

Dr. Shuddhananda  
Bharati

*Veera Thevan*

The history of *Veeraththevan* gives  
greatness to the history of  
Tamil Nadu itself

Veeraththevan



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## Introduction

Where Periya Marudhu was, Veeraththevan was there. If Periya Marudhu said 'Hoom', Veeraththevan would respond 'Yes' and get into action. For the revolution of the Maravas that arose in Tamil Nadu, Veeraththevan was like the right hand. The history of *Veeraththevan* gives greatness to the history of Tamil Nadu itself.

In my younger days, I used to go to Sivagangai Palace quite often. There I read my lessons with my school friend, Velu Durai, at night. At that time, there was a noble warrior in the Palace. His name was Delhi Paachchaa Thevar. He was of youthful build. Fair in complexion, steep shoulders, strong hand muscles born out of dumbbell exercises, twisted stiff moustache, tiger look, sweet talk, Maravas dynasty quality, Tamil civilization – all these aptly describe Delhi Paachchaa Thevar. He narrated in an interesting manner the story of the revolutionary leaders who fought for the freedom of Tamil Nadu. He narrated the stories of Periya Marudhu and Chinna Marudhu with emotion. More than anything else, he narrated the story of *Veeraththevan*. On hearing that story again and again, my mind became enthusiastic. An elderly woman named Aavaarankaattu Paatti of the Marava dynasty who had seen Veeraththevan told me several rare stories. An opportunity came for showing *Veeraththevan* to the world. Our people's hearts that have read and enjoyed Alexander Dumas, Victor Hugo and Sir Walter Scott's novels will get heroic thrills if they hear of *Veeraththevan's* life. People

who have read Bankim Chandra's book<sup>1</sup> *Anandamath* and Durga Rani will certainly enjoy *Veeraththevan's* story. Though thousands of Tamil hero gems shone in Tamil history, the world knows only a few. Some heroes of the Cheras, Chozhas (Cholas) and Pandiyas, and some heroes of Puranaanooru, shone countrywide and found their mention in books. There are many valorous lions that shone, hidden behind the curtain of time. Among them, *Veeraththevan* is an incomparable one. Tamil people should know about him; the world should learn about him. The West praises sky-high bandits with big hearts like Robin Hood<sup>2</sup> and Tim Drake<sup>3</sup>. They created stories with Robin Hood as the hero. The novelist Sir Walter Scott had woven a serial story called *Ivanhoe* based on Robin Hood. Let us also weave a serial story based on the life of *Veeraththevan* and present it to the world.

Yogi Shuddhananda Bharati

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<sup>1</sup> Bankim Chandra's respected book *Anandamath* (pronounced Anandomôh in Bengali), published in 1882.

<sup>2</sup> Robin Hood is a heroic outlaw in English folklore who, according to legend, was a highly skilled archer and swordsman. Hero in the book *Ivanhoe* by Sir Walter Scott.

<sup>3</sup> Batman.

## Preface

This novel, '*Veeraththevan*', one of the several novels of Swami Shuddhananda Bharati, delineates the events related to the freedom struggle of brave Tamils in the Pandiya kingdom in the form of a story. The avid readers and fans of Dr. Shuddhananda Bharati, who swam in the waters of his brilliant poetic flow in his books like *The Essence of Religion*, *Kummy Folk Dance: The History of our Country India*, *The Arrival of Buddha* and many others, are treated to Swami's gripping narration of a story in this novel entitled *Veeraththevan*, the story of the heroes of the Marava dynasty who fearlessly opposed the East India Company's domination and their capture of the country of India, and of the sacrifices, turmoil and tribulations the Maravas were subjected to in their quest for freedom and in their relentless guarding of the rights of the country.

With apt and striking chapter headings, the story is woven in a flowing style, eulogising valour, heroism and the tactical war methodologies of the Pandiya Kingdom in the eighteenth century. Humour is interspersed into the narration in a piquant manner. The action of the terrible war in which the King Vadugunadhar Durai and the Marudhu brothers belonging to the Marava dynasty were engaged is brought out by Shuddhananda Bharati in an elegant manner, given atmosphere by a number of action sounds too! The scenes, the Palace, the festivities, local fervour and charm are all conjured up before our eyes by Swami in this historical novel.

