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# Retro Clothing in Tamil Sangha Literature

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**Abstract:** No one knows when man, who evolved from ape to man, tried to hide his dignity. For a long period of time in the long history of mankind, he lived like animals in mountain caves and tree branches as his abode. He hunted animals for food. He lived without any clothes like animals. In time, when he felt the need to hide his dignity, what he got as clothing were leaves, tree bark and animal skins. That habit continued with him for a long period of history. This practice continued with him even during the Sangha period. Sangha literature attests to it. Clothing is one of the basic human needs. That is why a man without clothes is referred to as a half-man. Clothing is a basic human need and a symbol of culture. No one knows when man learned how to spin yarn and weave clothes. Since thousands of years it happened. The Sangam texts show us the development of the cotton weaving industry during the Sangam period. There are many references to clothing in "Tamil" literature Udukai, cloth, garment, uduku, kupayam, meipai, pattudai, kalingam, saree, kachu, danai, padam were the words used to refer to clothing during the Sangam period. This review article focuses to explore these retro clothing's.

**Keywords:** Tamil, Sangha period, Clothing, Human.

## I. INTRODUCTION

There are literary, archaeological, epigraphic source of ancient Tamil history. The foremost among these sources is the Sangam literature, dated to 5<sup>th</sup> century the poems in Sangam literature contain different aspects of life and society in Tamilakam during this age; Clothing gives beauty to the body and is a pillar of well-being. "Clothes", which is central to the basic needs of "food, clothing, and shelter", give beauty to the body and protect the body from environmental conditions and external dirt. Cleanliness of clothing is one of what today's scientific doctors refer to as external cleanliness. "Clothing" is a sweet symbol of the combination of beauty and well-being, the first purpose of clothing that helps to protect the skin that covers the muscles and thereby prevent the deterioration of the internal organs, is essential for the purpose of well-being. Clothes made from natural materials like cotton and silk are capable of providing good health.

Cloths are defending one's sense of dignity, exaggerating beauty, preserving physical conditions appropriate to the climate, expressing one's sense of art, and highlighting one's self-improvement form the context for dressing. Tamils wear clothes according to the weather. Thus, people who used to wear fewer clothes are now wearing more clothes due to cultural mixing. The custom of women wearing men's clothes is seen in today's environment. Therefore, according to the political, economic and religious situations that occur from time to time, the clothes and dressing methods keep changing.

*"Eating can be according to one's will.*

*But dressing should be according to others' preferences".*

## II. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

### A. Natural Clothing

The Sangha literature speaks extensively about tree barks being worn as clothing and women wearing straw clothes. Sangha literature attests to women wearing leaves and flowers by intertwining them with maralnaar and nara naar. Nakkeerar tells the news of the leaves (the women dressed the leaves of the big cold beauty that the beetles touched to eat honey by placing the kanjangullai (cannabis) on the head of the leaves and the gray bouquets of the leaves and the silver bunches of the marathun with the red feet in the middle). "The lady along with her friend collected 99 different kinds of flowers from the forest and piled them on a rock and removed their outer stamens and wore them as a wide leaf dress like the image of a snake," says Kabila in the note. Literature tells us that women used to wear leaves and skins to hide their modesty during the period when people lived in communal society.<sup>(1)</sup>

During the Sangam period, women used to wear natural clothing such as thayudai, marauri and woven clothes made of cotton or silk. The Kuramas wore a dress of large beautiful leaves interspersed with bunches of mango trees and surrounded by small bouquets of leaves.<sup>(2)</sup>

### B. Find Fibres

Cotton was grown on the lands surrounding the town in the Mullai land. They collected the cotton that had grown on the cotton plant and burst it, packed it in sacks and brought it to their homes. Purananuru (393) refers to this message as “bundle full of summer cotton”. The poet Nalliraiyanar describes the action of Killivalavan feeding and eating the rice that was prayed for as a gift, and the act of stuffing cotton in sacks. He has sung with the words of Kinaiporunan, “He gave and ate pieces of silver grass as if the panchi, which had been removed from the summer cotton and had removed the nuts, was full of goods packed with a lot”.

The poet Nalliraiyanar describes the action of Killivalavan feeding and eating the rice that was prayed for as a gift, and the act of stuffing cotton in sacks. He has sung with the words of Kinaiporunan, "He gave and ate pieces of silver grass as if the panchi, which had been removed from the summer cotton and had removed the nuts, was full of goods packed with a lot." Narita (299) states that 'the punch obtained from the bursting of cotton was beaten with a bow. The women did the work of removing gins from the cotton, ginning, cleaning with a bow, spinning, etc. Those women were called 'cotton girls'. Women did these jobs not only during the day, but also at night with a lamp for long hours. This,

*“The prison is in a state of flux Description of cotton ginseng fire*

(The light of the small lamp of the cotton needle and Pentati, which stood up to sweep away the pages and rubbish) and four hundred verses (326)

Conjunctions (353) also convey clarity.

