

The Emergence of Murukan

— A Study on the Formation of the Tamil Myths of his Divine Birth —

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Murukan - Subrahmanya, God *parexcellence* of the Tamils, has been plausibly believed to be a son of Śiva and Umā-Pārvatī and also to be the younger brother of elephant-headed Gaṇeśa-Gaṇapati. There is another belief, on the other hand, that Murukan is the son of Korṛavai, the ancient Dravidian goddess of war and victory. How can such a twofold parentage of Lord Murukan be historically explained? When did such conventional relationship centered around this adolescent god come to be known? And, does his relationship with other deities represent any essential nature of God Murukan? In this paper, to find a clue to these questions, we will closely examine the so-called *Caṅkam* classics, the literary corpus written in ancient Tamil, so that we may catch a glimpse of extra-Sanskritic or, more particularly, Dravidian notions of the sacred which presumably gave profound influences on the formation and the development of the religious ideas and institutions of the Southern Hindu cultures.

I. References to Murukan's Birth in the *Caṅkam* texts

It is to be remembered that, as far as we have surveyed, there are no apparent references to the birth of God Murukan in early *Akam* anthologies, such as the *Aiṅkurunūru* and the *Kuruntokai*. As in the case of the myths of Murukan and his beloved Valli, it is in the *Tirumurukārruppaṭai* and the *Paripāṭal* late *Caṅkam* works with growing devotional sentiments, that we can virtually expect some detailed information on his miraculous birth. This fact may indicate that some of the important myths centered around Murukan as known today were being formed to a considerable extent in the late *Caṅkam* period. In the *Paripāṭal* the myth of his birth is explained in some detail, while in the *Tirumurukārruppaṭai* it is briefly touched in allusion in the last portion of the text, viz. *Paḷamutircōlai* (verses 218-317). The account is given in *Tirumurukārruppaṭai* 253-255, which runs as follows:

Netumperuñ cimaittu nīlap paincuṅai/
Aivaruḷ oruvaṅ aṅkai ēṛpa/
Aruvar payanta āramar celva/

[Translation]

O the Prosperous One [= Murukan]

Whom one of the five (elements) (*viz.* Agni or Fire)
 received in his hands in a blue (or green) pond
 on the top of the lofty mountain [= Himālayas],
 whom Six (Kṛttikās except Arundhatī) brought up,
 and who is associated with six forms!¹⁾

We will examine this passage later, in comparison with the accounts in other documents.

The birth story of Murukaṅ in the *Paripāṭal* does not differ much from the above account of the *Tirumurukārruppatai* in outline, but the former is found far more detailed than the latter. In the extant *Paripāṭal* odes, the tale of Murukaṅ's birth are given in the fifth ode dedicated to Cevvēl-Murukaṅ. The outlines are shown in the following table:²⁾

VERSES	ACCOUNTS GIVEN
V 26-29	An embryo was produced as the result of the long sexual union of Śiva and Uma.
V 30-35	For the sake of Indra who had become the chief of gods by making a vow to kill Śiva's embryo, Śiva, the Consistent One, tore the embryo into pieces.
V 36-41	The seven Munis gathered the fragments. Their wives swallowed them, kept them in their wombs and brought them up. But, when the wives found unable to bear those fragments any longer, they finally performed sacrifice by throwing them into fire.
V 42-45	Excepting Calīni [= Arundhatī], six members of the Seven Mothers shining in the northern sky swallowed the fragments which had been protected by the Three Fires.
V 46-49	Thus the wives of the Ṛṣis [= Six Kṛttikas] became pregnant without violating their own chastity, and gave birth to Murukaṅ on the lotus-bed in the lake (called Caravaṇa) in the Himālayas.
V 50-54	Being aware of Murukaṅ's birth, Indra armed with flaming <i>vajra</i> challenged Murukaṅ to battle. In a few moments, the six pieces took the form of six persons and then became united into one.
V 55-56	Murukaṅ, though unarmed, defeated Indra in the battle which was no more than a sport for this adolescent god.

V 57-70 The gods, recognizing Murukaṅ as the chief of their army, presented his twelve hands with various things as his weapons; Agni gave him a cock, Indra a peacock, Yama a goat, and the other gods other things.