*Veeraththevan*, the hero of this novel is very well portrayed in several dimensions. In the opening chapter, the protagonist is introduced in a wrestling bout. The monstrous foreign wrestler's haughtiness, his burly figure, *Veeraththevan's* swift and elegant moves to counter and to fight the wrestler, huge in size, are all captured by Dr. Shuddhananda Bharati in a unique style. The heroics of *Veeraththevan*, the several roles he plays, his manoeuvres, tactics and strategies which played a big part in keeping the East India Company Army baffled and stunned are all narrated in a gripping manner and are the highlights of this novel.

Juxtaposed with the easy flow of the story are the poems interspersed at appropriate situations. Dr. Shuddhananda Bharati's rich knowledge of the Tamil culture, of the Tamil poetries, of the customs and traditions of the Royal family, of the festivities and of the intense devotion to Lord Muruga can be vividly seen throughout.

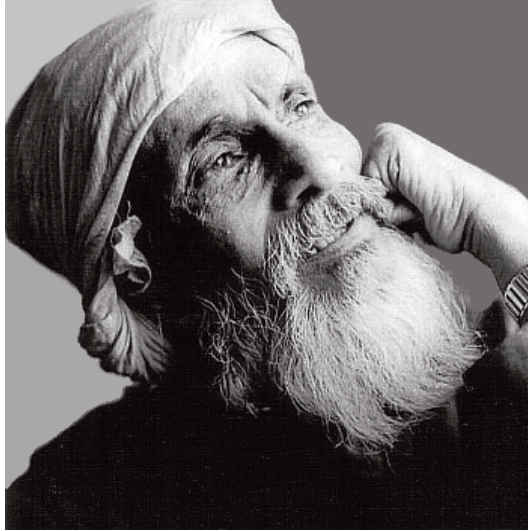
Through this poignant story, in a devoted and dedicated fashion, Swami Shuddhananda Bharati will definitely touch the hearts of all Indians filled with love for their country and make them shed at least a tear or two when they read about the sufferings the people of the country underwent in their struggle against foreign domination. Feelings of patriotism will glow in every Indian reader who gets a chance to read this novel. Every reader who reads it will get an insight into the selfless sacrifice of the patriotic and courageous heroes of Tamil Nadu.

It is because of the dedicated service rendered by Sri Christian Piaget of the Editions ASSA, Switzerland (Aum

Shuddha Shakti Aum) towards the noble task of spreading the message of the great Saint Shuddhananda Bharati that his great works in Tamil are being made available in English language so that the Swami's works and messages can be spread throughout the world.

To be assigned the job of translating a historical novel like this, wherein the scenes of patriotic emotions of the heroes of Bharat are so assiduously penned by the revered Kavi Yogi, is this translator's privilege!

Srinivasa Rao Nagaraja Kumar



Swami Shuddhananda Bharati

*There is but one God for the whole world  
All bodies are but temples of God*

## Editor's Notes

It is always with great respect and surprise for me to read and recognize the immense knowledge of Dr. Shuddhananda Bharati, mostly about the history of the world, India and Tamil Nadu more precisely.

The whole of his work can be considered as a summary of 5,000 years of history, world history, its evolution, and its vision of Maharishi, identical to the first Rishis who wrote the *Vedas*.

Kavi Yogi Maharishi Dr. Shuddhananda Bharati is one of the great men passing on earth, bringing his peace and light for the harmonious development of mankind.

About the meaning of *Veeraththevan*, from the translator:

“Though Viradevan or Veradevan, if transliterated, will also appear as வீரத்தேவன், the word ‘Devan’ in Tamil means divine, whereas ‘Thevar’ or ‘Thevan’ refers to the Thevars of the Marava dynasty belonging to Tamil Nadu. Therefore, the word ‘Thevan’ is more appropriate and is generally used in most forms of writings. I used ‘th’ in between so that people who are not familiar with Tamil will not read it as வீர தேவன் (leaving out the ‘த்’) if I write Veera Thevan. Dr. Shuddhananda Bharati has written வீரத்தேவன் as one word. So I have written it as *Veeraththevan*, one word. It would not be wrong to write it as ‘Veera Thevan’ too, if so desired.”

