

**HISTORY BEHIND THE PRAISING WORDS OF THE LEARNED**  
**An annotated translation of the *Patirrupattu* and the**  
**political geography of the early Cēra kingdom**

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## Abbreviations

*	reconstructed form.
abs.	absolutive ( <i>vinaiyeccam</i> )
adj.	adjective
alap.	alapetai
caus.	causative
fem.	feminine
Gr.	Ancient Greek
h. pl.	honorific plural
imp. pey.	<i>peyareccam</i> with imperfective aspect
inf.	infinitive
intr.	intransitive
masc.	masculine
neg. abs.	negative absolutive (negative <i>vinaiyeccam</i> )
neg. pey.	negative peyareccam
neut.	neuter
obl.	oblique case
onom.	onomatopoeia
opt.	optative
Pā.	Pali
Per.	Persian
perf. pey.	<i>peyareccam</i> with perfective aspect
pl.	plural
p.n.	proper name
POC	<i>Patirrupattu's</i> old commentary
Pkt.	Prakrit
pron. n.	pronominal noun
sing.	singular
subj.	subjunctive
Skt.	Sanskrit
tr.	transitive
v.	verb
v. n.	verbal noun
voc.	vocative
v. r.	verbal root



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## Introduction to a *longue durée* of South Indian history

“History may be divided into three movements: what moves rapidly, what moves slowly and what appears not to move at all.”<sup>1</sup> If we consider Braudel’s words when examining the ancient history of South India, we soon have to realise that, although the rapidly moving ‘evental history’ (*l’histoire événementielle*) is entirely impossible to reconstruct from the primary sources (of which I think mainly of the Caṅkam literature), still the first three centuries of the Common Era provide us with a *longue durée*, in which the seemingly motionless period is apt to reveal the course, processes, directions, and tendencies of history while breaking the surface we can somewhat explore the slowly moving, tectonic layers in the depth. To conduct such research, it is essential to put down boundary stones and drop down some additional anchors of Cēra chronology. However, between the endpoints, we must ignore, out of compulsion, the dense history of events and, instead, focus on the dynamism of long centuries.

Reviewing the works published on early Cēra history, we see a keen interest from the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, in the background of which we find the anthology called *Patirruppattu*, which had soon become very attractive as a quasi “chronicle” of Cēra history. Studies like Kanakasabhai’s *The Tamils eighteen hundred years ago* (1904), Sesha Aiyar’s *Cēra Kings of the Śāngam Period* (1937), Aiyangar’s *Seran Vanji* (1940), Marr’s dissertation and the published book called *The eight anthologies* [1958], Thiagarajah’s dissertation called *The Ceranāṭu during the Caṅkam and the post-Caṅkam period* (1963), M. E. M. Pillai’s *Culture of the Ancient Cheras* (1970), Balasubramanian’s *A Study of the Literature of the Cēra kingdom* (1980), and Turaicāmiṭṭai’s *Cēra maṅṅar varalāru* (2002) are the most important works written on this period of history. Each of these works is an important contribution to historical reconstruction. However, the lack of a sufficiently critical approach and a thorough comparative and philological work on the written sources arises in connection with almost all these works (perhaps Marr’s work is an exception in this respect). Historical studies like Champakalakshmi 1996 and 2011, Sivabalan 1996, Mahadevan 2003, Gurukkal 2010 and 2016, Selvakumar 2017, Narayanan 2018, and De Romanis 2020 provide valuable insight into Cēra history, and I found them immensely useful, although in some cases, particularly in the cases of politics and economy, I felt necessary to argue with their authors. This work is unique in that respect that it simultaneously presents a new translation of the *Patirruppattu*, with its rich annotation apparatus and in-depth studies related to it, in which the most crucial methodology was a critical reinterpretation of the text and the questioning of everything we thought we knew about the early Cēras, thus formulating new questions and opening new doors to interpretations and scientific dialogue.

I need to make some remarks about chronology now. The available data suggest that the early Cēra chronology has to be defined between two points: the inscriptions of Aśoka (3<sup>rd</sup> c. BC), which most probably records the strong tribal state of the Cēras perhaps dating back to a somewhat older past, and

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<sup>1</sup> Braudel 1972, 8.

the 4<sup>th</sup> century AD, when the Pallava dynasty already ruled over some of the eastern parts of South India,<sup>2</sup> however, the *Patirruppattu* is remarkably silent about them,<sup>3</sup> and/or the 5<sup>th</sup> century AD, the possible date of the epic *Cilappatikāram*,<sup>4</sup> since we have textual evidence that Iṅāṅkōvaṭikaḷ already knew the later *patikams* of *Patirruppattu*;<sup>5</sup> which century anyway marks the beginning of a next chapter in Tamil literary history: the *bhakti* (*paṭṭi*).<sup>6</sup> In these centuries, we see Pliny the Elder (around 50 AD), who mentioned the Cēras and their town Muziris as a place to be avoided by merchants because of the pirates, the *Periplus Maris Erythraei* (around 50–70 AD) which mentioned the Cēra state as kingdom and Mouziris that seemed to be an already safe place for the sailors, Ptolemy who mentioned the Cēra kingdom (around 150 AD) and their capital in Karuvūr, and last but not least, the Pukaḷūr inscriptions (near Karūr, Tamil Nadu) datable to the end of the 2<sup>nd</sup> century AD, which mentioned Cēra kings of the Irumporai branch. These, together with the textual references and unearthed archaeological evidence for Indo-Roman trade between the Mediterranean and the Cēras, offer us a period between the 1<sup>st</sup> c.–3<sup>rd</sup> c. AD as a possible era when the Cēra kings, who were mentioned in the *Patirruppattu*, reigned. Regarding the *Patirruppattu*, one of the conclusions of the following study is that the *Patirruppattu* is nothing more than a collection of old poems (old in style, phrasing, and contents) sung for ancient Cēra kings, which poems were collected and edited into an anthology probably during the time of the late Irumporai rulers, around the end of the 3<sup>rd</sup> century or sometime in the 4<sup>th</sup> century AD, while unified *patikams*, epilogues, and names of established authors were added to the *decades* (*paṭṭu*). The text thus became a means of legitimising power and, at the same time, the most important “songbook” of royal ceremonies, which was able to retell the history of the kingdom from its beginnings to the glorious present, when the kingdom was perhaps economically the strongest, culturally the most flourishing, and territorially the greatest. In my opinion, this must have happened at the same time when the Cēra love anthology, the *Aiṅkurunūru* took shape, and these two, the *puram* and the *akam* anthologies of the Cēras, have to be considered as late antique attempt to establish a Cēra literary tradition and academy, the “disciple” or “competitor” of the one found in Maturai.<sup>7</sup> However, it could not have been a cradle for a mediaeval Tamil literary renaissance during the Cēra Perumāḷs because of the rapidly intensifying Brāhmanical influences on the Malabar Coast, which have contributed significantly to the specific development of Kerala’s cultural history. Therefore, the academy at Maturai still could have felt that the ancient Cēra anthologies were their inheritance and burden to edit since this late-unfolding classical literature may have withered early in the decline of the early Cēra kingdom and at the beginning of *bhakti*. Still, the early mediaeval epics have already re-connected the literary legacies of the ancient kingdoms.

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<sup>2</sup> Francis 2011, 339.

<sup>3</sup> For a different point of view on the absence of the Pallavas, read Tiekens 2001, 130–131.

<sup>4</sup> For the chronology and debates around it, read: Zvelebil 1995, 145–146.

<sup>5</sup> For an illustrative example, read the V. *patikam* of the *Patirruppattu*, which has several passages comparable to passages in *Cilappatikāram*, III. 26; 28.

<sup>6</sup> Wilden 2014, 149.

<sup>7</sup> On the academy at Maturai, read: Wilden 2014, 12.

I must mention the so-called “Gajabāhu synchronism”, which has long been the basis of Caṅkam chronology. According to this theory, in the *Cilappatikāram*, the Cēra king Ceṅkuṭṭuvaṅ is reported to have met with the king Gajabāhu who was mentioned in the text as Kayavāku;<sup>8</sup> latter is identified with the king Gajabāhu I who reigned in Śrī Laṅkā about 113–125 AD.<sup>9</sup> I must agree with Eva Wilden who expresses her doubts about the theory as it is indeed unclear “a. whether the Tamil word *kayavāku* is the Tamilised form of *gajabāhu*, b. whether it refers to the Gajabāhu of the [Śrī Laṅka] chronicle, c. how the information of the chronicle is to be matched with that of the epic, d. what the date of the kings does imply for the dating of the *Cilappatikāram* (according to later legend the author of the epic was a younger brother of the Cēra king)...”.<sup>10</sup> If we accept the “Gajabāhu synchronism” as a historical data, then we may also take one of those chronologies which were offered by previous authors.<sup>11</sup> One of the biggest mysteries is deciding whether the kings reigned simultaneously or whether the two dynastic branches, the Kuṭṭuvar Cēras and the Irumpoṛai Cēras, succeeded each other on the throne. Authors like Sivaraja Pillai,<sup>12</sup> Thiagarajah<sup>13</sup> and others suggest that these branches ruled simultaneously. Pillai’s theory relies on the meeting of Karikāla Cōḷaṅ and Peruñcēral Irumpoṛai on the battlefield of Veṅṇi. However, the poems mention only Cēralātaṅ,<sup>14</sup> the one with *irum paṇam pōntai*.<sup>15</sup> The colophon of *Puranānūru* 65 mentions only Cēramāṅ Peruñcēralātaṅ, literally “the great Cēralātaṅ of the Cēras”. This is far from being sufficient to identify these two. What is, however, striking that the 88<sup>th</sup> poem of the *Patirruppattu* enumerates the royal titles and deeds of Iḷaṅcēral Irumpoṛai together with the deeds of his Cēra ancestors starting from Neṭuñcēralātaṅ and Ceṅkuṭṭuvaṅ with the battle against the *kaṭampus*, the defeat of Naṅṅaṅ and Kaḷuvuḷ, etc., which lines contain both the heroic feats of the Kuṭṭuvaṅ Cēras as well as the Irumpoṛais.<sup>16</sup> However, the poet calls Iḷaṅcēral the “descendant of [these] great ones” (Line 14), who did the actions described in the previous lines (Lines 1–13). If he had been a proud scion of the Irumpoṛai branch, he would not have boasted of the exploits of the other branch of the Cēras, and the poet would not have called him a descendant of both branches at once. At the very least, it casts doubt on Sivaraja Pillai’s theory. However, if we read the following words of Sivaraja Pillai, we understand his methodology, which differs from ours: “[b]ut in view of most, if not the whole, of the Chēra genealogy depending for its authenticity on *Patirruppattu*, a work not of impeccable authority in itself on account of its containing patent interpolations and which moreover has already been consigned to the humble role of mere secondary evidence, I could not bring myself to make that dynasty the

<sup>8</sup> *Cilappatikāram*, III. 30. 160.

<sup>9</sup> Wilden 2006, 17.

<sup>10</sup> Wilden 2006, 17.

<sup>11</sup> The most influential ones can be found in Kanakasabhai 1904, 87; Pillai 1932, Table III; and Sesha Aiyar 1937: 128–129.

<sup>12</sup> Pillai 1932, Table III.

<sup>13</sup> Thiagarajah 1963, 171.

<sup>14</sup> *Akanānūru*, 55: 11.

<sup>15</sup> *Porunarāruppatai*, 143.

<sup>16</sup> *Patirruppattu*, 88: 1–14.

standard for the construction of the Tables.”<sup>17</sup> Anyway, I interpret these kings as successive rulers, confirmed by the genealogical information of the *patikams* and their dynastic branches as Cēra families who could exercise power simultaneously as king and royal representatives. Still, I believe there is no hard evidence to prove that two crowned Cēra kings ever ruled simultaneously.

Talking about the “Gajabāhu synchronism” and the chronology, I rather think that, although it is a fascinating playground of numerology, we still do not have sufficient data to reconstruct a usable chronology of the Cēra kings from our South Indian literary sources, including the *Patirrupattu*’s epilogues, the *Cilappatikāram*, and others. Therefore, it is better to talk about periods of history in which it is possible, drawing on external evidence, to capture the significant historical courses of each century while we make the possibility to outline ‘evental history’ dependent on the discovery of additional evidence.

Thus, the most important chronological boundaries were fixed to the inscriptional material and the Greek and Latin sources. At the same time, for the reign of the eight kings of the *Patirrupattu*, we designated an extended period (1<sup>st</sup>–3<sup>rd</sup> centuries AD). In these centuries, if we consider the years given by the *Patirrupattu*’s epilogues, the Cēra kings ruled for 259 years. They succeeded each other on the throne every 32 years on average. Even if the exact years were not considered, this study used this data as an approximate calculation. Including the Cēra kings whose names we only know, we can conclude that the dynasty could have been in power for another hundred years, and its beginnings as a kingdom must be sought at the start of the first century AD.

This study will focus on a unique literary anthology: the *Patirrupattu*, which were intentionally written to one particular dynasty, the Cēras, and/or edited for them or their later successor’s needs. This anthology of ten times (*patirru*) ten poems (*pattu*), of which eighty survived along with eight summarising poems (*patikam*), is one among the eight old anthologies (*Eṭṭuttokai*) of the Early Old Tamil Caṅkam literary corpus, and one of the two *puram* anthologies that contain heroic compositions. The *puram* literature has particular importance in reconstructing history because the ancient heroic songs were a means to praise the great warriors and keep them alive through their glorious memories mixed with a significant quantity of literary topoi. Once the ancient literature of the Tamils had been edited and formed into a canon in the early Middle Ages, this canon was continuously studied (with more or less intensity), copied and preserved through the ages, which meant the next step of memorialising. Thus, I believe that the *puram* literature became a memory space (*lieu de mémoire*) with time, in which the poems were quasi-symbolic memorials for the heroes. I also have the impression that the Tamils looked upon the old literature as an imaginary *locus memoriae*, as a vast material of their collective memory, which became a part of their collective identity. During this work, I emphasised the importance of reading the songs of the *Patirrupattu* and the ancient Mediterranean authors together. At the same time, I occasionally used their data to verify each other. I analysed the text of the *Patirrupattu* in the light of

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<sup>17</sup> Pillai 1932, 57.

different works of the Caṅkam corpus (particularly the *Puranānūru*), paying attention to the system of conventions recorded in the *Tolkāppiyam*, which in some cases overwrote our possibilities of interpretation. Wherever it was possible, I used Sanskrit and Prakrit sources during the historical reconstruction. As a supplement to the primary sources, I often used inscriptions of the ancient *oikumene*, Tamil Brāhmī epigraphic remains, and archaeological findings from Egypt via India to Thailand, which materials, in many cases, contributed to a deeper understanding and dispelled the uncertainties.

I have already designated two methodological directions: to interpret Cēra history as a *longue durée* which allows us to shoot a “long take”, and to interpret *puram* poetry as a *locus memoriae*, a very formulaic literary universe in which actual historical events come to life. Since I will use literary sources to draw historical conclusions from them, it is important to mention the crucial questions collected by Wilden in her monograph on *Literary Techniques in Old Tamil Caṅkam Poetry*: “What picture of reality do the texts give and why? What do they betray as to their own historical and social reality, and how? To what extent is it possible to distinguish fiction from fact? How does fiction influence fact and vice versa?”<sup>18</sup> I felt it necessary to keep all these issues in mind throughout my study. Among these, the first question was already answered when I stated that heroic poetry served as a memorial place. I think the comparative method, in which I primarily used Latin and Greek texts as the background for Caṅkam sources, proved the antiquity of the Cēra kingdom and helped us to understand their history in several matters even when the Caṅkam poets remained silent. I tried, however, to remain sceptical and critical all along and to distinguish the texts in which the poets intended to capture history from those in which we find the imagination, poetic fancies, literary programs and conventions, or fabrications of the poets.

When we examine whether it is possible to reconstruct history from literary sources, we must emphasise that, as Assmann says, “the original task of the poet was to preserve the group memory”.<sup>19</sup> In our case, bards and court poets of the Cēras are special carriers of the cultural memory, who are indeed separated from everyday life and duties.<sup>20</sup> The poets were not merely slaves to literary conventions, while, as people who use their human memory to preserve the knowledge that consolidates the group identity,<sup>21</sup> they needed a “system” to fulfil the necessary tasks of creating unity and guiding action, which have three functions to be performed: storage (poetic form), retrieval (ritual performance), and communication (collective participation).<sup>22</sup> “Through regular repetition, festivals and rituals ensure the communication and continuance of the knowledge that gives the group its identity. Ritual repetition also consolidates the coherence of the group in time and space.”<sup>23</sup> This applies to the examined period, where we find lavish festivals around the courts, and at the festivals, many bards and musicians sing the praises of the king according to the established rules of ancient poetry, which increased the king’s reputation

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<sup>18</sup> Wilden 2006, 21–22.

<sup>19</sup> Assmann 2011, 39.

<sup>20</sup> Assmann 2011, 39.

<sup>21</sup> Assmann 2011, 41.

<sup>22</sup> Assmann 2011, 41.

<sup>23</sup> Assmann 2011, 42.

and strengthened the unity among those participating in the celebrations as a group. As Assmann mentions: “[i]t is generally accepted that the poetic form has the mnemotechnical aim of capturing the unifying knowledge in a manner that will preserve it.”<sup>24</sup> This means that in addition to formulaic language and literary conventions, which first serve as necessary means of storage, and later as means of preserving and miming the archaic style, the poet is the carrier of the cultural memory of his society. It is worth examining their poems from this point of view. I draw attention to the dangers inherent in this kind of historical reconstruction several times in this study. We assume that the *Patirruppattu* is an anthology already halfway between oral tradition and written literature, considering the possible dating and the length of the poems. In the oral tradition, the bard’s memory was the only means of storing knowledge, and there were no ways to access that knowledge besides the bard’s performance. As Assmann emphasises, repetition is a structural necessity in the oral tradition, without which the tradition would break down, while innovation would mean forgetting.<sup>25</sup> In the later semi-oral tradition, these are still valid, so even though writing helps the compositions to be preserved, following the rules of the old system remains an essential requirement for the continuity of the tradition.

The monograph of Tieken,<sup>26</sup> which casts doubt on the antiquity of Caṅkam literature and considers the corpus as mediaeval, giving the 8<sup>th</sup>–9<sup>th</sup> centuries AD as the lower limits, is an interesting work because, despite its exaggerations, it questions some disturbing conditionings and doubtful dating, from which one may be inspired.<sup>27</sup> However, we have to refute his re-dating efforts because, as we will see in the following pages, the Cēra panegyrics proved to be suitable sources to shed light on the antiquity of the Cēras and could have been successfully analysed in the mirror of the Greek and Latin authors. The external chronology provided by the Mediterranean texts, the various archaeological findings, and the inscriptions suggest that the historian must take the courage and attempt to use these Old Tamil literary works as a source in historical research. It is not a duty of my study to cover all of Tieken’s possible mistakes. However, I have to make a few comments about his ideas. He is perhaps right when he claims that the bards and poets are not always the same in the *puram* poems, but it does not mean that the *puram* is not a poetry of a contemporary heroic society but one about the heroic past.<sup>28</sup> As he says, bards appear as *dramatis personae* in most of the *puram* poems.<sup>29</sup> However, this does not mean that the court poets could not write poems in which they wrote on behalf of the minstrels, as they were certainly surrounded by a world where bards roamed around South India and sang the glory of the worthy ones and tradition the court poet may have felt its own as being a quasi *rhapsodos*. At the time of the *Patirruppattu*, if we consider the length and the complex contents of the songs, we may conclude that these songs were composed or even written in and around the courts and were most probably introduced on

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<sup>24</sup> Assmann 2011, 41–42.

<sup>25</sup> Assmann 2011, 82.

<sup>26</sup> Tieken 2001.

<sup>27</sup> Wilden 2006, 4. For a detailed review of his book, read Wilden 2002.

<sup>28</sup> Tieken 2001, 114.

<sup>29</sup> Tieken 2001, 113.

recitations of royal festivals as being parts of the *panegyric ritual*. The poems had a literary program to praise the king, the dynasty, and the kingdom using the old literature following the conventions of the *Tolkāppiyam*. We do not know whether to compose songs in *akaval/āciryappā* metre was in fashion around the 1<sup>st</sup>–3<sup>rd</sup> centuries AD, or whether it was an archaic but already fading tradition, but it seems that the audience was only satisfied if this old style was applied in the poems. The poets sang about themselves as the eyewitnesses of situations they have probably never seen personally. This, again, does not mean that these are historical fiction or that the poets must have composed these poems in later ages. Still, it probably means that the Caṅkam court poets, as honourable members of the court, did not have to follow the king into dangerous campaigns; it was enough if the outcome of the battles was sung according to the old poetic tradition, with the help of the appropriate poetic conventions. Therefore, I believe that the court poets were able to “move” between the court, the queen’s residence, the battlefield, the military camp, and the enemies’ countries, etc. while they lived in the protected mansion of the king and wrote their songs using the royal informants who learned first-hand about the affairs of the kingdom. Thus, the court literature remained a high culture; it met the highest expectations of the learned ones, and at the same time, the ruler could easily put it at his service. The fact that the poet who wrote the song and the *dramatis persona* who is depicted in the song as a poet is not always the same does not seem to be problematic and does not justify considering the poem as a work of later ages, as it was simply a matter of meeting the expectations of the court and the literary style. The problem is how to use them in historical reconstructions, an attempt of which is the recent study. Regarding Tieken’s comment on the *puram* colophons, I must say that he is perhaps right when he claims that the colophons are later and do not entirely reflect the reality of previous ages.<sup>30</sup> However, even if the colophons are not as ancient as the poems, we must confess that we do not know when they were written and from what sources the ancient or (early) mediaeval editors worked so we cannot exclude the possibility that in most cases those scholars had reliable data about the ancient past of South India. Contradictions arose only when they did not know something and/or had to improvise/amend. Last but not least, Tieken thinks that the *Patirrupattu*’s structure already shows the characteristics of *bhakti* poems, therefore, it is a later text than e.g. the *Puraṇānūru*.<sup>31</sup> However, I think it is possible to assume that the *king cult* of the Caṅkam times, together with its *panegyric ritual* and the pilgrimage-like wanderings of supplicants and bards to the palaces of kings who were the protectors of mankind, had an even more important influence on the early *bhakti* literature of the Tamils. This is why I think that in these ages, we must be careful with what we attribute to the influence of *bhakti* and what still comes from the royal cult of previous ages.

In the first part of my dissertation, I introduce an annotated translation of the *Patirrupattu*, the *puram* anthology of the early Cēra kings, together with introductory notes and annotations. A new translation of the *Patirrupattu* has long been awaited for a better understanding of the early Cēras, as far

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<sup>30</sup> Tieken 2001, 116–123.