The above is the plot of Murukaṅ's birth shown in *Paripāṭal* V. This ode alone, among the available *Paripāṭal* hymns, gives detailed information on his divine birth. The other odes of the same anthology only afford brief, fragmental accounts on his birth and parentage. For instance, the verses of *Paripāṭal* VIII 126-127 suggest that Murukaṅ is the son of Śiva and his divine consort Umā-Pārvatī. It reads as follows: "kaṭampamar celvaṅ kaṭinakar pēṇa/ maṛumiṭarṇṇaṅku mācilōḷ tanta/" (May you worship the temple protected by the one abiding in *kaṭampu* tree [= Murukaṅ] who was produced by the woman [= Umā-Pārvatī] faultless to the Great One [= Śiva] with a mole in his throat!). In *Paripāṭal* IX 7, Lord Murukaṅ is said to be the son of Āral [= Kṛttikās], while he is portrayed as the son of Śiva in V 13. It is narrated in *Paripāṭal* XIV 25-26 that the gods were fearful of Murukaṅ since his birth. The passage is as follows: "Piranta nāṅṅē ninṅai yuṭkic/ cirāntōr ānciya cīruṭaiyōyē/" (O the one who has such grandeur that has made the eminent ones [= gods] dread you since you were born!).

II. Epic-Purāṇic Accounts on Skanda's Birth

The stories of Murukaṅ's birth as given in the *Paripāṭal* are coincident in outline, but not wholly identical, with the Epic-Purāṇic accounts on the birth of Skanda, the Northern god with whom Murukaṅ became subsequently identified in Tamil religious tradition.

In the Great Epic *Mahābhārata*, the Vanaparvan (chapters 223-232), the Śalyaparvan (chs. 44-46) and the Anusāsanaparvan (chs. 84-86) give the accounts on Skanda's birth. In the *Rāmāyaṇa*, two chapters (chs. 36 and 37) of the Bālakaṇḍa narrate his birth. Not a few *Purāṇas* afford information on it (*viz.* Vāyu, Brahmāṇḍa, Matsya, Brhaddharma, Brahma, Vāmana, Śiva, Bhaviṣya, Brahmavaivarta and Skanda).³⁾ It might be generally said that most of the Purāṇic accounts are in some way or other imbued with the accounts found in the Great Epic.⁴⁾

Among the several versions of Skanda's birth in the Great Epic, the one given in the Vanaparvan is the most exhaustive. It runs as follows:

Svāhā, the daughter of Dakṣa, had a strong passion to Agni, the Fire God, approached him in disguise of the six wives of the Ṛṣis (except chaste Arundhatī) and finally succeeded in mating with him. Agni's semen thus emitted was thrown away into a golden lake, where Skanda was to be born.

The uniqueness of the Vanaparvan lies in the fact that it clearly attributes the birth of this god to the union of Agni and Svāhā. On the other hand, the Śalyaparvan of the *Mahābhārata*, for example, brings forward another variety of his birth and parentage. It goes:

Mahesvara's [= Śiva's] vital seed fell into the fire. Agni could not bear the seed within himself and threw it into Gaṅgā. Gaṅgā, in turn, cast it on the Himavat, where Kārttikeya grew. Kārttikeya was so named because he had sucked the breast of six Kṛttikās. He then divided himself into four forms, viz. Skanda, Śākha, Viśākha and Naigameya for the equal satisfaction of Rudra, Umā, Gaṅgā and Agni.

A similar plot is found in the Anusāsanaparvan, in which Śiva and Devī are portrayed as the parents of Skanda.

The *Vāyupurāṇa*, one of the oldest *Purāṇas*, introduces another variety:

Śaṅkara [= Śiva] and Śaṅkarī engaged in sexual intercourse for thousands of years. Then Indra sent Agni to destroy the fruit of their labour. As a result, Śiva's semen fell on the ground. Devī, who greatly resented it, ordered Agni to consume the semen. Agni was obliged to bear the load. After thousands of years he finally transferred it to Gaṅgā. She also failed to bear it and threw it into the Śaravaṇa, where Skanda was born. As he had been nursed by the Kṛttikās, he became to be called Kārttikeya.