*“With the tips of the fine multi-pointed cotton, Kaival Magaduu can make one work by his majesty, the thread of the world is one hundred and four”*

Says the divine Kalaviya Sutra commentator on women's threading from cotton. Purananuru says that this is “Cotton Pendar Banuval” (Cotton thread and cotton thread are fine cotton). Enslaved men and women did these jobs day and night for the luxurious and comfortable life of men in the slave society. So their cottage yard was covered with fluff. About this, Purananun (116) says, ‘Panji Munrill Chitil’ (Panju is a large yarded chitil).

Garments were woven from yarn spun from cotton. They were called ‘Nun Poongalingam’ due to the fineness and softness of the clothes. They were called Kalinga because the clothes were imported from the country of Kalinga. Literature also says that silk came from China and cotton clothes from Kalinga to Tamil Nadu.<sup>(1)</sup>

### C. Wet Processing

This news has been told earlier that Purananuru says that (the clothes that are washed and bleached by digging the rind from the black land every day). “Cleanse it and dip it in glue”. By removing the title Priyap Baru Uthri for water. (She smeared the clothes with glue and twisted them like a big rope and dragged them into the pond) Madurai Kanji (721) says, “Soromaivura Neerudaik Kalingam”. The story goes that during the festival days, Pulaythi used to bleach a lot of clothes for the birds. For bleached clothes, do not smoke.

### D. Garment

Sangha literature speaks of the softness and fineness of the garments as ‘Thirumalaranna Pudu Madi’ (Broad flower-like garment) (a garment shaped like a snake's skin, with a bamboo-like skin, with an indiscernible sequence of woven threads). Purananaru (274) says ‘neelakachaip poovaradai’ (cloth made of blue flowers). Thirumurukattuppa (15) says that ‘Kopathanna thoyaap poonthukil’ (the natural red colour of the flower that does not match Indra's anger). The book (138) further speaks of the softness and purity of the clothes worn by the Selvars as ‘pugai mukandanna maasil thooudai’ (pure clothes that do not get soiled by the smell of smoke). The Sangha literature speaks in detail about the softness and elegance of the clothes worn by the Andas and the beautiful floral embroidery on them. They also refer to the news that the clothes were dipped in colours like blue. It is reported that the rich and the kings themselves wore fine patata is with beautiful designs and gave them as gifts to the poets who sang their praises.<sup>(1)</sup>

## III. RETRO CLOTHING

### A. Tribal

It is the general opinion of the people. Living in the Nilgiris, the Todar people dress in a way of wrapping clothes from the neck to the ankles. But, “a section of the tribal people living in the Andaman regions wear a single fiber band tied around the waist as a mane at birth”. (Types of Dress in Tamil Literature P.94).

Meera said. Mukaidin mentions. From this, it can be seen that in the same period, there is a group of people who cover their whole body and wear clothes, while another group hides the opposite.



From the literary records of the poets we can know what clothes the people of that time wore. But although it is not clear how they were dressed, it is possible to know to some extent through the literature that recorded the clothes. Clothes are used to represent the place worn by men and women to reveal the place they hide. Through these we can know which parts of the body were used to cover the clothes.

*“Arimadar plowed by Alkhubatar is the rain eye  
Balbum is the enemy of the leaf, and Alkul” (Story 8).*

*“To bury a breast with foam and foam” (Perungatha 2.5.86).* In the above steps, thala cloth is used to cover the waist area and Kalingam is used to cover the chest area. It can be known that one can know whether the poets wore clothes or fought by the verbs they record in the literature. Thus; Verbs such as tai, udee, wear, setu, wrap, hide, surround, surround, correct, sathi, carry is formed.

- The verbs covered and covered refer to cover. Verbs such as encompassed, modified, etc. denote superposition.
- Kacha, kachai refers to fitted clothes.
- All these forms are still in use today. <sup>(3)</sup>

### B. King's Clothes

Every literature record different types of clothes worn by the king. Thus the Sangha literature mentions Kalingam, Padam, Dukil, Serar and Kachu as the clothes of the king.

Dukil, Kalingam: The rich and the kings used to wear a type of clothing called 'Dukil'. The types of clothing of that time were also used to express pleasures and pains. Wives at the time of separation from their husbands used to express their grief by wearing Kalinga embroidered with maseriya thread. She and her husband expressed their happiness by wearing a 'thugila' with floral designs. <sup>(2)</sup>

The Perungatha mentions the clothes of the king as Dukil, Kachai, Vadagam and Meekhol. Chintamani mentions silk, white silk, vattudai, silk, fur. So, in each period, it is possible to know that the names of the clothes have been placed in different ways.

