Word-hard (அருஞ்சொல் விளக்கம்), World of words (சொல்லுலகம்), English Expositor (ஆங்கிலத் தெளிபொருள் விளக்கி), Ductor in Linguas (மொழியின் வழிகாட்டி), Glossographia (அருங்கலைச் சொல் விளக்கம்), New world of words (சொற்சளின் புத்துலகம்), Etymologicum (சொல் விளக்க இலக்கணம்), Gazophylacium and finally Dictionary.

All these do not seem to be the common name of lexicon. The writers of the books that give meanings to words, named their books as they liked. This is the same as in Tamil Nikandus of the old wherein the authors called their books as “Naama Dhiipam” (நாமதீபம்), “Arum-Porull Villakkam” (அரும்பொருள் விளக்கம்), “Naanaartha Dhiipikai” (நானார்த்த தீபிகை), “Pal Porull Cuullaamanni” (பல்பொருள் சூளாமணி), etc. When the lexicons in the English language were bearing many names, Sir Thomas Elyot published such a book in the year 1538 A.D. with the name ‘Dictionary’ for it. The term “Dictionary” then became a common name for all books that give meanings to words like the term “Akaraathi” (அகராதி) in Tamil.

The work of giving meanings to difficult words was being done in the European and Indian languages till the seventeenth century. Then only various kinds of lexicons came into being and when these too were set in the alphabetic order, the field of lexicon became entitled to the name "Lexicography"—'அகராதிக்கலை'—Akaraathik kalai—(Art of Lexicon)

Though such books are called as "Akaraathi" (அகராதி) in Tamil, this term cannot be considered as a full name. The term "Akaraathi" simply means commencing in the alphabetic order. The name "Akaraathi" does not mention what it does after beginning in the alphabetic order. We have to explain that they explain words in the alphabetic order. Hence 'Akaraathi' (அகராதி) is just a shortened term.

The excellent name 'Akaraathi' has got itself somehow established. In the "Akaraathi Nikandu" (அகராதி நிகண்டு), the first lexicon of the world written in 1594 A D. the first letters of the words alone are set in the alphabetic order. The second and third letters were not considered and arranged in the alphabetic order. To set right these defects to a certain extent, in a book by name "Akaraathi Moonaikku Akaraathi Ethukai" (அகராதி மோனைக்கு அகராதி எதுகை) written a century later than the "Akaraathi Nikandu", the second letter was also considered in addition to the first letters of words in arranging in the alphabetic order like அகம் (Akam), அகப்பை (Akappai), வண்டி (Vandi), வண்டல் (Vandal) and so on. Even in this book the third and the fourth letters of words were not considered for alphabetic order. The credit of setting the words in the alphabetic order considering the first to the

last letter of the words, goes to the Jesuit Fathers (Clergymen) of the Seventeenth Century.

Many Jesuit Fathers came to India from Europe to spread Christianity. They learnt Tamil and wrote Tamil dictionaries (Akaraathis) with equivalents in the European languages. These lexicons were useful for the Europeans to learn Tamil and for the Tamilians to know the European languages.

Antem de Proenca, a monk of the west wrote a Tamil-Portuguese lexicon in the year 1679. In the 18th century (i.e.) in 1732, Father Beschi of Italy, wrote a dictionary (Akaraathi) in Tamil called (Chathur Akaraathi) “சதுர் அகராதி”. Besides many Europeans of the 17th and 18th centuries wrote many lexicons in Tamil related to languages like Latin, French and English.

Of all the lexicons written by the westerners, some are most noteworthy. They are the Chathur Akaraathi (சதுர் அகராதி) of Beschi popularly known as ‘Viiramaa Munivar’ (விரமர் முனிவர்) and Tamil English Dictionary of Fabricius of the 18th century, and Rottler’s Tamil-English dictionary and Winslow’s English-Tamil dictionary and Tamil-English dictionary of the 19th century. The lexicons of Fabricius, Rottler and Winslow were the fore-runners for the later dictionaries that give meanings in English for Tamil words and in Tamil for English words. Above all these, Viiramaa Muniver’s (Beschi’s) “Chathur Akaraathi” was the basis and pioneer work for the Dictionaries that give meanings to Tamil words in Tamil itself. As this book had four parts பெயர் - Peyar (Homonyms), பொருள் - Porull (Synonyms), தொகை - Thokai (Numeral groups) and தொடை -

Thotai (Rhymes), it was called as Chathur Akarathi (Quadruple Lexicon). The term "Chathur" means four. Most of the very big Tamil dictionaries compiled by famous authors later on followed this 'Chathur Akaraathi' mainly.

