

Mudal āzhwārs and the concept of Purushakāratvam of Srī

The *Nālāyira DivyaPrabhandam* comprising the four thousand sweet verses in Tamil by the twelve Āzhwārs Saints of TamilNādu is a special Tamil heritage of immense philosophic and literary value. It is accepted and treated as equal to the Védās and the Upanishads, the scriptures sacred to all Hindus. It is the loving experience of the Divine poured out in ecstatic poetry in the vernacular by the wise sages who revelled in the Divine and were immersed in the depths of the ocean of Divine Love. It inspired the great philosopher teacher Srī Rāmānuja (1017-1137 CE) to propound the Visishta Advaitam "the Qualified Non-Dualism".

The authors of this unique collection of poetry generally hailed from the region surrounding the major rivers (Cauvery, Tāmarabarani and Pālāru) coursing through Tamil Nādu. Although they were from different walks of life and lived at different times, their mystic experience and their philosophical views were quite unique and similar. For them the causal principle underlying all existence is Srīman Nārāyana (meaning the support and abode of all souls) with all glorious and auspicious attributes, the most important attribute being His Compassion personified in his chest as "Srī". All of the cosmos is like the body of the Lord and the Lord is the life and soul of the physical world. The unconditional compassion (*Nirhétuka Kripā*) of the Lord is the means for liberation and the Lord is thus the goal and the means to the goal.

The origin of the *Nālāyira Divya Prabhandam* can be traced to one eventful stormy night when three of the pioneers among the Āzhwārs, called the Mudal Āzhwārs, namely Srī Poikai Muni, Srī Bhūdat āzhwār and Srī Pei Āzhwār, met and came to share a common shelter from the storm in the confines of a narrow corridor (; A d k z i) at the entrance of a small house in the village called Thirukkōvalūr on the banks of Pennai river. Srī Poikai Āzhwār himself in his *Mudal Thiruvandhādhī* records this event.

nly æft iR nkQ rñiḷ bay a f.... kamr fpg Ekav l f
; A dkziEy pbbi y iḷ i (Mudal Thiruvandhādhī 86).

Thirukkōvalūr is one of the 108 *Divya desas* or holy shrines of the Lord. The Lord resident in this holy shrine is known as Trivikrama (Ulagamalandha Perumāl). The story pertains to the incarnation of the Lord as Vāmana when he came in the form of a celibate dwarf in order to repossess the worlds taken over from Indra, the chief of the celestials by the demon king Mahā Bali. Vāmana asked for three spaces as measured by his feet and when it was granted He changed His form to cosmic proportions (Trivikrama) and took the three giant strides to measure the worlds. This legend is well known. (t f ḷḷ iḷ pt æ3 v ickf Em "Trivikrama by three steps covered all the worlds" – Yajur Vēda – Ashta 2-8-16). The Lord is believed to have taken His abode in this holy *kshetra* (the holy place) acceding to the prayers of the sage Mrigandu in a bygone age.

On the stormy night in question when these three great devotees met, Lord Trivikrama from the local shrine along with His consort Srī (desiring to mingle with them) took His abode in their midst remaining invisible. All the three however felt a strange pressure in the small space and wondered who the intruder could be. Then the first among the three sages, Srī Poikai muni began singing the glory of the Lord as manifested in the cosmos lighting a lamp with the shining Sun as the flame, the Earth as the vessel and the surrounding oceans as the oil and offered it as a garland of one hundred verses in the *andhādhī* style.

A v y nft kq iy a v ækdḪ eny f y æk
ev y f y kt iEr aḷ fv iq k kækcf--- ecy f y
சுடராழியான் அடிக்கே சூட்டினேன் சொல்மாலை
இடராழி நீங்குகவே என்று

(Mudal Thiruvandhādhī 1)

This helped to dispel the outer darkness.

Then the second of the three sages, Srī Bhūdat Āzhwār lighted a lamp of knowledge (wāḷ cĀdrfv iq kĀ) with devotion as the base, love as the oil, the sweet mind as the wick and the knowing self as the shining flame offering all of them in the form of a garland of verses to the Lord again in a similar *andhadhi* style.

` [Ēp t kq iy a~ rfv Emeny f̄ ak
; [p̄R K cinĀ t ; Dt iriy a---- n[p̄R ki
wāḷ cĀdrfv iq kĀkbbiĒ [fnar] bĀ
wāḷ t f̄ mizfp̄inf̄ nāḷ f̄

(Irāndām Thiruvandhādhī 1)

This dispelled the inner darkness as well and the Lord could no longer remain invisible.