During the Sangam era, the king wore clothes that fell to the ground. It must have made him proud in some way to wear it like that. Way. Says Cha. To prove this “The double-edged scroll” (Patripattu 34-3) And always “The earth-builder Tugilinan built of wood” (Thirumurugu 214).

The steps are explained. The king wears dukilin as a top. Apart from that, he is holding the clothes falling on the ground in his right hand. “Idavai’s talisman in Pudaiveel Andukil” (Nedunalvadai 181) Nedunalvadai mentions that. However, today there is a change. When men wear dhoti, shirt and turban, they put the turban on the left side of the shoulder. This may be a remnant of the tradition of that time. Common people may have used the turban as the king carried his turban in his hand or slung it over his left shoulder.

### C. Warriors' Clothes

Sangam literature shows that girdle, armor etc. were the common clothes of warriors. “The girdle of subtlety is reluctant” (Kurinchippattu 125). Armor is a protective suit worn by a warrior to cover his entire body. Also, the soldiers also used unique armors for certain parts of the body. It is referred to as “Meipuku Kavagam” by Silampu and “Kalasodu Chama Erindu” by Sivakasintamani. It was the custom of the time to call the clothes of the bodyguards as Kanjugams and the warriors who wear them as Kanjuka Magas. This, “Minnudai Vedithirak Kaiyar Meipugath

*“Tunnidu Kanjukathukilar”*

You can know the song of Kambaramayana.

### D. Sage and Monk Robes

Sages are referred to as tree-huggers from Sangha literature. They used deer and tiger skins as clothing. This, Thirumuru Air Force

*“The Deer Skinners”*

Indicates that when referring to the clothes worn by monks who did not like worldly life, they wore saffron clothes. Some monks also wore white robes. Sangha literature mentions that Buddhist monks also wore saffron robes.

### E. Civilian Clothing

They can be divided into two categories as high class people and low class people. When we look at high status people, we can refer to five land leaders, rich people, people related to the king. Inferior people can refer to marginalized people like margaritas, hunters and thieves.

#### F. High End People Wear

Their clothes are called Kalingam, Kalashakam, Koara, Meippai, Porvai, Uttariyam etc. The Antanas were dressed in period clothes. Merchants were dressed like kings. Kovalan, the son of Silapathikaram Perunidhijivan, refers to the clothes he wears as korai. A goldsmith who plays a flute is interpreted as a bag of truth. These have been recorded by Ilangovadilar. In Purungathi, accountants and departmental workers wore blankets, a type of clothing.

*“Lie down and wrap the blanket*

*Nilandhoi Puduthanedu Nunnadaiyar” (Great Story)*

It can be known by the steps.

#### G. Low Class People's Clothes

References to the clothing of the common people, the lower classes, have also been recorded in the literature. The Sangha literature records the attire of the Kurama as Maranar Udukkai. Chintamani has registered this dress as a hunter's dress. Mentions Masunudukaki and Karunduvaram as the attires of the Adiaris. Sangha literature records that Einars and Kalvas wore sentuvaradai and nilakachadai. Dukhil, Kalingam, Kachai, Thajayadai and Vambu are mentioned as the clothes of lower-class women. Sangha literature suggests that they had dress patterns similar to those of high-class women.

#### H. Men's Clothing

Men's clothing can be classified into several categories such as king, warrior, monk, pauper.

#### I. Women's Clothing

Similar to men's clothes, women also wore many different types of clothes, such as Poontukil, Kalingam, Kodi Mandukil, etc. Like the king, his wives were dressed to the ground. That they were wearing kach and top

*“A million micro-organisms harvested”*

The epic story of Ft. Also, there are references to women wrapping their bodies in unstitched cloth. This,

*“Kavab will turn blue when exposed to sunlight*

*Pudunoo Poonthukilurumadiutee” (Great Story)* It can be known by the steps.<sup>(3)</sup>

### IV. CONCLUSION

This review study points out that the different types of clothes that have a place in the life of Tamils today are meant only for the sense of beauty. If we examine the types of 'clothes' that prevailed in Palandamizhar life through Sangha literature, we can know that they were Clothing gives beauty to the body and is a pillar of well-being. “Clothes”, which is central to the basic needs of “food, clothing, and shelter”, give beauty to the body and protect the body from environmental conditions and external dirt. The slogan ‘Kandha Naal Kakhaki Bandtu’ emphasizes the cleanliness of clothes. ‘Clothing’ is a sweet symbol of the combination of beauty and well-being, the first purpose of clothing that helps to protect the skin that covers the muscles and thereby prevents the deterioration of the internal organs, is essential for the purpose of well-being. Clothes made from natural materials like cotton and silk are capable of providing good health.

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