Because of the western influence, there are many benefits for the Tamil lexicography. Some of them are the following :—

1. Lexicons which were in the poetic form under the name Nikandus were written in individual word style enabling many people to read them easily.

2. Alphabetic order was considered before only for the first or second letter of words. With the advent of the Europeans, alphabetic order was followed to the last letter of the words.

3. The rare and difficult words alone found place in the old Nikandus. But since the Europeans learnt Tamil newly, they could not differentiate a difficult word with an easy word. Hence they compiled the hard and easy words in Tamil and thus gave out the hoard of Tamil words in full form.

4. To propagate Christianity they had to move with uneducated simple folk and so they gathered the words they learnt from the colloquial speech of the mass and thus perfected the lexicons.

5. They have illustrated the derivations of many verbs from a particular root by giving separate symbols to those roots of those verbs.

6. They facilitated the people to know the equivalents for Tamil words in Latin, Portuguese, French and English.

Thus lexicography attained its present stage after passing through many stages from Nikandus which were in verses. With the 19th century the origin of Tamil dictionaries as related to the European languages like Portuguese, Latin and French were stopped. In the 20th century many Tamil dictionaries related to English and Indian languages like Sanskrit, Hindi, Telugu, Marathi, etc., came into being. It is needless to say that many Tamil-Tamil dictionaries also were written.

In addition to Tamil-Tamil dictionaries of homonyms, many kinds of such books like Dictionary of technical terms, concordance, Glossary, Encyclopaedia, Dictionary of proverbs, Dictionary of the details of great Tamil scholars, Dictionary of Rhyming words, etc., were written and enriched the rich Tamil language. Various kinds of dictionaries are still being written.

This is the History of Tamil Lexicography from the period of Tholkaappiam written about three thousand years ago to the present day.

We shall see some of the Nikandus and Dictionaries in Parts II and III respectively.

## PART II

### NIKANDUS

We saw that parts of lexicon are to be found in the section of Collathikaaram (சொல்லதிகாரம்) of Tholkappiam written three thousand years ago, that is two thousand years before the later Sangam (கடைச் சங்கம்) period of Tamil literature. During the period of Tholkappiam, before that and after that age many books on grammar like the Tholkappiam were written in Tamil. Sections on lexicon are to be found in all these. But we know the names alone of some of them but the books are not available to us. When lexicons were written separately taking them out from the old grammar books, hundreds and even thousands of books were written in the verse form under the name of Nikandus. We can learn this fact from a stanza in the preface of the 'Naama Dhiipa Nikandu' (நாம தீப நிகண்டு) written by the poet Siva Subbhiramania Kaviraayar which reads as

\*“பல்லா யிரநிகண்டில் பண்டிதர்கள் சொன்ன  
பொருள்  
எல்லாம் எளிதாய் இனிதுணரக்—கல்லிடையூர்  
மன்னுசிவ சுப்ர மணியன் சுவிராசன்  
பன்னுதமிழ் நாமதீபம்”

(i.e.) I write 'Naama Dhiipa Nikandu' so as to know easily the meanings of words compiled by many learned men in thousands of Nikandus.

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\* Naama Dhiipa Nikandu-Preface verse 8.