The third Āzhwār Srī Pei Āzhwār described the resulting Divine vision with another garland of one hundred verses beginning with the statement

t iR kĀ] Ēd[fepāḷ Ēm[ik] Ēd[ft ikZ mf̄
` R kĀ[f̄] inibMgfk] Ēd[f- ecR kĀiq R mf̄
epāḷ [azik] Ēd[fp̄ricgk̄gfĀ kĀkĀ] Ēd[f̄
' [[aziv]] [fp̄al i[B

(Mūndrām Thirivandhadhi 1)

"I saw Srī, the divine Mother first with my ocean like Lord. Then I saw His beautiful resplendent Form effulgent like the sun, with the dazzling discus fierce in battle in one hand and the curved conch in the other"

Srī Vénkata Nātha or Védanta Désika, the philosopher scholar of the 13th century CE, and the most famous āchārya of Srī Vaishnava tradition was inspired by this event and the works of these great and ancient Bhaktās (*ādhi Bhaktās*) to glorify the Lord who appeared in the narrow corridor in the threshold of a house (; A d kzi - Et 3h q l in Sanskrit) in the form of a *stōtra* called the "Srī Déhaleesa Stuti" (referred to by the author). He metaphorically characterizes their beatific vision in one of the verses.

kās ar pāṣṭv kv i Mkḥḥ v imf 3 j nra
p] j at EdX Hs ḥ4k3s ḥ rEs ap3h ḥ Et
t ḥ t ḥat 3 pt ḥm mT 4ni t ḥ t 3nḥ Epa4kḥEy
N|nms mācfy t i N|t n crḥkrat ḥ mf (7)

The metaphor is as follows. The Lord Trivikrama of Thirukkōvalūr is like the plush sugar cane growing on the banks of the river Pennar. The three great poets were great devotees who had no other desires except the sweet nectar of the Lord's lotus feet. When they were intensely expressing their devotion, they were like the three wheels in the sugar crane crusher, squeezing out the sweet sugar cane juice from the sugar cane. Thus came out the Lord's (es q Sll ḥ) *Sausheelya guna* (His gracious condescension). This resulted in the formation of a new form of sugar, like mixing honey with the sugar cane juice producing a rich and sweet experience of the Divine. This is a fascinating and apt description of what was revealed through Srī Pei Āzhwār in his *Mūndrām Thiruvandhādhi*. When the beatific vision of the Supreme Person Nārāyana was actualized, His inseparable Consort Srī was seen first in His golden Form.

Srī Poikai Pirān (! epay A k ~ z v arj):

Srī Poikai Pirān lived in the Dwāpara Age. He was the first of the Mudal Āzhwārs. He is said to have been born in a lotus flower in a pond (poikai) near t iR ev # ka (*Thiruvekha*) temple in *Kanchipuram*. He was the *amsa* (incarnation) of the *Pancha Janya* or the Conch of Srīman Nārāyana. His avatāra took place on t iR Ev a] mf (*Thiruvōnam Nakshatram*) in the month of _p̄pci (*Ippasi*) (Tula). His work Mt l f t iR v nf at i (*Mudal Thiruvandādhī*) like the similar works by his two companion Āzhwārs, is also set in the *andhādhī* style where the end word or the syllable of each verse becomes the beginning word of the succeeding verse. The end word of the hundredth verse becomes, in turn, the beginning of the first verse, making the hundred verses a true garland of verses. Āzhwār sees the *Purushōttama* (the Supreme Person) in the Lord of the seven hills, who is ever resident in the hearts of those who think of Him.

uq [k] flayfn[é[wEc ut f me[[B mf
uq [k] flayfuq Q v aR q t t ff q [fk] flayf
ev q t t f i{ q t a{ mfEv g kdt ff Emy a{ mf
uq t t f i{ q t a[f' [Ebarf 99.

"My good heart, The Supreme being is forever with us. He resides forever in the hearts of those who remember him. Know too, that He, who rests on the waves of the milk ocean and is present on the Vénkata hill, is forever there in the inner recesses of your being".