<sup>31</sup> Tieken 2001, 230–231.

as the available translations<sup>32</sup> are neither faithful to the text nor accurate enough, or even critical. I did not undertake to keep up with these translations but focused on a rigorous text-based translation and a thorough textual reconstruction. The translation was based on the following edition: *Patirruppattu palaiyavuraiyum*, edited by U. Vē. Cāminātaiyar, Cennapaṭṭaṇam: Vaijayanti Accukkūṭam, 1904. In terms of methodology, I have tried to avoid relying on the mediaeval anonymous commentator, which is almost a thousand years later than the text itself. Because of that, it carries a great deal of danger. Previous translators, in turn, fell into this error. In the philological dead ends, I first tried to find early textual parallels, while I opened the mediaeval interpretation only after this step. Reading enigmatic and obscure parts, U. Vē. Cāminātaiyar (Cāminātaiyar 1980) and Turaicāmi Piḷḷai (Turaicāmiṭṭai 1973) were the ones among the modern editors I turned to for help, whose glosses and commentaries often helped me to understand the dubious passages. I am incredibly grateful to my supervisor, Eva Wilden, with whom I had the opportunity to read the *Patirruppattu* in Hamburg in 2019–2020 with the support of the DAAD Research Fund, and who provided me with constructive advice throughout. I am also very grateful to G. Vijayavenugopal (EFEO, Pondichéry) and K. Nachimuthu (EFEO, Pondichéry), with whom I had a chance to read the first four decades of the *Patirruppattu* in Pondichéry 2019 with the support of the EFEO Field Scholarship. They generously offered their free time and read these challenging texts with me for many days. Without their oral comments, the translation would not be the same now. Whenever I felt necessary, I considered the variant readings collected by U. Vē. Cāminātaiyar himself and occasionally used the oldest complete manuscript of the text, the UVSL [98a]<sup>33</sup> nr. palm-leaf manuscript for emendations.

In the second part of my dissertation (*The political geography of the early Cēra kingdom*), we find historical studies accompanying the translation. Regarding this chapter, in its first sub-chapter, called *The legitimate kingdom*, I have examined the political nature of the early Cēra state, the king's power legitimacy and his connection to the Cēra dynasty. I have discussed the Cēra royal courts and political centres, I have processed the historical data on towns, villages, and the society of the Cēra kingdom, and I have attempted to define the borders and border areas of the Cēra kingdom. In its second sub-chapter, *The expansive kingdom*, I discussed three topics: king and army, the king's campaigns against the disobedient, and the triumphant festivals after the victory. In its third sub-chapter, *The interactive kingdom*, I examined the commercial, diplomatic, religious, and cultural interactions of Cēras with those who contacted them in the 1<sup>st</sup>–3<sup>rd</sup> centuries AD. Thus, the Cēra kings appear at the centre of interactions, making their country long-standing, strong, and unique in terms of its cultural identity. In *The interactive kingdom*, I attempted to critically and thoroughly examine our ancient primary sources on trade and

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<sup>32</sup> Except for shorter or longer excerpts that have been published, two complete translations have to be mentioned: Cuppiramanniyan 1980 and Herbert 2012.

<sup>33</sup> Wilden 2014, 68. A critical edition of the *Patirruppattu* will be released in the coming years under the editorship of T. Rajeswari (EFEO, Pondichéry), after the publication of which I will have to make a corrected translation of the text considering the reconstructed text.



religion, during which new results were obtained. In many cases, I was able to refine our previous knowledge.

I adhere to the following conventions throughout this study. I have transliterated all Tamil texts using the conventions of the *Madras Tamil Lexicon* and all Sanskrit texts using the conventions of the *International Alphabet of Sanskrit Transliteration* (IAST). Regarding the Ancient Greek sources, I have transliterated the texts following the conventions of the ELOT 743 – Type 2; however, in the case of the South Asian proper names written in Greek, I felt it necessary to put the length marks (ō, ē). Regarding the place names and some of the essential terms found in Greek texts, they appear at their first occurrence in brackets in Greek, after that in Romanised transliteration. I followed the rules of Romanised transliteration for Tamil, Malayalam, Kannada, Telugu, and other Indian place names for administrative units. At the same time, I have given the names of modern Indian states in English transliteration.

All translations into English are my own unless I state otherwise.

## **Addendum (2024)**

In the two years following my doctoral defence, some of the results and revised chapters of my dissertation have been published in the following three publications, touching upon the subchapters of *The Legitimate Kingdom* and *The Interactive Kingdom*:

1. *On kings who drove back the sea: Shipping and seafaring in the early Cēra kingdom*. In: Acta Orientalia Hung. 76 (2023): 4, pp. 487–509.
2. “*The gold-possessing market where flags of the old town cast a shadow*”: *Some remarks on maritime trade, markets, and money in the early Cēra panegyrics*. In: Sven Günther (ed.), *Modern Economics and the Ancient World: Were the Ancients Rational Actors? Selected Papers from the Online Conference, 29–31 July 2021*. Münster: Zaphon, pp. 231-262 (2023).
3. *The heroes who turned into stones and songs: The memory of the monarch reflected in the Old Tamil Caṅkam literature*. In: Gabrielle Storey (ed.), *Memorialising Premodern Monarchs: Medias of Commemoration and Remembrance*. London: Palgrave Macmillan UK (2021), pp. 141-165.



# Encomia for the Cēra kings: The *Patirruppattu*

## *Introduction*

### **The *Patirruppattu* and its place in the Caṅkam corpus**

The Early Old Tamil Caṅkam literature as a corpus consists of two hyper-anthologies, the *Ettuttokai* or the oldest Eight Anthologies, and the *Pattuppāṭṭu* or the Ten Songs, which anthologies contain erotic (*akam*) and heroic (*puram*) songs composed by Tamil bards and court poets during the antiquity and late antiquity of South Indian history. Two heroic anthologies survived the ages, the *Puranānūru* and the *Patirruppattu*. The main difference between them is that while the *Puranānūru* is a collection of four hundred poems which have no particular relation to each other (although the mediaeval editor(s) had certainly searched for links in the contents),<sup>34</sup> the *Patirruppattu* is a unique text in being composed and edited as “a chronicle of the early kings of Kerala”.<sup>35</sup> The *Patirruppattu* is the only Old Tamil text which was written exclusively about one dynasty of ancient South India. There is another anthology among the collections of *Ettuttokai*, namely the *Aiṅkurunūru*, an anthology of five hundred short love poems, which shows striking similarities with the *Patirruppattu*, as both of these are Cēra texts connected to the Cēra court, and use a decadic structure the first time in Tamil literary history.<sup>36</sup> The *Patirruppattu*, as its title shows, originally contained ten times ten heroic songs in ten decades (*pattu*), of which eight decades with eighty songs survived together with the additional patikams that close/open and summarise each decade. As Eva Wilden says, although “in the case of the *Patirruppattu*, the beginning and end are missing, and so are both the invocation verse and the colophon, but it is so close to the *Aiṅkurunūru* in language and style that one can argue for the hypothesis that there was once such a verse and that the *Patirruppattu* was also part of a preliminary collection of six texts”.<sup>37</sup> The text of the *Patirruppattu* survived on four palm-leaf manuscripts and six paper manuscripts.<sup>38</sup> The collection of poems was discovered and edited by U. Vē. Cāminātaiyar, whose first edition (1904) was used throughout this study.

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<sup>34</sup> Panattoni 2001, 139–178.

<sup>35</sup> Marr 1985 [1958]: 262.

<sup>36</sup> Wilden 2014, 12.

<sup>37</sup> Wilden 2014, 12–13.

<sup>38</sup> Wilden 2014, 67–70.

Before turning to the main characteristics of the decade poems (*pattu*) and the *patikams*, it is necessary to talk about the authorship of the poems. As we know now, the *Patirruppattu* was written by ten various poets. The eight names that survived are the following: 1. Kumaṭṭūr Kaṇṇaṇār, 2. Pālai Kautamaṇār, 3. Kāppiyārru Kāppiyaṇār, 4. Kācaru Ceyyuḷ Paraṇar, 5. Kākaipāṭṭiyār Nacceḷḷaiyār, 6. Kapilar, 7. Aricil-kilār, and 8. Perunḱunṛur-kilār. According to this, the authors of the decades were among the greatest poets of Caṅkam literature; however, when we read the texts, we feel that they sometimes fall short of the high standard expected from the mentioned authors. How or in which milieu could the *Patirruppattu* be born as an anthology which contains the names mentioned above, and what is the relationship of the anthology with the early Cēra kings? To create a hypothesis, I considered the following situations:

	<b>Demand</b>	<b>Realization</b>	<b>Reception</b>	<b>Royal perspective</b>	<b>Evaluation</b>
<b>A</b>	<i>Patirruppattu</i> ( <i>Pati.</i> ) was ordered or received by the king	The poets are real celebrities of the Caṅkam literature, the authors are court poets	Success: people could meet, hear and celebrate the poets	The king is satisfied; his reputation is growing	<b><i>Pati.</i>'s inner perspective</b>
<b>B</b>	<i>Pati.</i> was ordered or received by the king	The poets mentioned in the <i>Pati.</i> never went to the Cēra court but their names were used by other poets	Literature only for internal usage, not very flattering to the king	No court recitations, no real performances, propaganda for festivals	doubtful conspiracy
<b>C</b>	<i>Pati.</i> was ordered or received by the king	The poets are real but epigones / impostors	Fraud; literature for internal usage	The king had to face the fraud, the real value of the <i>panegyrici</i> is lost	It would not have become famous poetical work; against the cultural ideals of the age
<b>D</b>	<i>Pati.</i> was composed during the spontaneous visits of famous poets	The poets are real celebrities of the Caṅkam lit.; the authors are temporary visitors	Success: people could meet, hear and celebrate the poets	The king is satisfied; his reputation is growing	slight probability; rich payment for the poets

<b>E</b>	<i>Pati.</i> was composed during the spontaneous visits of famous poets	The poets are real but epigones / impostors	Fraud; literature for internal usage	The king had to face the fraud, the real value of the <i>panegyrici</i> is lost	It would not have become famous poetical work; against the cultural ideals of the age
<b>F</b>	The name of poets are added by a later editor	No data available on the real poets	No data available on the reception	No real data about the kings and the early court poetry ( <i>patikams</i> are later!)	Possible but it means to reject the whole tradition around the <i>Pati.</i>
<b>G</b>	The whole <i>Pati.</i> was composed by ten various poets at the time of the last ruler(s)	The last poet(s) are real; before that, names as propaganda	Festivals; public recitations about the Cēra kings in the past; people were far from being able to judge whether the name of the poets were real	Constructing a glorious past based on historical tradition, <i>Pati.</i> is not an anthology from different ages but a collection of hymns ordered by one of the Irumpoṛai Cēras	Possible; a retelling narrative of the past from the perspective of the late Cēras; can be presented at festivals
<b>H</b>	The whole <i>Pati.</i> was composed by ten various poets from different ages, collected at the time of the last ruler(s)	The last poet(s) are real; before that, names as propaganda	Festivals; public recitations about the Cēra kings in the past; people were far from being able to judge whether the name of the poets were real	Constructing a glorious past based on historical tradition, <i>Pati.</i> is an anthology from different ages; perhaps slightly retouched	<b>Possible; a retelling narrative of the past from the perspective of the late Cēras; making the collected songs famous by adding the names of celebrities; can be presented at festivals</b>

Looking at this table, I have tried to introduce all the possible situations regarding the potential circumstances of the composition of *Patirruppattu*. I found the *Patirruppattu's* inner perspective (Situation **A**) a straightforward literary program with less to do with historical reality. I found it unlikely that the real poets mentioned in the *Patirruppattu* visited the Cēra court after each other, composing decadic compositions for the different kings (Situations **A**, **D**). Why would they have written only these ten songs, and why in this style? If they had written more, where would those

compositions have been? Thus, I found Situation H to be the only possible one. According to that, the poems of the *Patirruppattu* could have been written by ten various poets from different ages, including older hymns written for the ancient Cēra kings and newer ones, collected and edited by people serving in the court of the last Irumporai rulers, who had specific knowledge on ancient Cēra history. These early editors could have been the ones who connected the decades to the names of famous authors to elevate the entire work to a higher literary rank. At the same time, it became suitable for distribution as royal propaganda and presentation as a festive anthology of songs. If the text had been created later than the last Irumporais, there would undoubtedly be more crosstalk or intersections with the *Cilappatikāram* and the developments of later periods (e.g. the number of words of Indo-Aryan origin). If they had been composed earlier by the poets named in the texts, it would have been difficult to tailor the structure of *Patirruppattu* to those compositions later. The text must have existed as a Cēra anthology even before the early mediaeval editorial work at the Maturai academy since it is again not very likely that an anthology flattering to the Cēra kings would be produced a hundred years later in a Pāṇṭiya city. Thus, the only way I can interpret the text's genesis is the following: 1. collecting old songs from the Cēra past, 2. organising them, and 3. putting them in the service of the Cēra court with appropriate modifications and adding historical data. Of course, it is also possible that some poems are related to the poets to whom the tradition attributes them (e.g. Kapilar refers to his friendship with Pāri in his first poem),<sup>39</sup> but this can only become clearer with further research and text analysis, including mathematical methods.

### **The decade poems**

The *Patirruppattu* consists of decade poems, initially ten times (*patirru*) ten (*pattu*), from which eight times ten survived. These poems are, on average, 21 lines long; the shortest is a five-liner (87th song), while the longest is fifty-seven lines (90th song). As discussed earlier, each decade was written by various poets: Kumaṭṭūr Kaṇṇaṇār for the king Imaiavarampaṇ Neṭuñcēralātaṇ, 2. Pālai Kautamaṇār for the king Palyāṇaiccelkeḷu Kuṭṭuvaṇ, 3. Kāppiyārru Kāppiyaṇār for the king Kaḷaṅkāykaṇṇi Nārmuṭi Cēral, 4. Kācaṇu Ceyyuḷ Paraṇar for the king Kaṭal Piṛakkōṭṭiya Ceṅkuṭṭuvaṇ, 5. Kākkaipāṭiṇiyār Nacceḷlaiyār for the king Āṭukōṭpāṭṭu Cēralātaṇ, 6. Kapilar for the king Celvakkāṭuṅkō Vāliyātaṇ, 7. Aricil-kilār for the king Peruñcēral Irumporai, and 8. Peruṅkuṇṇūr-kilār for the king Iḷaṅcēral Irumporai. In some of the decades, the poems are only loosely connected, not so in the Fourth Decade (*nāṅkāṁ pattu*),

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<sup>39</sup> *Patirruppattu*, 61.

which is an early example of *antāti*-composition (< Skt. *antādi*) in Tamil literary history, in which the last letter, syllable, or foot of the previous line are repeated at the beginning of the next one.<sup>40</sup> In this case, it is quite an irregular *antāti* since repetitions sometimes change the word order, and the last and the first poems are not connected this way. We find another early (and also irregular) *antāti*-composition in the Caṅkam corpus, which is interestingly part of the *Aiṅkurunūru*, the Cēra erotic anthology: the decade called *Toṅṭip pattu* written by Ammūvaṅār more or less follows the same rules. Thus, the first *antātis* must be connected to the ancient Cēra literature.

The early editors of the decade poems have uniquely preserved interesting musicological information about the texts, which, as being parts of a lost tradition, cannot be decoded. In any case, they enhance the uniqueness of the text among other Caṅkam anthologies since the decade poems have titles (*peyar*), poetic themes (*turai*), information about the rhythmic effect of the metre (*vaṅṅam*), and information about the metre itself (*tūkkū*).<sup>41</sup> All the poems have *centūkkū* as metres, which seems identical to the old metre called *akaval* or *ācīriyaṅṅā*. The hypermetrical lines and the hypermetrical feet are rare in the poems. Some of the poems contain *vaṅṅi*-lines mixed with standard lines (*alavati*). Most of the themes are panegyrici (*pātāṅṅāttu*).<sup>42</sup> The rhythmic effect of the poems is described as *olukuvaṅṅam* or *olukuvaṅṅamum corcīrvaṅṅamum*. From these, the *oluku vaṅṅam* was defined by V. S. Rajam as a variation in rhythm that “is obtained when the lines in a composition produce an uninterrupted sound (*ōcai*) and present the subject matter in the order in which they are composed.”<sup>43</sup>

### **The *patikams***

The *patikams* are panegyrics which summarise and close/open each decade. They vary in length from ten to twenty-one lines. The *patikams* often contain data not found in the decade poems but were added by the knowledgeable ones who composed them. These poems show a uniform structure, which means that the poems first introduce the parents of the heroes, then we read their heroic acts in a row of absolutes which are connected to the king’s name as the object, for whom the poet, and here we find our main predicate, sang his ten songs. The *patikams* certainly have different authorships than the decades and were written in a later period, which we also see in the frequent appearance of accusatives (*-ai*), among other features. The *patikams*

<sup>40</sup> *Tamil Lexicon*, 82.

<sup>41</sup> Marr 1985 [1958], 266.

<sup>42</sup> For a list of the different *turais*, see: Marr 1985 [1958]: 267–271.

<sup>43</sup> Rajam 1992, 211.

contain prose parts with “epilogues”, which summarise the songs’ titles, the gifts received by the poets for their songs, and the number of years of the kings’ reigns, the reliability of which is a matter of debate. Although in some cases I think these epilogues contain historical data, it is necessary to interpret them as the most loosely connected parts of the text, whose language and the Indo-Aryan loanwords attested in them prove that these must be later additions even compared to the *patikams*.

### **Missing poems and stray songs**

Only a little information is available about the missing poems; this situation has stayed the same over the decades. Reading the poems, Marr’s theory seems reasonable, assuming that one of the lost decades is the first, and the other is the seventh instead of the tenth,<sup>44</sup> however, in the absence of further evidence, we can neither prove nor disprove these ideas. Scholars in the 20<sup>th</sup> century have rediscovered some of the lost fragments or stray songs (*tirattu*) of the *Patirruppattu*, which were found in the *Purattirattu* and Nacciṇārkkīṇiyar’s commentary on *Tolkāppiyam Porulatikāram*. Their language indeed shows that they were most likely part of the *Patirruppattu*. Not so in the case of the last fragment (*vicayam tappiya*), in which we find the word *vicayam* (< Skt. *vijaya*), which is rather weird in the light of the *Patirruppattu* as a whole. Suppose this passage was part of the text. In that case, it connects that missing verse, considering the attestations of the word *vicaya(m)* in the corpus, with the last poems of the *Puranānūru* (362: 5) and the songs of the *Pattuppāṭṭu* (*Perumpāṇārruppāṭai*, 261; *Maturaikkāñci*, 625; *Mullaippāṭṭu*, 91), so it is possible that we are talking about the lost Tenth Decade or a lost *patikam*. All these stray songs are included at the end of the annotated translation of the *Patirruppattu*.

### **Preliminary remarks on the translation**

The translation was based on the following edition: *Patirruppattu palaiyavuraiyum*, edited by U. Vē. Cāminātaiyar, Ceṇṇapaṭṭaṇam: Vaijayanti Accukkūṭam, 1904. Whenever I felt necessary, I considered the variant readings collected by U. Vē. Cāminātaiyar and occasionally used the oldest complete manuscript of the text, the UVSL [98a] nr. palm-leaf manuscript for emendations.<sup>45</sup> I have translated the poems line by line and put the number of the particular line of the Tamil original at the end of the translated English lines, thus helping the retrievability. When translating the text, I strove for philological accuracy and for my translation to reflect the

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<sup>44</sup> Marr 1968, 19–24.

<sup>45</sup> Special thanks to Eva Wilden who kindly provided me with copies of the manuscripts.



Old Tamil syntax instead of making the text aesthetically pleasing. This was necessary to follow the original text even better, word for word, thus getting closer to the original content. The Tamil text separated the hypermetrical foot or *kūn* (“hunch”) by a comma and a line break. I have bolded and italicised the title in both the Tamil and English text.



# An annotated translation of the Patirruppattu

## The First Decade

(*onrām pattu*)

Lost (*kiṭaikkavillai*)

## The Second Decade

(*iraṅtām pattu*)

The poet: Kumattūr Kaṅṅaṅār

The king: Imaiavarampaṅ Neṭuñcēralātaṅ

### 11.

peyar: puṅṅumil kuruti, turai: centurai pāṭāṅpāṭtu, tūkku: centūkku, vaṅṅam: oḷuku vaṅṅam

varai maruḷ puṅari vāṅ picir uṭaiya  
vaḷi pāynt' aṭṭa tuḷaṅk' irum kamañcūl  
naḷi ~irum parappiṅ mā+ kaṭal muṅṅi  
aṅaṅk' uṭai ~avuṅar ēmam puṅarkkum  
cūr uṭai muḷu mutal taṭinta pēr icai+ 5  
kaṭum ciṅa viṭal vēḷ kaḷir' ūrnt'-āṅku  
ce(m)+ vāy eḷkam viḷaṅkunar aṅuppa  
aru niṅam tiranta **puṅ+ umil kuruti**yiṅ  
maṅi niṅa ~irum kaḷi nīr niṅam peyarntu  
maṅāla+ kalavai pōla ~araṅ koṅṅu 10  
muraṅ miḷu ciṅappiṅ uyarnta ~ūkkalai  
palar mocint' ōmpiya tiraḷ pūṅ kaṭampiṅ  
kaṭi ~uṭai muḷu mutal tumiya ~ēey  
veṅṅr' eṅi muḷaṅku paṅai ceyta vel pōr  
nār ari naṅaviṅ āra māṅpiṅ 15  
pōr aṭu tāṅai+ cēralāta  
māṅpu mali paintār ōṭaiyoṭu viḷaṅkum  
valaṅ uyar maruppiṅ paḷi tīr yāṅai+  
polaṅ aṅi ~eruttam mēl koṅṅu polinta niṅ  
palar pukaḷ celvam iṅitu kaṅṅikumē 20

kavir tatai cilampiṅ tuñcum kavari  
parant' ilaṅk' aruviyoṭu narantam kaṇavum  
āriyar tuvaṅriya pēr icai ~imayam  
teṅṅam kumariyoṭ' āyitai  
maṅ mī+ kūrunar maṅam tapa+ kaṭantē.

25

11<sup>th</sup> song

### **Blood that the wounds spew**

Let us sweetly see<sup>46</sup> the wealth that is praised by many (20)

[wealth] of you who prospered, (19d)

after [you] had approached the great sea of vast surface dark like (*nali*) (3)

the billowing, dark, fully pregnant [clouds] which were attacked by the wind by blowing, (2)

when it shattered<sup>47</sup> the mountain-like waves into white spray, (1)

[having approached] being mounted on an elephant bull<sup>48</sup> like the famous and victorious chief (*vēl*)<sup>49</sup> with fierce anger, who cut down the entire foot of [the tree of] Cūr<sup>50</sup> (5–6)

protected by the awful (*aṇaiṅk' uṭai*)<sup>51</sup> *avunar* (*asura*) (4)

having destroyed/felled fortresses<sup>52</sup> so that the dark stream of the sapphire-coloured backwater became like a vermilion<sup>53</sup> dye (9–10)

by changing from ***the spewed blood of the wounds*** that gaped open [on] the difficult[-to-approach] vital spots, <sup>54</sup> when the blades of the red swords cut down the defiant, (7–8)

o you of the effort that was increased by [your] superiority with immense enmity, (11)

after [you] had commanded<sup>55</sup> to chop down the entire protected foot (13)

of the *kaṭampu*-tree<sup>56</sup> with round flowers, that was guarded by many by gathered together, (12)

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<sup>46</sup> Cf. *Aiṅkurunūru*, 121: 1. Here *kaṅṭikum* is a rare form. Aesthialingom explains the ending *-kum* as a suffix that denotes both first person plural and non-past, however, in the *Patirruppattu* we see *-ikum* (six occurrences) which is “found immediately after various past tense markers.” Agesthialingom 1979, 187. U. Vē Cāminātaiyar glosses *kaṅṭōm* (“we are ones who have seen”). Cāminātaiyar 1980, 4. Eva Wilden also analysed it as a past tense form. Wilden 2018, 82.

<sup>47</sup> Here *uṭaiya* can be translated in two different ways: 1. as an adjective (‘possessing’), or 2. as an infinitive (‘to break’). The translation of *uṭaiya* as a genitive suffix would suggest a later form of genitive in the text.

