

ABOUT THE AUTHOR



M.A.Ranganayaki (nee' S.T) was born on June 26th, 1926 into a freedom-fighting, orthodox Srivaisnava family, Svayamacaryas of the **Komandur Ilayavalli**, later known as the **puducheriar** family. It was a family tradition that the men-folk believed strongly in the education of their women, who were tutored at home. Daughter of Professor S.T.Krishnamachari, Head of the Department of Foreign Languages at Waltair University, and Vedavalliammal, a high school topper involved in the freedom movement herself, Ranganayaki completed her B.Sc in Home Science in 1945.

At the age of eighteen, she was married into the **Mandayam Anandampillai** family, descendants of Anandalvan, disciple of Ramanuja; and began life as the partner of handsome young Captain M.A. Ramaswamy. Life as an army doctor's wife was a far cry from the sheltered world she grew up in, and gave Ranganayaki a world view that was at once broad, mature and sympathetic. Through all her years of being a home-maker and bringing up three children (and being grandmother to five), one thing never changed - her constant thirst for knowledge, and her openness to learning anything from anybody.

At the age of 65, after the demise of her husband, Ranganayaki turned back to academics, and to Srivaisnavism in particular, for renewal and sustenance. It was the beginning of a 9 year period of intense and enjoyable study, from certificate to doctorate, and the study that has resulted in this work.

In addition to Srivaisnavism, Ranganayaki's many interests include reading, painting, crafts, music and friends.