THE COPENHAGEN COPY OF HENRIQUES' FLOS SANCTORUM

BY

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The Oriental Collection (Orientalske Afdeling) of the Royal Library, Copenhagen, includes a Tamil printed book (OA 1531), the rarity and importance of which has hitherto gone unrecognized.¹) Its anonymity has been preserved by the absence of a title-leaf and by the single word "Malabaricae" on the spine, the Jesuit monogram "IHS" on its binding not splendid enough to arouse curiosity. Closer examination, however, reveals it to be a copy of Flos Sanctorum or Lives of the Saints printed at Cochin in south India in 1586.²) This work was composed by the Jesuit missionary Henrique Henriques (1520–1600), the first European who can lay serious claim to have been a scholar of Indian languages. The Copenhagen example is one of the mere handful of copies of Tamil works printed by the Portuguese in India which are known to have survived, and additionally it has an extremely interesting provenance.

There were, as far as we know, just two very brief periods of Tamil printing by the Portuguese in India. The first was from 1577 to 1586 mainly at Cochin and the second from 1677 to 1680 at Ambalacatta, both on the south-western coast of modern Kerala below Goa. The two periods were similar in that both were stimulated by the outstanding linguistic prowess of one individual: Henrique Henriques in the 16th and Robert de Nobili in the 17th century. They were different in that the 16th-century works were printed with Tamil types cast on Indian soil, those in the 17th century with types imported from Rome. Only eight Tamil works were printed altogether by the Portuguese in India during the 16th and 17th centuries, and it is no exaggeration to state that today these are among the rarissima of early Indian imprints. Before the discovery of the Copenhagen example, only seven extant copies of six titles

had been traced in just five libraries, three in Europe (in the UK, Italy and France), one in India and one in the USA as follows:³)

Bodleian Library, Oxford Henriques' Catechism (1579) Henriques' Confessionary (1580)

Vatican Library, Rome Henriques' Lives of the Saints (1586) Proença's Vocabulary (1679)

Bibliothèque Municipale, Châlons-sur-Marne de Nobili's Catechism Pt. IV (1678?)

Panjim Central Library, Goa de Nobili's Catechism Pts. I-III (1677)

Harvard University Library, Cambridge, Mass. Henriques' Catechism (Quilon, 1578)

There was in addition a copy of Henriques' Catechism (Goa, 1577) in Leiden University Library until the beginning of the 18th century but it then disappeared from the published catalogues.⁴) A second copy of the 1579 Catechism was seen in the Bibliothèque de la Sorbonne, Paris, in the 1930s but this cannot now be traced.⁵) Likewise the copy once in the Jesuit seminary at Enghien, Belgium, apparently did not survive the transfer of that collection to the Bibliothèque des Fontaines, Chantilly.⁶) The discovery therefore of another copy of Flos Sanctorum, Henriques' magnum opus, in the Royal Library, Copenhagen, is an event which should not go unrecorded.

What do we know of Henriques' early life? He was born in 1520 or 1521 at Vila Viçosa near the city of Evora in south-eastern Portugal.⁷) His parents were fairly well-to-do "New Christians", recently converted from Judaism or perhaps Islam. After a good humanities education, he entered the Franciscan Order only to be dismissed within months on account of his family's religious ancestry. In 1541, while studying theology at Coimbra, he made the acquaintance of Simon Rodrigues who a year earlier had been the very first Jesuit to come to Portugal. Rodrigues received Henriques into the Society of Jesus apparently with the express intention of sending him to India to assist Francis Xavier, detecting in