With the exception of the Vanaparvan which speaks of Agni and Svāhā as the parents of Skanda-Kārttikeya, Epic-Purāṇic accounts in general turn out to impartially ascribe his birth to several figures: Śiva, Umā, Agni, Gaṅgā and Kṛttikās. In this regard, A.K. Chatterjee notes, "The authors of these accounts were not much sure about the parentage of Skanda and thought it prudent to give the honours of parenthood to all the above-mentioned deities."⁵⁾ Moreover, according to this historian, at the time of the author of the Vanaparvan there was only one belief about Skanda-Kārttikeya's birth and he finally recorded it. The other accounts were gradually formed thereafter, as Skanda rose in popularity in the Hindu pantheon. He further says that the intrusion of the Śiva elements in the later accounts may be explained by the vast popularity of that god from the Gupta age onward.⁶⁾ Hence, according to Chatterjee, it follows that the account given in the Vanaparvan is earlier than the other three. He adduces two evidences to support his argument:

- (a) As known in old literature, Skanda was believed to be the son of Agni in the earlier layer of his worship.⁷⁾
- (b) The episode of Skanda's slaying Tāraka, which represents the older layer of his legend, is recounted in the Vanaparvan.⁸⁾

On the close scrutiny into the above examples of the Sanskrit versions on Skanda-Kārttikeya's birth, we notice that the accounts given in the *Paripāṭal*, in which Śiva's fatherhood to Skanda is narrated, are akin not to that of the Vanaparvan but rather to the Epic-Purāṇic accounts formed a little later under the prevalence of Śiva worship. As aforesaid, *Paripāṭal* V 13 refers to Murukaṇ as the son of God of Destruction, namely Ruda-Śiva.

Paripāṭal VIII 126-127 suggests that Murukaṅ is the son of Śiva and Umā-Pārvatī. It is not chronologically impossible, as we will see below, that the poets of the *Paripāṭal* were enough acquainted with the Epic-Purāṇic accounts when they composed the Tamil myth of Murukaṅ's birth.

In *Paripāṭal* XIX 57, Murukaṅ is styled '*Māaṅ-marukaṅ*' (< *māl-marukaṅ*).⁹⁾ As the Tamil word '*marukaṅ*' has two meanings, "son-in-law" and "nephew", '*Māaṅ-marukaṅ*' indicates either "son-in-law of Māl [= Viṣṇu]" or "nephew of Māl". Both are equally possible for mythological reasons. Skanda/Murukaṅ is a "son-in-law" of Lord Viṣṇu because the former married Devasenā/Teyvayānai, Viṣṇu's daughter. Skanda/Murukaṅ is, on the other hand, a "nephew" of Viṣṇu because Pārvatī, the mother of Skanda/Murukaṅ, is Viṣṇu's sister. F. Gros explains this matrimonial relation in view of the preferential custom of cross-cousin alliance among South Indians.¹⁰⁾ Nevertheless, here again we find the *Paripāṭal* imbued with the mythical elements derived from the Northern-Sanskritic tradition.

In this Tamil anthology, Śiva is said to have separated his divine seed. D.D. Shulman points out the same plot seen in Sanskrit *Purāṇas*, such as the *Matsyapurāṇa* and the *Padmapurāṇa*.¹¹⁾ A similar narrative is also found in the birth-story of the Maruts. The theme of victorious Skanda given various presents by the gods (V 157-170) appears in not a few Epic-Purāṇic records.¹²⁾ All these unquestionably show that the strong Sanskritic influence was at work on the formation of the story of Murukaṅ's birth in the *Paripāṭal*, in spite of some typical Tamil motifs seen in the same work, — for example, the great emphasis upon the chastity of the wives of the Ṛṣis (V 46-47).¹³⁾

Now, bearing the foregoing discussion in mind, we shall again have a look at the accounts given in the *Tirumurukārruppaṭai*. This text pays tribute to Murukaṅ as "the Auspicious One who was received by the palm of Agni or Fire and brought up by six Kṛttikās and connected with six forms" (verses 253-255). It is easily understood from the context that it is Siva's seed that Agni received with his palm, though it is nowhere stated clearly. Naccinārkkīniyar, the mediaeval commentator of the *Tirumurukārruppaṭai*, presents no consistent interpretation to the word "the One" (*oruvaṅ*) in this passage. He regards this word as referring to Agni or the Fire God in one place, but takes it for Rudra (*Uruttiraṅ*) elsewhere. Anyway, there is no room for doubt that this passage of the original text is penetrated with the Epic-Purāṇic accounts on Skanda-Kārttikeya's birth.