<sup>48</sup> If the chief in Line 6 is identifiable as Murukaṅ (Cevvēl), then the elephant must be the one called Piṇimukam. See: *Tirumurukārruppatai*, 78–82; 247.

<sup>49</sup> The word *vēl* could refer either to Murukaṅ (Cevvēl) or to another famous chieftain (*vēl*). The previous lines are also ambiguous. The poet might have directly chosen this ambiguous way (between mythical and historical).

<sup>50</sup> I translate *cūr* as a proper name of a malevolent power that evolves to the character of Cūrapatumaṅ, the demon slaughtered by Murukaṅ. Cf. *Puranānūru*, 23: 4–5. Another possible translation is ‘fearful’, literally ‘fear-possessing’ (*cūr-uṭai*). See: *Tamil Lexicon*, 1565.

<sup>51</sup> *aṇaiṅku*: ‘fear’, ‘torment’, ‘class of demon/spirit’. *Tamil Lexicon*, 61; *Dravidian Etymological Dictionary*, 112. Here, *aṇaiṅku* + *uṭai* (v.r.) was translated as ‘awful’, lit. ‘fear/torment-possessing’.

<sup>52</sup> Another possibility is that the king ‘felled’ (*konru* abs. < *kol(lu)-tal* v. 3.) either the guarded tree of the forts or the wooden fences of the forts. We do not exactly know whether the forts were made from wood, mud, bricks, or stone.

<sup>53</sup> The word *maṇālam* is a hapax legomenon in the Caṅkam corpus. According to the POC, it means ‘saffron’ (*kuṅkumam*) or ‘vermilion’ (*cāiṅkulikam*), of which I chose the second in my translation.

<sup>54</sup> An important innovation of the *Patirruppattu* that the poems have titles (*peyar*) that is, in fact, a short phrase chosen from each poems. In the following pages in both the Tamil texts and the translations, I marked these titles with bold italic font.

<sup>55</sup> The form *ēy* is a metrically lengthened (*alaṭeṭai*) absolutive (*viṇaiyeccam*) of *ēvu-tal* v. 5. tr ‘to command’.

<sup>56</sup> Here *kaṭampu* refers to the totemistic tree of the *kaṭampu*-tribe. See: *Patirruppattu*, 12: 3; 17: 5; 20: 4; 88: 6; *Patirruppattu*, IV. 6. The act of cutting down a totemistic tree was one of the most important part of a battle and most of the times meant to score an irreversible victory.

o Cēralātaṅ<sup>57</sup> with an army that is murderous in battle (16)  
 with a chest with sandal paste [smeared on it], with fiber-filtered toddy, (15)  
 [and] with victorious war [in which] the *paṇai* drum was made,<sup>58</sup> which sounds by beating after  
 [you] had won, (14)  
 after [you] had been lifted on the golden<sup>59</sup> ornamented neck (19a–c)  
 of [your] flawless elephant with tusks excel in strength, (18)  
 which shines with abundant fresh garlands on [its] chest together with *ōtai* ornaments,<sup>60</sup> (17)  
 after [you] had overcome while the bravery of the ones who uttered praises of [other] kings  
 failed, (25)  
 [kings] between the southern Kumari<sup>61</sup> (24)  
 and the famous Imayam<sup>62</sup> where *āriyar* live (23)  
 where the yaks (*kavari*) sleep on the slopes dense with *kavir*-trees (21)  
 dream about *narantam*<sup>63</sup> and shiny splashing waterfalls.<sup>64</sup> (22)

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<sup>57</sup> We find another poem in the *Akanāṅṅūru* written by Māmūlaṅār, in which probably the same Cēra king appears together with his famous campaign against the *kaṭampu* tribe. *Akanāṅṅūru*, 127: 3–9.

<sup>58</sup> After the battle, royal drums (*muracu/muracam; paṇai*) were occasionally made from the chopped wood of the totemistic tree. It is remarkable that the custom appears only in the poems of the *Patirruppattu* (11: 14; 17: 5; 44: 15–16) or in another poem on a Cēra king (*Akanāṅṅūru* 347: 4–5), so we might talk about a Cēra tradition.

<sup>59</sup> The term *poḷaṅ* that denotes gold is a rare adjectival form appearing more frequently in later texts. In Caṅkam corpus, see: *Akanāṅṅūru*, 254: 3; 387: 7; *Aiṅkuṅṅūru*, 435: 5; *Kalittokai*, 54: 2; *Puṅṅāṅṅūru*, 29: 3.

<sup>60</sup> Here *ōtai* means ornamented frontlet of the elephants, same as *mukapaṭām*.

<sup>61</sup> Kaṅṅiyākumari or Cape Comorin is the southernmost point of the Indian peninsula.

<sup>62</sup> *imayam* < Skt. *hīmālaya*.

<sup>63</sup> The word *narantam* (perhaps < Skt. *nāraṅga*, *Dravidian Etymological Dictionary*, 3653) means either a fragrant grass (Cf. *Porunarāruppaṭai*, 238) or the flower of the bitter orange (cf. *Kuṅṅutokai*, 52: 3). Here to understand grass would be logical, but we cannot be sure about the eating habits of the ancient yaks.

<sup>64</sup> *āriyar* < Skt. *ārya*. The honorific marker might refer to an honorable enemy or more than one enemies.

## 12.

peyar: maṛam vīnku pal pukal, tuṛai: centuṛai pāṭānpāṭṭu, tūkku: centūkku, vaṇṇam: oḷuku vaṇṇam

vayavar vīla vāḷ aril mayakki

~iṭam kavara kaṭumpiṇ aracu talai paṇippa+

kaṭampu mutal taṭinta kaṭum ciṇam vēntē

tār aṇi ~eruttiṇ vāral vaḷ+ ukir

arimāṇ vaḷaṅkum cāral pira māṇ

5

tōṭu koḷ iṇa niraṇi neṇc' atirnt'-āṅku

muracu muḷaṅku(m) neṭum nakara aracu tuyil iṇyātu

māṭiram paṇikkum **maṛam vīnku pal pukal**

kēṭṭark' iṇitu niṇ celvam kēḷ torum

kāṇṭal viruppoṭu kamaḷum kuḷavi

10

vāṭā+ paṇi mayir iḷaiya ~āṭu naṭai

~aṇṇal maḷa kaḷir' ari ṇimir' oṇṇum

kaṇru puṇar piṭiya kuṇru pala nīnti

vant' avaṇ niṇrutta ~irum pēr okkal

tol paci ~uḷanta paḷaṅkaṇ vīla

15

~ekku pōḷnt' aṇrutta vāḷ niṇa+ koḷum kuṛai

mai ~ūṇ peyta veḷ-nel veḷ-cōru

naṇai ~amai kaḷḷiṇ tēraloṭu mānti

nīr+ paṭu paruntiṇ irum cirak' aṇṇa

niḷattiṇ citāra kaḷainta piṇṇai

20

nūlā+ kaḷiṅkam vāḷ arai+ koḷi

vaṇara irum kaṭuppiṇ vāṅk' amai mel tōḷ

vacai ~il maḷalir vayanṅk' iḷai ~aṇiya

~amarpu mey+ ārtta curramoṭu

nukartark' iṇitu niṇ perum kali maḷivē.

25

12<sup>th</sup> song

### The increasing many praises of bravery

After [you] had confused [the enemies] in a thicket of swords so that [their] strong men<sup>65</sup> fell, (1)  
o king with fierce anger, who chopped down the foot of the *kaṭampū*-tree (3)  
so that the heads of the kings<sup>66</sup> (*aracu*) [whose] relatives<sup>67</sup> seize domains, are trembling, (2)  
not having let the kings (*aracu*) of tall/long mansions with roaring *muracu*-drums sleep (7)  
having trembled like the hearts of the crowded groups of other animals of the valley (5c–6)  
where the lion<sup>68</sup> with mane-ornamented neck and sharp released<sup>69</sup> claws roams around; (4–  
5b)  
whenever we hear [about] your wealth, it is sweet to hear (9)  
the **increasing many praises of bravery** which caused the [great] directions shiver. (8)  
After [we] had crossed many mountains with female elephants joined by calves, (13)  
who chase away the striped bees from the mighty young elephant bulls (12)  
with youngish dancing gait [and] with fresh hair [on which] the *kuḷavi*-flowers<sup>70</sup> that emit  
fragrance do not wither; [having crossed] with the desire of seeing [your court] (10–11)  
after [we] had eaten white [boiled] rice (*veṅcōru*)<sup>71</sup> [from] white [mountain] paddy (*veṅṇel*)<sup>72</sup> [on  
which] goat flesh [in] greasy, fatty meat pieces which had been chopped by splitting with  
blades had been poured, together with the clarified sap (*tēral*) of the filtered toddy (*kaḷ*)  
produced with flower buds, (16–18)  
so that the sorrow has perished which bore the long-lasting hunger (15)  
of [our] relatives with big names, who camped here after coming, (14)  
after you had removed [our] muddy clothes (20)  
[that were] like the dark wings of the water-moistened brahminy kites (*paruntu*), (19)

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<sup>65</sup> I made an attempt to translate the original meaning of those terms, which were usually translated elsewhere as ‘foes’ or ‘enemies’. This way, we can see how or why they became enemies of the Cēras.

<sup>66</sup> *aracu* < Skt. *rāja*. *Dravidian Etymological Dictionary*, 201.

<sup>67</sup> The word *kaṭampū* is probably a variant of Tam. *kuṭampam* that means ‘relations’, ‘relatives’. *Dravidian Etymological Dictionary*, 1655.

<sup>68</sup> *arimān* prob. < Skt. *hari* ‘yellow’ + Tam. *mān* ‘animal’. *Tamil Lexicon*, 127. See: *Patirruppattu*, 88: 15; as *arimā*, see: *Kalittokai*, 103:18; *Narṇai*, 112: 4; *Paṭṭiṇappālai*, 298.

<sup>69</sup> Here *vāral* is most probably a contracted form of a verbal noun from either *vār-tal* v. 4. intr. (*Tamil Lexicon*, 3606), or *vāru-tal* v. 5. tr. (*Tamil Lexicon*, 3614). To translate it is a complicated task, because one has to choose from the several possible meanings, e.g. 1. sharp claws [with] *flowing* [blood?]; 2. *scooping* (?) sharp claws; 3. *long* sharp claws, etc. I found it appropriate to choose a transitive verb ‘to release’ to interpret the possible meaning (“released claws”) behind this phrase.

<sup>70</sup> *kuḷavi*: wild jasmine (*Jasminum angustifolium*). *Tamil Lexicon*, 1039. Cf. *Kuṛiṅcippāṭṭu*, 76.

<sup>71</sup> *veṅcōru*: white rice cooked but unmixed with sauce or condiment. *Tamil Lexicon*, 3777.

<sup>72</sup> *veṅṇel*: mountain paddy, wild rice (*Oryza mutica*). *Tamil Lexicon*, 3780.



after you had covered [our] young waist with unsewed (*nūlā*)<sup>73</sup> *kalīnkam*-clothes,<sup>74</sup> (21)  
your great and bustling joy is sweet [for us] to enjoy (25)  
together with [your] retinue who fervently strive [for] the truth,<sup>75</sup> (24)  
while [you] adorned with shiny jewels [our] flawless women (23)  
[who have] bamboo-like supple tender shoulders [and] curly black tresses. (22)

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<sup>73</sup> The form *nūlā* has only this single attestation in Caṅkam texts. It seems to be a neg. pey. from the verb *nūl(lu)-tal* v. 10. tr. ‘to spin’. *Tamil Lexicon*, 2326. Is this a reference to *dhoti*?

<sup>74</sup> Among other possible meanings (*Tamil Lexicon*, 782), *kalīnkam* was a kind of garment named after the country (of its origin?) called Kaliṅkam (Skt. *kalīṅga*). Cf. *Patirruppattu*, 76: 13; *Puraṇāṅgūru*, 392: 15.

<sup>75</sup> The penultimate line, taken as a whole, is problematic. Here *amarpu* is understood as an old absolutive of *amar-tal* v. 4. tr./intr. ‘to abide’, ‘to rest’, ‘to wish’, etc. requiring an adverbial usage (“longingly”, “lastingly”), *meṅ* means either ‘truth’ or ‘body’, etc. (*Tamil Lexicon*, 3336), *ārtta* is a perfective peyareccam from *ār-ttal* v. 11. tr./intr. ‘to shout’, ‘to fight’, ‘to slander’, ‘to bind’, etc. (*Tamil Lexicon*, 239), *curramoṭu* is the word *currām* in sociative case, means ‘retinue’, ‘attendants’, ‘friends’, etc. (*Tamil Lexicon*, 1549). After all, providing a final interpretation of this line is difficult.

### 13.

peyar: pūta ney<sub>tal</sub>, turai: centurai pāṭānpāṭṭu, tūkkū: centūkkum vañcittūkkum, vaṇṇam: oḷuku vaṇṇam

torutta v<sub>ayal</sub> ā<sub>ral</sub> piraḷnavum  
ēru poruta ceru ~ulātu vittunavum  
karumpiṇ pātti+ **pūta ney<sub>tal</sub>**  
irum kaṇ erumaiyiṇ nirai taṭukkunavum  
kali keḷu tuṇaṅkai ~āṭiya maruṅkiṇ 5  
vaḷai talai mūt' ā ~āmpal ārn<sub>avum</sub>  
oli tenkiṇ imiḷ marutiṇ  
puṇal vāyil pūm poykai+  
pāṭal cāṇra payam keḷu vaippiṇ  
nāṭu kaviṇ aḷiya nāmam tōṇri+ 10  
kūr' aṭūu niṇra yākkai pōla  
nī civant' iṇrutta nīr aḷi pākkam  
viri pūm karumpiṇ kaḷaṇi pul+ eṇa+  
tiri kāy viṭattaroṭu kār uṭai pōki+  
kavai+ talai+ pēymakaḷ kaḷut' ūrnt' iyaṅka 15  
~ūriya neruṅci nīr' āṭu paṇantalai+  
tāt' eru maṇrutta kali ~aḷi maṇṇratt'  
uḷlam aḷiya ~ūkkunar miṭal taputt'  
uḷlunar paṇikkum pāl āyiṇavē  
kāṭē kaṭavuḷ mēṇa puṇavē 20  
~oḷ+ ilai makaliroṭu maḷḷar mēṇa  
~āṇē ~a~+ aṇaitt' aṇṇiyum ṇālattu+  
kūlam pakarnar kuṭi puṇam-tarāa+  
kuṭi puṇam-tarunar pāram ōmpi  
~aḷal ceṇra maruṅkiṇ vellī ~ōṭātu 25  
maḷai vēṇṭu pulattu māri nirpa  
nōyoṭu paci ~ikant' orī+  
pūttanṇu peruma nī kātta nāṭē.

13<sup>th</sup> song

**The *neytal* which has blossomed**

[Where] *āral*-fish<sup>76</sup> leap [out of the water] on the pastures with herds, (1)  
bulls fight on the meadows [which are] not sowed [anymore], (2)  
herd of buffaloes with black eyes were impeded (4)  
by the ***neytal*-flowers<sup>77</sup> which have blossomed** on the sugar cane fields, (3)  
[and] old cows with drooping heads eat the white waterlily<sup>78</sup> (6)  
at the side [where] bustling *tunāṅkai*<sup>79</sup> was [previously] performed, (5)  
having caused fear as the beauty of the country perished, (10)  
[country] with wealthy areas which were worthy of singing about, (9)  
[and] with blooming ponds at the sluice (*vāyil*) of the stream (8)  
with clamorous coconut palms and noisy<sup>80</sup> *marutam*-trees, (7)  
having destroyed the valour of the strong ones, while [their] minds became subdued (18)  
on the perished village common with dust and dung, where the bustle died away (17)  
on the wasteland with flying ashes [and] with the *neruñci*-plant<sup>81</sup> that had spread [around], (16)  
while demonic women with shaggy hair were riding on donkeys and roaming around (15)  
[where] the *viṭattar*<sup>82</sup> of twisting fruits grew [pervasively] together with the dark *uṭai*<sup>83</sup>, (14)  
while the sugar cane fields with thick flowers became exhausted (13)  
[at] the villages perished in the water, which you furiously destroyed, (12)  
so that they became similar to the bodies that were left behind by Kūrṟu<sup>84</sup> after [he] killed them; (11)  
these devastations have taken place, making those who think [about that] shiver. (19)  
The forests are desired by the deities (*kaṭavul*). The forest tracts (20)  
are desired by the warriors together with [their] wives with bright jewels. (21)  
After [you] had nourished the relatives,<sup>85</sup> of the ones who had given protection

<sup>76</sup> *āral*: probably the brownish or greenish sand-eel (*Rhynchobdella aculeata*). *Tamil Lexicon*, 242.

<sup>77</sup> *neytal*: blue waterlily (*Nymphaea malabarica* or *Nymphaea caerulea*). Rajeswari 2020, 263.

<sup>78</sup> *āmpal*: *Nymphaea pubescens*. Rajeswari 2020, 149.

<sup>79</sup> *tunāṅkai*: a kind of dance. *Tamil Lexicon*, 1963.

<sup>80</sup> Here both the verbal roots (*oli-*, *imil-*) function as adjectives (“sounding”).

<sup>81</sup> *neruñci*: cow's thorn, a small prostrate herb (*Tribulus terrestris*). *Tamil Lexicon*, 2345.

<sup>82</sup> According to the *Tamil Lexicon*, *viṭattar* is identifiable with *viṭattērai*, Ashy babool (*Dichrostachys cinerea*). *Tamil Lexicon*, 3654. The name of this tree is anyway a hapax legomenon in the Caṅkam texts.

<sup>83</sup> The *Tamil Lexicon* provides three options to identify the *uṭai*-tree: 1. Umbrella-thorn babul (*Acacia planifrons*) 2. Buffalo-thorn cutch (*Acacia latronum*) 3. Pea-podded black babul (*Acacia eburnea*).

<sup>84</sup> Kūrṟu, also known as Kūrṟuvaṅ or Kālaṅ, is the God of Death in the Old Tamil poetry, often compared to Yama.

<sup>85</sup> The word *pāram* (< Skt. *bhāra*) has several meanings that makes these lines more difficult to understand. See: *Tamil Lexicon*, 2621. Agesthalingom suggests “relations” in his *Index* (Agesthalingom 1979, 93), which can be

to the clans, [since] the grain merchants [were] not [able to] protect the families (23–24),  
 after [you] had dispelled and eradicated the hunger together with the pain, (27)  
 when clouds tarried above the fields that desired rain (26)  
 [when] the Velli (Venus) had not run to the side [where] the Alal (Mars) had gone,<sup>86</sup> (25)  
 besides all the [great] routes<sup>87</sup> in the world, (22)  
 o great one, the country, which you protect, has become flourishing [again]. (28)

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related with the sixth meaning given by the *Tamil Lexicon*. However, it is also possible to read “having released the burden” (*pāram ōmpi*).

<sup>86</sup> The astronomical description perhaps reflects an observation of the stationary or northwards(?)-moving Venus and the Mars in an opposite (southwards?) motion that might happened around the beginning of the monsoon season. According to the observations or astronomical knowledge of the ancient Tamils, Venus probably had an important role associated with rainfall. The *Patirruppattu* tells us that if the Venus bends to the north, it is a forerunner of turbulent rains. Cf. *Patirruppattu*, 24: 24–26; 69: 13–15. However, we learn from the *Puranānūru* that the southwards motion of Venus meant to be unauspicious. Cf. *Puranānūru*, 35: 7; 117: 1–2. The *Purapporuḷvenḷpāmālai* records a subtheme of the *pātān-tinai* called *vellimilai* which “is talking about the elevated Velli saying that it gives rain so that the sorrow vanishes”. (*tuyar tirapḷ puyal tarum eṇa/uyar velliḷi nilai uraittaṇṇu*). *Purapporuḷvenḷpāmālai*, IX. 16. However, the *venḷpā* stanza given as an example does not help us to get closer to the theme.

<sup>87</sup> According to the POC and U. Vē. Cāminātaiyar, the word *āru* here refers to the “great routes” (*peruvali*), the trade routes or highways of South India. Cāminātaiyar 1980, 12.

#### 14.

peyar: cānrōr meymmarai, turai: centurai pātānpāṭṭu, tūkku: centūkku, vaṇṇam: oḷuku vaṇṇamum  
corcīr vaṇṇamum

nilam nīr vaḷi vicump' eṇra nāṅkiṇ  
aḷapp' ariyaiyē  
nāl kōḷ tiṅkaḷ ṅāyiru kaṇai ~aḷal  
aint' oruṅku puṇarnta viḷakkatt' aṇaiyai  
pōr talai mikutta ~īr aimpatiṇmaroṭu 5  
tuppu+ turai-pōkiya tuṇiv' uṭai ~āṇmai  
~akkuraṇ aṇaiya kai vaṇmaiyaiyē  
~amar kaṭantu malainta tumpai+ pakaivar  
pōr piṭ' alitta ceru+ pukal muṇpa  
kūrru vekuṇṭu varinūm ārru mārralaiyē 10  
~eḷu muṭi keḷīya tiru ṅemar akalattu  
nōl puri+ taṭa+ kai+ **cānrōr meymmarai**  
vāṇ urai makaḷir nalaṇ ikal koḷḷum  
vayaṅk' iḷai karanta vaṇṭu paṭu katuppiṇ  
oṭuṅk' īr oṭi+ koṭum kuḷai kaṇava 15  
pal kaḷirru+ toḷutiyōṭu vel koṭi nuṭaṅkum  
paṭai ~ēr uḷava pāṭiṇi vēntē  
~ilaṅku maṇi miṭainta polam kala+ tikiri+  
kaṭal-akam varaippiṇ i+ poḷil muḷutu ~āṇṭa niṇ  
muṇ tiṇai mutalvar pōla niṇru nī 20  
keṭāa nal+ icai nilai+  
tavāaaliyarō ~i~+ ulakamōṭ' uṭaṇē.

14<sup>th</sup> song

### The body shield of worthy men

Earth, water, wind, and sky, [just like these] four, (1)

you are difficult to measure. (2)

Stars, planets, Moon, Sun, and burning fire,<sup>88</sup> (3)

you resemble the light that joins together as five. (4)

You are generous [with your liberal] hands which resemble [the hands] of Akkuraṇ<sup>89</sup> (7)

with determined manliness accomplished in strength, (6)

together with [his] twice fifty warriors<sup>90</sup> who greatly excelled in warfare. (5)

O powerful one who enters the field of battle, [who] destroyed the wartime pride (9)

of [your] enemies with *tumpai*[-flowers] that were worn,<sup>91</sup> by overcoming in battle! (8)

You are the one who would not change [your] way even if Kūrū came with anger. (10)

O you, the **body shield**<sup>92</sup> **of worthy men**, who have sturdy large arms (12)

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<sup>88</sup> The beginning of this poem resembles the 2<sup>nd</sup> poem of the *Puranānūru*, where the king is compared to “the five great elements” (*am perum pūtattu*) which reflects the brāhmaṇical term of *pañcamahābhūta* (*prthvī* “earth”, *apaḥ* “water”, *agni* “fire”, *vāyuh* “wind”, *ākāśah/dyau* aether”). Here we see a slightly different description, where the various elements and extraterrestrial objects fall into two categories: 1. those which are similar to the unmeasurable nature of the king (earth, water, wind, and sky), and 2. those which are similar to the brilliance of the king (stars, planets, Moon, Sun, and fire). These lines here seem to be a mixture of the *pañcabhūta* tenet and the unique idea of the poet Kumaṭṭūr Kaṇṇaṇār who was perhaps inspired by the poem of Murañciyūr Muṭinākaṇār (*Puranānūru*, 2) composed for Cēramāṇ Peruñcōṛru Utiyaṇ Cēralātaṇ, probably the predecessor of Neṭuñcēralātaṇ. Cf. *Patirruppattu*, II. patikam: 1; *Akanānūru*, 65: 5; 233: 8.