(1)

(1) Srī Poikai Āzhwār's Mudal Thiruvandhādhī . Text with free translation by Srī.N.Rajagopalan, 1999, Chennai, published by Srī.N.Rajagopalan

Srī Bhūdat Āzhwār (! p̄t f azv arj):

Srī Bhūdat Āzhwār was the second of the Mudal Āzhwārs. His avatāra took place in t iR k̄k̄dl f̄m̄ Āl (Mahābalipuram), the day after that of Srī Poikai Āzhwār namely on ` v id̄f̄m̄ (Avittam Nakshatram) in the Tula month. He was considered as the *amsa* (incarnation) of the Mace or *Gada* of Vishnu, born in a blue lilly. The work of this Āzhwār is ; r] f̄l̄m̄ t iR v n̄f̄ at i (Irādām Thiruvandādhī) which is a poetic piece of high literary beauty and depth.

The Āzhwār points to the grace of the Lord as the underlying cause of the entire spiritual process.

` R q f̄p̄r̄inf̄ cin̄Ā t ` Fy ar̄Ēm̄ f̄A v t f̄f̄
epaR q fet rin̄f̄ ka] Kbb v p̄ĒpaT - ; R q t irin̄f̄
EnakkiĒ [f̄EnakkinīA [n̄Ēt [f̄ T o] k̄m̄ m̄f̄
OkkiĒ [f̄ [Ā [y r̄f̄` ḡĒkar̄h̄f̄f̄ . (59)

"When the Lord cast His benevolent glance at us, His devotees, showering on us the grace of constant remembrance, making some substance out of mere straw, my ignorance dispelled, I looked closely at the reality of God and Self, and meditated on His Feet resembling the lotus flower. I then offered my soul to those feet without a thought of any other recourse". (2)

Srī Pei Āzhwār (! Epy az v ar j):

Srī Pei Āzhwār is considered an "amsa" of the Lord's Nandaka, the Sword of Srī Maha Vishnu. He was born in the Dwāpara age, in the Tula month in the asterism of Satabhishak. He is believed to have been born in a red lilly in a well that is attached to the ĀdhiKésava temple in Mylapore in Chennai. One can see that huge well even today where there is a temple garden. He was known as Bhrānta –Yōgi or Pei Āzhwār since he was intoxicated by love of God.

"Epy Er ' [kK y av R mf y aġ EmarfEpy Eġ ' v r kK mf..

Epy [ay fo z inĒt [f' nṙpir aġ kĒk " (Perumāl Thirumozhi 3-8).

"All people seem to my mind to be crazy, even as all consider me mad. I am content to be mad after the Lord".

His *bhakti* is considered "Supreme Devotion" or *Parama bhakti*. The *MūndrāmThiruvandhādhi* gives us a unique view of the Āzhwār's heart and his intense devotion. In several verses, he instructs actively his mind and heart to follow him in his worship of the Lord and His *kalyāna gunās*. All his sense organs follow his love of the Lord.

kaġ kæġ [v iR nṙṙfk] kq fkt iril K

pṙṙ ṙarkl t f aġ fepaġ Ēmġ i - paġ kdf

edazil fpaF v] ṙA by ṙfet agkl aġ f ecmṙepabf

kzI ṙaF y aṙfēt aZ T mfA k. (Mūndrām Thiruvandhādhi -35).

"My eyes hearken "See behold the golden frame of the Lord wearing dazzling jewels and garlands". Like the humming bees hovering around the garlands, my lips crave to sing in tune His glories and hands fold in prayer. Worship His crimson feet thus in all manner ". (3)

(3). Srī Pei Āzhwār 's Moonram Thiruvandhādhi . Text with free translation by. Srī. N.Rajagopalan,2004, Chennai, published by.N.Rajagopalan.

The uniqueness of the *Mūndrām Thiruvandhādhī* lies in the clear expression of *Srīyapatitvam* of the Lord as well as the *Purushakāratvam* of Srī.

Srī Poikai Pirān as well as Srī Bhūdat Āzhwār also indicate these in their works. In *Mudal Thiruvandhādhī*, Srī Poikai Pirān refers to *Srīyapatitvam* many a time, and declares, that the inner consciousness revolves around the Consort of Lakshmi,

epy R gfkR gkdEi EnakK māB o] p>
 uy R gfk t ir v E] EnakK mf-- uy iR mf
 t R mA [Ey EnakK mf- o] ft amA ry aq fEkq fv [f
 o R v A [Ey EnakK mf u] rfv < (Mudal Thiruvandhādhī -67)

"The river naturally flows towards the ocean with the surging waves. The beautiful lotus blossoms facing the rising sun in the sky. The life force looks for the deity of death at the end of life. Similarly the inner consciousness is naturally aware of the consort of Lakshmi residing in the lotus"

and those who worship Him find their way to liberation (MpppK A [cf
 cinf ipparKkil A | t iR māEi ni] [FA y v nf ipparfka] prfv zi –
 Mudal Thiruvandhādhī -75).

