Notes
1. This introduction to the Tamil Siddhas was written nearly ten years ago and reflects many of the misconceptions surrounding the siddhas that were popular at the time. Also its circulation on the internet surely added to over simplifying the subject with faults that are entirely my own. I’ve tried to briefly rectify the overtly erroneous statements that I had made and have attempted to elaborate on some of the more reductionistic portions of this work.
2. Most of the Tamil Siddha works popular today were written only in the last two centuries. A significant percentage of works purported to be “rediscovered” are modern forgeries.
4. Ibid.: 3. See the Tiruvilaiyadhal sections 13, 42 & 45.
5. As Manonmani, Valai, Vallabai, Parai, Parapparai, etc.
6. Some see the Bhradanyaka Upanisad as containing enough of the key elements of tantric cosmology to represent the earliest strain of a definitive Tantric tradition complete with the hita functioning as a proto- shashumna nadi, anticipating the more elaborate kundalini system to come.
8. Bhogar’s 7000 tells of his repeated visits to China but does not provide even a single cultural detail that demonstrates he has any first hand knowledge of the region, it’s customs, etc. Now in popular secondary sources on the Tamil Siddhas the China origin of Bhogar is strongly refuted with the characteristic nationalistic fervour of the present day.
9. Bhogar makes no mention of Palani in his 7000 and has always been associated in the Tamil Siddha literature with Sathuragiri mountain. Further, the Palanitalapuranam (the Mythic History of Palani) makes no mention of its supposed founder (though it does make passing reference to Gorakhnath).
10. Presumably he is referring to one of his gulikais, a pill often made of trenched mercury in solid form.
11. Another notable entry into the modern literary sphere comes when freedom-fighting poet, Subramaniya Bharathi, called himself a “cittar,” invoking a religious-revolutionary persona that was intrinsically "Tamil.”

References

FOLK MEDICINAL WISDOM OF CHITTOOR DISTRICT, ANDHRA PRADESH

S. Vedavathy is President of Herbal Folklore Research Centre at Tirupati. The author can be contacted at vedavathy@hotmail.com

Some of the folk medicinal treasures found in Chittoor district in Andhra Pradesh are given here:

Tagubothulaku Natu Mandu (Psidium gujava) - Myrtaceae (Medicine for alcohol addicts)
Leaf juice is secretly added with alcohol and given to the person who is addicted to alcohol. The person starts vomiting and feels irritation. If the therapy is repeated two or three times, the person develops a sort of aversion towards alcohol.

Vavili (Vitex negundo) and Allamu (Zingeber officinale) (Onti Talanoppi - Migraine)
Juice extracted from the leaves of vavili and rhizome of allamu is mixed in equal proportions and few drops of the juice are instilled into the nostrils to cure migraine.

Keella noppulu (Kanuga (Pongamia pinnata) - Fabaceae
The root bark boiled in gingely oil is stored in earthen pot and given to patients suffering from chronic body pain and arthritis. The oil is given both internally and applied on the affected parts also. This therapy is called as mandhu noone and the Gesthampalli village is famous for it.

Medicine for Emukalu virigithe - Bone fracture
Every village in the Chittoor district has one medicine man who knows the treatment for dislocated and broken bones. The two centres in the district, one at Puttur and another at Kalluru, have become famous because of the devoted families. The people in these centres are service oriented and they do not accept money for their service.

Jatamansi - (Nardostachys jatamansi) - Valerianaceae
(Gundello nemmu - Pneumonia)
Decoction of the root powder is given two or three times a day and it is continued until the fever subsides. Wheat powder mixed in Calotropis leaf juice is applied on the chest to prevent pleurisy.

Saraswathi aku (Centella asiatica) - Apiaceae
(Teliviki - Brain Tonic)
Dried plant is powdered along with Piper nigrum seeds in 10:1 ratio and a mixture of 2 to 3

Photo by the Author
Saramma, an expert in curing dog bite & snake bite

Shaking the Tree: Kundalini Yoga, Spiritual Alchemy, and the Mysteries of the Breath in Bhogar’s 7000.