A warm thank you to M. Kumar Srinivasa Nagaraja Rao for this beautiful translation and for the preface and to Phyl Stewart for her help on the preparation of this book.



Also special thanks to my friend A V Ilango for his presence at my side and his valuable support. It is a great joy and happiness to have the chance to know A V Ilango in Chennai, renowned painter and sculptor. I met him some years ago in Chennai, we both keep a wonderful memory of a beautiful meditation. Ties of friendships have been created and A V Ilango participated in various paintings of Shakti to achieve a major work of Shuddhananda Bharati, his Magnum Opus, *Bharata Shakti* and for this work the paintings of *Veeraththevan*. He is the founder of Ilango's Artspace Pvt. Ltd.

It is a real pleasure for me to present you *Veeraththevan* . Thank you to Dr. Shuddhananda Bharati for having transmitted *Veeraththevan* to us.

With the blessing of *Aum Shuddha Shakti Aum*.

Christian Piaget

## Courage!

*The night is through,  
The chain of slavery  
It is already broken -  
I am full of courage!*

*Peace in the morning,  
A golden sun rises  
Like a lion superhuman  
To accomplish my dream.*

*A hopeful smile,  
Docile as a child  
Who plays in the infinite  
With a fiery star.*

*My journey is over;  
I enjoy time;  
The universe is my nest;  
Of eternal spring.*

## Peace Anthem

*Peace for all, peace for all  
For all the countries peace  
Joy for all, joy for all  
For all the nations joy  
A rosy morning peace  
A smiling summer joy (Peace for all)*

*All for each and each for all  
This is the golden rule  
Life and Light and Love for all  
For all that live our love (Peace for all)*

*Work and food and clothes for all  
Equal status for all  
Health and home and school for all  
A happy world for all (Peace for all)*

*No idle rich, no more beggars  
All are equal workers  
No more tears, no more fears  
The heart is full of cheers (Peace for all)*

*No atom scare, no fat mammon  
No room for war demon  
Like leaves in trees, like rays in the sun  
We are one communion,  
One Divine communion (Peace for all)*

*The good in you is good for all  
Your life is life for all  
The God in you is God for all  
Your love is love for all (Peace for all)*

*For he or she or it or rest  
This collective life is best  
This Universal Life is best  
North or South, or East or West (Peace for all)*

*Peace for plants and birds and beasts  
For hills and streams and woods  
Peace in Home - land and air and sea  
Dynamic peace we see*

*Peace for all, peace for all*

*Immortal Peace for All*

## Song of Unity

*Unite. Unite, Unite, Oh Souls  
Unite and play your roles  
Unite in mind, unite in heart  
Unite in whole, unite in part  
Like words and tunes and sense in song  
Let East and West unite and live long  
Trees are many; the grove is one  
Branches are many; tree is one  
Shores are many; sea is one  
Limbs are many; body is one  
Bodies are many; self is one  
Stars are many; sky is one  
Flowers are many; honey is one  
Pages are many; book is one  
Thoughts are many; thinker is one  
Tastes are many; taster is one  
Actors are many; the drama is one  
Nations are many; the world is one  
Religions are many; Truth is one  
The wise are many; Wisdom is one  
Beings are many; breath is one  
Classes are many; college is one  
Find out this One behind the many  
Then life shall enjoy peaceful harmony*