- [ெலிச்தாத்]க்கெழும்க்களுண்டாயிருந & Panaman On Cereson Syles & Bruggen agen a ள்டருள்]வண அற[டெலிசு] படை அற[புலு புபு] வவ அர்[தன்றான்]வவன்ர[ருடுவூடம்⊉பூ]்டுளவ அர [அஜ்ஜ்டல] என அர் [ரடுத்பால] என அன்தோல் லாட்டு ந யடுக்கு கார்க்கு நார்க்கு குறியாகும் புத்திருக்கும் விறியாகு விறியாகும் புத்திருக்கும் விறியாகு விறியாகும் புத்திருக்கும் விறியாகும் புத்திருக்கும் விறியாகும் புத்திருக்கும் விறியாகும் புத்திருக்கும் விறியாகும் விறியாகும் புத்திருக்கும் விறியாகும் விறியாகும் புத்திருக்கும் விறியாகும் பிறியாகும் புத்திருக்கும் விறியாகும் புத்திருக்கும் விறியாகும் புத்திருக்கும் விறியாகும் புத்திருக்கும் விறியாகும் பிறியாகும் புத்திருக்கும் விறியாகும் புத்திருக்கும் விறியாகும் பிறியாகும் பிறியாகுக்கும் பிறியாகும் பிறியாகும் பிறியாகும் பிறியாகும் பிறியாகும் பிறியாகுக்கும் 8x 5/2 Ora Control of Control of One னவடித்தவட் எண்*யி* இத்தாள் மிக்கு ஒத்த வக்கு கொண்டு முறுமாக ஆ யம்பு பான்.தே கண்டு டுதயவங்களுக்கு படணி வி ை—டுச்புத் தவா தன [அந்டு தாண்ண] என் த [வமடுபா ு இதாா]ு — ததி⊙ல⊙சனா<u>வ அ</u>வ⊙ஞ்⊙ட்[⊙ுலி£தா **த**]என் ் ெண்சா நியு ம் வளுடையம் ககளுந்டு தவிரு ed-neron una gue do a um Cempur e emoro- E e பாகனாது தெவரோசுகத்தடுல் மிருக்கிறது கரு நல்லதல்ல <u> அம்</u>த்_ெண்டிடிடுக்கு _ நடிக்கு _ காண்டு காண்டு க டத்ரும்க்டில் மித்தத்த வராட்டிய இவர் பெருக்க கொடித்து க ு தாளளுவார்கள்⊙காபி<u>த்து</u>க⊚ தாண் —ாடு லிரஞ தா

A specimen page of Tamil text showing the end of the account of St Paul and the beginning of the life of St Felicity his character a certain dependability. This certainly proved a shrewd observation as, despite frequent bouts of ill-health, Henriques was to serve as a missionary in India for over five decades. He was one of nine Jesuits to sail for India in April 1546, reaching Goa on 17 September. Xavier directed that all the new arrivals should be assigned to Cape Comorin in the extreme south.

Henriques in particular seems to have regarded Xavier as his ideal and to have taken from him the importance of translating Christian works into the local languages - it was Xavier himself who had made the first attempt at compiling a catechism in Tamil. Within two years, Henriques' natural gift for languages was already gaining recognition among his contemporaries for in 1548 the Jesuit Superior on the Fishery Coast, Antonio Criminali, relieved him of certain pastoral duties so that he should concentrate upon mastering Tamil with the specific aim of preparing a grammar of the language for the instruction of his fellow missionaries. A Tamil youth was found to assist him with the difficult learning process. For the next forty years Henriques was able to pursue his translation work only fitfully, as health and other duties allowed. It is difficult to assess precisely his overall achievement as a translator, because we cannot be sure how many of his projects were brought to completion. In addition to the grammar (Arte malavar), in his letters at various times Henriques talked of working on (or intending to begin) the following in Tamil: a vocabulary, a version of Jo[a]o Soares' Libro de la verdad de la fé (Lisbon, 1543), a confessionary, an explanation of the Articles of Faith after Xavier, a summary of events from the Creation to the Resurrection of Christ, a collection of prayers, a revision of Christian hymns then in use in Sri Lanka, a catechism, and finally Flos Sanctorum itself.

Henriques was evidently supremely confident of his ability to analyze any language as at one point he boasted that he could compile similar grammars of Chinese, Japanese and Ethiopic. Certainly his linguistic horizons extended beyond Tamil, for he also mentioned compiling a grammar and vocabulary of Malayalam and translating prayers into it. Although different, Henriques recognized that this language belonged to the same family as Tamil, much as Castilian and Portuguese were related. He even referred several times to working on a grammar of Konkani, the language of the region around Goa, remarking that it was more difficult than Tamil and also *very* different. This was entirely accurate as Konkani is an Indo-Aryan rather than a Dravidian language like Tamil or Malayalam. In these gropings to compare the languages

he encountered, it is difficult not to see Henriques as a true ancestor in spirit of Sir William Jones, who was to make the fundamental connection between Indian and European languages two centuries later.