In verse 256, Murukaṅ is said to be the son of the god of the banyan tree (*ālakeḷukatavuḷ*). This god is most probably Śiva.

The information on Murukaṅ's mother is found in verses 256-259. Verses 256-257 make mention of Murukaṅ's mother as "Hill-Goddess of a lofty mountain" (*mālvarai-malaimakaḷ*). In verse 258, victorious Korṟavai (*verri velpōrk korṟavai*) is named as the mother of this youthful god, while in verse 259 a beautiful "Old Lady" (*Paḷaiyōl*) adorned with ornaments is said to be his divine mother. Although Gros thinks that these three refer to one goddess, it remains uncertain whether all these are one and the same goddess or separate ones. The first one, namely '*Mālvarai-malaimakaḷ*', may perhaps be identified with Pārvatī, the Goddess of the Himālayas in the Sanskrit pantheon.¹⁴⁾ Otherwise it may possibly indicate something related to the non-Brāhmanical idea of the Hill-Goddess like Varaiyaramakaḷir

occasionally mentioned in the *Aiṅkurunūru*, etc.¹⁵⁾ The second one, namely *Korravai*, is indisputably the Dravidian Goddess of war and victory, as known by the very name '*Korravai*', the female personal noun derived from '*korram*' (victory).¹⁶⁾ The last one, *Paḷaiyōḷ*, may be allusive to furious *Vanadurgā*, the Goddess of the jungle who forms the *bhairava* counterpart of peaceful goddess *Vanaśāṅkarī*. According to J. Filliozat, *Paḷaiyōḷ* is identical with *Durgā*, the guardian goddess of warriors, to whom the offering of blood and flesh was commonly performed.¹⁷⁾ As the bloodshed of her ritual suggests, the concept of this goddess might perhaps have its root in the indigenous cults stemming from some pre- or non-Aryan religious milieu.

III. The Significance of the Myth in the Tamil Tradition

In the *Tirumurukārruppaṭai*, as stated above, the story of *Murukaṅ*'s birth follows the outlines of *Skanda*'s birth narrated in Sanskrit myths on the one hand, but it is accompanied with miscellaneous elements of mother-son relationship presumably derived from pre-Aryan modes of worship on the other hand. Such inconsistency seen in the *Tirumurukārruppaṭai* attests that, while *Murukaṅ* was pressed to be Sanskritized by adopting the *Skanda-Kārttikeya* cycle of Northern myths, deep-rooted indigenous, extra-Sanskritic tradition around *God Murukaṅ* still prevailed in Tamil society in those days. This might suggest that the date of the composition of the *Tirumurukārruppaṭai* can be earlier than that of the *Paripāṭal* in which the narratives of *Murukaṅ*'s birth are fairly infiltrated with Sanskritic accounts. Otherwise, it may be at least suggestive of more composite nature of the *Tirumurukārruppaṭai*. K. Kailasapathy is of the opinion that the *Tirumurukārruppaṭai* contains two components, new and old. *Skanda* elements, according to him, may be indicative of the new components, while the descriptions of *Korravai* and the place names related to *Murukaṅ* worship may represent the older autochthonous layer of its compilation. From this, he comes to a conclusion that this text must have been formed over several centuries.¹⁸⁾ It seems to us, however, that the composite, inconsistent nature of a text does not necessarily imply plural stages of its compilation. It might be rather plausible that the compound nature of the work is reflective of the religious conditions of the day.

Neither the *Tirumurukārruppaṭai* nor the *Paripāṭal* (*Cevvēḷ* and *Tirumāl* hymns) makes mentions of *Gaṇeśa*, to say nothing of the brotherhood of *Gaṇeśa* and *Murukaṅ*. This fact probably indicates that their brotherhood had not yet been introduced when these two works were composed, and that the establishment of their brotherhood was brought forward to later periods.