All these numerous Nikandus are not available. The names of some of them alone are now known. The 'Nikandu Kalaik Koottu Thandu' (நிகண்டு கலைக் கோட்டுத் தண்டு) written two thousand years ago and the later work 'Aathi Dhivaakaram' (ஆதி திவாகரம்) are not at all available. The 'Seenthan Dhivaakaram' (சேந்தன் திவாகரம்) and the 'Pinkalam' (பிங்கலம்) of the 8th century A.D. along are the oldest Nikandus available. The Nikandus of the period from the 8th to the 15th century are not available. We are able to get only certain portions of some of the Nikandus:

In the 'Nannool' (நன்னூல்) of the 13th century, a book on grammar, we see a section of lexicon. It is said that the much-read 'Cuudaamanni Nikandu' (சூடாமணி நிகண்டு) belongs to the sixteenth century. After this many Nikandus came into being till the 19th century. Besides the origin of dictionaries that give meanings to words, Medical Dictionaries, Astrological Dictionaries and many such books on various fields of study were written.

In Seenthan Dhivaakaram, the oldest of the available Nikandus there are three sections. They are : (1) the class-vocabularies or synonyms, (2) section giving all the meanings of a word (Homonyms) and thirdly the numeral grouping of words like the two great lights (இரு சுடர்-Iru Sutar), the three qualities (மூக்குணம்-Mukkunnam), etc. All the later Nikandus followed this same system of Seenthan Dhivaakara Nikandu.

In some Nikandus we see all the three sections and in some two out of three sections are to be seen while in some others only one of the three alone is dealt with.

We shall see the names of Nikandus, their authors, dates and sections they deal with in the following tables :—



<i>S. No.</i>	<i>Name of the Book.</i>	<i>Author.</i>	<i>Date.</i>	<i>Matter dealt with.</i>
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
<b>PRE-SANGAM AGE</b>				
1	Tholkaappiam iyal, Itai Marapiyal	(Uri Tholkaappiyar	... 1000 B.C.	... Homonyms, Synonyms and group-names.
<b>SANGAM PERIOD</b>				
2	Nikandu-kalaik Koottuthandu	Nikandan Kalaik Koottuthandanaar	Sangam Period (300 B.C.—300 A.D.)	.....
<b>POST-SANGAM PERIOD UPTO THE 15TH CENTURY</b>				
3	Aathi Dhivaakaram	Aathi Dhivaakarar	Not known	...
4	Seenthan Dhivaakaram (Dhivaakara Nikandu)	Dhivaakarar	... 8th Century A.D.	Class-vocabularies, Homonyms and group-names
5	Pinkala Nikandu (Pinkalanthai)	Pinkalar	... 8th Century A.D.	Class—Vocabularies and Homonyms.

(1) (2) (3) (4) (5)

POST-SANGAM PERIOD UPTO THE 15TH CENTURY--(Contd)

6	Verses from Nikandus whose names are not known	Anonymous	...	between the 8th and the 16th Century	.....
7	Nannool (Itai iyal—Uri iyal)	Pavannanthiyaar	...	13th Century	... Homonyms, Synonyms and group-names
16th CENTURY NIKANDUS					
8	Cuudaamanni Nikandu	Ni-Mandala Purutar...	...	16th Century	... Class-vocabularies, Homonyms and group-names
9	Akaraathi Nikandu	Reevanna Sitthar	...	1594 A.D.	... Homonyms
17th CENTURY NIKANDUS					
10	Uri-c-col Nikandu	Kaankeeyan	...	Beginning of the 17th Century	... Class-vocabularies, Homonyms and group-names
11	Kayaathara Nikandu	Kayaatharar	...	17th Century	... Class-vocabularies and Homonyms
12	Pal Porull Cuudaamanni Nikandu	Iswara jaar	Bhaarathi-	1700 A.D.	... Homonyms and group-names

(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
13	Kailaasa Nikandu Cuudaamani	Unknown (Kailaasa may be his name)	End of the 17th Century	Class-vocabularies and Homonyms
<b>18th CENTURY NIKANDUS</b>				
14	Bhaarathi Dhiipam ...	Thiruveenkata Bhaarathi	End of the 17th century and beginning of the 18th Century	Class-vocabularies, Homonyms and group-names
15	Aaciriya Nikandu ...	Aandi Pulavar ...	End of the 17th century or beginning of the 18th Century	Class-vocabularies and Homonyms
16	Arum Porull Villakka Nikandu	Arumarundaiya Deesikar	18th century ...	Homonyms
17	Thokai Nikandu ...	Subbiramaniya Kaviraayar	18th century ...	Group-names
18	Porull Thokai Nikan- du	Subbiramaniya Bhaarathi	.....	Group-names
19	Pothikai Nikandu ...	Saaminaatha Kavi- raayar	End of the 18th century	Class-vocabularies, and Homonyms