Soon after his death in 1600 Henriques' reputation as a linguist had already reached Europe. The Frenchman Claude Duret, in his Thrésor de l'histoire des langues de cest vnivers published at Paris in 1613, makes specific mention of Henriques' achievements, if with some exaggeration: "Les relations modernes rapportent qu'vn P. F. Henriquez reduisit en art ceste langue [i.e. Tamil], comme nous auons la Latine, auec les declinaisons des noms, coniugaisons des verbes, genres, preterits, & autres regles de Grammaire. Ce qui sembloit presque impossible à un homme, qui ne faisoit que de venir d'Europe, mais toutefois iceluy en moins de six mois entendit fort bien ceste langue, & l'a sceut parler, bref il eust dans peu de temps acheué la Grammaire, auec vn Dicti[õ]naire de tous les mots non sans vn grand proffit de ceux qui la veulent apprendre" (p. 887).

As Flos Sanctorum is the only sixteenth-century Portuguese work in Tamil of which more than one copy survives, can we learn anything from a comparison of the two copies? Of the two, only the Vatican copy contains the complete text of Henriques' work comprising 334 leaves. The Copenhagen copy lacks 45 leaves and is incomplete at both beginning and end, comprising only leaves 19-55, 68-73, 77-143, 145-224, 229-322, and 324-325. Most of the missing leaves have been supplied in manuscript. Both copies lack a printed title-leaf or any preliminaries, although the Vatican copy has a two-leaf Prologo al lector by Henriques and a table of contents both supplied in manuscript. The lack of a title-leaf in both copies keeps alive the doubt about its date and place of printing first alluded to by the Lutheran missionaries at Tranquebar: "Die Römischen Missionarii haben schon vor uns eine Malabarische Buchdruckerey gehabt, es sey nun zu Goa, oder sonst irgendswo gewesen. Denn wir haben hier ein altes Buch in Quart. Flos Sanctorum, in Malabarischer Sprache gedruckt, gesehen. Weil aber die ersten Blätter ausgerissen waren, so konnte man den Ort und das Jahr des Drucks nicht wissen".8)

The year of printing is the easier matter to settle. Writing in December 1586 Henriques himself stated that he had finished *Flos Sanctorum* and had begun composing the statutes for the confraternity which he hoped to establish on the Fishery Coast.⁹) A year earlier in December 1585 he had reported that he was in the process of completing the Tamil Lives of the Saints.¹⁰) It seems likely therefore that this monumental

work was finished during the first half of 1586. The evidence suggests that completion of composition in this case meant also completion of printing. Certainly Flos Sanctorum had a long gestation, with Henriques working on it intermittently over a period of more than thirty years. This was typical of his working method, being a meticulous reviser, but it also indicates the heavy pastoral duties which he bore, particularly as Jesuit Superior on the Fishery Coast from 1549 onwards, as well as the often precarious state of his health. The first specific mention of his aim to translate "many lives of the Saints" into Tamil is found in a letter of January 1551.11) In December 1558 we learn that he was working on a Flos Sanctorum among other works, 12) and in November the next year he had already finished "several lives of the Saints".13) Further impetus to this and Henriques' other literary labours was provided by the first Provincial Congregation summoned by Alessandro Valignano, the dynamic Visitor to the Province of India, in December 1575. Perturbed that no works were yet available for Tamil converts in their own tongue, he directed that Henriques should concentrate on preparing Christian texts for the press, relieving him of the office of Jesuit Superior on the Fishery Coast to do so. Inevitably the preparation of Flos Sanctorum had lower priority than the catechism and confessionary which were printed at Cochin in 1579 and 1580 respectively. We can therefore conjecture that the translation and textual revision of Flos Sanctorum was principally undertaken during the five years 1581-1585. In December 1582 Henriques reported, optimistically as it transpired, that he would need "one year or a little less" to complete the translation. 14) From the same letter it is clear that preparations were now at last being made to begin printing the work. No doubt the death of the master-printer Jo[a]o de Faria in November or December 1581 had caused anxiety as well as delay, but fortunately Jo[a]o Rodrigues, who under his earlier name of Jo[a]o de Bustamente had been the first printer on Indian soil, could be brought out of 'retirement' to direct the press. Printing this massive work of more than 600 pages probably stretched over the four years 1583-1586, progressing in sections as Henriques completed them. Since Jo[a]o Rodrigues (unlike Jo[a]o de Faria) had had little or no experience of printing with Tamil types, it would seem likely that Henriques himself was closely involved at every step with correcting the press. This would have been a laborious task for one already in his sixties, and it is hardly surprising that after Flos Sanctorum Henriques produced no more works for the press before his death in 1600.