Gaṇeśa-Gaṇapati is in fact a post-Vedic, post-Epic deity. Any representation of this god has not been discovered anterior to the fifth century.¹⁹⁾ In Tamil literature, the earliest reference to this deity as the son of *Śiva* is, according to N. Subrahmanian, to be found in the *Tēvārām* by *Tiruṇānācāmpantar*, i.e. early seventh century A.D.²⁰⁾ Historically, the cult of *Gaṇeśa-Gaṇapati* was first brought to the Tamil country by *Narasimha-varma*, a *Pallava* King, from *Vātāpi* in the seventh century A.D.²¹⁾ By these facts it is indirectly proved that the

Tirumurukāṛruppaṭai and the *Paripāṭal*, which make no mention of this elephant-headed god, were compiled before the seventh century A.D.

K.V. Zvelebil says, "The original Tamil Murugaṅ was the son of Korṛavai, the Mother - Goddess of war and victory."²²⁾ Gros too regards Murugaṅ as the son of Korṛavai.²³⁾ Such a view, which seemingly agrees with the traditional belief among the Tamils, appears to find general acceptance of the scholars. It is true that Murugaṅ is portrayed as the son of Korṛavai in *Tirumurukāṛruppaṭai* 258. In *Perumpāṇārruppaṭai* 457-459 also, the mother who gave birth to Cēy [= Murugaṅ] is styled 'celvi', which may perhaps indicate Goddess Korṛavai²⁴⁾. However, the reference to the mother-son relationship between the two is quite rare in the entire *Caṅkam* corpus and, as far as we have surveyed, at least older anthologies such as *Aiṅḱurūnūru* and *Kuruntokai* do not support their relationship. According to F. Hardy's observation, the goddess Korṛavai, said to be Murugaṅ's mother, is referred to only about three times in the early texts and two further references are found in the *Paripāṭal*, while Murugaṅ is referred to at least seventy times in the whole *Caṅkam* corpus.²⁵⁾ This fact undoubtedly shows that Korṛavai remained inconspicuous in comparison with Murugaṅ. Anyway, it is unwarrantable to presume Korṛavai to be the original mother of God Murugaṅ from such rare references in literature.²⁶⁾ It seems probable to us that the mother-son relationship between them was secondarily derived from the rigid identification of Korṛavai, the goddess of war, with Durgā-Pārvatī-Umā, Śiva's divine consort and the mother of Northern Skanda-Kārttikeya²⁷⁾. As to the rigid identification of the two goddesses, Korṛavai and Durgā, G.L. Hart's remark is significant. He writes, "Yet even at the time of the anthologies, Korṛavai and Durgā had been identified such an extent that it is somewhat difficult to determine the original character of Korṛavai."²⁸⁾

According to Zvelebil, the original Murugaṅ has no father because his father's name is never mentioned though his mother is named Korṛavai in Tamil sources.²⁹⁾ The same author says, "Later myth-makers, however, must find a father for Murugaṅ. They do not accept Rudra or Agni as his father, although either one of these gods is father of the northern Skanda. Why? Because neither Rudra nor Agni are (*sic*) important and well-known gods in the Tamil country. On the contrary, it is Śiva who is important in Tamilnadu. Hence, the Tamil myth-makers substitute Śiva as the father of the composite Skanda-Murugaṅ in the South."³⁰⁾ In short, according to him, the parentage of Śiva to Murugaṅ resulted from a voluntary choice by the Tamil myth-makers. But, is it quite probable? Now we will test the validity of Zvelebil's argument. As we have seen above, the parentage of Śiva to Skanda was already established in many accounts in the *Māhābhārata* with the exception of an old account in Vanaparvan which refers to Agni and Svāhā as the parents of the adolescent god. The accounts given in the *Māhābhārata* foreshadow the important role of Śiva (as Skanda's father) in the Purāṇic myths of Skanda's birth. The present amount of knowledge does not allow us to confirm whether or not the poets of the *Tirumurukāṛruppaṭai* and the *Paripāṭal* were familiar with the Purāṇic accounts, since the chronology of the *Purāṇas* still remains obscure.³¹⁾ It is at least certain, however, that they were aware of the *Māhābhārata* (and perhaps the *Rāmāyaṇa* also), for the *Caṅkam* works refer to those epics.³²⁾ According to L. Renou, the *Māhābhārata* was compiled in the extant form between the 4th century B.C. and the 4th century A.D.³³⁾ The composition