# Presentation of Dr. Shuddhananda Bharati

11<sup>th</sup> May 1897 – 7<sup>th</sup> March 1990

## The wise one to the cosmic age

Although more than 90 years old, *Kavi Yogi Maharishi* (great divine visionary, wise poet), Dr. Shuddhananda Bharati worked like a young man of twenty in his school in the south of India. When he was asked his age, he answered: "My age is Courage!" The Yogi wrote several hundred works in English, French, Tamil, Hindi, Telugu and Sanskrit; five thousand songs, and fifteen hundred poems in French. The magnum opus of the man conscious of the presence of God in him, *Bharata Shakti*, (in 50,000 verses) described his ideal: only One Humanity living in communion with only One God in a transformed world! *Bharata Shakti* is a monumental and unique work. The Yogi depicts the essence of all the religions, of all the prophets and saints, all the approaches of yoga and all the cultures on an allegorical fabric. It is a book for any age which all spiritual researchers and all nations should read and meditate on. His commitment is summarized in his book celebrating his life, *Pilgrim Soul*. The three poems mentioned in the opening express perfectly his ideal. His mantra, *Aum Shuddha Shakti Aum*, nourishes our souls and guides our steps towards the inner joy *Ananda*. It means: The light of Grace and power of the pure supreme Almighty bless us of peace, happiness and prosperity! Let the beauty and greatness of the soul of Dr. Bharati Shuddhananda bloom and perfume the entire Earth of his divine message and his spiritual and unifying benefactor!

Editions ASSA





*Veeraththevan*, painting from A V Ilango



*Veeraththevan*, painting from A V Ilango





Yogi Shuddhananda Bharati

# *Veeraththevan*

## 1. Well done, Hero!

On the huge grounds of the Palace, a competition of valour is taking place. The ground is decorated with suspended festoons made out of mango leaves, tender coconut shoots and colourful flags to indicate which section is for which game. Valiant heroes are coming in long lines like lion herds and taking their space in the seats allotted to them. Apart from the heroes from Maravas, heroes from other countries also have come for the competition. People in large numbers are seated in the galleries to watch the valouros games. The women are watching the fun from the storied portions of the Palace.

Whenever a hero comes, the blowing horns sound 'bhoom, bhoom'. The drums beat 'dum, dunuk, dunuk'; when they play, the jambai keeps time, making a roaring noise in the band.

Some heroes are engaged in sword fighting. Some go around brandishing and flashing the coiling sword repeatedly. Some show their quarter staff swings. Some fight with battle axes and spears. Some are patting their shoulders as they wrestle. Watching these, the King stood and started twisting his moustache. At this time, one strong wrestler from the North called Malla Rasa appeared. Looking at the King, he spoke of his greatness and boasted that no one could wrestle with him and win. Malla Rasa was strong, fat, with hardened thick skin

grown gigantic in size with haughtiness. Eggs, meat , butter,milk, curd and badam had grown his flesh like that?. His eyes were as big as the eyes of a buffalo. His look was a tiger's look. His moustache was long like a sword on both sides. His extended teeth pierced his lips. His eyes and moustache were intimidating people. His hands were undesirably brisk, wanting to hit someone. The part below his hip was bulging across like the Muniyaandi of Iyanar Temple, competing with a pumpkin. Seeing his monstrous figure, all wrestlers became afraid. No one tapped his shoulders and entered the arena to wrestle with him.

The King was disappointed. With fire emitting from his eyes, twisting his moustache, the King looked at the gathering and asked "Is there no Marava hero to challenge this wrestler?"

Everyone stood bewildered in the playground of courage . With fiery eyes, the King looked around again and said, "If there is not a single person to give a fight to this wrestler, why should we perform Marava's occupation? Why should we stand before the world as heroes? "

One young man stood up, tucking up his cloth. Tapping his shoulder, which sent vibrations in all directions, and coming before the King, bowing he said, "I will make this wrestler a nothing. Please give your command." The King looked at him. He doubted how this leanly built young man sporting a thin moustache would compete against the monstrous figure. Periya Marudhu whispered something into his ear. The King commanded.

“O Wrestler. Is there any number of hefty wrestlers in our kingdom to fight against you? then, first you must answer this young man” said the King.

