



**SIDDHA LITERATURE REPOSITORIES IN AND OUTSIDE TAMILNADU**

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**ABSTRACT**

Siddha system is one of the oldest traditional system in India. It is a medicinal heritage of Tamils and it is not only familiar in South India, also in Srilanka, Malayasia, Singapore etc, where Tamil people living throughout the world. Siddha system widely brought up by Siddhars who contributed to develop the Siddha system in ancient days. In early stages, Siddha knowledge was in Oral tradition and it was passed through the generations by Guru – Seedan (Teacher – Student) method. Later Siddha knowledges were written in Palm leaf manuscripts in ancient tamil script. These Manuscript were kept carefully by renowned Siddha vaidyars and passed through the family tradition. After Development of paper Printing technology in 18<sup>th</sup> Century, maximum no. of Siddha Manuscripts were published. That was the important period for Siddha system when the available palm manuscripts were published into books. Now we are in digital Era, some of these Siddha literatures are available as a digital version. Eventhough these literatures are printed as books, some of important books are not republished and are not available. This article mentioned about the Siddha Literature Repositories in and outside Tamilnadu where the old rare published books are kept as their collections.

**KEYWORDS:** Siddha Archives, Siddha Literatures, Ancient Texts, Siddha medicines.

**INTRODUCTION**

Siddha system is one of the oldest traditional system in India. It is a medicinal heritage of Tamils and it is not only familiar in South India, also in Srilanka, Malayasia, Singapore etc, where Tamil people living throughout the world. Siddha system widely brought up by Siddhars who contributed to develop the Siddha system in ancient days. In early stages, Siddha knowledge was in Oral tradition and it was passed through the generations by Guru – Seedan (Teacher – Student) method. Later Siddha knowledges were written in Palm leaf manuscripts in ancient tamil script. These Manuscript were kept carefully by renowned Siddha vaidyars and passed through the family tradition. After Development of paper Printing technology in 18<sup>th</sup> Century, maximum no. of Siddha Manuscripts were published. That was the important period for Siddha system when the available palm manuscripts were published into books. Now we are in digital Era, some of these Siddha literatures are available as a digital version. Eventhough these literatures are printed as books, some of important books are not republished and are not available. This article mentioned about the Siddha Literature Repositories in and outside Tamilnadu where the old rare published books are kept as their collections.

**List of Important Siddha Literature Repositories**

1. Sarawathi Mahal Library, Tanjore
2. Tamil University, Tanjore
3. Connemarah Public Library, Chennai
4. International Institute of Tamil Studies, Chennai
5. Jaffna Public Library, Jaffna, Srilanka
6. Government Oriental Manuscript Library, Chennai
7. Literary Research & Documentation Department and Library, SCRI, Chennai.
8. Govt Siddha Medical College Library, Palayomkottai
9. Govt Siddha Medical College Library, Chennai
10. Roja Muthaih Research Library, Chennai
11. Munchirai Siddha Medical College Library, Nagercoil
12. Institute of Asian Studies, Chennai
13. French Institute of Pondicherry, Pondicherry
14. SKM CARE Library. Erode.

**1. Sarawathi Mahal Library, Tanjore**

**Saraswathi Mahal Library** which is also known as **Tanjore Maharaja Serfoji's Sarasvati Mahal Library (TMSSML)** is located in Tanjore, Tamil Nadu, India. It is believed that it is one of the oldest libraries in Asia. The Saraswathi Mahal library started as a Royal Library for the private pleasure of the Maratha Kings of Tanjore who ruled 1535 - 1675 AD. Under the period of **King**

**Serfoji II** (1798–1832), Library was reached great heights and had lot of rare collection of Palm leaf manuscripts and paper written in Tamil, Hindi, Telugu, Marathi, English. It has Tamil manuscripts number over 3500000, comprising titles in literature, music and medicine.