was concluded by the end of the 4th century. Therefore, it is almost sure that the *Mahābhārata* preceded the bulk of the *Caṅkam* corpus.³⁴⁾ Still more it seems plausible that the poets of later works such as the *Tirumurukārruppaṭai* and the *Paripāṭal* were acquainted with the *Mahābhārata* (and even perhaps with early *Purāṇas*).³⁵⁾ Considering all these, we are obliged to be negative as regards the voluntary choice of the Tamil myth-makers in designating Lord Śiva as the father of Murukaṅ as suggested by Zvelebil. It might be nearer to the truth that the Tamil myth-makers, in spite of the deep-rooted indigenous lineaments still lingering on around this god, intended to somehow Sanskritize their cult of Murukaṅ in agreement with the growing Sanskritic influences on their own tradition, and finally accepted the parentage of Śiva and Pārvatī to Skanda which was in vogue in the Northern Sanskritic myths in those days.³⁶⁾ Zvelebil further says, "It is significant that all the myths centered around Agni are transferred to Śiva and Śiva is made the father of Murugaṅ."³⁷⁾ However, this is true of the Northern myth of Skanda, as A.K. Chatterjee repeatedly stresses in his monograph,³⁸⁾ rather than of the Tamil myth of Murukaṅ. The reason is that, if common mythological traits are found to be shared by Northern Skanda and Tamil Murukaṅ as regards the narratives of their birth, the correspondence may probably be attributable to the adoption of the Northern myths by Tamil myth-makers, and not vice versa. Thus it appears to us that Zvelebil misunderstands the historical context in some aspects of the formation of the Tamil myth of Murukaṅ's birth.

The reluctance of Indra, the chief of the Āryan gods, to accept Skanda/Murukaṅ seen in Sanskrit and hence Tamil myths of his birth may perhaps reflect the historical fact that he was a deity of some non-Āryan provenance which was not welcomed to the Āryan circles.³⁹⁾ If so, even Skanda of the North can be a kind of composite, multifarious deity absorbing some extra-Sanskritic, indigenous traits. This poses very interesting questions in view of the ambivalence and the demonic aspects of Sanskritic Skanda-Kārttikeya-Kumāra.

What is most significant as regards the birth of Murukaṅ may be that the earlier stratum of Tamil literature does not give rich information on his birth. We can expect somewhat detailed accounts in the *Tirumurukārruppaṭai*, a late *Caṅkam* text. Further details are narrated in the *Paripāṭal*. As we have seen, however, the accounts on Murukaṅ's birth and his familial relations given in the *Tirumurukārruppaṭai* and the *Paripāṭal* are, so to say, the Tamil version of the Sanskrit Purāṇic tales of Skanda's birth. In the Cevvēl odes of the *Paripāṭal*, no preferential position is ascribed to Śiva in comparison with the other major gods, except for a single ode (*i.e.* V) in which he is portrayed as the father of Murukaṅ.⁴⁰⁾ This is likely to suggest that the father-son relationship between them imported presumably from the North had not yet been firmly established in the Tamil country at the time of the *Paripāṭal*. The same might be true of the *Tirumurukārruppaṭai*. Our above discussion also poses a question to Zvelebil's view of Korṟavai as the mother of original Tamil Murukaṅ.

The foregoing may lead us to the assumption of the primary lack of the birth myth in the pre-Āryan Murukaṅ. This may have something to do with the probable absence of his anthropomorphic representation in the archaic modes of Murukaṅ worship. All these further pose a crucial question on the original mode of representation of the sacred in the Dravidian religious traditions — that is, whether or not the divine was anthropomorphically represented,

and therefore whether or not the mythology was commonly known in the ancient pre-Aryanized South India.