Turning to the place of printing, it has been suggested by several

writers¹⁵) that the work was produced at Punicale on India's south-east Fishery Coast. The only justification offered for this is the fact that Flos Sanctorum was intended primarily for the Paravas or pearl-fishers on that coast. However, not just this but all the works printed in Tamil by the Portuguese during the 16th century were intended for that community which had been the prime focus of the Jesuit conversion programme in India ever since Xavier's visit in the 1540s. The other five works all bear their place of printing but none was printed at Punicale. As Father Henry Hosten has pointed out in his unpublished account of early Indo-Portuguese printing in India,16) Punicale was always a relatively minor missionary station. It was certainly never important enough for the printing-press, that vital and precious instrument of conversion, to have been sited there. Besides, it would have been too much at risk there as the Paravas of the Fishery Coast were prey to attacks by Badaga tribesmen exacting tribute on behalf of the Nayakas of Madurai. There is not a single mention of the Tamil press being at Punicale during the 1570s or 1580s among the contemporary Jesuit letters edited by Wicki. 17) Instead, we read, for instance, of Pero Luis, a Tamil Brahmin turned Jesuit and an important contributor to the success of the early Portuguese Tamil press, moving from the Fishery coast to Cochin in 1579 'por amor da empres[a]o malavar' ("for love of Tamil printing"). 18) After initial experiments at Goa and Quilon, Cochin clearly became the principal centre of vernacular printing in the 16th century and undoubtedly Flos Sanctorum represents its finest achievement.

It is perhaps unjustified on the evidence of just two copies to suggest that the absence of all preliminaries is in any way significant. However, such speculation is still tempting. Might it indicate, for instance, that the printing of this book, the last work known to have been printed on the Cochin press, was never properly completed? Could it be that the text was printed off and sent to the Bishop of Cochin for examination and approval but a reply not received until somehow the press had ceased to be in operation? Or, since the work could not have been 'officially' issued without an *imprimatur*, are these surviving copies in some ways trial or proof printings? Such speculation is intriguing but cannot be substantiated at present.

Apart from its intrinsic rarity, the Copenhagen copy has a particularly interesting provenance. The ownership inscription on the front endpaper reads: "Librum hunc possidet Philippus Baldaeus V[erbi] D[ei] M[inister] Jaff[na]" i.e. "This book belongs to Philippus Baldaeus, Minister of the Word of God, Jaffna". Baldaeus was Dutch, born at

Delft in October 1632 but orphaned at the age of four. 19) He was brought up chiefly by Robertus Junius, a relative on his mother's side, who had been a minister (predikant) on the island of Formosa and who is thought therefore to have influenced Baldaeus' subsequent choice of career. In October 1654 Baldaeus sailed for Batavia, arriving the next July. Fifteen months or so later he sailed for Galle in Sri Lanka in November 1656 to become a minister there. He was accompanied on the voyage by Jo[a]o Ferreira de Almeida, a Jesuit priest turned Protestant, who knew Tamil and may perhaps have introduced Baldaeus to the language. In January 1658 Baldaeus joined van Goens' expedition from Negombo against Tuticorin, Mannar, Jaffna and Negapatam. After Jaffna's capitulation in June 1658, Baldaeus was ordered to remain there as predikant and zealously set about the task of conversion to the reformed faith throughout the Jaffna peninsula. He began by preaching in Portuguese as well as Dutch and busied himself learning Tamil. It may have been during this first sojourn at Jaffna that Baldaeus acquired his copy of Flos Sanctorum. He probably used it to double effect, as a means of studying the Catholic teachings which he needed to counteract among the local Christian community and as an aid to learning Tamil. His example was later followed by the Lutheran missionaries at Tranquebar who also managed to acquire Tamil books printed by the Jesuits, including Flos Sanctorum.20) In July 1660 Baldaeus sailed for Negapatam to reform the churches there and in November 1661 joined van Goens' expedition against the Portuguese fortresses on the Malabar Coast. He returned to Jaffna in April 1662, remaining there for a further three and a half years before sailing home to the Netherlands at the close of 1665. From the ownership inscription we can deduce therefore that Baldaeus acquired the Copenhagen copy of Flos Sanctorum somewhere between the years 1658 and 1665. Although one might suppose that it came into his hands during the 1661 Malabar expedition, it is equally possible that he acquired it on Sri Lanka itself, as no doubt the Portuguese Jesuits had circulated copies to their brethren in the Jaffna peninsula.