Srī Bhūdat Āzhwār refers to "Srī" in many verses in *Irاندām Thiruvandhādhī* and declares that the grace of Srī brings the vision of the golden Form of the Lord even before the Lord's own grace

ka] kfkzikat | fA kmikKkkadF [a f
 na] pfpDem [ba] fna} Em- Ep] ikf
 kR mA | pfepa [Em] ikadfaM [fkaDmf
 t iR mA | ngkq ft iR - (Irاندām Thiruvandhādhī -56)

"When intense desire to have vision of the Lord grows into a passion, how can one curb the same and appear not impatient. Even before the Lord chooses to bestow the vision of His golden Form, Srī the divine Mother will reveal that to us"

t iR mg Å k ni[bR Q mf et y v mfnav az f fl mf
kR mg fkA dp̄piFm[fk] Grf- ur iA my a f
" t f iE[anfp̄at mf; R nf dk Å k ' n Å t Eprf
nab̄biA cy g fEk d GER narf (Irāndām Thiruvandhādhi – 57)

Srī Pei Āzhwār however begins his *andhadhi* with a declaration at the very outset "t iR kk] Ed[ſepa[Em[i k] Ed[f. *He* first saw "Thiru" which stands for "Srī" in Tamil and then only he mentions that he saw the golden Form of the Lord. Srī Pei Āzhwār confirms Srī Bhūdat Āzhwār 's assertion stated above. Finally Srī Pei Āzhwār ends his *Mūndrām Thiruvandhādhi* indicating the easy accessibility of Srī Lakshmi's grace for us,

carv anrk̄k[B mfck̄krt f a[f t] Dzay f f
t arv azfv A rmar̄p[ft a[MygKmf- karar̄hf
v a[nR m[[iA rk̄Kmfv] ft amA r enDgk] f
Et [nR mfp̄Em̄ ft iR 100.

" The glorious mother Lakshmi is held close in His heart by the discus wielding Lord Who has the chest wide as the mountain adorned by the cool Tulasi garland. She is like the permanent lightning streak in the dense dark clouds in the skies. She has long beautiful lotus eyes and is seated on the honey laden lotus flower. She is our refuge now and for ever".

The concept of "Srī":

The concept of "Srī" in Visishta Advaitam has been extensively commented upon by eminent Vaishanava āchāryās including Yāmuna, Srī Rāmānuja, Parāsara Bhattar, Nanjiyar and Vénkata Natha. Srī Yāmuna sings the glory of "Srī" in four verses (*Chatustlōki*) and the stōtrās of other āchāryās more or less follow the idea from these. Srī Nanjiyar's commentary on Srī Sūktam is considered as an authoritative treatise. In the Dvaya Mantra Adhikāra of *Srīmad Rahasya Traya Sāram*, Srī Védanta Désika commenting on the meaning of Srīman Nārāyana quotes the following slōka (of Srī Arulāla Perumāl Emperumānār)

~ kar i] s fī v iw fw a[nf~ kar w a[pṛv krf

Et nakar nrs f iy nfw at fw a w at v Ey ap4k3v a[fh ri: "

"The knowledge of a qualified object is possible only through the attribute. So knowing first Srī who is an Ākāra or Vishéshana, the Ākāri or Vishéshya – the Lord is to be known".

He then gives six derivative meanings of the word "Srī" (*Shreeyathé* meaning She is sought, *Srayathé* meaning She seeks the Lord for the protection of the *jīvās*, *Srunōti* meaning She listens, *Srāvayathi* meaning She makes the Lord listen, *Srunāthi* meaning She destroys the faults of the devotees and *Sreenāthi* meaning She fills the worlds with her *gunās* which further illustrate her *Purushakāratvam*).

Srī or MahāLakshmi is co-eternal with the Lord and ever resident in the chest of the Lord. She not only acts to bring the grace of the Lord to the *jiva* but also actively helps in the redemption of the individual souls. In this role, She is considered as a compassionate mediator (*Purushakāra Bhūthai*).