Available also at http://www.levity.com/alchemy/...
spoons of the powder and a glass of cow’s milk is given in the early morning. The Somala village is famous for this therapy.

**Seeds of Sompu (Foeniculum vulgare), leaves of Tamala paku (Piper betel) and Honey (Recheekati - Night blindness)**

All the plant parts in equal proportions are added with honey to make paste. The paste is kept in a clean bottle and the paste is applied on the eyes daily.

**Cotyledons of Gacchakai (Caesalpinia crista), roots of Reppala (Wrightia tinctoria) and seeds of Pokalu (Areca catechu) (Moorcha - Epilepsy)**

The plant parts in equal proportion are mixed with old jaggery and made into paste with water. A soap nut size paste is given daily for a fortnight.

**Leaves of Veduru (Bambusa arundinacea) - Gramineae (To remove a dead child from the womb)**

Leaf paste mixed with water is given to women for whom delivery becomes difficult leading to the death of the child in the womb.

**Adavimalathi (Aganosma dichotoma) - Apocynaceae (Mutrasayamlo rallu - Stones in the urinary tract and bladder)**

Root powder is given with milk in the early morning for a period of two weeks.

**Tulasi (Ocimum sanctum) - Lamiaceae (Chali jwaram - Malaria)**

A glass of root decoction is given twice a day to subside the malarial fever in 4 or 5 days.

**Gurivinda (Abrus precatorius) - Fabaceae (Pandu rogam - Leucoderma)**

Leaf juice is applied on the white patches and exposed to the sun for an hour. Within two to three months the white patches will disappear and turn into the colour of the skin.

**Ravi (Ficus religiosa) - Moraceae (Nallamanduku virugudu - drug addicts (Bhang and Opium)**

Decoction of stem bark is given for relief.

**Vayuvidangalu (Embelia ribes), fruits of Terminalia chebula, Terminalia bellerica, Emblica officinalis and latex of Calotropis gigantea (Sanna jeevalu rakunda - To drive away rats, scorpions and mosquitoes)**

The plant parts are dried and powdered when the powder is burned its fume drives away mosquitoes, rats and scorpions.

**Root bark of Kasinatha (Cassia occidentalis) - Caesalpiniaceae Enugukalu (Filariosis)**

A spoonful of paste made with ghee is given twice a day and M imosa pudica leaf paste is applied on the affected feet until relief is achieved.

**Fruit rind of Dhanimma (Punica granatum), Punicaeace, Alum and Camphor (Rommulu gattipadataniki - Large, Hard breast)**

The fruit rind is made into paste with alum and camphor in 8:2 proportion. The paste is applied over the breast late in the evening and bandaged. The bandage is removed in the morning. This is repeated for a period of two weeks.

**Nelausiri (Phyllanthus amarus) - Euphorbiaceae Pasiricalaku (Jaundice)**

A spoonful of paste is given early in the morning on an empty stomach along with buttermilk. This is repeated, depending upon the condition of the patient, for a week or a fortnight.

**Stem bark of Telamadhi (Terminalia arjuna) - Combretaceae (Rakthapotuku -Hypertension)**

Bark decoction with milk is given to the patient in the early morning.

**Leaves of Saraswathi aku (Centella asiatica), dried rhizome of Allamu (Zingeber officinale) and fruits of Pipallu (Piper longum) (Clear Voice)**

The plant parts mixed in equal proportions are dried in shade and powdered. Half a spoonful of powder with honey is given for forty days.

**Leaves of Banyan (Ficus benghalensis) (Healing wounds and binding damaged tissues)**

The tender leaves are warmed in fire and wrapped around the wound or any deep cut and then the wound or deep cut is bandaged.

**Latex of Banyan (Ficus benghalensis) and fruit decoction of Myrobalan (Terminalia chebula) (Healing wounds)**

The wound is washed with the Myrobalan fruit decoction and the entire wound is drenched with the latex obtained by cutting the new branches of Banyan tree. The fresh latex is poured on the wound by holding the cut branches on the wound. For noothi or chronic ulcer, the latex is taken internally daily in a prescribed quantity.