<sup>89</sup> Akkuraṇ was a generous philanthropist and according to the *Piṅkalam* (*Piṅkalam*, 756), believed to be one of the seven “munificent patrons of the intermediate galaxy of benefactors” (*iṭai-vallalkaḷ*). *Tamil Lexicon*, 289. Akkuraṇ is perhaps the Tamilised form of the Sanskrit name Akrūra. At least one famous Akrūra is well-known from the epics and the Purāṇic literature, who was the uncle and a follower of Kṛṣṇa, and might have been the person referred by Kumaṭṭūr Kaṇṇaṇār.

<sup>90</sup> This passage on one hundred warriors led U. Vē. Cāminātaiyar to the conclusion that we might have to understand the hundred warriors as the hundred Kaurava brothers of the *Mahābhārata*. Cāminātaiyar 1980, 14. The *Piṅkalam*, an old dictionary mentions Akkuraṇ and Kaṇṇaṇ among the seven munificent patrons (*Piṅkalam*, 756) which fact precludes the identification of these two; Cāminātaiyar too mentions the lack of evidence. It is more than possible that the *Patirruppattu* refers to the same Akkuraṇ, but it is also possible that the editor of the *Piṅkalam* extracted the name from the *Patirruppattu*, unless these enumerated names have been borrowed from a Sanskrit original list that I could not discover yet. In fact, we have neither old commentary available for this line, or other references to Kaṇṇaṇ (not even to Akkuraṇ) in Caṅkam literature that would support the above-mentioned idea, so here I stick to translating literally without further interpretation.

<sup>91</sup> *tumpai*: white dead nettle (*Leucas aspera*). *Tamil Lexicon*, 1972. The occurrence of this plant denotes a “literary setting” (*tiṇai*) that focuses on the battle. *Tolkāppiyam Porulatikāram Purattiṇaiyiyal*, 70. In the poems that show the features of *tumpai tiṇai*, the warriors often wear *tumpai* garlands during the battle.

<sup>92</sup> The word *meymmarai* is a unique Cēra word attested only in the *Patirruppattu* (*Patirruppattu*, 14:12; 21: 24; 55: 8; 58: 11; 59: 9; 65: 5; 73: 13; 90: 27). Its meaning would be literally “body-concealment”. In the POC the compound *meypukukaruvi* (“instrument inserted [on the] body”) is given as a meaning. According to the old commentary on *Puranānūru*, 13: 2, there the *meypukukaruvi* is an armour probably made from/with leather of a tiger. (*puliyiṇ tōlār ceyyappatta meypukukaruvi*). Considering the context of these lines, I conclude that this must be an armour, a breastplate, or a body shield.

and a brilliant<sup>93</sup> wide chest [on which] seven crowns<sup>94</sup> have been united! (11)  
 O husband of [the lady] with curved earrings, with hair that restrained the moisture [of oil],  
 (15)  
 with tresses swarmed by bees that hid [her] shiny jewels, (14)  
 [and] with beauty that competes with the girls abiding in the sky!<sup>95</sup> (13)  
 O king of the songstresses (*pāṭini*)!<sup>96</sup> O ploughman<sup>97</sup> whose plough is the army (17)  
 with swaying victory banners and herds of elephant bulls! (16)  
 Having [firmly] stood like the ancestors (*mutalvar*) of the ancient family (20)  
 of yours, [which] entirely ruled in this grove with boundaries inside the sea, (19)  
 [having] the wheel<sup>98</sup> with golden ornaments set with shiny sapphires, (18)  
 having established [your] immortal fame, (21)  
 may you, together with this world, never decline! (22)

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<sup>93</sup> Here the word *tiru* can be interpreted in two different ways: 1. *Tiru* (Śrī) as the Goddess who extends (*ñemar*) on the chest of the king; 2. *tiru* as ‘brilliance’ and since that noun can be used as an adjective, the translation would be “brilliant wide chest”. The description is clearly formulaic as the repetitions suggest. Cf. *Patirruppattu*, 16: 17; 31: 7; 40: 13. In northern Indian (and later South Indian) traditions, it is well known that there were deep relations between the kingship/dominion (*kṣatra*) and the welfare, fortune (*śrī*). Śrī as a goddess is not only believed to select a mighty king as her husband, but also described as one who resides in the monarch. Gonda 1956: 131. The king’s person anyway has connotations with Viṣṇu, who himself often compared to the deity, as far as he guards and protects the world. See: Gonda 1969: 164–167.

<sup>94</sup> According to the POC on Line 11, it is believed that the Cēra kings won over seven kingdoms (*ēlu aracarai venṇu*) so that they wore seven crowns of those kings on their chests. Another hypothesis would be to interpret those “crowns” as the “seven treasures” (*ratnāni*) of the king (chariot, elephant, horse, a jewel, [best] wife, [best] minister and [best] adviser) as a northern Indian borrowing. Gonda 1956: 145. This again seems to be a formulaic pattern, cf. *Patirruppattu*, 40:13; and a quasi-formulaic usage in 45: 6.

<sup>95</sup> The *cūr-ara-makalīr*, *vāṇ-ara-makalīr*, or *vāṇ uṛai makalīr* are celestial girls abiding in the upper spheres, who are famous for their beauty.

<sup>96</sup> The *pāṭini* was a female musician or songstress who sang the prowess of the victorious king. *Puṛaṇāṇūru*, 11: 10–11. See her in: *Patirruppattu*, 17: 14; 61: 16; 87:1.

<sup>97</sup> It is an agricultural metaphor of the king who is a ploughman with a plough that is his army/weapon (*paṭai*) ploughing on the field of battle.

<sup>98</sup> The ornamented wheel (*tikiri*) of the dynasty can be identified as one among the regalia of the sovereign monarch. I consider the wheel of dynasty here as *cakra* or *dharmacakra* which probably reflects the brāhmanical tradition of coronation and/or the presence of brāhmanical traditions around the Cēra court. About the relations between the king and the wheel in Indo-Aryan sources, see: Gonda 1957: 144–149.

15.

peyar: niraiya vellam, turai: centurai pātānpāṭṭu, tūkku: centūkku, vaṇṇam: oḷuku vaṇṇam.

yāṇṭu talai+ peyara vēṇṭu pulatt' iruttu  
munai ~eri parappiya tun+ arum cīrramoṭu  
maḷai tavalpu talaiya matil maram murukki  
nirai kaḷiru ~oḷukiya **niraiya vellam**  
parant' āṭu kaḷaṅk' aḷi maṇ maruṅk' aruppa+ 5  
koṭi viṭu kurūu+ pukai picira+ kāl pora  
aḷal kavar maruṅkiṇ uru +ara+ keṭuttu+  
tol kaviṇ aḷinta kaṇ+ akaṇ vaippiṇ  
veḷ pū vēḷaiyoṭu paim curai kalittu+  
pīr ivarpu paranta nīr aru niṇaimutal 10  
civanta kāntaḷ mutal citai mūt' il  
pulavu vil+ ulaviṇ pul+ āḷ vaḷaṅkum  
pul+ ilai vaippiṇ pulam citai ~arampiṇ  
ariyāmaiyaḷ maṇantu tuppū ~etirnta niṇ  
pakaivar nāṭum kaṇṭu vantiṇē 15  
kaṭalavum kallavum ārravum piṇavum  
vaḷam pala nikaḷtarum naṇam talai nal nāṭṭu  
viḷav' arup' ariyā muḷav' imiḷ mūt' ūr+  
koṭi niḷal paṭṭa poṇ+ uṭai niyamattu+  
cīr peru kali-makiḷ iyampum muraciṇ 20  
vayavar vēntē paricilar verukkai  
tār aṇint' eḷiḷiya toṭi citai maruppiṇ  
pōr val yāṇai+ cēralāta  
nī vāḷiyar i~+ ulakattōrkk' eṇa  
uṇṭ' urai māriya maḷalai nāviṇ 25  
mel col kala+-paiyar tiruntu toṭai vāḷtta  
veyt' urav' ariyātu nantiya vāḷkkai+  
ceyta mēval amarnta curramōṭ'  
oṇru molint' aṭaṅkiya koḷkai ~eṇrum  
pati piḷaipp' ariyātu tuyttal eyti 30  
niraiyam orīya vēṭkai+ puraiyōr



mēyinar uṛaiyum palar pukaḷ paṇṇin  
nī puṛam tarutaliṅ nōy ikantu ~orīya  
yāṇar nal nāṭum kaṇṭu mati maruṇṭaṇeṅ  
maṇ+ uṭai ñālattu maṇṇ'-uyirkk' eñcātu 35  
~ittu+ kai taṇṭā+ kai kaṭum tuppin  
purai-vayin purai-vayin periya nalki  
ēmam ākiya cīr keḷu viḷavin  
neṭiyōṅ aṇṇa nal+ icai  
~oṭiyā mainta nin paṇpu pala nayantē. 40

15<sup>th</sup> song

## The hellish flood

After [you] camped on the desired land [of your foes] while a year had [already] passed, (1)  
after [you] destroyed the tree of the ramparts,<sup>99</sup> [where] clouds spread [and] showered [plentifully], (3)  
by means of [your] rage difficult to approach while you caused to spread the fire on the battlefield; (2)  
after [you] destroyed [everything], so that the beauty of the fire-seized [country-]sides perished, (7)  
while the wind battered the particles [of ash in the] colourful smoke by letting out banners, (6)  
when **the hellish flood** that flowed [with] elephant bulls in rows cut the waists<sup>100</sup> of the  
kings, [whose prediction] made with *kalanku*-beans<sup>101</sup> [had become] ruined, (4–5)  
after [we] had seen the countries of your enemies who opposed [your] strength (14c–15c)  
by forgetting [about it] because of [their] ignorance, (14)  
[the countries] with villages<sup>102</sup> where the fields perished together with the grassy-leafy lands,<sup>103</sup> (13)  
where rascals,<sup>104</sup> [who carry their] flesh-reeking bows as [their] ploughs,<sup>105</sup> roam (12)  
[among] the old houses destroyed by the vines of the reddened *kāntal*<sup>106</sup> (11)  
where in<sup>107</sup> the waterless furrows which were creepingly spread with [the tendrils of] *pīr*,<sup>108</sup> (10)  
the green *curai*<sup>109</sup> grew well together with the *vēlai*<sup>110</sup> with white flower (9)  
on the regions of vast areas whose ancient beauty has perished, (8)

<sup>99</sup> It is probably a reference to the destruction of the guarded totemistic tree (*kaṭimaram*) of the enemy.

<sup>100</sup> A strange although formulaic pattern. E.g. cf. *Akanānūru*, 220: 5; *Akanānūru*, 59: 10; *Patirruppattu*, 81: 35; *Puranānūru*, 93: 6. The old meaning of *maruṅku* is “side”, “waist”, “side of the body”, but has several other meanings. However, the *Tamil Ilakkiyaḥ Pēraḥarāti* (p. 1912) suggests to translate “retinue” (*curram*) here, and “family” (*kuṭi*) in *Patirruppattu*, 81: 35. (*tol maruṅk’ aruttal aṅci*). Although we can understand here continuous rule of dynasties that had been cut, I rather translate it literal as ‘waist’, thus we have a metaphor together with Line 7, so that both the waists of the kings and the waists of their lands had been cut/destroyed.

<sup>101</sup> The *kalanku* is the Molucca bean (*kalarcikkāy*). *Tamil Ilakkiyaḥ Pēraḥarāti*, 639. According to the *Tamil Lexicon* it also means a play among girls with Molucca-beans, the divination with the help of Molucca-beans by a soothsayer when possessed (cf. *Narriṇai*, 47: 8), or gambling as a later meaning. *Tamil Lexicon*, 797. It is tempting to translate this passage as “the kings who gamble”, although that meaning does not seem to be attested in the old texts.

<sup>102</sup> Following the POC, the word *arampu* is probably the same as *kurumpu*, ‘village of a desert tract’ (Cf. *Civakacintāmaṇi*, 2727). See: *Akanānūru*, 179: 9; 287: 13.

<sup>103</sup> The *Tamil Lexicon* suggests “village of leafy huts” (*Tamil Lexicon*, 2781) which interpretation is based on the POC written on this line (*pulliya ilaikaḷālē vēya paṭṭu ūr*). The question is whether in this case we should trust in the much later mediaeval commentary or choose an old meaning of *vaippu* as “place” or “land”.

<sup>104</sup> *pullāl* lit. “low/mean people”, “wayside robbers”. Cf. *Kalittokai*, 103: 64; *pullār*: *Aṅkurumūru*, 459: 2; *Puranānūru*, 257: 8; *pullāy*: *Puranānūru*, 123: 11; *pullālar*: *Puranānūru*, 292: 4; 327: 6.

<sup>105</sup> Cf. *vil ēr vāḷkkai cīrūr matavali* („the strong [man] of the small village whose livelihood [is his] bow [as a] plough”). *Puranānūru*, 331: 2. Most probably, this passage refers to the same idea that these people have their bows as ploughs means their only livelihood was, in fact, to kill, as also the flesh-reeking (*pulavu*) signifier suggests.

<sup>106</sup> Malabar glory lily (*Gloriosa superba*). *Tamil Lexicon*, 866.

<sup>107</sup> I translated *mutal* here as a mere locative suffix. Wilden 2018: 27.

<sup>108</sup> *pīr*: sponge gourd (*Luffa acutangula*). *Dravidian Etymological Dictionary*, 4224.

<sup>109</sup> *curai*: calabash climber (*Lagenaria vulgaris*). *Dravidian Etymological Dictionary*, 2690.

<sup>110</sup> The *vēlai* is either the ‘black vailay’ (*Gynandropsis pentaphylla*), or another sticky plant that grows best in sandy places (*Cleome viscosa*). *Dravidian Etymological Dictionary*, 5546.

[having seen all these] let us come [to your court]! (15d)  
 O wealth of the gift-seekers! O king of strong men (21)  
 with the *muracu*-drum<sup>111</sup> that sounds in [your] excellent court (*kalimakil*)<sup>112</sup> (20)  
 at the gold-possessing market (*niyamam*)<sup>113</sup> where the flags of [your] old town cast a shadow,  
 [old town] that sounds with *mulavu*-drum<sup>114</sup> where the festivals do not know an end; (18–19)  
 [old town] of the good country with vast areas where many goods enter (17)  
 from the seas, mountains, rivers, and other [such places]! (16)  
 O Cēralātaṅ with elephants strong in war, (23)  
 with ringed, worn-out tusks which were beautified by adorning garlands! (22)  
 After [I] had seen the fertile good countries (34a–c)  
 that were avoided by the pain by overcoming [it] by means of your protection, (33)  
 [you of] a nature praised by many [who] stay as people who are attached,<sup>115</sup> (32)  
 [who are] great men with a desire that avoided the hell<sup>116</sup> (31)  
 having reached enjoyment never knowing of doing wrong [in their] villages, (29d–30)  
 [people] with principles that were controlled by declaring an oath<sup>117</sup> (29a–c)  
 together with [their] relatives in whom the fulfilled desire abided, (28)  
 [longing for] a prosperous<sup>118</sup> life that does not know to have distress (*veytu*),<sup>119</sup> (27)  
 while the perfect strings of the people with instruments in bags and with tender words praised [you] (26)  
 with prattling tongues that changed [their] words after having drunk, (25)  
 saying, “may you live long for the people of this world!”, (24)  
 [thus] my mind has become puzzled, (34d)  
 having desired your many qualities, o great man, whose fame does not diminish,

<sup>111</sup> The royal drum called *muracu*/*muraicu*/*muracam* is one and (might be the most important) among the regalia of a sovereign monarch in ancient South India.

<sup>112</sup> According to the *Tamil Lexicon*, *kalimakil* as a compound can be interpreted as ‘public audience’, or ‘royal court’. *Tamil Lexicon*, 783. Occasionally, we can consider the literal meaning as ‘bustling mirth’ although it clearly refers here to the daily court of the Cēra king.

<sup>113</sup> The word *niyamam* means ‘market’ or ‘bazaar street’ (*Tamil Ilakkīyaḥ Pēraḥarāṭi: kaṭai teru*) in the old literature, which term has a clear Indo-Aryan origin (< *nigama*). Cf. *Narriṇai*, 45: 4–5. Its meaning as a ‘temple’ is a later development that might be reflected first in the *Cilappatikāram*, II. 14: 8. *Tamil Ilakkīyaḥ Pēraḥarāṭi*, 1366. I think that those temples referred as *niyamam* were perhaps temple-economies uniting the two functions, the ritual and the economic.

<sup>114</sup> A large drum, hemispherical in shape. *Tamil Lexicon*, 3283. According to the *Tamil Ilakkīyaḥ Pēraḥarāṭi*, it might be a synonym of *mattalam* (< Skt. *mardala*).

<sup>115</sup> Here *mēyinar* is a finite form that I translated as a *murreccam* (“the ones who desired”).

<sup>116</sup> *niraiyam* < Skt. *niraya*.

<sup>117</sup> The verb *onru-moli-tal* intr. means “to declare with an oath”. *Tamil Lexicon*, 616.

<sup>118</sup> *nantu-tal* v. 5. intr. ‘to increase’, ‘to be luxuriant, fertile’, ‘to prosper’, etc. *Tamil Lexicon*, 2153.

<sup>119</sup> This part is obscure and hardly understandable. I followed the gloss of U. Vē. Cāminātaiyar: *veyturavu – tuṅgam urutalai*. Cāminātaiyar 1980, 20.

[whose fame is] like that of *Neṭiyōṇ*<sup>120</sup> (39–40)  
with excellent festivals that became [the source of] delight/protection, (38)  
after [you] bestowed huge things at all [your] places (37)  
by means of the fierce strength of [your] unceasingly [generous] hands, (36)  
by tirelessly granting for the sake of the living beings of the earthly world. (35)

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<sup>120</sup> *Neṭiyōṇ* can be understood as the “lofty/tall man” who is usually Viṣṇu in the later texts, and there is a possibility that he is the one who was mentioned here. However, I left the original name which does not preclude its interpretation as another deity.

## 16.

peyar: tuyil in pāyal, turai: centurai pāṭānpāṭṭu, tūkku: centūkku, vaṇṇam: oḷuku vaṇṇam.

kōṭ' uṛalnt' eṭutta koṭum-kaṇ iñci	
nāṭu kaṇṭ' aṇṇa kaṇai tuñcu vilāṅkal	
tuñcu-mara+ kuḷāam tuvaṇṇi+ puṇiṛru makaḷ	
pūṇā ~aiyavi tūkkiya matila	
nal+ eḷil neṭum putavu murukki+ kollupu	5
~ēṇam ākiya nuṇai muri maruppiṇ	
kaṭāam vārntu kaṭum ciṇam potti	
maram kol maḷa kaḷiṛu muḷāṅkum pācaṛai	
nīṭiṇai ~ākaliṇ kāṅku vanticiṇē	
~āriya karpiṇ aṭāṅkiya cāyal	10
ūṭiṇum iṇiya kūrum iṇ nakai	
~amirtu poti tuvar vāy amartta nōkkiṇ	
cuṭar nutal acai naṭai ~uḷḷalum uriyaḷ	
pāyal uyyumō tōṇral tāviṇru	
tīru maṇi poruta tikaḷ viṭu pacum-poṇ	15
vayaṅku katir vayiramōṭ' uṛalntu pūṇ cuṭarvara	
~eḷu muṭi keḷiṇiya tīru ñemar akalattu+	
puraiyōr uṇ kaṇ <b>tuyil in pāyal</b>	
pālum koḷālum vallōy niṇ	
cāyaṇ māṛpu naṇi ~alaittaṇṛē.	20

16<sup>th</sup> song

## The bed sweet for sleeping

After [you] felled by crushing the magnificent tall gate (5)

of the walls [on which] the *aiyavi*<sup>121</sup> was hanged, which is not [the unguent (*aiyavi*)] smeared (4)

by new mothers on,<sup>122</sup> where many<sup>123</sup> of the wooden beams (*tuñcumaram*)<sup>124</sup> were closely placed (3)

at the blockade<sup>125</sup> of the laying (*tuñcu*) arrows which looked like the country (2)

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<sup>121</sup> Here the *aiyavi* seems to be a specific term that only Kumaṭṭūr Kaṇṇaṇār and Pālai Kautamaṇār mentioned in the Caṅkam corpus (Cf. *Patirruppattu*, 22: 23), although *aiyavi* as ‘white mustard’ (*veḷ kaṭuku*) appears in other texts (*Kuruntokai*, 50: 1; *Tirumurukāruppatai*, 228; *Narrai*, 40: 7; 370: 3; *Neṭumalvātai*, 86; *Puranānūru*, 98: 15; 281: 4; 296: 2; 342: 9; 358: 4; *Maturaiikkānci*, 287; *Malaipatuṅkaṭam*, 123). The POC suggests understanding *aiyavi* as “a well-sweep/wooden-beam (*tulāmaram*, *Tamil Lexicon*, 1988) that has been hung on the outer entrance as a protection for the gate” (*katavirku kāvalāka puravāyilē tūkkappaṭum tulāmaram*). In the 22<sup>nd</sup> poem of the *Patirruppattu*, we see “the *aiyavi* with excellent fame [on which] a bow-mechanism (*vil-vicai*) has been tied” or “the *aiyavi* ... that has been fastened [having] the speed (*vicai*) of the bow (*vil*)” (*vil vicai māṭṭiya vīlu cīr aiyavi*). The POC explains it in another way: “*aiyavittulām* which possesses the abundant arrows of fast bowmen, which quickly penetrate [in it] without destroying [it].” (*vicaiyutaiya villāṇum tuṇai urwa eyya muṭiyātu miṅka kaṇattaiyutaiya aiyavittulām*). The commentator seems to understand something that caught the arrows of the enemies rather than a machine that discharges arrows. The *aiyavittulām* also appears in later, post-Caṅkam texts such as *Cilappatikāram* and *Civakacintāmaṇi*. In the *Cilappatikāram* (II. 15. 212–213) we see a kind of “machine on the wall” (*Tamil Ilakkīyaḥ Pēraḱarāṭi* uses the word *matil-pori*, p. 523) that was one among the many weapons and mechanisms served as the defense of the fortress (Lines 207–216). The commentator Aṭiyārkkunallār gave a short description of this object (comm. on Line 213): “*aiyavittulām*: a hanging beam resembled (*toṭaṅki*) a stone-vault (*kaṅkavi*) that makes the gate unapproachable; there are also those who say that the fixed bunch of arrows is of a hanging nature; it is a machine that discharges the small arrows [that] have been loaded in.” (*aiyavittulām – katavai aṅkātapaṭi kaṅkavi toṭaṅki nārrum tulām; appu parrākkai tūkk’ ir’ eṅpārum uḷar; cīr’ ampukalāi vaittu eyyum iyantiram ām*). According to the commentator Nacciṅārkkīṇiyar, the same “machine” (at least bearing the same name) appears in the *Civakacintāmaṇi* (76: 4) where he explains the object called “twisting wood” (*nerukku-maram*) as an “*aiyavittulām*: the wood that presses with strength and twisting the heads” (*taḷaikaḷai tirukikkollum valiyutanē nerukkum maramāvat’ aiyavittulām*). Suppose we believe in the testimony of these later authors and commentators. In that case, we may conclude that the *aiyavi* mentioned in the 22<sup>nd</sup> poem of *Patirruppattu* was perhaps an arrow shooting-machine (*vil-vicai*) fastened on the wall. It might be the same in this poem, but from the oldest attestations, it is not possible to satisfactorily identify the *aiyavi*.