The āchāryās point not only to the Védās but also to the Āzhwārs ' works as evidence or the *Pramāna* for this.

h f IS t Et | X fr IS t pt h éy q (*Purusha Sūkhtam* 2-6)

"For Thee, Bhū Dévi and Srī Dévi are two consorts" The second c (conjunction) indicates indirectly Neela Devi.

In *Srī Sūkhtam* we find Srī described as the Sovereign of all the souls (: cfv r l s rf p 4t anam). In Vishnu Purāna, the most authoritative among all the Puranas and so termed Purāna Ratnam (jewel among the Purānās), Srī is described as the divine mother who is eternal (nit fy), inseparable from the Lord (` n pay i| i) and all pervasive (s rf k 3t :).

Srī is the personification of compassion or *Daya*. Bhū represents Bhūmi Dévi who stands for forgiveness (*Kshamā*) and Neela Devi is of the nature of enchanting beauty and represents the Lord's *anubhava* – *sukham* and is also personification of forgiveness or *kshama*.

Āzhwārs 's verses also refer to all the three consorts of the Lord.

t iR nkQ nfm] frkQ mf~ y frkQ mfEcr h t a l f

(*Mudal Thiruvandhādhī* -42),

; [ff A] pf pT mt f t l r frkq f t [kKmf ; [p[f
nb p x it [kkiA bv [ft [ff A] ~ y r f paA v n p pi [A [t [kkiA b

(*Periya Thirumozhi* 2-3-5)

Srī Thirumazhisai Pirān addresses the Lord,

urt f iL mfoR t f i t [A [A v t ff uk n ff (*Thirucchandaviruttam* – 29), meaning "O' Lord, Thou art united with the divine mother Lakshmi

who for ever resides in Thy heart, "epaḷ paA v Ekq v a kiq eraq i' [f Ekcv Eḷ (Nānmukan Thiruvandhādhī -59) meaning "O' the Lord of Srī Lakshmi, whose halo adds lustre to Thee ". He further defines Brahman as the entity where Srī resides.

t iR niḷ b pkkmf t ibv iT ' [Ebararf kR niḷ bkl f arkf KA bpprft iR niḷ b marfv [f cirIt r[f (Nānmukan Thiruvandhādhī - 62).

Srī Parāsara Bhattar (1123-1151 CE) makes a similar statement,

` pag kaḅ pāy arEs a y T 3pri prmf pBrh fnt t t 3pāt f (Srī Gunaratna Kōsha -30) meaning whichever entity gets most of the grace of the divine mother Lakshmi that entity becomes Para Brahman. Thus, Srīman Nārāyana is Para Brahman since Srī resides in His heart.

Also Srī Nammāzhwār refers to Nārāyana as t iR mkq arft [ikEkq v [f in *Thiruvāimozhi* (1-6-9). He further points to the fact that her grace could remove the effects of the binding *karma* Ev ri mābat pEm iR ppaq f v iA [t lrkkEm (*Thiruvāimozhi* 4-5-11). Āzhwārs make it immensely clear that the divine couple is the supreme goal (*Prāpya pf apy*) for rendering eternal divine service and also they serve as the *Upāya* or the means. Her grace automatically brings the goal of eternal divine service t [may t aEḷ A kP Dmf (*Mudal Thiruvandhādhī* - 43). The famous *Saranāgati* verse by Srī Nammāzhwār ` kl kil Eḷ [f ; A by emḷ B ` l rEm fmg A k uA b marpa (*Thiruvāimozhi* 6-10-10), in the act of self surrender made to the Lord of Thiruvénkatam is considered by the Srī Vaishnava āchāryas as the most appropriate example to follow for spiritual aspirānts since it is made to the Lord of Srī invoking first the grace of Srī who is eternally resident in the chest of the Lord.

In the *Saranāgati Gadyam*, Srī Rāmānuja first humbly approaches the divine Mother Srī and after gaining her grace only makes his surrender to the Lord.

However, the very first expression of *Srīyapatitvam* and *Purushakāratvam* of Srī goes to Srī Pei Āzhwār . "T [[iy EprīR q f nlgk Ecat i Et a[b EcmMd[f enDmāAl kf ka] pṅkK t iR kḥ] Ed[f ' [v A rt f Et Ev " (Srī Védāntha Désika in *Prabhandha Sāram*).