(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
<b>19th CENTURY NIKANDUS</b>				
20	Naamadhiipa Nikandu	Siva Subbiramaniya Kaviraayar	Beginning of the 19th century	Class-vocabularies
21	Veedhakiriyaar cuudaamanni Nikandu	... Veedhakiri Mudaliar	19th century ... (Printed in 1842 A.D.)	Homonyms
22	Kanthaswaamiyam	... Subbiramaniya Deesikar	19th century ... (Printed in 1844)	Class-vocabularies and Homonyms.
23	Thokai-p-Peyar Villakkam	Veedhakiri Mudaliar	19th century (Printed in 1849)	Group-names
24	Ilakka-T-Thirravukool	Unknown	(19th century) ...	Group-names
25	Naanaartha Dhiipikai	Muthusaamy Pillai	1850 A.D. ...	Homonyms
26	CinthaamanniNikandu	Vaithiyalingam Pillai	19th century ... (Printed in 1874)	Homonyms
27	Apithaana-Thani-ceyyull Nikandu	Gopalasami Naayakkar	19th century ... (Printed at 1878)	Class-vocabularies
28	Virivu Nikandu	... N. Arunaachala Naavalalar	End of the 19th century	Homonyms

(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
29	Aariya Nikandu ...	Unknown ...	(19th century) ...	.....
30	Pothiya Nikandu ...	.....	.....	.....
31	Avvai Nikandu ...	.....	.....	—..
32	Akatthiyar Nikandu	Akatthiyar ...	.....	Medical terms
33	Pookar Nikandu ...	Pookar ...	.....	Medical terms
34	Kaala Nikandu ...	Thillai Naayakar ...	.....	Astrological terms
35	Kaaraka Nikandu ...	Thillai Naayakr ...	.....	Astrological terms

## PART III

### DICTIONARIES

We saw that dictionaries that tell the meanings of words arranged in the alphabetic order, unlike the Nikandus which were mainly in verse form, were written in the 17th century. The lexicon-baby born in the 17th century grew to the early-childhood in the 18th century and to late-childhood in the 19th century. It reached its adolescence in the twentieth century. There are still many scopes for its growth and development.

We shall now see the names of dictionaries, their compilers or authors, dates and places and substances, century-war in the following tables :—

44

<i>S. No.</i>	<i>Name of the Dictionary.</i>	<i>Compiler or Author.</i>	<i>Date and Place.</i>	<i>Substance.</i>
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)

#### 17th CENTURY DICTIONARIES

1	Akaraathi Moonaikku Akaraathi Ethukai	.....	17th Century	... Tamil—Tamil Homonyms
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(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
2	Patthu-c-col Akaraathi	.....	.....	Tamil—Tamil Homonyms
3	Glossarium of the Vaisnava commentaries	.....	.....	Tamil—Tamil Glossarium
4	Tamil—Portuguese Dictionary	Fr. Antem De Proenca	1679 A. D. Ambalakkadu, Kerala	Tamil—Portuguese Homonyms
18th CENTURY DICTIONARIES				
5	Dictionarium Tamulicum	Bartholmaeus Ziegenbalg	1712 A. D. Not published	Tamil—Tamil Homonyms
6	Chathur Akaraathi ...	Father Beschi (Viiramaa Munivar)	1732 A.D. Thirukavalur	Tamil—Tamil Homonyms, Synonyms, Groupnames and Rhyming words
7	Tamil—Latin Dictionary	Fr. Beschi	... 1742	... Tamil—Latin Homonyms
8	Latin—Tamil Dictionary	Fr. Beschi	... 1742	... Latin—Tamil
9	Tamil—French Dictionary	Fr. Beschi	... 1744	... Tamil—French