Tanjore Maharaja Serfoji's Sarasvati Mahal Library (TMSSML) also publishing more than 200 Siddha books."Sarabendra Sikitchai Muraikal" – Vatha Noikal, Pitha Noikal, Kabaha Noikal, Bedhi Muraikal, Visamurivu muraikal, Virana sikitchai Muraikal, Thalai Noikal etc. are the important books of Siddha Treatments for each system are published by them.

## 2. Tamil University, Tanjore

The Tamil University, Tanjore was established in 1981. The university has six science departments namely Industries and Earth Sciences, Computer Science, Environmental and Herbal Science, **Siddha Medicine**, Ancient Sciences and Architecture. It is the largest university in Tamilnadu state by area. The library of Tamil University is reminiscent of the Indian Parliament at New Delhi. Largest collections of Siddha manuscripts kept in Siddha Department. The Siddha Department of Tamil University also publishing more than 50 books like **Siddha Maruthuva Noolodhi, Siddha Maruthuva Thokai agarathi, Kan Maruthuvam** etc. Dr. Prema, was the greatest Siddha Scholar, under her Siddha department developed enormously.

## 3. Connemarah Public Library, Chennai

The Connemarah Public Library Chennai, was Established in 1890 in is one of the four National Depository Libraries which receive a copy of all books, newspapers and periodicals published in India., the library is a repository of centuries-old publications, wherein lie some of the most respected works and collections in the country. It also serves as a depository library for the UN. It has also most all printed Siddha Books till date. The Library maintaining separate blocks for keeping rare old Siddha Literatures.

## 4. International Institute of Tamil Studies, Chennai

The International Institute of Tamil Studies is popularly known as **Ulaga Tamil Araichi Niruvanam** among Tamil scholars, is situated in Chennai. It was set up in 1970 jointly and supported till today by UNESCO and Govt of Tamil Nadu. The library of this Institute have more 10000 Siddha manuscripts and printed Books. They also publishing some Siddha books like **Karuvorar Pala Thirattu, Theran Venba, Theran Anthathi** etc. They also offering course for ancient Tamil Manuscript Reading and Transcription techniques.

## 5. Jaffna Public Library, Jaffna, Srilanka

The Jaffna Public Library was established in 1933. During the Civil war in Srilanka, the library was burnt by Sinhalese people in 1981. At the time, the Library was one of the biggest in Asia containing over

97000 Books and Manuscripts. **Pararasasekaram (10 parts), Sekarasasekaram, Irupallai chetty Pathartha Guna Vilakam** and other literature are the collections among the library Collection.

## 6. Government Oriental Manuscript Library, Chennai

**Government Oriental Manuscript Library** (GOML) is located in the Western Wing of the first floor of the Madras University Library. Full fledged library in the true sense was started in 1869. Three collections i.e. the Mackenzie Collection and Brown Collection were transferred to Presidency College, Madras in 1870. It has more than 15000 Tamil Manuscripts. GOML has brought out so far 350 publications including Descriptive and Triennial Catalogues of its manuscripts in various languages. The publication have been brought under two series. **GOVERNMENT ORIENTAL MANUSCRIPTS SERIES** and **GOVERNMENT ORIENTAL SERIES**, those in the latter being edited by the Curator and the staff of the Library.

## 7. Literary Research & Documentation Department and Library, SCRI, Chennai

The Literary Research & Documentation Department and Library is one of the department of Siddha Central Research Institute, Chennai which comes under the Central council for Siddha, Ministry of Ayush. A Literary Research Unit was started by the Government of India, at Saraswathi Mahal Library Campus, Thanjavur in the year 1964 for the enlightenment of the Siddha system. In 1971, one more Literary Research Unit was started at Govt. Siddha Medical College, Palayamkottai. They have made wonderful collections of traditional manuscripts and very old Siddha printed books dealing with treatment of ailments from the traditional physicians all over the Tamil Nadu. In 1979 the units were merged and formed as Literary Research & Documentation Department (LRDD) at Central Research Institute for Siddha, Chennai. In April 2007, the LR & DD was merged with CRIS, Chennai-106. The Mandate of this department is to carry out literary research.