When all ignorance vanished and the Divine Light began to shine, Srī Pei Āzhwār 's description of his direct perception of the Lord, (s aX at kart f m) of the Lord, revealed Srī first. As pointed out by the author, the state reached by Srī Pei Āzhwār is described by Srī Periavacchaan Pillai as the highest and the most mature state of *Parama Bhakti* resulting in "*Bhagavat svarūpa Sākshā kāratvam*" or direct perception of the Divine. In the words of Srī Periyavācchān Pillai, "kdAl kf k] dv[f ` t bKq Q] dā Mt ff mā] ikkāt ikA q t f [it f [i k] D ukkK māEpaEl " it is like the person who saw the ocean perceiving and enjoying all the pearls and the gems that are hidden in it.

Srī Pei Āzhwār points out to us from his own experience that the Lord's grace is assured for us (` R q æt aziEm~ l iAl Em f ` [B ...M[f verse 19) and He will take His abode in the minds of those who love Him and who think of Him. Āzhwār describes his own mind and heart as good since they were along with him in his path of love divine.

Mudal Āzhwārs and The Lord of Thiruvénkatam:

Srī Pei Āzhwār experiences the Lord as enshrined in the various holy shrines (*archa* Form of the Lord). Among these, however, the Lord of Thiruvénkatam appears to be his favourite, very similar to the other two of his companions in *Bhakti*. Srī Poikai Pirān sings on the Lord of Thiruvénkatam in at least 10 of the verses in the *Mudal Thiruvandhādhī* (v iA [cŌdA r nnf v ikKmf Ev gkdEm -verse 26; pZ et a] B mf v arat v]] Emv ij ēkaDkKmf]] q nf clra] ft iR Ev gkdmf-verse 76; ev q t f i] q t a] mf Ev gkdt f Emy a] mf u q t f i] q t a] f-verse 99) and Srī Bhūdat Āzhwār also is fond of Thiruvénkatam as seen in his verses in the *Irāndām Thiruvandhādhī* . (m] t f q t a] fEv gkdt f a] fmkdl a] f-verse 28; Ev gkdEmy arf v iR nprf ev b p <verse 53). Srī Pei Āzhwār on the other hand, refers to Thiruvénkatam in 19 of the 100 verses. Āzhwār confirms that the Lord of all, the inner controller of this earth, the all pervasive Lord, He from whom all the Védās emanated, the One who forms the meaning and the substance of the Védās, the Lord of the eternal realm, the Lord of Thiruvénkatam has taken His abode in His heart (piA bv ay hf ev q t f R v i v iq gēka inlf Ev gkdt f a] f u q t f i] { q E q u q [f-verse 39). It is of interest to note that Srī Thirumangai Āzhwār calls the Lord of Thiruvénkatam "ecnf nizf paDv arfv] gKmfEt v rf", referring to the Mudal Āzhwārs and their *Thiruvandhādhies*. (*Periya Thirumozhi* II-8-2). Srī Thirumangai Āzhwār refers here to Mudal Āzhwārs as "ecnf nizf paDv arf" admiring the literary beauty of their Tamil verses.

Āzhwār's words confidently reiterate the way the Lord was made captive in his heart where He began to reside continually without interruption. He states that he achieved this by a meticulous search guided by the bright lamp of knowledge of true understanding that the Lord is the way.

uyf f̄] rēv [f̄ mfo q iekəq fv iq kēkb̄bi
 Av t f v A [naF v A | p̄pDt ēt [f --- emt f [Ev
 ni[b̄a[f; Rnf a[fkidnt a[f' [ē[w̄ct f̄
 epa[b̄aA m̄r̄ay [fp̄k̄n̄f̄ –verse 94.

Such conviction and confidence expressed so succinctly arising from personal direct perception must have attracted the great Yōgi Srī Thirumazhisai Pirān. It is said that Srī Thirumazhisai Pirān, took to *Bhakti marga* being influenced by Srī Pei Āzhwār . The benedictory verse reads "epR k̄k̄Md[ft iR n̄ziA cp̄ir a[fet aZ Ev a[fv aZ iEy ". In fact one can see the *āchārya– sishya bhāva* in the shrine of ādhiKésava Perumāl in Mylapore even today between the two Āzhwārs depicting this association.

All the three *Thiruvandhādhies* by these ancient great souls expound the eternal Truth and shed bright light on superior devotion, true knowledge and afford the glimpses of that blissful *Bhagavatanubhavam* that they all felt. Perhaps for these reasons the first three *Thiruvandhādhies* are recited at the sanctum of the Lord of Thiruvénkatam on the day of the Kārthigai Deepam to represent the lights that they lit on that dark stormy night.

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