Adhyātmaramayaṇam Kilippāttu: In Comparison with the Original

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Bhakti Cult taught human beings to be united forgetting all kind of divisions in terms of cast creed and everything. Literature propagating bhakti has a major role in uniting the people of our country. Among such books, Ramayana has become a world literature. We can see that the heart of India is beating through Ramayana. Adhyātmarāmāyaṇam is a text in Sanskrit which was based on Ramayana and originated to propagate Bhakti (Devotion). But no evidence about its author is available till date. Some say that it's written as a part of Brahmandapurana. But there are disputes among the scholars regarding this. While Valmiki Maharshi was trying to depict the story of an ideal human being who will be a role model for all human beings, the creator of Adhyātmarāmāyaṇa was trying to teach the people how all the worldly sorrows could be wiped out through devotion. This book has the capacity to narrate all high philosophical principles in a very simple and easily understandable style and that was the reason for its acceptance even among the common man.

This path of devotion was reverberating in Kerala through Thunjath Ramanujan Ezhuthachan. The renovation that was taking place in India through Ramanuja, Madhva , Chaitanya etc. attracted the people towards Bhakti (devotion). This trail was echoing in Kerala through Ezhuthachan who was a great poet and was a prominent person to make an easy entry to this path among the regional languages. Even though there were poetries like Kannassaramayana etc., by renovating Malayalam language, by propagating devotion and imbibing dharma, Ezhuthachan through the Adhyātmarāmāyaṇam Kilippāttu, embedded the story of Rama in the heart of Kerala.

Adhyātmarāmāyaṇam Kilippāttu also was meant to spread devotion and it also envisages universal brotherhood. No language in this world has a father. But Ramanujacharya is considered as the 'father of Malayalam Language'. Why? Even though this is ornamental, there are some truths regarding this. The first poetry in Malayalam, depicting, only the story of Yuddhakāṇḍa of Ramayana, the Malayalam is used with a Tamil touch. The first Ramayana in Malayalam depicting the whole story of Ramayana is written by Niranam Raman who was believed to be the preceptor of Ezhuthachan. See the language in that.

When Rama Was going for Thatakavadha, he speaks to Viswamitra thus-

Povitu Naminiyituvazhiyenkoru
Polivodu Ceruñāṇoli Ceitalave (Ramakathappattu, 77th pattu)

The same situation in Kilippāttu-

Mestaveyoru Ceruñāṇoli Ceitu Rāma
Nestālokavumoṅtuku viraṇtatu Neram
(Adhyātmarāmāyaṇam Kilippāttu, Bālakanda)

Even though this is the pure Malayalam style, the Beauty of dvtiyaksharaprasa used by Ezhuthachan gives an elegance to his style. Bhagavatgita was first translated to Malayalam among the Indian languages. The Krishnagatha of Cherussery introduced Krishna stories to Malayalam language. In short it was a period when the spirituality and philosophy began to influence the people of Kerala. Ezhuthachan entered during this period and he might have thought that the Malayalam language with a very few vocabulary prevalent during those days was not enough to depict the whole philosophy of India. So he renovated the vocabulary and gave a new style to poetry. He renewed Malayalam Language with Sanskrit. He used Malayalam - Sanskrit intermixed Manipravala style in a very beautiful way. He used Sanskrit words with Malayalam suffixes, and crowned the Sanskrit stems with Bhasha suffixes. While using Sanskrit words as it is, he always tried to use words like Āstayā, Mudrā, mama, Cetasi, Jaya etc. which were very familiar to the people Kerala who is in touch with literature. He kept Sanskrit and Tamil in equal distance and moved forward in a middle path as far

as language and sentiments are concerned. Poetry flowed from him without any break. His book, The Adhyātmarāmāyaṇam Kilippāttu lead the minds of Kerala to carry out one's own duties, to stick on to dharma, and to read the Puranas. In such a way by renovating Malayalam language and by increasing its vocabulary, the translations done by him for Mahabharata and Ramayana in an innovative stunning style, made him the father of Malayalam language.

Comparison of the Size

The story of Rama depicted in Valmiki Ramayana with 24000 verses is narrated in Adhyātmarāmāyaṇa in 4200 verses in 64 sargas if we omit the Mahatmya portion. There are differences in certain editions. There may be inclusions during the later period. The edition published by Gita Press has 66 sargas with 4310 verses including the Mahatmya portion. There are differences in different editions.