<sup>122</sup> *pūnā*: not-smeared (negative peyareccam). Here this special feature, which I call a *negative signifier*, helps to distinguish the specific meaning of this particular *aiyavi* from the *aiyavi* well-known as white mustard. Cf. *Puranānūru*, 168: 14. *ūrā kutirai* “the not-ridden horse” = Kutirai (“Horse”)-mountain.

<sup>123</sup> Here, we see the lengthened (*aḷapeṭai*) form of *kulām*, which basically means ‘herd’ or ‘flock’ of living beings or animals. It is an odd usage of the word unless the intention of the poet was to create a metonymy (“the herds of sleeping beams”) since *tuñcu-maram*, the technical term for a kind of protective beams, contains the verbal root *tuñcu-tal* v. 5. ‘to sleep’ (*Tamil Lexicon*, 1957). Maybe the full image that the author intended to create looks like this: “[where like animals,] the herds of sleeping beams were crowded [at] the mountain (*vilāṅkal*) of the laying arrows [...]” However, the *Tamil Ilakkīyaḥ Pēraḱarāṭi* (p. 727) suggests that *kulām* also meant *tūḷal* (‘multitude’, ‘crowd’, etc.) attested in *Puranānūru*, 136 :4, where the word means ‘swarm’ according to V. I. Subramoniam (*Index of Puranānūru*, 252). My understanding is based on the last and simplest.

<sup>124</sup> The word *tuñcumaram* is a rare word attested only two times in the whole corpus, here and in *Patirruppattu*, 22: 21. The *Tamil Lexicon* gave a meaning of *tuñcu-maram* as 1. ‘a wooden bar to fasten the gate of the fort’ and 2. ‘impaling stakes’ (*Tamil Lexicon*, 1957). These meanings are based on the POC given for this line (Line 3): “*tuñcumaram* means cylindrical woods (*kaṇaiya maraṅkal*) that hang/rest on the entrance of the walls; henceforth, there are those who say that [it is] a wood planted as impaling stake.” (*tuñcumaram eṅratu matil vāyilil tūṅcum kaṇaiya maraṅkalai, iṇi kalukkolāka nāṭṭiya maram eṅpārum uḷar*).

<sup>125</sup> I understood here *vilāṅkal* as a quasi “blockade” since it is grammatically a contracted form of the verbal noun *vilāṅkatal* ‘laying athwards’, ‘being transverse’ or ‘obstructing’. According to the *Tamil Lexicon* (p. 3712), the word could also mean ‘mountain’ (Cf. *Malaipatuṅkaṭam*, 298), although that seemed to be derived from the same verb (*vilāṅku-tal* v. 5.) as an extended meaning (‘something that is lying athwards’: mountain).

where the raised outer walls<sup>126</sup> with curved formations<sup>127</sup> resembled the mountains, (1)  
 I arrived to see<sup>128</sup> [you] because you prolonged [staying in] (9)  
 the military camp where the young elephant bulls are trumpeting by felling trees<sup>129</sup> (8)  
 after [they] had become full (*potti*)<sup>130</sup> of fierce rage, after their must flowed, (7)  
 having tusks with broken tips<sup>131</sup> that became like<sup>132</sup> [the fangs of] the boars. (6)  
 Whenever [your] rightful wife remembers you, who has swaying walk, glowing forehead, (13)  
 a glance that conflicts<sup>133</sup> with [her] nectar-filled,<sup>134</sup> coral-like mouth (12)  
 with a kind smile, which talks sweetly even if there is a quarrel, (11)  
 who has obedient<sup>135</sup> nature [and] appeased<sup>136</sup> fidelity (*karpu*), (12)  
 will she live, [alone] on the bed, o [lord with great] appearance? (14a–c)  
 [The memory of] your graceful chest tortures [her] a lot, (20)  
 [chest of] yours who can be divided<sup>137</sup> and remain<sup>138</sup> (19)  
 in *the bed* [of your camp] that is *sweet for sleeping* [for] the kohl-painted eyes of [your] lovers<sup>139</sup> (18)  
 [laying] on your brilliant<sup>140</sup> wide chest that united seven crowns, (17)  
 while jewels [on it] glitter in contrast with the shining, radiant diamonds, (16)

<sup>126</sup> The word *iñci* is lexicalised in the Tamil Lexicon as ‘ramparts’ (*Tamil Lexicon*, 274), although the POC gives a less specific meaning as ‘outer walls’ (*puramatil*) that I borrowed here.

<sup>127</sup> Because of the simile of the mountains, I found it reasonable to follow the POC that suggested to understand “outer walls which possess curved formations/places” (*valainta iṭattaiyūṭaiya puramatil*). Another possibility would be to translate *koṭuñkaṇ* as ‘evil-eye’ (*Tamil Lexicon*, 1138), so the translation would be “the ramparts [with] evil-eye[-like portholes]”.

<sup>128</sup> *kāṅku*: first person singular subjunctive from the verb *kāṅ-tal* v. 13. ‘to see’.

<sup>129</sup> The topos of tree-killing elephants is a well-known one in Caṅkam texts. The elephants usually attack the *vēñkai*-tree, because seeing its colour it could be easily confused with a tiger. See: *Kalittokai*, 38: 6–9; *Narīṇai*, 51: 8–11. This passage may also suggest this.

<sup>130</sup> I understood *potti* as a *viñaiyeccam* from the verb *poti-tal* v. 4. ‘to become full’, ‘to become large’, etc. *Tamil Ilakkiyaṭ Pērakarāṭi*, 1813.

<sup>131</sup> The broken tusks of the elephants are a literary topos, which is one of the consequences of a difficult siege.

<sup>132</sup> I understood *ākīya* as a comparative particle here, which is the same how U. Vē. Cāminātaiyar explains this (*kompaippōlākīya*). Cāminātaiyar 1980, 23.

<sup>133</sup> *amartta*: perfective *peyareccam* of the verb *amar-ttal* v. 11. intr. ‘to be at strife’. *Tamil Lexicon*, 101.

<sup>134</sup> *amirtu* < Skt. *amṛta*.

<sup>135</sup> *aṭaṅkiya*: perfective *peyareccam* of the verb *aṭaṅku-tal* c. 5. intr. ‘to obey’, ‘to yield’, ‘to be subdued’, etc. *Tamil Lexicon*, 44.

<sup>136</sup> *āriya*: perfective *peyareccam* of the verb *āru-tal* v. 5. intr. ‘to be appeased’, ‘to be mitigated’, etc. *Tamil Lexicon*, 259.

<sup>137</sup> The word *pāl* can be identified as a contracted form of a verbal noun from *paku-tal* v. 6. intr. ‘to be divided’, ‘to be split’, ‘to be separated’, etc. (*Tamil Lexicon*, 2384). In this sense, the king is able to separate from his bed, when his royal duty calls.

<sup>138</sup> The word *koḷāl* is a hapax legomenon in the Caṅkam corpus that seems to be a contracted form of a verbal noun from *koḷ(lu)-tal* v. 2. tr. ‘to grasp’, ‘to receive’, etc. *Tamil Lexicon*, 1162. We agreed with the suggestion of Agesthalingom (*Index of Patiruppattu*, 56) that *koḷāl* means “the act of remaining” in a sense that the king “received” the bed at the end of the day/his duty.

<sup>139</sup> *puraiyōr*: sweethearts; *kāṭaṇ makalīr*. *Tamil Lexicon*, 2779.

<sup>140</sup> Here this line might refer to the chest of the king taken *ab initio* by the Goddess (and *de iure* by the queen) on which lovers are *de facto* lying.

[and] greenish gold<sup>141</sup> glimmers contrasting in colour with the flawless, brilliant sapphires. (14d–15)

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<sup>141</sup> *pacum pon*: fine gold. *Tamil Lexicon*, 2400. I translated it literally as a ‘greenish gold’ because it probably had a greenish colour that showed its fineness.



17.

peyar: valampaṭu viyaṇpaṇai, tuṛai: centuṛai pāṭāṇpāṭṭu, tūkku: centūkku, vaṇṇam: oḷuku vaṇṇam.

puraivatu niṇaiṇṇi puraiṇṇi ~iṇṇē  
periya tappunar āyiṇṇum pakaivar  
paṇintu tūṛai pakara+ koḷḷunai ~āṭaliṇ  
tuḷaṇku picir uṭaiya mā+ kaṭal nīkki+  
kaṭamp' arutt' iyarriya *valam-paṭu viyaṇ paṇai* 5  
~āṭunar peyarntu vant' arum pali tūuy+  
kaṭippu+ kaṇ uṇūum toṭi+ tōḷ iyavar  
araṇam kāṇātu māṭiram tuḷaiiya  
naṇam talai+ paim ṇilam varuka ~i+ niḷal eṇa  
ṇāyiṇṇu pukaṇṇa tūtu tīr ciṇṇappiṇ 10  
amiḷtu tikaḷ karuviya kaṇam maḷai talai+  
kaṭum kāl koṭkum nal perum parappiṇ  
vicumpu tōy veḷ kuṭai nuvalum  
pacum pūṇ mārpa pāṭiṇi vēntē.

17<sup>th</sup> song

### The victorious wide *paṇai*-drum

If [someone] thinks it is alike, there is nothing like [you]<sup>142</sup> (1)

Even if [they are] someones with big faults, (2a–c)

because you receive [their] tributes which were humbly announced by [those] enemies, (3)

after [you] had liberated the great sea that possessed shiny spray, (4)

after [you] scattered precious offerings (*palī*),<sup>143</sup> having come by returning with your

warriors,<sup>144</sup> (6)

o man of the chest with golden<sup>145</sup> jewels, o king of songstresses, (14)

[your] white parasol, which touches the sky (13a–c)

of considerably vast extent, where fierce wind whirls around (12)

after groups of clouds in a big number that glimmer with ambrosia,<sup>146</sup> showered plentifully (11)

[the parasol] whose flawless superiority is desired by the Sun, (10)

announces (13d)

“Let [the young men] come [under] this shade in [this] fertile world of vast area, (9)

young men (*yavar*) with armlets on [their] arms, who keep [their] drumsticks on the [drums]’ eyes, (7)

who had [already] explored the great directions (*māṭiram*) without seeing [any] refuge!” (8)

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<sup>142</sup> In the phrase *puraiṅvatō inṇē*, I understood the *ōkāram* as the demarcation of the topic, and the *ēkāram* at the end of the finite form as the end of a sentence.

<sup>143</sup> *palī* < Skt. *bali* ‘oblation’, ‘offering’.

<sup>144</sup> *ātumar*: honorific third person plural form of the verb *ātu-tal* v. 5. intr. ‘to move’, ‘to dance’, ‘to fight’. *Tamil Lexicon*, 219. Here, I translated warriors, although it is possible that the author referred to dancers who returned to celebrate the king or dancing/rejoicing warriors. Anyway, I understood *ātumar* as having an unmarked sociative case, so I avoided the subject-changing absolutes.

<sup>145</sup> *pacum*: ‘greenish-yellow’ (adj.).

<sup>146</sup> *amiltu* < Skt. *amṛta*. Remarkably, Kumaṭṭūr Kaṇṇaṅār used this Sanskrit loanword two times (*Patirrupattu*, 16: 12) with two different spellings. Comparing the two words, this one (*amiltu*) seems to be an older form attested in most of the old anthologies of the Eṭṭutokai (*Akanānūru*, 170: 5; *Kalittokai*, 4: 13; 20: 11; *Kuruntokai*, 14: 1; *Narriṅai*, 230: 3; *Puranānūru*, 10: 7; 125: 8; 361: 19; 390: 17; *Patirrupattu*, 51: 21; *Cirupānāruppatai*, 101; 227), while *amirtu* can be found only once in the *Patirrupattu* (16:12), and later anthologies such as *Paripāṭal* (3: 33; 8: 121; 12: 57), and *Maturaikkāñci* (Line 532).

## 18.

peyar: kūntal viṛaliyar, tuṛai: iyaṇmoli vālttu, tūkku: centūkku, vaṇṇam: oḷuku vaṇṇam.

uṇmin̄ kallē ~aṭumin̄ cōrē

~erika tirri ~ērṛumin̄ pulukkē

varunarkku varaiyātu polam kalam telirppa

~iruḷ vaṇar olivarum puri ~aviḷ aim pāl

ēntu kōṭṭ' alkul mukil̄ nakai maṭavaral

5

*kūntal viṛaliyar* vaḷaṅkuka ~aṭuppē

perrat' utavumin̄ tapp' in̄ru pin̄num

maṇṇ' uyir aliya yāṇṭu pala tuḷakki

maṇ+ uṭai ṅālam purav' etir-koṇṭa

taṇ+ iyal eḷili talaiyātu māri

10

māri poykkuvat' āyiṇum

cēralātaṇ poyyalaṇ nacaiyē.

18<sup>th</sup> song

### Songstresses with tresses

Drink<sup>147</sup> the toddy! Cook the rice! (1)

May [you] cut the meat! Pile up the cooked grains!<sup>148</sup> (2)

May the *viraliyar*<sup>149</sup> *with* [long] *tresses*<sup>150</sup> bustle around the oven, (6)

as women with blossoming smiles and eminent, arched hips; (5)

whose curly and black, sprouting and loosening [coiffures were] fashioned into five parts

(*aimpāl*), (4)

while golden vessels sparkle without limit for the sake of those who come!<sup>151</sup> (3)

Help yourself to what is available thereafter, without fault! (7)

Even if the rain lies (11)

by failing, without having showered from the clouds (*elili*) of cool nature, (10)

which had accepted to protect the material world,<sup>152</sup> (9)

[after] shaking for many years so that creatures<sup>153</sup> perished, (8)

a loving Cēralātaṅ never lies. (12)

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<sup>147</sup> The beginning of this poem resembles *Puṣāṅṅūru* 172 which could have been the antecedent of the poem, or both are songs of a popular sub-genre of *iyāṅmoli vālttu* for which only a few examples survived.

<sup>148</sup> The word *pulukku* seems to be a root noun from the verb *pulukku-tal* 5. v. tr. ‘to boil before husking, as paddy’ (*Tamil Lexicon*, 2793), so we conclude that *pulukku* could probably be ‘boiled grains’, a *dāl*. *Dravidian Etymological Dictionary*, 4315. Another possibility is to understand meat (*iraicci*) suggested by the *Tamil Ilakkiyaṅ Perakarāṭi* (p. 1741) among the old meanings (cf. *Puṣāṅṅūru*, 212: 3), but the POC makes it clear that *tirri* (from the verb *tin-tal* 8. v. tr.) in the same line already means ‘meat’ (*iraicci*).

<sup>149</sup> *virali*: a female performer who is most probably a dancer and/or a singer.

<sup>150</sup> *maṭavaral*: 1. ‘simplicity’, ‘artlessness’; 2. ‘woman’. (*Tamil Lexicon*, 3020)

<sup>151</sup> According to my understanding, the imperatives in Line 1–2 led us to understand that the guests (*varunar*) arrive to the subject of the poem who is either the king or the husband/chief of the *viralis*. If we choose the latter, then the message of the poem could be something like this: “do not be afraid to help others with those things what you have got from the king, because he will shower gifts again and again not like the rain that sometimes fails.” If the subject was the king Neṭuñcēralātaṅ, to whom this case all the imperatives are directed, then the poem must be an advice to the king to be liberal as much as his ancestors, and the word *cēralātaṅ* in Line 12 is a general reference to the Cēra kings and the just nature of the dynasty. Since the *turai* of this poem is *iyāṅmoli vālttu*, I tend to accept the king as the subject of the poem who is compared to his predecessors. Cf. *Puṣāṅṅūru* 172: 9: 6–7.

<sup>152</sup> I translated the phrase *maṅ uṭai nālam* as ‘material world’; it literally means “earthly world”.

<sup>153</sup> I translated the phrase *mann’ uyir* as ‘creature’; it literally means “permanent life”.

## 19.

peyar: vaḷam aru paitiram, tuṛai: paricil tuṛai pāṭāṇpāṭtu, tūkku: centūkku, vaṇṇam: oḷuku vaṇṇamum  
corcīr vaṇṇamum.

koḷḷai valci+ kavar kāl kūḷiyar  
kal+ uṭai neṭum neṛi pōḷntu curam aruppa  
~oḷ porī+ kaḷal kāl māṛā vayavar  
tiṇ piṇi ~eḷkam puli ~uṛai kaḷippa+  
cem kaḷam viruppoṭu kūlam muṛṛiya 5  
~uruva+ cem tiṇai kurutiyoṭu tūuy  
maṇ+ uṛu muracam kaṇ peyartt' iyavar  
kaṭipp' uṭai valattar toṭi+ tōḷ ṓcca  
vampu kaḷaiv' aṛiyā+ curramōṭ' ampu terint'  
a+ viṇai mēvalai ~ākaliṇ 10  
ellum naṇi ~irunt' elli+ perṛa  
~aritu peru pāyal ciṛu makilāṇum  
kaṇaviṇ uḷ uṛaiyum perum cālṇ' oṭuṅkiya  
nāṇu mali yākkai vāḷ nutal arivaikku  
yārkol aḷiyai 15  
~iṇam tōṭ' akala ~ūr uṭaṇ eḷuntu  
nilam kaṇ vāṭa nāṅcil kaṭintu nī  
vāḷtal iyā **vaḷam aru paitiram**  
aṇṇa ~āyina paḷaṇam tōṛum  
aḷal mali tāmarai ~āmpaloṭu malarntu 20  
nellin ceruvil neytal pūppa  
~arinar koy vāḷ maṭaṅka ~aṛainar  
tīm piḷi ~entiram pattal varunta  
~iṇṛō ~aṇṛō tonṛōr kālai  
nallamaṇ aḷiya tām eṇa+ colli+ 25  
kāṇunar kai puṭaitt' iraṅka  
māṇā māṭciya māṇṭaṇa palavē.

19<sup>th</sup> song

### The countries with lost fertility

After you had scattered colourful red millet together with blood (6)  
which crops have become matured, [scattered] with the desire [for] the red battlefield, (5)  
while the firmly tied<sup>154</sup> blades had been removed from the tiger[-skin] scabbards (4)  
by [your] stable-minded<sup>155</sup> strong men with legs [wearing] anklets with bright spots, (3)  
when the the demon-like<sup>156</sup> foot-soldiers (*kāl kūliyar*) who seize food as plunder (1)  
took a short-cut [through] the desert by cutting off the rocky long road, (2)  
after you caused to return the bathed<sup>157</sup> *muracam*-drum [to its] place,<sup>158</sup> (7)  
after you had examined the arrows together with [your] retinue who never remove [their]  
gloves,<sup>159</sup> (9)  
while young men as being someones who have drumsticks on their right raised [their] armllet-  
[wearing] arms (7d–8)  
because you are someone with the desire for those [heroic] acts,  
who [are you] (15a)  
for [your] woman (*arivai*) with bright forehead, with a body that abounds in modesty (*nānu*) (14)  
controlled by [her] outstanding excellence that remained even during in [her] dreams (13)  
with the bit of joy obtained at night in sleeping, which is difficult to obtain after many days  
have passed? (11–12)

Pitiable you are! (15b)

The many [lands] which [were] splendidly glorious,<sup>160</sup> are not glorious [anymore], (27)  
so that those who see [this] are clapping [their] hands and moaning, (26)

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<sup>154</sup> It might be a reference to the hilt of the swords.

<sup>155</sup> *māyā*: lit. “not-changing” (neg. *pey*). This signifier denotes the fact that the warriors do not change their determination, do not turn back from the battle so that I translated it as “stable-minded”.

<sup>156</sup> Since the word *kūliyar* can be interpreted in two different ways as ‘soldiers’ or ‘demons’ (*Tamil Lexicon*, 1080), I decided to give back both the meanings that is, I guess, similar to what has been suggested by Turaicāmpillai (*kūli pataiyinar*). Turaicāmpillai 1973, 50.

<sup>157</sup> The phrase *maṇṇuru muracam* can be split and interpreted in two different ways: 1. *maṇ uru muracam*: “the *muracam*[-drum] that has clay/paste (*maṇ*) [on its surface]” (*Tamil Lexicon*, 3026), 2. *maṇṇuru muracam*: “the *muracam*[-drum] that was bathed” (*maṇṇuru-ttal*, *Tamil Lexicon*, 3034), cf. *Puranānūru*, 50: 5–6.

<sup>158</sup> The word *kaṇ* is ambiguous here, since it could mean the “centre of a drum-head where it is rapped” (*Tamil Lexicon*, 683), or the ‘location’ or ‘place’ (*kaṇ*) of the drum where it was stored. Cf. *Puranānūru*, 50: 7, where the drum has a decorated flower-bed on which it used to be laid.

<sup>159</sup> The word *vamṇu* is not a rare one in the Caṅkam corpus, although none of the old meanings fits here. However, the POC believes that *vamṇu* means “glove” (*kaiccātu*). Another possible meaning can be found in the old commentary of *Purapporuḷveṇṇāmālai* on VI. 24: 3, where the *vamṇu* of the warriors with bright swords means a ‘girth’ or ‘belt’ (*kaccu* < Skt. *kakṣya*, *Tamil Lexicon*, 638).

<sup>160</sup> *māṭciya māṇṭaṇa*: lit. “those which were gloriously glorious”.

having said, “[Not just] today, [or] yesterday, [but] in ancient times [these lands were] good indeed, [but now] they [are] pitiable!” (24–25)

while the reaper’s buckets for the nectar (*tīm*) squeezing<sup>161</sup> machines<sup>162</sup> suffered [from emptiness], (23)

while sickles<sup>163</sup> for shearing of those who cut [the crops] became bent, (22)

while the *neytal* blossomed on the paddy fields (21)

and the fire-like *tāmarai*<sup>164</sup> flourished together with the *āmpal* (20)

on every arable land, which became similar to (19)

***the countries with lost fertility*** that you did not let live, (17d–18)

after you renounced to plough so that the yield (*kaṇ*) of the lands perished, (17a–d)

after the villages unitedly set off (*eluntu*), while [their] herds scattered. (16)

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<sup>161</sup> Verbal root from *pīli-tal* 4.v. tr. 1. ‘to shed’, ‘to pour, as rain’; 2. ‘to squeeze’, ‘to express’, ‘to press out with the hands’; intr. ‘to drip, as oil from hair’; ‘to exude, as juice from fruits’. *Tamil Lexicon*, 2711.

<sup>162</sup> *entīram* < Skt. *yantra* ‘machine’, ‘mechanism’.

<sup>163</sup> *vāḷ*: ‘sword’. I read here “sickle” following the POC which suggests understanding *arivāḷ*, which was already lexicalised as ‘sickle’, ‘garden-knife’, or ‘billhook’. (*Tamil Lexicon*, 128)

<sup>164</sup> *tāmarai*: lotus, *Nelumbium speciosum*. *Tamil Lexicon*, 1837.