Back in the Netherlands, Baldaeus settled initially at The Hague but in February 1669 was appointed *predikant* to Geervliet, a small town on the island of Putten in the south. Here he began writing his first-hand

Opposite: Title page of 'Wahrhaftige ausführliche Beschreibung der berühmten Ost-Indischen Kusten Malabar und Coromandel, als auch der Insel Zeylon', the German edition of Baldaeus' Naauwkeurige beschryvinge, both published posthumously in 1672



t' AMSTERDAM,

JANSSONIUS van WAASBERGE

SOMEREN. Anno 1672.

account of south India and Sri Lanka, Naauwkeurige beschryvinge van Malabar en Choromandel, der zelver aangrenzende ryken, en het machtige eyland Ceylon. Printing of this work probably began early in 1669 but had not been completed when Baldaeus died at the end of 1671 or the beginning of 1672. The book was published posthumously in Dutch early in 1672, the German edition appearing later the same year. The first English edition was published at London in 1704, A true and exact account of the most celebrated East-India coasts of Malabar and Coromandel, and also of the isle of Ceylon, forming the last part of volume III of Churchill's A collection of voyages and travels.

Could Baldaeus possibly have mentioned his copy of Flos Sanctorum in his famous work? In Chapter XVIII, after describing the siege and capture of Cranganor by the Dutch in January 1662, he discusses the St Thomas Christians of the Malabar Coast, their liturgical use of Syriac and the Portuguese attempts to reform them which necessitated establishing a Syriac printing-press and seminary at Rome. In this context he then observes: "It is evident that the Roman clergy exceed ours, in their zeal of propagating the Roman religion ... I have seen divers books printed with the Portuguese characters, in the Malabar language, for the instruction of the Paruas; one whereof I keep by me to this day; though at the same time I must confess, that in case we should follow the same method in printing with our characters, though in their language, it would not have the same effect, they being much bigotted both to the Roman clergy and the Portuguese language".21) This passage implies that the Portuguese printed Tamil works in Roman rather than Tamil script, plainly a contradiction of the evidence supplied by the books themselves, including Baldaeus' own Flos Sanctorum. Indeed, although the Portuguese consistently printed works in another Indian vernacular, namely Konkani, with Roman types, not a single work at all is known to have been printed by them in 'Romanized Tamil' during the 16th or 17th centuries.

Such a mistake seems curious in a first-hand account such as that of Baldaeus. One writer has observed of the English version that it is "delightfully quaint; but, unfortunately, the translator has in many cases grievously mis-interpreted the 'High Dutch', and in some cases has had the presumption to make additions or alterations of his own, thereby exposing his ignorance of oriental words and customs".²²) Could the explanation be therefore that, in this instance also, Baldaeus' meaning has not been correctly conveyed by the English translation? We know from the title-page that the English was "translated from the High Dutch, printed at Amsterdam 1672" i.e. Wahrhaftige ausführliche Beschrei-

bung der berühmten Ost-Indischen Kusten Malabar und Coromandel, als auch der Insel Zeylon. If we turn to the German text of the passage quoted above, we read: "So hat man auch gesehen, dass selbst in der Malabarischen Sprache, mit den eigentlichen Buchstaben dieser Nation, Bücher zur Unterweisung der Parruas gedruckt sind, gestalt ich noch ein Exemplar davon bey mir ligen habe".²³) The error in the translation arises from eigentlich and dieser Nation being taken to denote the Portuguese and not the Tamils. Clearly the English would have better read: "I have also seen books printed in the Malabar language, in the original letters of that people, for the instruction of the Paruas; of which I keep a specimen by me to this day".