The Adhytmaramayanam Kilippāttu has 4936 catushpadas in seven Kandas. So this becomes bigger in size compared to the original. There are differences in many things including its divisions. It is written in the original like,

Priyāyai Giriśastasyai Gūḍam Vyākhyātavā Svayam
Purāṇottamamadhyātmarāmāyaṇamiti Smṛtam

(Adhyātmarāmāyaṇam, Balakanda)

i.e. Ramayana is written as a story told by Lord Siva to Parvathy. As such Brahma depicts it to Narada as Umamaheswarasamvada itself. Ezhuthachan enters one step more forward that a very versatile parrot narrates the whole story. Some say that this style is adopted from the Tamil style of storytelling. But this style of storytelling itself helped him to narrate in such a way that importance of the 'Atmamsa' or 'self' in depiction is nullified and he could easily get into the hearts of the readers. For a mere translation, the efficiency as a poet is not much needed. Also it is not tried to present it as a new work. But by omitting the unnecessary portions, he could translate the work which excels the original and made the readers bath in devotion in a ceremonial way.

The Difference In Language

It may not be true if we say that the poetic abilities of the original Sanskrit work helped in the renaissance of India. But Kilippāttu really influenced the thought processes of the readers and brought a unity among the people of Kerala. He really made a model for translation. He depicted ordinary things in an ordinary style and deep thoughts of Vedanta in an elite way. The Arthagaurava of Bharavi, the versatility of Kalidasa, and the proud style of Magha joint hands together in Ramanujabharathi i.e. in the Language of Adhytmaramayanam Kilippāttu.

See a few examples-

Mūlam -

Kathañcidṛṣṭavān Brahmā Durddaśakṛtātmanām
Indranīlapratīkāśam Smitāsyam Padmalocanam
(Adhyātmarāmāyaṇam, Balakanda)

Kilippāttu-

Padmasambhavan Tanikkampodu Kāṇāivannu
Padmalōcananāya Padmanābhane Mōdāl
Candrikāmandasmitasundarānanapūrṇa
Candramaṇḍalamaravindalōcanam Devam
Indranīlābham Paramindirāmanōhara
Mandiravakshasthalam Vandyamānandōdayam
(Adhyātmarāmāyaṇam Kilippāttu, Balakanda)

Mūlam -

Rāmam Kadā vā Drakṣyamaḥ Prabhātam Vā kadā Bhavet
Ityuddikadhiya haṇṇe Babhūvuḥ Puravāsīnaḥ
(Adhyātmarāmāyaṇam, Ayodhyakanda)

Kilippattu -

Rātriyām rakṣhasi pokunnathillennu
cīrtaviṣādamotoutsukyamulkond
Mārthāṇḍadevanekkāṇāñju nokkiyum

Pārthupārtānandapūrṇāmṛtābdiyil
Vīṇumuzhukiyum Pinneyum Pongiyum
Vāṇīdināl puravāsiklādarāl

(Adhyātmarāmāyaṇam Kilippāttu, Ayodhyakanda)

The poetry with splendor and elegance in the translation and brightness and fluency of the original can be clearly seen in these examples. But the bliss in vocabulary of the translator is not there for the poet of the original Sanskrit work.

Ramanujacharya uses three kinds of languages, i.e. the Sanskrit style, Malayalam style, and a mixed Manipravala style. Here are some examples -

Kolleṇamavale nī vallajātiyumati
nilloru samśayamennu māmuni parañjappol
mellaveyoru ceru ñaṇoli ceitū
Rāmanellalokavumonnu Viracitathathuneram

(Adhyātmarāmāyaṇam Kilippāttu, Balakanda)

Puratahsthitam sākṣādīswram raghunātham
Puruṣōttamam kūppistuticcāl Bhaktiyode
(Manipravala style) (Adhyātmarāmāyaṇam Kilippāttu, Balakanda)

Sṛṇu sumukhi tava caraṇanalinadāsōsmyaham
Śōbhanaśīle prasīda me

(sanskrit style) (Adhyātmarāmāyaṇam Kilippāttu, Sundarakanda)

Ezhuthachan was the one who introduced the aesthetic beauty of meters to Malayalam language. In the original work mostly Anushtup is used. But the Dravida meters like Keka, Annanata, Kakali, Kalakanchi etc. gave a musical style to Kilippāttu. This musical tone helped this book to be the property of ordinary people. He depicted the minute details of each and every part he narrated. The author of the Sanskrit text depicts the fight between Sugreeva and Bali thus-