The big wrestler looked, laughed out loudly and called with contempt: “O, little chick. Come on.” The young man tapped his shoulders with a “tup, tup” sound. Then he tapped his thighs, caught hold of his hand and shook it violently. Next, he caught hold of his armpit and pressed it hard, leaping between his legs and giving a kick to the thigh. The fat wrestler swung his leg to crush him in one shot. In a flash, the young man escaped and came behind the monstrous wrestler and gave him a kick to the waist. The wrestler fell on his back. Saying “Not fallen on the face,” he got up and jumped on the young man, trying to bite him like a tender cucumber piece. The young man, running in quick circles, going here and there, wriggled out and jumped around all the four corners of the ring. The hefty wrestler became tired. With sweat dripping profusely, breathing heavily, his moustache trembling and anger simmering, pushing forward his entire weight, he jumped to crush the young hero. Because of the kick he got on his hip, he could not jump freely. The young man, leaping and gripping him, pressing hard against his thigh, stamping on his chest, pushed him down suddenly and climbed on to him, sat on him, pulling at both ends of the proudly twisted moustache, like pulling the tail of a squirrel.

The assembled gathering went into raptures. “Well done, hero,” said the King. Trumpets sounded the achievement of victory. Thundering sounds of drums hit the sky. Malla

Rasa slowly got up; bending his back slowly and holding his hip, he staggered away. Heaving a heavy breath, he said "I will never come again to the boundary of Marava country".

The King presented a sword to the valorous young man. Saying "Well done, Hero," he presented the award. The King asked "O young man who saved the dignity of Maravas, what is your name?"

Young man: O King! My name is *Veeraththevan*.

King: You are the great hero. Who is your father? Who is your mother?

Youth: I have not seen my parents. Marudhu Servai who is standing here is my foster Father.

King: O Periya Marudhu! All these days, why didn't you show this youth to us?

Periya Marudhu: Instead of me showing him, let his valour itself show him. I stayed back.

King: I am very glad. What are this sword hero's birth and greatness?

Periya Marudhu: O King! He is the son of a great hero called Sasi Varna Thevan (One of the Kings of Marava dynasty). Valli Nachchiar's son. Sasi Varna Thevan lost his life in the Ramanathapuram battle. His mother was a devoted wife. She took her life after the loss of her husband. Like Pandiyamadevi,

Nedunchezhiyan's Queen, Valli Nachchiar<sup>4</sup> also became a chaste wife Goddess. The baby became an orphan. My brother and I brought him up. We got the job of carrying the betel box for the King. We got the responsibility of looking after the hunting dogs. If a job is available with the King for this young boy also, it would be marvelous.

King: Fine, Marudhu! You have done a great job. Give the hunting dogs to him. May all of you be of support to me for my valorous actions and hunting actions.

"O King! The foreign devil is more important than the hunting dogs. For that, we will be of great support" said the youth, bowing to the King and raising his sword. Wishing the youth well, the King blessed him with a garland made of fragrant wood, presented him with a coloured dhoti, gave him a bag of money and honoured the young man. From that day onwards, *Veeraththevan* started his life as a great hero. The King Vadugunadha Durai also gave him training.

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<sup>4</sup> Valli - Valli Nachchiar, the wife of the brave warrior Sasivarnam who gave his life in the Ramanathapuram battle. When her husband died, Valli Nachchiar also ended her life. She is the mother of Veera Thevan, the hero of this novel.

## 2. The milk of valour that Bharat fed

During that period, in the country during, war clouds hovered over everywhere. Darkness encircled Indian lives; Turkish ruling could be felt in the blood coloured red sky. The domination of Nawabs was fading . The strength of our people also was deeply affected. The English flag rose and theirritation of Englishmen increased. Robberies abounded. The decayed sena of the Nawab joining with the East Indian Company Whites itself began collecting heavy taxes.

The Whites sent the Nawab's army in the front uttering "Go-go-do, collect funds, bring money". They also followed them. If the fight intensified, those who were falling prey to the bullets were our local people. Those who installed their flags and made profits were the Whites; those who toiled were our people; the Whites were the ones amassing wealth. After dividing and setting to make them quarrel and story teling to create even more division , those who made our people fight with our own people were the Whites. The heads that were broken were the heads of our people. Entering in between, working cunningly on both sides and leaping like tigers were the Whites; our people shedding blood standing there , bewildered. The Whites threatened our people with our own people.