## 20.

peyar: aṭṭu malar māṛpaṇ, tuṛai: iyaṇmoḷi vāḷttu, tūkku: centūkkum vañcittūkkum, vaṇṇam: oḷuku vaṇṇamum corcīr vaṇṇamum.

num kō yār eṇa viṇaviṇ em kō  
~iruḷ munnīr+ turutti ~uḷ  
muraṇiyōr+ talai+ ceṇṇu  
kaṭampu mutal taṭinta kaṭum ciṇam munṇiṇ  
neṭuñcēralātaṇ vāḷka ~avaṇ kaṇṇi 5  
vāypp' aṛiyalaṇē veyil tukaḷ aṇaittum  
māṛrōr tēttu māṛiya viṇaiyē  
kaṇṇiṇ uvantu neñc' aviḷp' aṛiyā  
naṇṇār tēttum poypp' aṛiyalaṇē  
kaṇaviṇum,  
oṇṇār tēya ~ōṅki naṭantu 10  
paṭiyōr+ tēyttu vaṭi maṇi ~iraṭṭum  
kaṭāam yāṇai+ kaṇam nirai ~alaṛa  
viyal irum parappiṇ mā nilam kaṭantu  
pulavar ētta ~ōṅku pukaḷ niṛṇi  
viri ~uḷai māṇvum kaḷiṛum tērum 15  
vayiriyar kaṇṇuḷarkku ~ōmpātu vīci+  
kaṭi miḷai+ kuṇṭu kiṭaṅkiṇ  
neṭum matil nilai ṇāyil  
amp' uṭai ~ār eyil uḷ aḷitt' uṇṭa  
~aṭāa ~aṭu pukai ~**aṭṭu malar māṛpaṇ** 20  
emarkkum piṛarkkum yāvar āyiṇum  
paricil māḷkaḷ vallār āyiṇum  
koṭai+ kaṭaṇ amarnta kōṭā neñciṇaṇ  
maṇṇ' uyir aḷiya yāṇṭu pala māṛi+  
taṇ+ iyal eḷili talaiyāt' āyiṇum 25  
vayīru paci kūra ~īyalaṇ  
vayīru māc' il īyar avaṇ iṇṇra tāyē.





after he gave abundantly without saving [for himself,]<sup>172</sup> chariots, elephant bulls and horses  
with spreading mane to the dancers (*kaṇṇuḷar*)<sup>173</sup> and the musicians (*vayiriyar*),<sup>174</sup> (15–16)  
after he destroyed the insides of the difficult-[to-conquer] fortresses that possess arrows, (19a–c)  
stable bastions, tall walls, (18)  
deep moats and protecting forests;<sup>175</sup> (17)  
**he** [is] **the one with a chest that blooms after killing** [in the] smoke that was not of  
cooking<sup>176</sup>  
[but of] destruction, (20)  
which engulfed [the fortresses]. (19d)  
To us and others, whoever they were, (21)  
even if the gift-seekers (*paricilar*) were incapable men,  
he is a man with an unbiased<sup>177</sup> heart who desired [his] duty to give [liberally]. (23)  
Even if the clouds with cool nature have failed for many years without showering so that  
creatures perished (24–25)  
he is one who gives abundantly [against] the hunger of the stomach,— (26)  
let the womb (*vayiru*) of the mother who gave birth to him be spotless! (27)

<sup>172</sup> The phrase *ōmpātu vīci* is a formulaic pattern denoting that the liberal donor does not save (*ōmpātu*, neg. abs.) anything to himself, but give away all what he has.

<sup>173</sup> According to the *Tamil Lexicon*, the word *kaṇṇuḷan* is the same as *kaṇṇuḷālan*, which means ‘actor’, ‘dancer’, or ‘masquerader’ (*Tamil Lexicon*, 696). We have only two attestations of the word *kaṇṇuḷan* in the Caṅkam texts, here (in dative) and in *Malaiṇṇaṅkaṭam* 50 (in honorific plural nominative), where the king is “the head of the *kaṇṇuḷar*’s kinsfolk which obtained jewels” (*kalam peru kaṇṇuḷar okkal talaiva*), so this does not help us. However, from the *Puranānūru* 153, it seems to be clear that the families of *kaṇṇuḷ* (*kaṇṇuḷam kuṭumpē*, Line 6) were a kind of actors who were dancing and singing (*āṭalum ollār tam pāṭalum maṇantē*, Line 12).

<sup>174</sup> *vayiriyar*: ‘professional dancers’, ‘actors’, or ‘professional musicians’ (at the entry *vayiriyamākkaḷ*, *Tamil Lexicon*, 3500). Since their name is most probably derivable from the name of an ancient instrument, the *vayir* which was a large horn or bugle (*Tamil Lexicon*, 3498), I translated the word as “musicians”, although it is possible that we see here another group of actors as the *Tamil Lexicon* suggests.

<sup>175</sup> *kaṭi milai*: a protective forest or grove (or thorny obstacles?) around the fort. Cf. *Patirruppattu*, 22: 24; *Puranānūru*, 21: 5.

<sup>176</sup> *atā*: a lengthened (*alapeṭai*) form of the neg. *pey*. from the verb *aṭu-tal* v. 6. tr. ‘to cook’, ‘to kill’, ‘to destroy’, ‘to conquer’. This form is used here as a negative signifier, which narrows the meaning of the given word and precludes the possibility of understanding the smoke of cooking.

<sup>177</sup> *kōṭā*: lit. “not-bending”, neg. *pey*.

## II. patikam

maṇṇiya perum pukal maru ~il vāymoli  
~iṇ+ icai muraciṇ utiyañcēraṅku  
veḷiyaṇ vēṇmāl nalliṇi ~iṇra makaṇ  
amai varal aruvi ~imaiyam vil poritt'  
imiḷ kaṭal vēli+ taṇḷakam viḷaṅka+ 5  
taṇ kōl niṇṇi+ takai cāl cirappoṭu  
pēr icai marapiṇ āriyar vaṇakki  
nayaṇ il val col yavaṇar+ piṇittu  
ney talai+ peytu kai piṇ koḷi  
~arum vilai nal kalam vayiramoṭu koṇṭu 10  
perum viṇal mūt' ūr+ tantu piṇarck' utavi  
~amaiyār+ tēytta ~aṇaṅk' uṭai nōl tāḷ  
imaiyavarampaṇ neṭuñcēralāṭaṇai+  
kumaṭṭūr+ kaṇṇaṇār pāṭiṇār pattu+ pāṭṭu.

avai tām: puṇ+ umiḷ kuruti, maṇam vīṅku pal pukal, pūṭta neytal, cāṇrōr meymmaṇai, niraiya  
veḷlam, tuyil iṇ pāyal, valam paṭu viyal paṇai, kūṅtal viṇalīyar, vaḷaṇ aru paitiram, aṭṭu malar  
mārpaṇ, ivai pāṭṭiṇ patikam.

pāṭi+ perṇa paricil: umparkāṭṭu aim nūr' ūr piramatāyam koṭuttu mu+ patt' eṭṭu yāṇṭu ten  
nāṭṭuḷ varuvataṇiṇ pākam koṭuttāṇ.

imaiyavarampaṇ neṭuñcēralāṭaṇ aim patt'eṭṭu yāṇṭu vīṇṇiruntāṇ.

## II. Panegyric

These are the songs that were sung by Kumattūr Kaṇṇaṇār<sup>178</sup> (12)  
on Imaiavarampaṇ Neṭuñcēralātaṇ, (13)  
the son who was born from [the queen] Vēṇmāl<sup>179</sup> Nalliṇi<sup>180</sup> [daughter of] Veliyaṇ,<sup>181</sup> (3)  
to [the father] Utiyañcēral<sup>182</sup> with a sweetly sounding *muracu*-drum, (2)  
with flawless speech [and] permanent, good fame; (1)  
[who] imprinted a bow[-sign]<sup>183</sup> in the Imaiyaṃ<sup>184</sup> with waterfalls that flow properly,<sup>185</sup> (4)  
[who] established [the rule of] his [royal-]staff (*kōl*),<sup>186</sup> (6a–b)  
so that Tamiḷakam<sup>187</sup> with fences of the rumbling sea was shining, (5)  
[who] made the *āriyar*<sup>188</sup> of famous tradition<sup>189</sup> humble with [his] eminent glory, (6c–7)  
[who] shackled the worthless *yavaṇas*<sup>190</sup> of harsh speech, (8)  
poured oil on [their] heads, pinioned [their] hands behind [their] back, (9)  
took [their] good vessels<sup>191</sup> of rare value together with [their] gems (*vayiram*) (10)

<sup>178</sup> The name of this particular bard is known only from the *Patirrupattu*.

<sup>179</sup> *vēṇmāl*: woman of *vēḷir*-tribe. *Tamil Lexicon*, 3825.

<sup>180</sup> It is the proper name of Neṭuñcēralātaṇ's mother who was the wife of Utiyañcēral, perhaps the first king of the lost First Decade (*onrām pattu*).

<sup>181</sup> Considering the masculine ending of Veliyaṇ, I think it is the name of Nalliṇi's father which appears anyway as a part of her name. Marr thought the same in his study (Marr 1985 [1958]: 274), what is more, he has noted that Veliyaṇ could be a possible father of Āy Eyiṇaṇ as well. Marr 1985 [1958]: 123–124.

<sup>182</sup> Utiyañcēral is the name of Neṭuñcēralātaṇ's father. We find the name Utiyaṇ as a Cēra king in *Akanānūru*, 65: 5; 168: 7; 233: 8; as a member of Naṇṇaṇ's dynasty in *Akanānūru*, 258: 1; and an unidentifiable Utiyaṇ in *Narriṇai*, 113: 9. The *Pre-Pallavan Tamil Index* states that the name Utiyaṇ was a branch of the Cēra dynasty that can be found in names like the name of the above-mentioned king or in the name of Naṇṇaṇ Utiyaṇ (p. 132), but this theory seems to be a bit weak since it is mostly based on the similarity of names. However, the *Puranānūru* 2 was composed by Murañciyūr Muṭṭinaṇār to the king called Peruñcōṛru Utiyaṇ Cēralātaṇ who might be the same king as the king appeared in *Akanānūru* 233: 8, who offers sacrificial rice (*peruñcōṛu*) to the ancestors (*muṭiyar*). Although the *Pre-Pallavan Tamil Index* warns us that Utiyaṇ of the *akam*-poetry might be different from Utiyaṇ of the *puram*-poetry, I do not see convincing arguments behind this statement.

<sup>183</sup> Māmulaṇār mentions the same act of the same king in *Akanānūru*, 127: 4–5. Cf. *Puranānūru*, 39: 15; *Akanānūru*, 396: 16–18. Both, the location of the so-called Imaiyaṃ mountain and the Cēra peculiarity of carving a bow symbol is doubtful. See: Marr 1985 [1958]: 281–282.

<sup>184</sup> Imaiyaṃ: < Skt. Himālaya (p. n.).

<sup>185</sup> Another possible reading is to take *amai* as 'bamboo' ("Imaiyaṃ with coming waterfalls [and] bamboo").

<sup>186</sup> The term *kōl* denotes the royal staff, one among the regalia which was perhaps a scepter.

<sup>187</sup> Tamiḷakam: the Tamil country. *Puranānūru*, 168: 18. *Tamil Lexicon*, 1757. It means perhaps those lands where Tamil was spoken, so it seems to be not a political region but a cultural.

<sup>188</sup> *āriyar* < Skt. *ārya*. As an umbrella-term, *āriyar* denotes non-Tamil but Indian people living in the Indian peninsula.

<sup>189</sup> Or *maraiṇ*: "according to the tradition".

<sup>190</sup> *yavaṇar*: 'Greeks' (< Gr. Ἴων "Ionian"). It is an umbrella-term which denotes non-Indian people living inside or outside the Indian peninsula. In the Caṅkam texts it seems that *yavaṇar* meant mostly the merchants of the Roman Empire, although there are cases when their identification is far from being settled. For the philological problems related to this part, pp. 331–332.

<sup>191</sup> *kalam*: 'vessel', 'plate', 'utensil', 'earthenware', 'ship' (*Dravidian Etymological Dictionary*, 1305); 'jewel' (*Tamil Lexicon*, 778). It is possible that the author is talking about either the jewels or the ships, amphorae or any other vessels of the *yavaṇar*, so that this question should be left open.

[and] gave [them all] to greatly valorous, old villages, [who] helped others, (11)  
[who had] sturdy legs possessed by *aṅanku* that destroyed the disobedient. (12)

These [ten songs] themselves [are]: Blood that the wounds spew; The increasing many praises of bravery; The *neytal* which have blossomed; The body shield of worthy men; The hellish flood; The bed sweet for sleeping; The victorious wide *paṇai*-drum; Songstresses with tresses; The countries with lost fertility; He with a chest that blooms after killing, [and this as] the panegyric of these ten.

Having sung, [the following] gifts [have been] obtained: [the king] gave a portion [of the revenue] that came to the Southern lands [during] thirty-eight years [and] gave five hundred *brahmadeya* (*piramatāyam*)<sup>192</sup> villages of the Umparkāṭu<sup>193</sup> [to the Brahmins].

Imaiyavarampaṇ<sup>194</sup> Neṭuñcēralātaṇ sat fifty-eight years on the throne.

iraṅṭām pattu murriṇṇu.

Thus ending the Second Decade.

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<sup>192</sup> *piramatāyam*: (< Skt. *brahmadeya*) “land granted to Brahmins free of assessment”. *Tamil Lexicon*, 2685. Suppose we accept the *patikams* as part of the *Patirruppattu* composed at the same time as the decade poems. In that case, this term is a hapax legomenon in the Caṅkam corpus, although I argue for the later dating of the *patikams*.

<sup>193</sup> Umparkāṭu (“elephant-forest”) was a division in the Cēra kingdom. *Patirruppattu*, III. 2; V. Cf. *Akanāṅṇūru*, 357: 9–10.

<sup>194</sup> The word *imaiyavarampaṇ* is an epithet of Neṭuñcēralātaṇ that means: 1. “he whose limit (*varampu*) is the Imaiya/Himālaya”; 2. “he who is beloved (*ampan*) by the celestials (*imaiyavar*), cf. Pā. *devāṅṅāṅṅpiya*, an epithet used by ancient kings e.g. Aśoka Maurya.

## The Third Decade

(*mūnrām pattu*)

The poet: Pālai Kautamaṅār

The king: Palyāṅaiccelkelu Kuṭṭuvaṅ

### 21.

peyar: aṭu ney āvuti, tuṛai: centuṛai pāṭāṅpāṭṭu, tūkku: centūkku, vaṅṅam: oḷuku vaṅṅam.

col peyar nāṭṭam kēḷvi neṅcam eṅr'  
aint' uṭaṅ pōrri ~avai tuṅai ~āka  
~evvam cūḷātu viḷaṅkiya koḷkai+  
kālai ~aṅṅa cīr cāl vāymoḷi  
~uru keḷu marapiṅ kaṭavuḷ pēṅiyar 5  
koṅṭa tīyiṅ cuṭar eḷu-tōrum  
virumpu mey paranta perum peyar āvuti  
varunar varaiyār vāra vēṅṭi  
viruntu kaṅ māṛāt' uṅṅiya pācavar  
ūṅatt' alitta vāl niṅa+ koḷum kurai 10  
kuy ~iṭu tōrum āṅāt' ārppa+  
kaṭal oli koṅṭu ceḷu nakar naṭuvaṅ  
aṭu mai ~eḷunta ~**aṭu ney āvuti**  
~iraṅṭ' uṭaṅ kamaḷum nāṅṅamoṭu vāṅattu  
nilai peru kaṭavuḷum viḷai taka+ pēṅi 15  
~ār vaḷam paḷuṅiya ~aiyam tīr ciṅappiṅ  
māri ~am kaḷḷiṅ pōr val yāṅai+  
pōrpp' uṅu muracam kaṅaṅka ~ārppu+ ciṅantu  
nal kalam tarūum maṅ paṭu mārpa  
mullai+ kaṅṅi+ pal+ āṅ kōvalar 20  
pul+ uṭai viyam pulam pal+ ā parappi+  
kal+ uyar kaṭatt'-iṭai+ katir maṅi perūum  
miti ~al ceruppiṅ pūḷiyar kōvē  
kuviyal kaṅṅi maḷavar meymmaṅai  
pal payam taḷīya payam keḷu neṭum kōṭṭu 25  
nīr aṅal maruṅku vaḷi+ paṭā+ pākuṭi+

pārval kokkiṅ pari vēṭṭp' añcā+  
cīr uṭai+ tēetta muṇai keṭa vilāṅkiya  
nēr uyar neṭum varai ~ayirai+ poruna  
yāṅṭu pīlai+ ariyātu payam maḷai curantu 30  
nōy il māntarkk' ūḷi ~āka  
maṅṅā ~āyiṅ maṅam kamaḷ koṅṭu  
kār malar kamaḷum tāḷ irum kūntal  
orīyiṅa pōla ~iravu malar niṅṅru  
tīru mukatt' alamarum perum matar maḷai+ kaṅ 35  
alaṅkiya kāntaḷ ilaṅku nīr aḷuvattu  
vēy uraḷ paṅai+ tōḷ ivalōṭ'  
āyira vellam vāḷiya palavē.

21<sup>st</sup> song

### The libation of heated ghī

O [you,] the man of the chest [on which Mother] Earth (*man*)<sup>195</sup> abides, who gives good jewels (19)

as the noise excelled when the [skin-]covered<sup>196</sup> *muracam*-drum was sounding, (18)

[who possesses] elephants which have strength in war, [you, who] have raining<sup>197</sup> (*māriyam*) toddy (*kaḷ*) (17)

[and] doubtless superiority which had grown high [from your] abundant prosperity, (16)

[you, who] paid homage in a way which is fit<sup>198</sup> (*taka*) to be desired by the deities who obtained permanence (15)

in the sky, [you, who paid homage] with the two scents together (*uṭan*) which emit fragrance,— (14)

[the smell of] **the libation** (*āvuti*) **of heated ghī** [from which] the dark<sup>199</sup> (*mai*) [smoke] of the cooking arose (13)

in the middle of [your] palace<sup>200</sup> (*nakar*) rich with<sup>201</sup> (*koṇṭu*) the sound of the sea, (12)

while<sup>202</sup> the seasoning was unceasingly sizzling whenever it had been put (11)

on the fatty pieces of the pure meat<sup>203</sup>, which had been minced on the cutting board<sup>204</sup> (10)

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<sup>195</sup> Here I translated *man* (Line 19) as ‘Earth’ choosing the interpretation as Bhūdevi, the Goddess Earth.

<sup>196</sup> *pōrppu*: lit. ‘cover’ derivable from the verb *pōr-ttal* 11. v. tr. ‘to wear’, ‘put on’, ‘warp oneself in’, ‘to cloak’, ‘to cover’, ‘to envelope’, ‘to surround’. What is referred to here is not easy to decode from the poems in which *pōrppu* had been mentioned since ‘*pōrpp*’ *uru muracam*’ is formulaic. Cf. *Paṭirrupattu*, 84: 2; *Akanānūru*, 188: 3; *Puṇanānūru*, 241: 4. We do not have available medieval commentary on the above-mentioned lines for *Paṭirrupattu* or *Akanānūru*. As for the *Puṇanānūru* poem, the commentator said that the drum was *pōrttal urru muracam* which is not helpful at all. However, it clearly refers to a verbal noun (*pōrttal*) instead of ‘skin’, which is a possible meaning of *pōrvai* (id. *pōrppu*, *Tamil Ilakkīyaṭ Pēraḱarāṭi*, 1861) found in *Piṅkaḷam* (*Tamil Lexicon*, 2968). I conclude that since the *muracam* drum was definitely covered with the skin of an animal (*Puṇanānūru*, 288: 2–4; 63: 7; *Maturaikkāñci*, 242), here we see the same description with the difference that in these poems the cover (as a result of the act of covering) was emphasised, instead of the skin which was the material used for covering and in later centuries became a possible meaning of *pōrppu*.

<sup>197</sup> The phrase ‘*māriyam*’ was analysed here as *māri* (‘rain’) + *am* (adjective suffix).

<sup>198</sup> Here, *taka* was taken as an adverbial infinitive.

<sup>199</sup> Here, *aṭu mai* was translated as ‘cooking’ (*aṭu*, root noun) + ‘darkness’ (*mai*, noun) instead of *aṭumai* (‘cooking’, abstract noun).

<sup>200</sup> *nakar*: ‘house’, ‘mansion’, ‘palace’, etc. *Dravidian Etymological Dictionary*, 3568.

<sup>201</sup> It is more likely to understand *koṇṭu* as an early example of a frozen sociative than to translate it literally, which does not make much sense.

<sup>202</sup> Following my analysis, here the infinitive *ārppa*, although it looks like, cannot be understood as a purposive infinitive.

<sup>203</sup> As for *vāl niṅam koḷum kuṛai*, another interpretation is “the meat-pieces (*kuṛai*) which are rich (*koḷum*) in white fat (*vāl niṅam*)”.

<sup>204</sup> The POC suggests that *ūṅattu* here has to be understood as “anvil/scaffold [on which] the meat is hacked” (*iraicci kottum aṭaikurāṭu*). Cf. *ūṅ-amar-kurāṭu*, *Tamil Lexicon*, 506. Here I followed this idea, although another and easier interpretation would be to understand the oblique case of *ūṅam* (‘flesh’), so that the meaning of the phrase would be “fat pieces of the pure meat [which had been minced] from the flesh [of the animal]”.



by the goat-traders<sup>205</sup> (*pācavar*), to feed the limitless guests wishing to take up [what is served] without exchanging glances [during] the feast;<sup>206</sup> (8–9)  
[and the scent of] the libation (*āvuti*) with great name<sup>207</sup> [in which] the desirable body (*meṅ*)  
had spread (7)  
whenever sparks (*cuṭar*) arose from the fire which was taken (6)  
by those who pay homage to the deities<sup>208</sup> according to [their] frightful tradition, (5)  
[who have] truthful speech abounding in excellence [which] resembles the Sun (*kālai*),<sup>209</sup> (4)  
[who have] shining principles that do not consider the distress, (3)  
while by worshipping ‘word (*col*),<sup>210</sup> names (*peyar*),<sup>211</sup> eyes (*nāṭṭam*),<sup>212</sup> hearing (*kēḷvi*),<sup>213</sup>  
heart/mind (*neñcam*)’,<sup>214</sup> these five together, they<sup>215</sup> became a help [for you], (1–2)

<sup>205</sup> *pācavar*: “goat-trader” (*āṭṭuvāṇikar*, POC). Cf. *Patirruppattu*, 67: 17. It is possible that these people were, in fact, butchers. Their name might be derivable from Skt. *paśu* ‘cattle’, or *pāśa* ‘noose’, ‘trap’, etc., since we do not know whether these particular group of people were hunting with bows, traps, or something else. We might consider an old Dravidian verb (Te. *pāyu*, *pācu*, *pāśu*; Ko. *pās*; Ka. *hasuku*; Ta. *pāl* ?), which means ‘to rot and smell offensively (of any food, rice, fruit, or animal)’, so that *pācavar* would mean “those who smells [like] rotten [animals]”. *Dravidian Etymological Dictionary*, 4057. The word has two attestations only in the *Patirruppattu*.

<sup>206</sup> Here, the question is whether we should translate *kaṇ* as ‘eye’ or ‘place’. Because of this ambiguity, we have another possible reading in which the guests were eating “without changing the place of the feast” (*viruntu-kaṇ māṟātu*), which would mean that they were satisfied and did not wish to go to another patron.

<sup>207</sup> See: p. 433–435.

<sup>208</sup> I translated *kaṭavul* as a plural, although it is possible that the author refers to one particular deity.