(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
10	Tamil—English Dictionary	Fr. Beschi	... ..	Tamil—English
11	Portuguese—Latin—Tamil Dictionary	Fr. Beschi	... 1744	... Portuguese—Latin—Tamil
12	Common Dialect Dictionary	Fr. Beschi	... ..	Tamil—Tamil—Dialect
13	Fabricius Tamil—English Dictionary	John Philip Fabricius and Christian Breithaupt	1779, Madras	Wepery, Tamil—English

## 19th CENTURY DICTIONARIES

14	Dictionnaire Francais—Tamoul, Tamoul—Francais	A. Blin	... 1831	... French—Tamil and Tamil—French
15	Knight's Tamil—English Dictionary, English—Tamil Dictionary and Tamil—Tamil Dictionary	Rev. J. Knight	... 1833, Jaffna	... (Not published)



(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
16	Rottler's Tamil— English Dictionary	Dr. J. P. Rottler ...	1834, Madras	... Tamil-English- Tamil, Homonyms, Synonyms, Group-names and Rhymes
17	Winslow's English— Tamil Dictionary	Rev. M. Winslow	1842	... English-Tamil
18	Jaffna Tamil Dictio- nary or Manippay Dictionary	Chandhirasekara Paandithar	1842, Jaffna	... Tamil-Tamil Homonyms, Sy- nonyms, Group- names and Rhymes
19	Spaulding's English— Tamil Dictionary	Rev. L. Spaulding	1844	... English-Tamil
20	Percival's English— Tamil Dictionary	Rev. Peter Percival	.....	English-Tamil
21	"Dictionarium Latino Gallico-Tamulicum" or "Dictionaire Latin-Francais-Tamil	L. Mousset and L. Dupus	1846, Pondicherry	Latin-French- Tamil
22	Oru col Pal Porull Villakkam	Annasamy Pillai...	1850	... Tamil-Homonyms

(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
23	English-Telugu-Tamil Dictionary	T. M. Krishna-samy Pillai	1851	... English-Telugu-Tamil
24	Tamil-French Dictionary	L. Mousset and L. Dupus	(2nd Edition-1855 Pondicherry)	Tamil-French
25	French-Tamil Dictionary	L. Mousset and L. Dupus	(3rd Edition-1952 Pondicherry)	French-Tamil
26	Pope's Tamil-English Dictionary	G. U. Pope	... 1859	... Tamil-English
27	Winslow's Tamil-English Dictionary	Rev. M. Winslow	1862	... Tamil-English-Tamil
28	Kuri's Tamil-Latin Dictionary	R. P. Kuri Pathiriyar	1867	... Tamil-Latin
29	Classical Tamil-English Dictionary	(Under the supervision of Director of Public Instruction, Madras.	1870	... Tamil-English
30	Patharttha Paskaram	T. K. Narayana Ayyankar	1877	... Krantham-Tamil
31	A Builder's Vocabulary in English and Tamil	T. S. Viirasamy Mudaliar	1880	... English-Tamil

(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
32	Akaraathi Surukkam or Tamil Pocket Dictionary	C. Vijayaranga Mudaliar	... 1883	... Tamil
33	A Dictionary Tamil and English	V. Viswanatha Pillai	... 1888	... Tamil-English
34	Tharankampadi Dic- tionary	Tharankampadi Mission	.. 1897	... Tamil-English

#### 20th CENTURY DICTIONARIES

35	Vaithiya Muulikai Akaraathi	Sitthar	... ..	Tamil-Medical Dictionary
36	Vaithiya Muulikai Virivakaraathi	„	Printed in 1902, Madras	„
37	Vaithiya Malai Akaraathi	„	Printed in 1908, Madras	„
38	Arumpeyar Anupan- tha Akaraathi	„	.....	„
39	Thokai Akaraathi ...	„	.....	„
40	Patchilai Muulikai Akaraathi	„	.....	„
41	Paripashai Akaraathi	„	.....	„
42	Karu-P-Porull Aka- raathi	„	.....	„

(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
43	Marraippu Vellippatai Akaraathi	„	.....	„
44	Kathirai Vel Pillai's Dictionary	N. Kathirai Vel Pillai	Beginning of the 20th Century	Tamil
45	Thamizh col Akaraathi	C. W. Kathirai Vel Pillai	1904, Madurai Tamil Sangam	Tamil
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