From 1748, the pillaging by Whites increased in Tamil Nadu. The pillage by Chanda Saheb and Umdat Umar made our people lean and weak. Immediately the raiding of Colonel Smith and of Jackson happened at gunpoint...

scenting money, the Europeans crowded in. In front of a house, the White would say "Give ten thousand." If they said "Pity the poor," he would say "Set the house on fire "... Come on, plunder..." To carry out his command exactly word by word, a hundred Indian slaves would be there behind him. Out of this hundred, some four could have joined and thrashed the White man. No one dared to ask "Hey! You! Why are you plundering our people? Who are you to ask for our belongings? Get out!" Therefore, the foreigners grew bolder. Our people, as cowardly slaves, burying their dignity in their stomach, singing praise of the bread pieces that dropped from the tables of the Englishmen, became blinded slaves.

Is there no one to guard dignity? Did no one come forward to chest beat saying the country where we live is our right? Wasn't there any hero to rise and say "O you White foreigner! Get out!" Mother India cried. "Isn't there a strong person to show a sword to the Whites who are tying the people?" All of North India became slaves. There Clive and Warren and Cornwallis and Wellesley and Bentinck and cunning scraping again and again put the country under the governance of the Whites, applied red and made the Union Jack flag firmly take root.

Freedom rays rose in the South; India's freedom battle rose in the land of the Maravas. It rose as a movement of refusal to pay tax. After the siege of Arcot, the Englishmen implemented self-rule in South India, keeping a dummy Nawab in front. The Nawab could not collect taxes. Tamil Nadu woke up. The Nawab became a slave of the East India Company Whites. The Whites, using their



armed forces and taking into their ranks the people of slave kings like Thondaiman, came harassing to collect taxes. Jack and Smith, along with the Jamalkhans, entered into the Maravas land. "Give money" they said. "Go at once" said the Maravas.

Vadugunadha Durai was the first Marava to hold the flag to oppose the Englishmen in such a way. He was one who lived for valour only, the personification of courage, he was one who was brave enough to say "You foreigner, get out!", even if Yama comes. He was very well versed in martial arts, an expert in all sports like wrestling, quarter staff swinging, sword fight, rifle shooting and climbing forts. He had sharpened his sword with only the welfare of the country in mind. Vadugunadha Durai gave war training to his Marava army, often conducting mock wars in his training arena.

During his time, the 'Bharat day of significance' was established; he tied string, reciting mantras to be free from affliction, in the Temple of Goddess Draupadi and organized readings of Bharat every day. Reading Bharat does not mean reading from a book. Bharatham Pillai would go on telling the story of Bharatham in a stream style. There will be a raag exclusively meant for him. It was neither a Melakartha raag nor a Janaya raag. His was a furious raag, with nothing like taal or musical scale. What taal and musical scale were there for the Kutralam Falls, those were there for the Bharati poet! This poet was a hereditary musical exponent. In my younger days, I had heard his son's voice. Here are some lines:

“The war of Bharat has arrived, Sirs. With the seven earths shivering, the eight directions trembling, eighty-four

living beings fluttering, the Pandava Army started off. Duryodhana’s came in the opposite direction. Conches sounded ‘boom, boom’; drums beat ‘dum, damaar’. Leather drums were tapped ‘daka, daka, daka, dak’. Black birds beat ‘pateer, pateer’, the sound echoing in eight directions. See Suyodhanan rising, vowing “Hey! Bheem, Arjuna, come before me! Take up the bow! Come on, wage war! I will give you a thrashing. Crushing the Pandava Army, stamping feet, hitting and squeezing, mixing in blood, I will scatter the devils.” Arjuna stood at the battle line and strung his bow, which sounded ‘gada, gada, gada, gada, daan, daan, daan, daan’. With twisted moustache, tight muscles, vibrant steps and a roar like thunder, Bheema stood majestically swinging his mace sky high to kill Duryodhana and perform rites to take revenge.

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