Muṣṭibhyām tādayāmāsa
Vālinam sōpi tam tathā
Aham vālī ca sugrīvam
Sugrīovo vālinam tathā (Adhyātmarāmāyaṇam, Kishkindhakanda)

But see this in Kilippāttu, -

Kettiyum kālkai parasparam tādanam
Tattiyum muttukoṇdum tala tangalil
Kottiyumettam pidichum kadichumang
Ūttathil viṇum pirumurumul
Cittam kalarnnu nakham kondu māntiyum
Cādippatikkayum koodekuthikayum
Māditthadukkayaum koodekodukkayum
Ōdikkalikkayum vādiviyarkkayum
Mādivilikkayum kōpicadukkayum
Ūde viyarkkayum nādikal cirkkayum
Muṣtiyuddhaprayogam kunilpavar
Dṛtikulirkkayum Vāzhttistutikkayum

(Adhyātmarāmāyaṇam Kilippāttu, Kishkindhakanda)

Now the reader gets the experience of seeing a great war in front of him.

He also used the figures of speech and sabdalankaras very effectively in poetry. This contributes in the enhancement of devotion of the readers.

Mūlam-

Rahite rāghavābhyām tvam sunīva hariradhvare
Hṛtavānasi mām nīca tatphalam prāpsyasecirāt

(Adhyātmarāmāyaṇam, Āraṇyakanda)

Kilippāttu-

Sabhayamati vinayamodu sunīva haviradhware
Sāhasattodu mām kattukondīlayo

(Adhyātmarāmāyaṇam Kilippāttu, Āraṇyakanda)

Ityālokya puraḥ patnīm vyaghrīmiva puraḥ sthitām

(Adhyātmarāmāyaṇam, Ayodhyakanda)

See the beautiful astonishing translation,

Vyaghriyeppole samīpe vasikkunna
Mūrkhamatiyāya kaikeyi tanmukham
Noki noki bhayam pūndu dasa
Dīrkhamay vīrttuvīttevamuraceitu

(Adhyātmarāmāyaṇam Kilippāttu, Ayodhyakanda)

The original Sanskrit writer and the translator take very care in using Alankaras. Here the alankaras are not for namesake, but they beautifully serve the purpose in poetry.

Certain words are translated using its the variety of meanings. For example see-

Tatkāle haripramukhnmārām vibudhanmā
rokkave harirūpadhārikalāyārallo

(Adhyātmarāmāyaṇam Kilippāttu, Balakanda)

Here the first 'Hari' means 'lord Vishnu' and the second 'Hari' means 'Monkey'. See the awakening of Kumbhakarna in Kilippatu,

Kumbhakarṇorasi pāñjumāattum jagal-
kkambam varuttinārentoru vismayam
Kumbhasahasram jalam coriñjīdinār
Kumbhakarnaśravaṇāntare pinneyum
Kumbhīvaranmārekondu nāsārandhra-
Sambhūtaromam pidichuvalippichum
Tumpikkaramattalariyumānakal Jambhārivairikku kampamillethume
Jṛmbhasamārambhamodumunarnnithu
Sambhramichodinārāśravīrarum
Kumbhasahasram niracculla madyavum
Kumbhasahasram niracculla raktavum
Sambhojyamannavum kunnupole kando-
rimpam kalarnnezhunnettirunnīdinā

(Adhyātmarāmāyaṇam Kilippāttu, Yuddhakanda)

The repetition of Bhakara in these verses shows the unparallel command of the author over vocabulary which can never be seen in the original.

Above all when he starts to recite the name of god, he becomes eloquent. His intention to spread devotion is clear in this aspect. After Bhakti, he likes Karunarasa. See the mourning of Dasaratha during his death

Mūlam-

Sa idānīm mama prāptaḥ śāpakālonivāritaḥ
Ityuktvaa vilalāpatha rājā śokasamākulaḥ
Hā rāma putra hā sīte hā lakṣmaṇa guṇākara
Tvadviyogādaham prāpto mṛtyum kaikeyisambhavam
Vadankevam daśaratho prāṇāstyaktvā divam gataḥ

(Adhyātmarāmāyaṇam Kilippāttu, Ayodhyakanda)

Kilippāttu -

Mannavanevam parañju vilappiccu
Pinneyum pinneyum keṇu tudanginan
Hā rāma putra hā sīte janakaje
Hā rāma lakṣmaṇa hā hā guṇāmbudhe
Ningaleyum piriñjenmaraṇam puna-
ringane vanatum kaikeyisambhavam
Rājīvanetranecinticu cinticu
Rājā daśarathan pukku surālayam

(Adhyātmarāmāyaṇam Kilippāttu, Ayodhyakanda)

Through this great philosophical text, he lifted and awakened the minds of the people of Kerala. He taught the ideal concepts of partners of life, fatherly affections, brotherhood, citizenship, friendship and each and every relationship in this world. He purified the minds of people with devotion and ultimate surrender in the feet of lord Rama. There are many directions in his text which really lifted the minds of the people of Kerala. Here are some examples, in Yuddhakanda.