It has huge collections of Old Siddha manuscripts and Books. Digital Documentation of old books are also going on. They also publishing more than 50 Publications like Therayan Sekarappa, Therayar Kudineer 100, Agathiyar Vaithya Vallathy 600 etc in Tamil and Hindi languages.

## 8. Govt Siddha Medical College Library, Palayomkottai

Govt Siddha Medical College Library is situated in Palayomkottai, Tirunelveli, Tamil Nadu. It was established in 1964. The library almost have all printed version of Siddha Publications like Tamarai Noolagam, Saraswathi mahal etc.

**9. Govt Siddha Medical College Library, Chennai**

Govt Siddha Medical College Library is situated in Arumbakkam Chennai. It was established in 1991 which is shifted from Palani. The library almost have all printed version of Siddha Publications like Tamarai Noolagam, Saraswathi mahal etc.

**10. Roja Muthiah Research Library, Chennai**

The Roja Muthiah Research Library (RMRL) was founded in 1994, and opened to researchers in 1996. The Library is based on the collection of Roja Muthiah, who accumulated one of the world's finest private libraries of Tamil publications. With beginnings as a small private collection by Roja Muthiah, the library now holds an impressive 3,00,000 items and aims at continually preserving and expanding the historic archive.

Understanding the significance of the library and the need to preserve its valuable contents the University of Chicago bought the entire collection in 1994. However, with the library being deeply rooted in south Indian culture and tradition, it was decided that the collection would remain in Tamil Nadu to form the nucleus of a research library. RMRL Trust now maintains this rare private collection of Tamil imprints in collaboration with the University of Chicago. The library almost have all printed version of Siddha books and they permit to take copy of any book.

**11. Munchirai Siddha Medical College Library, Nagercoil**

ATSVS Siddha Medical College, the first private Siddha Medical College, situated in Munchirai, Kanyakumari District is run by Akila Thiruvithanore Siddha Vaidhya Sangam. It was founded by late Nithyananda Swamikal and college was started on 1931 and restructured into 1996. The college has a central Library where a collection of 4313 Books are available. This includes a good collection of around 3052 Siddha Books of various authors including famous Siddhars. Rare collection of Palm Manuscripts (Olai Suvadigal) are also available in a 216 good number.

**12. Institute of Asian Studies, Chennai**

The Institute of Asian Studies was established in 1982, by Dr. John Samuel along with his Japanese student Dr. Shu Hikosaka at Chemmencherry, Chennai. This centre has blossomed into one of the unique organizations of South Indian studies with wider global perspective. The founder is one of the pioneer in creating awareness about the preservation of the rich heritage of Tamil palm leaf manuscripts. This institute having large number of Siddha Manuscripts and has published more than 50 into books.

**13. French Institute of Pondicherry, Pondicherry**

The French Institute of Pondicherry (IFP) is a research institution under the joint supervision of the French Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Development (MAEDI) and the French National Centre for Scientific Research (CNRS). It is an integral part of

the network of 27 research centres connected to this Ministry. It is also part of the research unit 3330 "Savoirs et Mondes Indiens" of the CNRS, along with the Centre de Sciences Humaines (CSH) in New Delhi.

The institute having huge number of Tamil Manuscripts especially Siddha Manuscripts.

**14. SKM CARE Library, Erode**

SKM CARE Library is established in 1989, is situated inside the SKM SIDDHA & Ayurveda Company India Ltd Campus, Erode. SKM founder Padmashri Mr. Maeliantham's and SKM Vaidhyar Muthusamy Aiya's Siddha Books collections are available in this library. Siddha Research Pharmacopea 1, 2 & 3, Seeva Rakshamirtham and Yugi Vaithya Sara Sankiraham, Gems of Siddha Medicine etc. are the some rare collections available here.

**CONCLUSION**

Preserving the ancient texts, is the first step for development of traditional system. There are lot of hidden treasure – Treatments are mentioned in these ancient literature. If All collections from above said organisation will be preserved and republished, It will be great contribution towards the development of Siddha System.

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