Notes

- 1) To translate this passage, we referred to Naccinārkkīṇiyar's commentary.
- 2) We referred to Parimēlaḷakar's commentary on the *Paripāṭal*.
- 3) As to the accounts of Skanda's birth in the Epics and the *Purāṇas*, we referred to A.K. Chatterjee, *The cult of Skanda-Kārttikeya in Ancient India*, Calcutta, 1970. pp. 8-28 (chapter 2).
- 4) *Ibid.*, p.21.
- 5) *Ibid.*, p.12.
- 6) *Ibid.*, p.14. See also pp. 21, 48.
- 7) *Ibid.*, p. 12. See also the chapter one of his book.
- 8) *Ibid.*, p. 15. See also pp. 98-100.
- 9) A Tamil dictionary gives another word, 'māyōṅṅmarukaṅ', which has the same meaning as 'māṅṅmarukaṅ' (Winslow, *A Comprehensive Tamil and English Dictionary*, p. 863).
- 10) F. Gros, *Le Paripāṭal: texte tamoul*, Pondichéry, 1968, p. XLVII, 282, n. 57.
- 11) D.D. Shulman, *Tamil Temple Myths: The Sacrifice and the Divine Marriage in South Indian Śaiva Tradition*, Princeton, 1980, pp. 236, 250, 406, n. 79.
- 12) Gros, *op. cit.*, p. 196, notes.
- 13) Cf. Shulamn, *op. cit.*, p. 249f. For the emphasis on female chastity and its association with sacred power in Tamil culture, see G.L. Hart, *Poems of Ancient Tamil: Their Milieu and their Sanskrit Counterparts*, Berkeley, 1975 pp. 93-119.
- 14) J. Filliozat, *Un texte de la religion Kaumāra, le TirumurukāRRuppaṭai*, Pondichéry, 1973. p. 98, the note on vv. 256-257.
- 15) *Aiṅkurunūru* 191, 204, 255; *Akanānūru* 342 (12); *Kuṛiṅcippāṭtu* 195; *Malaipatuḷakaṭam* 190.
- 16) See Hart *op. cit.*, p. 24.
- 17) Filliozat, *op. cit.*, p. 98, n. 259.
- 18) K. Kailasapathy, *Tamil Heroic Poetry*, Oxford, 1968. p. 35f. Further, according to him, the original title of the work was 'MurukāRRuppaṭai', to which the prefix 'tiru-' ("sacred") was added later in the *bhakti* period (p. 36).
- 19) L. Renou et J. Filliozat, *L'Inde classique, manual des études indiennes*, tome I, Paris, 1947, § 1024. The earliest so far discovered is in a temple at Bhumāra, Central India (A. Getty, *Gaṇesa: A Monograph on the Elephant-faced God*, Oxford, 1936, pl. 36).
- 20) N. Subrahmanian, *Śaṅgam Polity*, revised ed., Madurai, 1980, pp. 375, n., 414f.
- 21) See R. Sarangapani, *The Critical Study of Paripāṭal*, Madurai, 1984, p. 103. For the argument in favour of the importation of Gaṇeśa-Gaṇapati cult from the Chālukyas, see N. Subrahmanian. *op. cit.*, p. 414f.
- 22) K.V. Zvelebil, *Tiru Murugaṅ*, Madras, 1981, p.8.
- 23) Gros, *op. cit.*, p. 195, n. 54.
- 24) For 'celvi'-as the title of Koṭṭavai, see Hart, *op. cit.*, p. 24. Chelliah regards 'celvi' of this passage as Goddess Kālī (Chelliah, *The Pattuppattu*, Madras, 1962, p. 133), while Raghunathan takes the

same for Umā (Raghunathan, *Six Long Poems from Sangam Tamil*, Madras/Bangalore, 1978, p. 95, n. 64). In consideration of Hart's view that 'celvi' is the title applied to the goddesses of the Northern provenance, it seems to us that the 'celvi' of this paragraph connotes not merely Koṛṛavai but multifarious Goddess Koṛṛavai-Durgā-Pārvatī-Umā as Śiva's divine spouse as the result of their syncretizing process.