<sup>209</sup> Although *Kālai* normally means *Kūrru*, I followed the suggestion of the old commentary which glosses *kālai* as *āṭṭaṅ* < Skt. *āditya* ‘Sun’, which idea was taken up by U. Vē. Cāminātaiyar who glosses *cūriyaṅ* < Skt. *sūrya* ‘Sun’ and gives parallels. Cāminātaiyar 1980, 40.

<sup>210</sup> *col*: ‘word’, ‘term’, ‘saying’, ‘speech’, ‘praise’, etc. *Dravidian Etymological Dictionary*, 2855. POC understood “the treatise which talks [about] the grammar of words” (*collilakkaṇam collu nūl*), which seems to refer to the second division of the *Tolkāppiyam* (*Collatikāram*).

<sup>211</sup> *peyar*: ‘name’, ‘reputation’, ‘name’, ‘person’, ‘shape’, ‘form’, etc. *Dravidian Etymological Dictionary*, 4410. POC understood “the treatise which talks [about] the grammar of meanings” (*porulilakkaṇam collu nūl*) which seems to refer to the third division of the *Tolkāppiyam* (*Porulatikāram*).

<sup>212</sup> *nāṭṭam*: ‘eye’, ‘sight’, ‘examination’, ‘investigation’, ‘desire’, ‘intention’, etc. *Dravidian Etymological Dictionary*, 3637. POC understood “the treatise on astrology/astronomy” (*cōṭiṭa nūl*, *Tamil Lexicon*, 1668).

<sup>213</sup> *kēḷvi*: ‘hearing’, ‘question’, ‘learning’, ‘sound’, ‘ear’, etc. *Dravidian Etymological Dictionary*, 2017. POC understood here Vedas (*vētam*), “that which is heard” (*śruti*).

<sup>214</sup> *neñcam*: ‘conscience’, ‘heart’, ‘breast’, ‘chest’, ‘bravery’, ‘mind’, etc. *Dravidian Etymological Dictionary*, 3736. POC understood “the pure [and] harmonious heart/mind which does not follow the path of the senses” (*intiriyankaḷiṅ valiyōṭātu uṭaṅkiya tūya neñcinai*). Turaicāmiṭṭai suggests that *neñcam* is *ākamaṅ* (id. Skt. *āgama*) which seems to be a matter of interpretation as both the old commentator and Turaicāmiṭṭai seems to see *vedāṅgas* here which idea was borrowed by Marr (Marr 1985 [1958]: 311). Turaicāmiṭṭai 1973, 67.

<sup>215</sup> The enumeration in Line 1 is very interesting, although it is impossible to give a final interpretation. Here, we see a quasi *specula principum* or Fürstenspiegel-like context, which conducts the king how to reign. It is possible to reconstruct one secular and at least one another religious list. The secular one could be: 1. speech, 2. fame, 3. inspection, 4. audience, 5. intelligence/valour/conscience. The religious one could be: 1. praises (Cf. *col-mālai*), 2. names (Cf. *sahasraṅama*), 3. sight (Cf. *darśana*), 4. *śruti*/*kēḷvi*, 5. mind/heart/meditation (Cf. *vijñāna*). We can draw up another list of *vedāṅgas* following the POC: 1. treatise on words (phonology), 2. treatise on meanings (morphology), 3. astrology/astronomy, 4. Vedas, 5. controlled heart/mind, but this seems to be just as much an educated guess of the commentator as the other two above, as the usage of words allows for a wider range of interpretations.

o king of the Pūliyar<sup>216</sup> [in] the Ceruppu[-mountain<sup>217</sup> which] no [one] can tread on [like on a slipper (*ceruppu*)],<sup>218</sup> (23)  
 [where] herdsmen with *mullai*-chaplets<sup>219</sup> and with many cows (20)  
 obtain radiating sapphires<sup>220</sup> in the woods high with rocks, (22)  
 once they made their many cows spread on the grassy, vast lands, (21)  
 o body shield of warriors with chaplets of heaped [flowers], (24)  
 o fighter of the straightly rising tall Ayirai<sup>221</sup> that lies athwart, (29)  
 so that the frontier of famous lands perished (28)  
 [Ayirai, where] the *kokku*-bird, which is watching keenly/from afar,<sup>222</sup> does not fear to circle<sup>223</sup>  
 [in the air] (26d–27)  
 without going to the waterless slopes (26a–c)  
 with prosperous tall peaks that encompass great yield, (25)  
 May you live for thousand *vellam*<sup>224</sup> [of years] (38)  
 together with Her, [your woman] with round shoulders resembling bamboo (37)  
 [standing in] the depth of the shining water with swaying *kāntal*, (36)  
 with greatly proud rain eyes that cast side glances,<sup>225</sup> (35)  
 with a beautiful face, [who] stands like the plucked (*orūyina*) night flower, (34)  
 with descending dark tresses being fragrant [like] the monsoon flowers (33)

<sup>216</sup> *pūliyar*: the people living in Pūlināṭu which was a division of the Cēra kingdom. *Pre-Pallavan Tamil Index*, 593.

<sup>217</sup> Ceruppu: an unidentified mountain.

<sup>218</sup> The phrase *miti al* is a negative signifier here that appears when the poet intends to clarify his message. Here, to make sure that we do not mix up the name of the “Sandal-mountain” with the ‘sandals’ (*ceruppu*), he says that this particular “sandal” is the one that no one can tread on (*miti al*). It is possible that this has a double meaning and the Ceruppu-mountain was a kind of sacred mountain which cannot be entered by anyone.

<sup>219</sup> The jasmine (*mullai*) refers to the literary setting (*tinai*) of woodlands and pastoral tracts (*mullai*).

<sup>220</sup> The gems and sapphires, which are lying on the ground, show the abundance and fertility of the country. Cf. *Puranānūru*, 202: 1–4; *Akanānūru*, 213: 14–15.

<sup>221</sup> Ayirai is a hill which was an established place of worship. The old commentator seemed to know that the deity of the hill was the Goddess, Korravai (See: POC on *Patirrupattu*, 79: 18).

<sup>222</sup> *pākuṭi*: a hapax legomenon. There is no useful old comment on this. Agesthalingom suggests (*Index of Patirrupattu*, 92) that it means ‘minuteness’. Turaicāmiṭṭai (Turaicāmiṭṭai 1973, 72) who reads ‘*pākuṭi pārval kokkin*’ as ‘*cēyamaṭṭiruntē nuṭṭu nōkkum kokkin*’ (“the *kokku*-bird, which sharply stares from the distance”). U. Vē. Cāminātaiyar says that “*pākuṭi* is like *kūmai*”. The *Tamil Lexicon* (p. 2581) glosses ‘long distance’ (*veku tūram*). The *Tamil Ilakkīyap Pērakavāti* (p. 1596) seems clueless and glosses both *vekutūram* and *kūmai*, so it is up to the translator how to interpret this hapax.

<sup>223</sup> *pari-veṭṭu* (< Skt. *pari-veṣa*?): “circling, hovering, as of a bird”. *Tamil Lexicon*, 2519.

<sup>224</sup> *vellam*: ‘flood’, ‘a big number’, etc. *Tamil Lexicon*, 3791.

<sup>225</sup> *alamanum* (imp. pey.): “whirling”, here refers to the side-glances.

with (*koṇṭu*) the smell of [a natural] scent [even] if [her hair] had not been washed,<sup>226</sup> (32) [may you live], so that [this aeon] (*ūli*)<sup>227</sup> become painless for the human beings, (31) after wealthy clouds showered without missing a year. (30)

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<sup>226</sup> A very famous debate was going on probably from the earliest times through the Middle Ages, whether the hair of the beloved has a natural fragrance, or it is artificially fragrant. This “scholarly” debate between Tarumi and Nakkīraṇ is a part of the *Tiruvilaiyāṭarpurāṇam* of Perumparappuliyūr Nampi and the *Tiruvilaiyāṭarpurāṇam* of Parañcōti, the *Cikāḷatti Purāṇam*, but also of many other texts. See: Wilden 2014: 254–255; 268–269; 271–272.

<sup>227</sup> *ūli*: ‘time of universal deluge and destruction of the world’, ‘aeon’, ‘very long time’. *Tamil Lexicon*, 502.

## 22.

peyar: kayirukuru mukavai, turai: vañcitturai pātānpāṭṭu, tūkkū: centūkkum vañcittūkkum, vaṇṇam: oluku vaṇṇamum corcīr vaṇṇamum.

ciṇaṇē kāmam kalī kaṇṇōṭṭam accam poy+ col aṇṇu mika ~uṭaimai teral kaṭumaiyoṭu piṇavum i~+ ulakatt' aṇam teri tūkirikku valī ~aṭai ~ākum tītu cēṇ ikantu naṇṇu mika+ purintu kaṭalum kāṇamum pala payam utava+ piṇar piṇar naliyātu vēṇṇu+ poruḷ veḷkātu mai ~il aṇiṇar cevviṇ naṭantu tam amar tuṇai+ piṇiyātu pāṭṭ' uṇṭu māḷkaḷ mūṭṭa yākkaiyoṭu piṇi ~iṇṇu kalīya ~ūḷi ~uytta ~uravōr umpal poṇ cey kaṇicci+ tiṇ piṇi ~uṭaittu+ ciraṇu cila ~ūriya nīr vāy+ pattal <b>kayiru kuru mukavai</b> mūyiṇa moykkum ā keḷu koṅkar nāṭ' akam+ paṭutta vēl keḷu tāṇai veru-varu tōṇṇal uḷai+ polinta mā ~iḷai+ polinta kaḷiru vampu paranta tēr amarkk' etirnta pukal maṇavaroṭu tuṇcu-maram tuvaṇṇiya malar akal paṇantalai ~ōṅku nilai vāyiṇ tūṅkupu takaitta vil vicai māṭṭiya viḷu+ cīr aiyavi+ kaṭi miḷai+ kuṇṭu kiṭaṅkiṇ neṭum matil nirai+ pataṇatt' aṇṇalam perum kōṭṭ' akappā eṇṇinta poṇ puṇai ~uḷiṇai vel pōr+ kuṭṭuva pōrtt' eṇṇinta paṇaiyāl puṇal ceṇṇukunarum nīr+ taru pūcaliṇ amp' aḷikkunarum oli+ talai viḷaviṇ maliyum yāṇar	5 10 15 20 25 30
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nāṭu keḷu taṅ paṅai cīriṅai ātalīṅ  
kuṭa ticai māyntu kuṅa mutal tōṅri+  
pāy iruḷ akarūm payam keḷu paṅpiṅ  
ñāyiru kōṭā nal pakal amayattu+  
kavalai veḷ nari kūm muṅai payirri+  
kaḷal kaṅ kūkai+ kuḷaru kural pāṅi+  
karum kaṅ pēymakaḷ vaḷaṅkum  
perum pāl ākumaṅ aliya tāmē.

35

22<sup>nd</sup> song

### The small scoops on ropes

Anger, desire, excessive pity,<sup>228</sup> (1)

fear, untrue words, possession of excessive love, (2)

punishing with cruelty, and other [such things] in this world (3)

become obstacles on the road for the wheel, which knows the virtues (*aram*).<sup>229</sup> (4)

O offspring of strong men who governed for aeons (*ūli*), (11)

while [their people] passed away without suffering with bodies that had become old, (10)

people who share [what they] ate, [who] did not separate from their beloved retinue, (8d–9)

walking straight like the flawless, learned ones (8a–d)

without desiring other's property, without causing affliction to others,<sup>230</sup> (7)

while the many profits of the forests and the seas helped [them], (6)

staying away [from what is] evil, desiring much what is good, (5)

o [you,] the frightening appearance with [your] spear-army, (16)

who annexed the country of the *koṅkar*<sup>231</sup> [who] have cows, (15)

[the *koṅkar*,] who closely surround the rim of the bucket [holding their] **the small scoops on the ropes**, [in which bucket] the water sprang [from among] the scattered scraps,<sup>232</sup> (13–14)

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<sup>228</sup> The compound *kaṇṇōṭṭam* means 'regard', 'kindness', 'partiality', etc. *Tamil Lexicon*, 697. The *Puranānūru* refers to the same good (!) quality when it talks about *peruṅkaṇṇōṭṭam*, cf. *Puranānūru*, 20: 6; 198: 7. Here I have translated *kaḷi kaṇṇōṭṭam* as "excessive pity", as I needed an extremity or bad quality in the list, although I have to mention that the *Tamil Lexicon* has already lexicalised *kaḷikaṇṇōṭṭam* as 'glance with overflowing eyes', 'great joy', 'delight'. *Tamil Lexicon*, 800. Its attestation, however, is not really old but was found in the commentary of the *Kural*.

<sup>229</sup> The wheel (*tikiri*) that knows the *aram* seems to be a direct reference to the royal attribute known as *dharmacakra*, "the wheel or circle of religion or law". *A Sanskrit-English Dictionary*, 449. This is a unique feature in the *Patirruppattu*, which is not attested in other Old Tamil texts.

<sup>230</sup> One might understand the selfless, non-violent, non-extremist, balance-promoting advice here and in Lines 1–2 as Jaina or Buddhist teachings. In this case, 1. the reference to the virtuous wheel (*aram teri tikiri*, Line 4) might be identifiable with the *dharmacakra* of the Jainas or with the wheel that the Buddha set in motion, and 2. the flawless, learned ones (*arivinar*, Line 8) who walk straight, might be identifiable with the *tīrthankaras*, *arhats*, etc. of Jainism or with the monks (*bhikṣu*), enlightened ones, etc. of Buddhism. One day, the primary sources and epigraphical remains might help solve this historical puzzle. The name of the poet of this decade is telling: Pālai Kautamaṅār, in which we might see the name Gautama, but unfortunately, that could also refer to either Gautama Buddha or to Indrabhūti Gautama, the first disciple of Mahāvīra (or someone else?). Unfortunately, the epilogue of the *patikam* mentions him as a *brāhmaṇa*.

<sup>231</sup> The term *koṅkar* refers to the people living in Koṅku Nāṭu, which was a part of the Cēra kingdom. The ancient Koṅku Nāṭu perhaps covers a region in, around, and behind the Palghat (Pālakkaṭu) Gap, the only low mountain pass in the Western Ghats. The *Pre-Pallavan Tamil Index* suggests (p. 322) that it might be identifiable with the northern and western parts of today's Salem District, Tamil Nadu.

<sup>232</sup> The word *cila* had been understood as a neuter plural noun from *cil* (*Tamil Lexicon*, 1431) and translated as "scraps", literally means "small pieces".

after the tightly stuck [earth]<sup>233</sup> had been broken by the metal-made axe (*kaṇicci*) [of the Cēra],  
 (12)  
 o Kuṭṭuvan<sup>234</sup> of victorious war, [who] wears golden *uliṅṅai*-flower,<sup>235</sup> (27)  
 who attacked Akappā<sup>236</sup> [among] the majestic, great peaks, (26)  
 [the fort, which has] rows of ramparts<sup>237</sup> [on] the tall/long walls, (25)  
 deep moats, protective forests, (24)  
 [and] the *aiyavi* of excellent fame which had been tied with a bow-machine,<sup>238</sup> (23)  
 which was fastened, hanging on the lofty, stable gate (22)  
 [the fort at] the vast, extensive wasteland which was filled up [with] wooden beams  
 (*tuṅcumaram*),<sup>239</sup> (21)  
 [Kuṭṭuvan who attacked the fort] with [his] rejoicing warriors who were facing the battle, (20)  
 with chariots spread with hangings [of cloth?],<sup>240</sup> (19)  
 with elephant bulls on which ornaments shone (18)  
 [and] with horses whose manes shine, (17)  
 because you destroyed the cool fields of the country (31)  
 with ample fertility [and] with festivals (*vilavu*) in noisy areas (30)  
 of fighters<sup>241</sup> with bows, [who made noise] like the water-created clamour, (29)

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<sup>233</sup> The elliptical structure probably refers to the earth, which is “tightly stuck” (*tiṅ piṅi*) and which had to be broken with an axe to get water.

<sup>234</sup> The name *kuṭṭuvan* was a traditional title among the Cēra rulers which was probably connected to the geographical region called Kuṭṭa-nāṭu (“The country of the lakes”). *Tamil Lexicon*, 962. Kuṭṭanāṭ is a well-known region of Kerala even today, which covers Alappuzha, Kottayam and Pathanamthitta Districts.

<sup>235</sup> The golden *uliṅṅai*-flowers are golden jewels here. For similarly made jewelry which has the form of flowers, see: *Puranānūru*, 153: 7–9.

<sup>236</sup> Akappā was the name of a fort which was attacked and seized by Palyāṅaiccelkeḷu Kuṭṭuvan. The *Tamil Lexicon* understands *akappā* as not a name but a compound which would mean “fortified fort” (lit. “inner protection?”). *Tamil Lexicon*, 11. However, *Narriṅai*, 14:4. and the *Patirruppattu*, III. *patikam* (Line 3) seems to underline that Akappā was, in fact, the name of a fort. The *Narriṅai*, 14: 5. is particularly interesting because the same formulaic phrase was used as in the III. *patikam* (*pakal tī vēṭṭa/pakal tī vēṭṭu*), but in *Narriṅai*, it seems that the Cōḷa king won the battle, although the *Pre-Pallavan Tamil Index* rejects this reading. *Pre-Pallavan Tamil Index*, 20. In this poem, it seems that the Cēra king did not capture a fort that once already belonged to his dynasty but acquired a new fort and annexed new territories with that. Whether the certainly later III. *patikam* misunderstood the *Narriṅai* passage, which I think the author paraphrased, or the ambiguous *Narriṅai* passage has to be understood as a Cēra victory over the Cōḷas at Akappā, or the *Narriṅai* talks about an event which happened in time after this particular Cēra siege, when the Cōḷas captured Akappā from the Cēras, is a matter of interpretation.

<sup>237</sup> *paṭaṅam*: mound or raised terrace of a fort, rampart. *Tamil Lexicon*, 2468.

<sup>238</sup> See: footnote 121.

<sup>239</sup> See: footnote 124.

<sup>240</sup> Here, I followed the suggestion given by the *Tamil Ilakkīyap Pēraḱarāṭi* (p. 2116) and understood *vampū* as *tēr cīlai* (“cloths of the chariot”). The phrase *vampū paṛanta tēr* could also be interpreted as “the chariot [on which] flagpoles (*vampū*) extend”.

<sup>241</sup> *alikkunar*: lit. “destroyers”.

and of people (*cerukkunar*) who control the stream with [their] *parai*-drum<sup>242</sup> [whose skin-]cover was beaten, (28)

those pitiable [fields] certainly<sup>243</sup> became big wastelands, (38)

[where] black-eyed demonesses dance, (37)

after owls (*kūkai*) with bulging eyes repeat shrieking voices (36)

having produced sequences [repeatedly] howled by white jackals at the crossroad, (35)

at the auspicious time of the day with not-bending [rays of the] Sun, (34)

[the Sun] with a salutary nature that removes the extensive darkness, (33)

having disappeared in the West [and] having turned up in the East. (32)

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<sup>242</sup> The *parai*-drum, probably a frame drum, was a particularly important one among the instruments.

<sup>243</sup> Here *man* is an assertive particle with shades of evaluation. Wilden 2018, 167.



### 23.

peyar: tatainta kãñci, tuṛai: vañcittuṛai pāṭānpāṭṭu, tūkku: centūkku, vaṇṇam: oḷuku vaṇṇam.

alam talai ~uṇṇatt' am kavaṭu porunti+  
citaṭi karaiya+ perum vaṛam kūrntu  
nilam pait' arṛa pulam keṭu kālaiyum  
vāñkupu takaitta kala+ paiyar āñkaṇ  
maṇṇram pōntu maṛuku ciṛai pāṭum 5  
vayiriya mākkal kaṭum paci nīnka+  
poṇ cey puṇai ~ilai ~olippa+ perit' uvantu  
neñcu mali ~uvakaiyar uṇṭu malint' āṭa+  
ciṛu makil āṇum perum kalam vīcum  
pōr aṭu tāṇai+ polam tār+ kuṭṭuva 10  
niṇ nayantu varuvēm kaṇṭaṇam pul mikku  
valāñkunar arṛ' eṇa maruñku keṭa+ tūrntu  
perum kaviṇ alinta ~arṛa ~ēru puṇarnt'  
aṇṇal marai ~ā ~amarnt' iṇit' uṛaiyum  
viṇ+ uyar vaippina kāṭ' āyina niṇ 15  
maintu mali perum pukaḷ aṛiyār malainta  
pōr etir vēntar tār alint' orāliṇ  
marut' imiḷnt' oñkiya naḷi ~irum parappiṇ  
maṇal mali perum tuṛai+ **tatainta kãñci**yoṭu  
murukku+ tālp' elīliya nerupp' uṛal aṭai karai 20  
nantu nāraiyoṭu cevvari ~ukaḷum  
kaḷaṇi vāyiṇ paḷaṇa+ paṭappai  
~aḷal maruḷ pūviṇ tamarai vaḷai makaḷ  
kuṛāatu malarnta ~āmpal  
aṛāa yāṇar avar akam talai nāṭē. 25

23<sup>rd</sup> song

### The dense *kāñci*-trees

O Kuṭṭuvaṅ with golden garland and army which is murderous in war, (10)  
who liberally gives<sup>244</sup> big vessels, even if just a little toddy remains [for himself], (9)  
while those whose hearts are full of happiness cheerfully dance after they eat, (8)  
[and] they greatly rejoiced, when [their] beautiful, gold-made<sup>245</sup> jewels jingle, (7)  
while the fierce hunger left the *vayir*-people,<sup>246</sup> (6)  
who sing on the side of the streets, having come there, to the village common,<sup>247</sup> (4d–5)  
as people who have bags with instruments that were tied up [and] carried; (4a–c)  
[they rejoice] even at the time when the fields perished as the moisture of the ground ceased, (3)  
after the great drought intensified, while crickets, abiding on the forked branches of the *unnam*-  
trees<sup>248</sup> distressed crown, were chirping (1–2)  
we have come longing for you as people who have seen (11a–c)  
their countries of vast areas with unceasing fertility (25)  
with blossoming *āmpal*-flowers which were not [yet] plucked (24)  
by the girls with bangles, [and] with lotuses (*tāmarai*) with flowers that resemble fire, (23)  
[in] the gardens at the water tanks of the paddy fields,<sup>249</sup> (22)  
[where] the *cevari*-birds<sup>250</sup> hop together with the numerous *nārai*-birds<sup>251</sup> (21)  
[on] the solid seashore which resembles fire, which was glorious when the *murukku*-trees<sup>252</sup>  
droop (20)

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<sup>244</sup> The main meaning of *vīcu-tal* 5 v. tr. is ‘to throw’, ‘to fling, as a weapon’, ‘to cast, as a net’, etc. Here, I translated “to give liberally”, which is a meaning that can be found in the *Tamil Lexicon*. Although I believe that the verb would mean here that the king “showered, throw, fling (gifts)”, in the case of fragile vessels, throwing them to the supplicants would be unfortunate.

<sup>245</sup> Here *poṅ cey puṇai ilai* refers to ‘gold-made jewels’, but *poṅ* could also mean ‘metal’. The poet definitely wanted to emphasize here their high value. However, we saw in the previous poem (22<sup>nd</sup>) that *poṅ cey kañici* meant “metal-made axe”, since gold would not be appropriate to fabricate axes, however, as a poetic fancy that could also have been a “golden axe”.

<sup>246</sup> Same as *vayiriyar* ‘musicians’.