The book in question is undoubtedly this copy of *Flos Sanctorum* which Baldaeus had taken with him on his return to the Netherlands from Sri Lanka in 1665. How it then came to leave the Netherlands and ended up in the collection of the Royal Library, Copenhagen, is as yet unknown but a fascinating subject for further investigation.

NOTES

(1) I am grateful to Dr Frede Møller-Kristensen for first bringing this item to my attention. - (2) For more details of this work see J. Wicki, "O 'flos sanctorum' do P. H. Henriques, impresso na lingua tamul em 1586", Boletim do Instituto Vasco da Gama 73 (1965), p. 42-9. The text was reprinted Tuticorin, 1967 under the title Flos Sanctorum enar Aţiyār Varalāru, edited by S. J. Rajamanickam. - (3) Location information taken from G. W. Shaw, The South Asia and Burma Retrospective Bibliography (SABREB). Stage 1: 1556-1800 (London, 1987), p. 32-41. - (4) See G. W. Shaw, "Scaliger's copy of an early Tamil catechism", The Library 6th Series 3 (1981), p. 239-243. - (5) See J. Muller and E. Róth, Aussereuropäische Druckereien im 16. Jahrhundert (Baden-Baden, 1969), p. 49. - (6) Ibid. This has been confirmed in recent correspondence with the Director of the Bibliothèque des Fontaines. - (7) The biographical information given here is taken principally from J. Wicki, "Father Henrique Henriques S. I. (1520-1600). An exemplary missionary of India", Indian Ecclesiastical Studies 4 (1965), p. 142-150, and 5 (1966), p. 36-72 and 175-189. See also S. J. Rajamanickam, "Padre Henrique Henriques, the father of the Tamil press", in Proceedings of the Second International Conference Seminar of Tamil Studies Vol. II (Madras, 1971), p. 520-7, and G. W. Shaw, "A 'lost' work of Henrique Henriques: the Tamil confessionary of 1580", The Bodleian Library Record 11 (1982), p. 26-34. - (8) Drey und dreyssigste Continuation des Berichts der königlichen dänischen Missionarien in Ost-Indien (Halle, 1733), p. 906 footnote. - (9) Documenta Indica Vol. XIV (Romae, 1979), p. 534. - (10) Ibid., p. 128.

(11) Documenta Indica Vol. II (Romae, 1950), p. 145. – (12) Documenta Indica Vol. IV (Romae, 1956), p. 159. – (13) Ibid., p. 357. – (14) Documenta Indica Vol. XII (Romae, 1972), p. 684. – (15) For instance, A. K. Priolkar, The printing press in India (Bombay, 1958), p. 11; J. Muller and E. Róth, op. cit., p. 51–52; B. S. Kesavan, History of printing and publishing in India, Vol. 1 (New Delhi, 1985), p. 32–34; A. Mohanrajan, Glimpses of early printing and publishing in India (Madras, 1990), p. 41–45. – (16) See G. W. Shaw, "A brief note on the Hosten collection at Vidyajyoti College, Delhi, and his unpublished history of early Indo-Portuguese printing", South Asia Library Group Newsletter 24 (1984), p. 5–7. – (17) To date 18 volumes of Documenta Indica have been published since 1948 by the Society of Jesus in Rome. – (18) Documenta Indica Vol. XI (Romae, 1970), p. 790. – (19) Outline of Baldaeus' life mostly taken from D. W. Ferguson, The Rev. Philippus Baldaeus and his book on Ceylon (Colombo, 1895), p. 1–17, and S. Arasaratnam, Dutch power in Ceylon 1658–1687 (Amsterdam, 1958), p. 218–220. – (20) See footnote 8 above. – (21) A true and exact account ..., p. 570. – (22) D. W. Ferguson, op. cit., p. 40. – (23) P. 111.