

Translation and Adaptation of Thousand and One nights into Tamil

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Abstract

The Thousand and One Nights (also called The Arabian nights) were introduced popularly to Tamil people and got a good response from both Muslims and non-Muslims, so it has been continuously translated into Tamil by different authors for over three centuries. We divided the Tamil translation of Arabian nights into two, complete translation and partial translation. Sixteen complete translations and twelve partial translations were made in these three centuries. Some of the complete translations do not cover all stories of Arabian nights. The adaptation can be separated into two. The first one is to extract only the subject matter from Thousand and nights. In this way, there are a lot of short stories and novels were written in Tamil, based on the subject matter of Thousand and nights. Let us take the structure and subject matter of thousands and nights. There is a children novel in Tamil, Mayakkallan by Perisamy Thooran, which adapted the structure and subject matter of Thousand and nights. Mayakkallan, like Thousand and nights, involves many stories within a story and exemplifies magic in the subject matter.

Keywords: Thousand and One Nights, Translation, Adaptation

The *Thousand and One Nights (Alf laylahwalaylah)* is one of the most popular works in world literature and spawn numerous adaptations and imitations. In the modern age, it has been translated into most of the world languages. The very first modern translation was made in French by Antoine Galland in 1717, subsequently translated into major languages of the world, English, German, Russian, Chinese, Japanese, etc., and which these tales transcend cultural and linguistic boundaries. In 1825, P. Ganaprakasa Mudaliyar, probably from Pondicherry, translated and published the ‘Arabian nights Entertainment’ in twelve volumes, which had the English and Tamil version in a parallel column. This probably was the first work in Tamil related to the Arabic and Islamic countries by a Tamil, though the author was not a Tamil Muslim (J.B. More, 2004). After this several translations were done by Muslims and non-Muslims.

The *Thousand and One Nights (also called The Arabian nights)* was introduced popularly to Tamil peoples and got a good response from both Muslims and non-Muslims, so it continuously translating into Tamil by different authors for over three centuries. We divided the Tamil translation of Arabian nights as two, complete translation, and partial translation. Sixteen complete translations and twelve partial translations were made in these three centuries. Some of the complete translations do not cover all stories of Arabian nights. Most of the readings did not mention the original text, which text was used and followed. So we confused the translation is made directly from Arabic or through English. The translators of Arabian nights in Tamil mostly from upper-middle-class like Desikar, Mudaliyar, Pillai, and Naidu. These classes are educated from the middle of the nineteenth century, and they were introduced to world literature through English.

The upper-class Brahmins already educated and introduced to world literature, but they didn't do translate the Arabian nights, why it is an Islamic literary piece. At the same time, the publisher also interested to publish the Arabian nights; they published it without the name of the author(s) and did not awareness in translation.

Children's Literature

Children's stories start from the folk stories in Tamil. There were stories like the Madurai veeran story, Kaathavarayan story, etc., popular among people. Later, Vikramaadityan stories, Thenaliraaman stories, Eesop stories, and Alibaba, Aladdin, Sindbad are Arabian stories that came to Tamil. Among the children's stories, those who came from Arabic got its importance. There were many stories in Tamil adapted from A Thousand and one night.

When Tamil children's stories adaptation from thousand and one night, Tamil children received the stories very well. But there was strong opposition among the people as they were of ghost stories and magic stories, were against the real-life situation and also unfit and stepping stone for the intellectual growth of the children. In children's literature of Tamil, particularly in Novels, the influence of thousand and one nights. The characters of Alibaba, Aladin, and Sindbad were separately modified for the children. Quite a large number of stories have been produced in Tamil from Thousand and one night. Where bird and animal take to humans, and also man comes like animal, bird, fish, snake, etc., are some of the magic stories in Tamil. These are just adaptations from a thousand and one night.

Children's novels adaptation of Thousand and one night:

- Muthiah Thangaraj's *Thangamalai Mohini, Athisayakkuthirai, Arputhavalli, Manthiravathiyin Mahal.*
- Nagai Tharuman's *Mayapuri Mannan.*
- Perisamy Thooran's *Mayakkallan, Nattiyarani, Olaikkili, Nilappattu, Thambiyinthiramai,* etc.
- Puvi Venthan's *Pachchaypoothamum payankara thevathaiyum, Thankakkoondu Ilavarasi.*
- Vandumama's *Thangaththeevu, Manthirakkuthirai,* etc.,

This adaptation can be separated into two. The first one is to extract only the subject matter from thousands and nights. In this way, there are a lot of short stories and novels were written in Tamil, based on the subject matter of Thousand and nights. Let us take the structure and subject matter of thousands and nights. There is a children novel in Tamil, *Mayakkallan* by PerisamyThooran, which adapted the structure and subject matter of Thousand and nights. *Mayakkalan*, like Thousand and nights, involves many stories within a story and exemplifies magic in the subject matter.