Iṣtam parayunna bandhukkalārume
Kaṣtakālattinkalillenn nirṇayama

Nithyavum ceyyunna karmmaphalaguṇam
Karttāvozhinju mattanyan bhujikkumo
(Adhyātmarāmāyaṇam Kilippāttu, Ayodhyakanda)
Kāryamallattatu ceyyunnatākilā
Cāryanum śāsanam ceikennathe varū
(Adhyātmarāmāyaṇam Kilippāttu, Ayodhyakanda)
Prathyupakāram marakkunna puruṣan
Catthathoinokkume jīvicirikkilum
(Adhyātmarāmāyaṇam Kilippāttu, Kishkindhakanda)

When any reference about Rama comes, Ezhuthachan starts with versatility to glorify Rama imparting all philosophical concepts,

Śuddhanavyaktan nityan nirmmalanekan
Bhuddhanavyaktan śāntanasangan nirākāran
Satvādiguṇatrayayukayām saktiyuktan
Sattvangalullil vāzhum jīvātmāvāya nāthan
Bhaktānām muktipradan yuktānām yogapradan
Saktānām bhuktipradan siddhānāam yogapradan
Tattvādhārātmādevan sakalajaganmayan
Tattvajñan nirupaman niṣkalan niranjanan
Namaste rāma rāma puruṣāddhyakṣa viṣṇo
Namaste rāma rāma bhakthavatsala rama
Samastakarmārpaṇam bhavati karomi ñjan
(Adhyātmarāmāyaṇam Kilippāttu, Balakanda)

With this impact, even now people of Kerala recites this text every year during the Malayalam month, Karkitaka.

In the Sanskrit original god Rama never becomes a human being. But the Rama of Ezhuthachan is a human god. During the wedding ceremony of Rama, As per the original, when Rama was advised to take the bow, he easily takes it and breaks. But the Rama of Ezhuthachan asks the permission of his preceptor to take the bow obeying the worldly rules.

The philosophy of Advaita and Visisthadvaita can also be clearly seen in this text. When Bali was killed by Rama, his wife Thara falls on his body and nobody is able to console her. At that time the wordings of Rama to relieve her pain really depicts the principles of Vedanta thus-

Entinu śokam vṛthaa tava kelkilo
Bandhamilletumitinnu manohare
Ninnude Bharttāv dehamo jīvano
Dhanye paramārthamennodu collu nī
Pancabhūtātmakam dehamettam jadam
Sancitam tvangmāmsaraktāsthikondo
Nisceṣṭakāṣṭatulyam dehamorkka nī
Niscayamātmāvu jīvan nirāmayan
Illa jananam maraṇavumilla
Kelallalundaikāikatuninacetume
Nilkayumilla nadakkayumilla kel
Dukhaviṣayavumallatu kevalam
Strīpuruṣaklībabhedangalumilla
Tāpaśītādiyumillennarika nī
Sarvagan jīvanekan paramadvaya-
navyayanākāśātulyanalepakan

Śuddhamai nityamai ñjānātmakamāya

Tattvamortenthu dukhathinnu kāraṇam ?

(Adhyātmarāmāyaṇam Kilippāttu, Kishkindhakanda)

This will remind the verses in Bhagavadgita's sankhyayoga saying "नैनं छिन्दन्ति शस्त्राणि" — etc (Bhagavadgita, Sankhyayoga). The list won't come to an end, if I quote even much more.

In short Ramanujacharya considered that literature should show a new light to life. But the renovation brought about by Kilippāttu is much greater than the original Sanskrit text. Through new style, mastery over the language, poetic skills, reformation of Malyalam language and by inspiring people to lead a life based on Dharma, Kilippāttu became a greatest headstone in Malyalam literature. The philosophy imparted by him still resonates in the life of the people of Kerala.

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