- 25) Hart, *op. cit.*, p. 134f. (footnotes).
- 26) Kailasapathy says, "Also the relationship of Murukaṇ to Koṛṛavai, the old mother-goddess of the Tamils, mentioned in the poem [= *Tirumurukāṛruppaṭai*], points to an early religious tradition being embodied in it" (*op. cit.*, p. 36). However, we are skeptical about such a view for the above reason.
- 27) In this connection, see K.K. Pillay, *A Social History of the Tamils*, 2nd ed., Madras, 1969, p. 497, Gros remarks, "A la date du Pa [= *Paripāṭal*] la fusion [de Murukaṇ dravidian et Skanda-Kumāra aryan] est faite, et l'étude des rapports de Koṛṛavai et Murukaṇ est difficile, faute de texts..." (Gros, *op. cit.*, p. XLII). Such a statement is found to need reconsideration since the mother-son relationship of the two is not satisfactorily proved in older anthologies.
- 28) Hart, *op. cit.*, p. 24. The result of this identification was not only that some characteristics of Durgā were superimposed on Tamil Koṛṛavai, but also that some of the lineaments of Koṛṛavai were transferred to Durgā (cf. Renou et Filliozat, *op. cit.*, § 1074). In this context, it is noteworthy that the derivation of Skt. 'Koṭavī' and 'Koṭṭavī', the epithets of Durgā, from Tamil "Koṛṛavai" is suggested by an Indologist (Filliozat, *op. cit.*, pp. XXIX-XXXI). This derivation seems quite probable to us.
- 29) Zvelebil, *op. cit.*, p. 8
- 30) *Ibid.*, p.9
- 31) For the difficulty in establishing the dates of *Purāṇas*, see Renou et Filliozat, *op. cit.*, § 830. According to C. Dimmitt and J.A.B. van Buitenen, the compilation of the *Purāṇas* spanned the period from 300 to 1000 A.D. (*Classical Hindu Mythology*, Philadelphia, 1972, p. 3).
- 32) Cf. Hart, *op. cit.*, pp. 60-62.
- 33) Renou et Filliozat, *op. cit.* § 803.
- 34) Hart, *op. cit.*, p. 2.
- 35) The *Tirumurukāṛruppaṭai* was composed 250 A.D. or a little later, while the *Pāripāṭal* was compiled 400-500 A.D. or a little later.
- 36) Taking the mother-son relationship between Koṛṛavai and Murukaṇ for granted, Rajamanickam argues that Murukaṇ came to be understood as the son of Śiva and Umā (Rajamanickam, *Pattuppāṭṭu Ārāycci*, Madras, 1970., p. 381). Such a view needs to be revised.
- 37) Zvelebil, *op. cit.*, p. 9.
- 38) See, for example, the chapter two of his *The Cult of Skanda-Karttikeya in Ancient India*.
- 39) Cf. K.C. Kamalaiah, *Saiva Siddhanta*, vol. IX, July-Dec., 1974, p. 113.
- 40) See *Paripāṭal* VIII 2; Gros, *op. cit.*, p. 217.

ムルガンの誕生

——南インドの童子神ムルガンの出生譚の形成に関する一考察——

(山下博司・古坂紘一)

今日南インド・タミル地方^{ナード}の民衆の間で絶大な人気と信仰を集める童子神ムルガン（スブラマニヤ）には、その出生に関して一定の神話的説明が施され、一般にも広く信じられている。この神の誕生にまつわる纏まった記述は、タミル語の古典として知られるサンガム文献の後期の諸作品中に初めて現れるが、そこに見出される説話のプロットは、北方インドの軍神スカンダ（クマーラ、カールッティケーヤ）の出生譚の言わば一つのヴァリエーションとも呼ぶべきものであって、ムルガンの誕生説話が、南インド・ドラヴィダ世界に固有の文化的・宗教的伝統に根差したものであるというより、寧ろサンスクリット系のエピックやプラーナの甚大な影響のもとに形成されたものであることを強く示唆している。

同様のことは、ムルガン神の家族関係をめぐる神話的説明に関しても確認することができる。例えば、ムルガンとガネーシャ（ガナパティ）は兄弟をなし、共にシヴァ神の息子と信じられているが、シヴァの息子としてのガネーシャの初出は遅く、サンガム文献中では全く言及を受けない。ムルガンとシヴァ＝パールヴァティー、或いはコットラヴァイ女神との親子関係についても、後期に成立した一部の作品を除いて、サンガム文献にはそれを支持する積極的な証拠が欠如している。

これらの事実、ムルガン神の出生と家族関係をめぐる神話や一般の信仰が、概して、タミル地方が北方インドからの絶え間ない文化的影響を吸収・同化する過程で、数世紀にわたって徐々に成立・定着を見たものであることを暗示している。