Periasamy Thooran wrote the novel *Mayakkallan*. He produced a lot of children, stories, and novels. He is an exemplary scholar in Tamil children's literature. He was awarded "Padma vibushan" by the government of India for his writings. One can find the influence of thousands and nights in *Mayakkallan*. It follows the subject matter and structure of Thousand and nights. This novel is very popular among children. The principal character in this novel is Aathmarangan. He doesn't know his father and mother. Aathmarangan could become in any physical form of his choice. He transforms himself into various forms to reach his parents, who are on the top of the mountain. *Mayakkallan* is a Necromancer, comes to stop Aathmarangan from climbing the mountain. Now, both *Mayakkallan* and Aathmarangan agree; according to that if Aathmarangan, when *Mayakkallan* tells a story, Aathmarangan should not sleep, and if sleep. Aathmarangan would be dropped down. Aathmarangan agrees for that. But he sleeps in the middle of the stories of *Mayakkallan*. so *Mayakkallan* brings him down to the ground. Aathmarangan's purpose in seeing his parents is unsuccessful. Whenever Aathmarangan claims mountain, he transforms himself into a new body, and *Mayakkallan* also starts telling narrating new stories accordingly.

Aathmarangan gives New Bodies and, at the Time, Start Anew the Story of *Mayakkallan*

	Aathmarangan give new bodies	New stories of <i>Mayakkallan</i>
1	Grass	Main story
2	Flower	''
3	Snake	''

4	Koel	”
5	Lion	”
6	Baby	Cinna babba
7	12 year children	Thanthirakkathai
8	Student	ganamoorthy
9	Spinster	paadunkuyil
10	Warrtor	senkatru
11	Landlord	Iyaare! anilaare!
12	40 year old woman	cattaiyadi
13	Scientist	minsarapuri
14	Old man	Ulunthuvadai
15	A pious man	cittupperuman
16	Sanyasi	maayakkurangu

Here, magic is found throughout the novel like Thousand and nights. A Thousand and nights strictly followed both subject matter and structure. Within the main story, Aathmarangan, eleven new stories are in chided. The novel is like; many stories are packed inside a big story.

Tamil Cinema

Thousand and one night's influence upon Three Tamil Films. The first one, 'Alibaabavum naarpathu thirutarkalum' (Alibaba and forty thieves) it was released on 14.01.1956. The second one, 'Alavudinum arbutha vilakkum' (Alavudin and magic light) it was released on 13.04.1979. The third one, 'Sindubad,' these films are influenced by thousand and one night some message and logic.

In Alibaba, thousands and one night like stories with some differences. At the end of Alibaba story in thousand and one night when Markiana kills forty thieves, she pours boiling oil into the tin and kills the thieves. In the Tamil cinema Alibaba, she kills the forty thieves by rolling tin, one by one from the back door of the palace to the running water.

Differences

Thousand and one nights	Alibaba (Tamil movie)
Markiana is a slave woman.	Markiana is not a slave.
In order to compensate Markiana's faith, Alibaba gives his son to Markiana is marriage	To compensate Markiana's faith, Alibaba marries Markiana.

Having heard that his elder brother Kasim was murdered into pieces by thieves in a cage, Alibaba travels in a donkey to search his elder brother.	Kasim travels on a horse while searching his elder brother.
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Conclusion

The impact of Arabian night's stories in Tamil is found in different areas like children's novels and cinema. A few characters like Alibaba, Aladin, and Sindbad made big impacts on the Tamil cinema industry and children's literature. These writings in Tamil started only after 1945. It reached the climax stage during 1970-1990. The influence in Tamil novels started in the 1890s, In A.D.1898 (A.H.1318), "Tamirapattanam" was written in Arabuttamil (Tamil wrote in Arabic script), which was adapted from *Madinatun Nuhas* of Arabian Nights. In the Tamil world, the impact of Arabian nights started through Tamil novel and later influenced into Tamil cinema and children's literature of Tamil. In this way, if we arrange in order of mostly influence of Arabian nights in Tamil, Tamil children's literature (Ten novels and thirty short stories), Tamil cinema (six movies), and finally Tamil novels (two).

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Appendix - I: List of Tamil translations of Arabian nights 19th Century Translation

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- Alibaba*, Kazaigan Publication.
- Alibabavum 40 Thirudarkalum* (Alibaba and forty Thieves), Kazaigan Publication.
- Sindubad Story*, Manimekalai Publication.
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20th Century Translation

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21st Century Translation

- Janarthanan, N. *Ayiraththoru Arabia Iravukal* (1001 Arabian nights), 2009.

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Appendix - II: List of Adaptation of Arabian nights in Tamil

In Children's novels of Tamil

- Mohanarangan, K. Aalandoor., *Chandra mandalaththil manthiravathy*.
- Magilchchikkannan., *Thangameen*.
- Poovannan, *Erimalaiarakkan*.
- Thankakkoondur Ilavarasi*.
- Raji, *Thangamaambalam*.
- Santhanu, *Vethalaulakilveechchu*.
- Thangaraj Muthiah., *Thangamalai Mohini*, *Athisayakkuthirai*, *Arputhavalli*, *Manthiravathiyin Mahal*.
- Tharuman Nagai, *Mayapuri Mannan*.
- ThooranPerisamy, *Nattiya rani*.
- , *Olaikkili*.
- , *Nilappattu*.
- , *Thambiyinthiramai*.
- Vandumama, *Thangaththevu*, *Manthirakkuthirai* etc.

In Tamil Cinema

- Alibabavum 40 Thirudarkalum* (Alibaba and forty Thieves), 1956.
- Allavudeenum Arpudha Villakkum* (Aladin and bright light), 1957.
- Allavutheenum Arputha Vilakkum* (Aladin and bright light), 1979.
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