<sup>247</sup> In Old Tamil texts, the word *manṇam* could denote either the village-common, a square, a frontyard, or the royal court. *Tamil Lexicon*, 3127. It is possible that here the poet meant the royal court, but I rather came up with the easiest and usual interpretation, since there are streets around the *manṇam* here, and we do not exactly know how the environment of the ancient Cēra palaces looked like.

<sup>248</sup> *unnam*: “A small tree with golden flowers and small leaves which, in ancient times, was invoked for omens before warriors proceeded to battle.” *Tamil Lexicon*, 488.

<sup>249</sup> Here *vāyīṅ* was translated as a locative suffix.

<sup>250</sup> *cevari*: a kind of wading bird, a species of ibis (?). *Tamil Lexicon*, 1413.

<sup>251</sup> *nārai*: a kind of wading bird. According to the *Tamil Lexicon*, it can be a species of heron, stork, ibis, or crane. *Tamil Lexicon*, 2226.

<sup>252</sup> *murukku* same as *mullumurukku*: 1. *palāśa*-tree (*Butea monosperma*); 2. coral tree (*Erythrina indica*). *Tamil Lexicon*, 3289.

together with **the dense *kāñci*-trees**<sup>253</sup> of the big harbour,<sup>254</sup> which abounds in the sand  
(19)

[of] the big, vast expanse [of the sea, which has] high-growing, rustling *marutu*-trees,—<sup>255</sup> (18)  
[we have seen their the countries] which have ways (*āru*) where the great beauty lost (13a–c)  
after they perished, while the [country-]sides were destroyed because those who roam around  
stopped coming (12)

[and] the grass abounded, (11d)

[the countries] which have sky-touching regions (15a–b)

where superior wild cows dwell sweetly taking rest (14)

[after they] united with the bulls, (13d)

[ways and regions] that have become wilderness (15c–d)

because of the desolation (*orāl*), after the garlands<sup>256</sup> of the kings perished, who opposed [you  
in] war, (17)

who fought while being ignorant of the great fame that was increased by your strength. (15d–16)

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<sup>253</sup> *kāñci*: portia tree (*Thespesia populnea*). *Tamil Lexicon*, 847.

<sup>254</sup> The word *turai* refers to a ghat or a harbour.

<sup>255</sup> *marutu*: 1. Arjuna tree (*Terminalia arjuna*); 2. black winged myrobalan. *Tamil Lexicon*, 3093.

<sup>256</sup> The word *tār* refers to either a flower-garland or the vanguard of an army.

24.

peyar: cirkāl velli, turai: iyanmoli vālttu, tükku: centükku, vaṇṇam: oluku vaṇṇam.

neṭum vayiṅ oḷiṅ miṅṅu+ parant'-āṅku+	
puli ~urai kaḷitta pulavu vāy ekkam	
ēval āṭavar valam uyartt' ēnti	
~ār araṅ kaṭanta tār arum takaippin	
pīṭu koḷ mālai+ perum paṭai+ talaiva	5
~ōtal vēṭṭal avai piṅar+ ceystal	
ītal ērral eṅr' āru purint' oḷukum	
aṅam puri ~antaṅar vaḷimolint' oḷuki	
ñālam niṅ vaḷi ~oḷuka+ pāṭal cāṅru	
nāṭ' uṭaṅ viḷaṅkum nāṭā nal+ icai+	10
tiruntiya ~iyal moḷi+ tirunt' ilai kaṅava	
kulai ~ilip' aṅiyā+ cāpattu vayavar	
ampu kaḷaiv' aṅiyā+ tūṅku tuḷaṅk' irukkai	
~iṭāa ~ēṅi ~iyal aṅai+ kurucil	
nīr nilam tī vaḷi vicumpōṭ' aintum	15
aḷantu kaṭai ~aṅiyiṅum aḷapp' aruṅkuraiyai niṅ	
vaḷam vīṅku perukkam iṅitu kaṅṭikumē	
~uṅmarum tiṅmarum varai kōḷ aṅiyātu	
kurai+ toṭi maḷukiya ~ulakkai vayiṅ tōr'	
aṭai+ cēmp' eḷunta ~āṭ' uṅu maṭāviṅ	20
ekk' ura+ civanta ~ūṅatt' āvarum	
kaṅṭu mati maruḷum vāṭā+ coṅri	
vayaṅku katir virintu vāṅ akam cuṭar-vara	
vaṅitu vaṭakk' iraiṅciya <b>cīr cāl velli</b>	
payam keḷu poḷutōṭ' āṅiyam niṅpa+	25
kaḷiḷum karuviyoṭu kai ~ura vaṅaṅki	
maṅṅ' uyir puraiiya valaṅ ērp' irāṅkum	
koṅṭal taṅ tali+ kamaṅcūl mā maḷai	
kār etir paruvam maṅappiṅum	
pērā yaṅarttāl vāḷka niṅ vaḷamē.	30

24<sup>th</sup> song

### The Venus (Velli) with abundant excellence

O hero of the great army with proud garlands,<sup>257</sup> (5)

[army] with the military-array<sup>258</sup> of [its] difficult[-to-defeat] vanguard that overran the difficult[-to-obtain] fortress, (4)

after the right [hands] of the commanding men were raised and held up (3)

with blades [which had] reeking flesh on the edges, which were pulled out of the tiger[-skin] scabbards,— (2)

[hero of the great army that] scattered like shiny flashes in the tall space! (1)

O husband of [your beloved with] perfect jewels, the nature of whose speech is perfect, (11)

whose fame, which is incomparable, shines along with the country, (10)

after [you] have become worthy for singing [praises], while the world followed your path, (9)

after [you] have acted by praising (*valimolī*) the gracious ones<sup>259</sup> who desire the virtues (*aram*) (8)

[and] act by exercising the six<sup>260</sup> namely: reciting, sacrificing, doing these [two for] others, giving, and receiving [offerings],— (6–7)

o king of the advancing camp (*arai*) whose boundaries (*ēni*) had not been set, (14)

[camp] with a swinging, swaying throne, [camp] that does not know to put down arrows, (13)

[camp] with strong bowmen who do not know how to dismount the bow strings, (12)

You are as difficult<sup>261</sup> to measure as the five: water, earth, fire, wind and sky,<sup>262</sup> even if one would know the result after measuring [them]. (15–16)

We have sweetly seen your prosperity with [your] increasing wealth. (16d–17)

After we have seen (22a)

all of those with meat that was reddened when knives were cutting [them], (21)

with large earthen cooking pots (*maṭā*) in which leafy Indian kale<sup>263</sup> arose (20)

at all the places with pestles of which metal rings were worn-out (19)

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<sup>257</sup> U. Vē. Cā. claims (Cāminātaiyar 1980, 52) that here we have to understand an additional meaning of *mālai* as *iyalpu* “nature”, which idea was based on the POC whose knowledge came from the *Tolkāppiyam Collatikāram Uṟṟiyal*, 16.

<sup>258</sup> Here I followed the POC and understood *takaiṭṭu* as a ‘military array’ (*paṭaiṭṭu*, *Tamil Lexicon*, 2448).

<sup>259</sup> *antaṇar*: ‘the gracious ones’, ‘brāhmaṇas’, ‘sages’, etc. *Tamil Lexicon*, 80.

<sup>260</sup> The *antaṇararutolil*, or ‘the six occupations of the *antaṇar*’ – learning, teaching, offering a sacrifice, conducting a sacrifice, giving, receiving – are well-known from early texts. See: *Mānavadharmasāstra* I. 88. (*adhyāpanam adhyayaṃ yajanaṃ yājanaṃ tathā/dānaṃ pratigrahaṃ caiva brāhmaṇānām akalpayat*).

<sup>261</sup> In the word *aruṅkuraiyai*, I analysed *kurai* (*Tolkāppiyam Collatikāram*, cū. 272) as either a syllabic supplement (*acaiṇilai*), or a metric complement (*icaiṇirai*), so that the translation is “you, the rare/difficult one”.

<sup>262</sup> Cf. *Patirrupattu*, 14: 1–2.

<sup>263</sup> *cēmpu*: *Colocasia antiquorum*. *Tamil Lexicon*, 1631.

which places do not know the limit of receiving those who eat and those who drink, (18)

the ceaseless boiled rice which puzzles [our] mind (22a–d)  
[means] indeed<sup>264</sup> unceasing fertility, 30(a–b)  
even if the monsoon forgets the coming season (29)  
[monsoon] with dark clouds that are fully pregnant with cool drops of the rain, (28)  
[clouds], which sound ascending clockwise in order to protect the creatures, (27)  
after [the clouds] bow down so that hands can touch them, along with the turbulent masses  
[of rain], (26)  
when ***the Venus*** (Velli) ***with abundant excellence*** which bent a little to the north (24)  
stands [visible] at daytime in a blessed timing, (25)  
so that the middle of the sky starts to shine, spreading shiny rays. (23)

May your wealth live [long]! (30c–d)

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<sup>264</sup> Here the particle *āl* has an assertive function.

25.

peyar: k̄aṇuṇaṅku kaṭuṇerī, turai: vaṅcitturāi pāṭāṇpāṭṭu, tūkkū: centūkkum vaṅcittūkkum, vaṇṇam:  
oḷuku vaṇṇamum coṅcīrvaṇṇamum.

mā ~āṭiya pulam nāñcil āṭā

kaṭāam ceṇṇiya kaṭum kaṇ yāṇai

~iṇam paranta pulam vaḷam parapp' aṇiyā

niṇ paṭaiṇar cērnta maṇram kaḷutai pōki

nī,

~uṭaṇrōr maṇ+ eyil tōṭṭi vaiyā

5

kaṭum kāl orraliṇ cuṭar ciṇant' uruttu+

pacum picir oḷ aḷal āṭiya maruṅkiṇ

āṇ talai vaḷaṅkum **kāṇ uṇaṅku kaṭum nerī**

muṇai ~akam perum pāl āka maṇṇiya

~urum uṇalp' iraṅkum muraciṇ perum malai

10

varai ~ili ~aruviyiṇ oḷiru koṭi nuṭaṅka+

kaṭum pari+ kataḷ ciṇak' akaippa nī

neṭum tēr oṭṭiya piṇar akam talai nāṭē.

25<sup>th</sup> song

**The harsh paths, where the forest dried out**

After the ploughs did not move on the land when horses were galloping,<sup>265</sup> (1)  
after the land did not know the spreading of growth where herds of elephants with fierce eyes  
and heads on which rut [flows] spread (2–3)  
after donkeys entered the village common (*manram*) where your armed ones gathered, (4)  
after no guard,<sup>266</sup> was put in the permanent fortress of the enraged ones, (5)  
let it permanently become a big wasteland (9b–d)  
the country with vast areas of the others whom you chased away [with] the tall chariot (13)  
of yours, when the advancing wing of the swift horses were broken, (12)  
while [your] bright flag swayed as the waterfall [which] rushes on the slopes (11)  
of the big hill, [rushes] like the *muracam*-drum which sounds like<sup>267</sup> thunder, (10)  
[let it become a big wasteland] with battlefield[-like] inner [parts] (9a)  
with **harsh paths, where the forests dried out**, where wild cocks roam around the areas,  
(8)  
with places where the bright fire with yellow sparks danced (7)  
burning excessively [using its] flames driven by the fast wind. (6)

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<sup>265</sup> The formulaic first line (*mā āṭiya pulam nāñcil āṭā*) returns in *Patirrupattu*, 26: 2, although there are elephant-bulls (*kaḷiru*) instead of horses. Anyway, the *Patirrupattu* 25 and 26 have many features in common.

<sup>266</sup> According to the POC, *tōṭṭi* means ‘protection’ (*kāval*) here.

<sup>267</sup> *uralpu* (abs.): “having resembled”.



## 26.

peyar: k̄aṭuru kaṭuner̄i, tuṛai: vañcittuṛai pāṭāṇpāṭṭu, tūkku: centūkkum vañcittūkkum, vaṇṇam: oḷuku  
vaṇṇamum corcīrvaṇṇamum.

tēer paranta pulam ēer paravā

kaḷir̄' āṭiya pulam nāñcil āṭā

matt' urariya maṇai ~in̄ ~iyam imilā

~āñku+,

paṇṭu nar̄k' aṛiyunar ceḷu vaḷam niṇaippin̄

nōkō yāṇē nō taka varumē

5

peyal maḷai purav' in̄r' āki veyt' urru

valam in̄r' amma kālaiyatu paṇp' eṇa+

kaṇ paṇi malir niṛai tāñki+ kai puṭaiyū

meliv' uṭai neñciṇar ciṛumai kūra+

pīr ivar vēli+ pāl̄ maṇai neruñci+

10

**kāṭ' uru kaṭum neri** ~āka maṇṇiya

muruk' uṭaṇru kaṛutta kali ~āl̄i mūt' ūr

urump' il kūrratt' aṇṇa nin̄

tiruntu toḷil vayavar cīriya nāṭē.

26<sup>th</sup> song

### The harsh paths which experienced wilderness

After the ploughs (*ēer*) did not move on the lands where chariots spread, (1)

after the ploughs (*nāñciḷ*) did not move on the lands when elephant bulls moved, (2)

after the sweet sound does not arise<sup>268</sup> [from] the houses, where the churning-staff (*mattu*)<sup>269</sup> resounded [before], (3)

when thinking of the prosperous fertility of those people who know there well the older times (*paṇtu*), (4)

Ah, I ache. Pain is coming, as is fit. (5)

Let them permanently become **harsh paths which experienced wilderness**, (11)

the countries where the strong men with perfect work infuriated (14)

you who resembled the God of Death (Kūrram), who does not [face] the ire [of others],<sup>270</sup> (13)

[countries with] ancient towns, where the bustle died away, which are blackened<sup>271</sup> [after] Muruku<sup>272</sup> got enraged, (12)

[harsh paths] with *neruñci*-plant [on] the desolated mansions [which have] high-rising fences of the *p̄r*-plant, (10)

while misery abounds [in] those, whose hearts are possessed by the pain, (9)

after they clapped [their] hands after they endured the increasing quantity of dew [in their] eyes, (8)

saying that: “Alas, [this is] the nature of [this] enervate time, (7)

after [the lands] have experienced the heat [and] remained<sup>273</sup> without the protection of the raining clouds!” (6)

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<sup>268</sup> I intended to avoid the repetition, so I translated the phrase *iyam imilā* (“not-sounding sound”) as “the sound which does not arise”.

<sup>269</sup> *mattu* (< Skt. *mantha*): churning-staff. It is a typical Caṅkam description of the devastation when the sound of the churning-staff cannot be heard in a village anymore. Cf. *Patirrupattu*, 71: 16–18.

<sup>270</sup> As I do not have better suggestion and the phrase is very much enigmatic, here I followed the POC (*piṇṇi onṇāl naliṇu paṭtu maṇakkotiṭṭi illāta kūrram*).

<sup>271</sup> *kaṇṭṭa* (perf. pey.): ‘blackened’, ‘got angry’, ‘became polluted’. *Tamil Lexicon*, 825. It is possible that the towns with their inhabitants got angry, but I found it better to translate as “blackened”, because this might refer to the fact that the town had been burnt down/had been become filthy.

<sup>272</sup> Muruku is the proper name of an ancient Dravidian deity, the same as Murukaṇ, who could undoubtedly be associated from the early Middle Ages with Skanda/Subrahmaṇya. *Dravidian Etymological Dictionary*, 4978.

<sup>273</sup> *āki* (abs.): “having become”.

27.

peyar: toṭarnta kuvalai, tuṛai: centuṛai pāṭānpāṭṭu, tūkku: centūkku, vaṇṇam: oḷuku vaṇṇam.

citaintatu maṇṛa nī civantaṇai nōkkaliṇ

**toṭarnta kuvalai**+ tū neṛi ~āṭaicci

~alarnta ~āmpal akam maṭivaiyar

curiyal am ceṇṇi+ pūm cey kaṇṇi

~ariyal ārkaiyar iṇitu kūṭ' iyavar 5

tuṛai maṇi marutam ēṛi+ teṛumār

el vaḷai makaḷir teḷ viḷi ~icaippiṇ

paḷaṇam+ kāvil pacum mayil ālum

poykai vāyil puṇal poru putaviṇ

neytal marapiṇ nirai kaḷ ceṛuviṇ 10

val vāy uruḷi katum eṇa maṇṭa

allal paṭṭu+ tullūpu turappa

nal+ erutum muyalum aḷaru pōku viḷumattu+

cākāṭṭāḷar kampalai ~allatu

pūcal aṛiyā nal nāṭṭ' 15

~yāṇar aṛāa+ kāmaru kaviṇē.

27<sup>th</sup> song

### The concatenated *kuvaḷai*-flowers

Because of the sight of you, who became enraged, (1)  
the desirable beauty of the unceasing fertility is definitely spoiled (1a–b, 16)  
[in] the good country which does not know another clamour than (14d–15)  
the uproar of the cart men<sup>274</sup> (14a–c)  
in distress trying to get out of the mire [using their] good oxen,<sup>275</sup> (13)  
after [they] were goading [them] jumping down [from the cart], after [it] got stuck in the mud, (12)  
when the wheels with solid rims rapidly entered (11)  
the fields [which have] rows of bees (*kaḷ*) according to the nature of the *neytal*-flower,<sup>276</sup> (10)  
[which have] sluices attacked by the flood at the gates of the water tanks, (9)  
[where] greenish peacocks dance in the groves of the paddy fields (8)  
when the clear tinkle of the girls with splendid bangles sounds, (7)  
[girls] who tarried at the ghat climbing on the jingling<sup>277</sup> *marutam*-trees, (6)  
[ghat] with musicians (*iṅavar*) who sweetly gathered, the ones who drink toddy (*ariyaḷ*) (5)  
[wearing] flower-made chaplets [on their] pretty, curly heads, (4)  
the ones with garments of leaves<sup>278</sup> with blossoming *āmpal*-flowers inside [that], (3)  
[on which] the pure calyxes of the **concatenated *kuvaḷai*-flowers** had been inserted. (2)

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<sup>274</sup> *cākāṭṭālar* (< Skt. *śakāṭa*): ‘cart-people’, ‘cart-drivers’.

<sup>275</sup> This topic with the mire and the cart is well-known in early literature; for a famous example, see *Akanānūru*, 140.

<sup>276</sup> This might refer to the *tiṅai* called *neytal* and its literary conventions.

<sup>277</sup> *maṇi*: ‘bell’. Here I translated the “*marutam*-tree with bells [on the girls]” as “jingling *marutam*-tree”. However, not all the editions read *maṇi* in Line 6, as U. Vē. Cāminātaiyar did. For example, Turaicāmiṭṭai and Aruḷampalavaṅṅar read *naṇi* (“nearness”). Turaicāmiṭṭai 1973, 111; Aruḷampalavaṅṅar 1960, 185.

<sup>278</sup> *maṭivaiyar*: “the ones with foliage”. The scene described here recalled my memories about a Malabari folk dance, the *Kummāṭṭi*, when the dancers wear masks and garments woven from grass during the performance which is accompanied by drummers.

28.

peyar: uruttuvaru malir<sub>nirai</sub>, turai: nāṭuvā<sub>l</sub>ttu, tū<sub>kku</sub>: centū<sub>kku</sub>, vaṇṇam: o<sub>l</sub>uku vaṇṇam.

tiru ~uṭaitt'-amma perum vi<sub>r</sub>al pakaivar  
paim kaṇ yā<sub>n</sub>ai+ puṇar nirai tumiya  
~uram turant' e<sub>r</sub>inta ka<sub>r</sub>ai ~a<sub>i</sub>+ ka<sub>l</sub>al kāl  
kaṭum mā ma<sub>r</sub>avar kata<sub>l</sub> toṭai ma<sub>r</sub>appa  
~ilai ~i<sub>n</sub>itu tantu vi<sub>l</sub>ai<sub>v</sub>u mu<sub>ṭṭ</sub>' urā<sub>t</sub>u 5  
pulampā ~urāiyu<sub>ḷ</sub> nī to<sub>l</sub>il ā<sub>r</sub>ra<sub>l</sub>i<sub>n</sub>  
vi<sub>ṭ</sub>u nila+ kara<sub>m</sub>pai vi<sub>ṭ</sub>ar a<sub>ḷ</sub>ai ni<sub>r</sub>aiya+  
kōṭai nī<sub>ṭ</sub>a+ ku<sub>n</sub>ra<sub>m</sub> pul+ e<sub>n</sub>a  
~aruvi ~a<sub>r</sub>ra perum va<sub>r</sub>al kā<sub>l</sub>aiyum  
nivantu karai ~i<sub>l</sub>itaru na<sub>n</sub>am talai+ pē<sub>r</sub>iya<sub>r</sub>ru+ 10  
cī<sub>r</sub> u<sub>ṭ</sub>ai vi<sub>y</sub>al pulam vāy parantu mi<sub>k</sub>īyar  
uvalai cū<sub>ṭ</sub>i ~**uruttu varu malir nirai**+  
cem nī<sub>r</sub>+ pū<sub>c</sub>al allatu  
vemmai ~a<sub>r</sub>itu ni<sub>n</sub>+ akam talai nā<sub>ṭ</sub>ē.

28<sup>th</sup> song

### **The increasing mass which furiously comes**

Alas! Your land with vast dominions possesses fortune (*tiru*),<sup>279</sup> (1a–b, 14b–d)  
because you master your duty [at your] never-desolated residence (6)  
after the production did not have difficulties after the defence was sweetly organised, (5)  
while [your] warriors (*maravar*) with ankleted feet and mortar-legged<sup>280</sup> fierce animals ignored<sup>281</sup>  
the hasty shooting [of the enemies] (3c–4)  
[warriors] who attacked by forcefully driving [those animals] (3a–b)  
when the united line of [their] green-eyed elephants had been slaughtered,<sup>282</sup> (2)  
[elephants] of [your] greatly victorious enemies, (1c–d)  
[your land] in which harshness is rare (14a–b)  
except the noise<sup>283</sup> of the red water, (13)  
***the increasing mass which furiously comes*** after it wore dried leaves [on its surface] (12)  
when it was getting wider spreading on the excellent, vast fields, (11)  
the big river<sup>284</sup> of wide spaces which overflowingly descends to the seashores (*karai*) (10)  
even at the time of the big draught, [when] waterfalls subsided, (9)  
when the mountains became empty, the west wind prolongs, (8)  
while the soil became full of clefts and holes, eroding the land. (7)

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<sup>279</sup> Another, slightly different interpretation is to translate *tiru* as the Goddess (Tiru/Śrī).

<sup>280</sup> The phrase *karai ati* (“mortar-legs”), as an attribute connected to elephants, is very frequent in the old texts. See for examples: *Puranānūru*, 39: 1–2; 135: 12; 323: 6.

<sup>281</sup> *marappa* (inf.): ‘forgetting’.

<sup>282</sup> *tumiya* (inf.): ‘being cut’.

<sup>283</sup> This structure may already be familiar from the previous poem (*Patirrupattu*, 27: 14). This might be an argument that the poem was the work of one particular author who concatenated his works with parallel features.

<sup>284</sup> Although there is a river in Kerala called Periyār today, I do not follow the practice of those translators who identifies these two, but rather translated it literally.

## 29.

peyar: veṅkai makaḷir, tuṛai: vañcitturaippāṭānpāṭṭu, tūkkū: centūkkū, vaṅṅam: oḷuku vaṅṅam.

aval eṛinta ~ulakkai vālai+ cērtti  
vaḷai+ kai makaḷir vaḷḷai koyyum  
muṭantai nellin viḷai vayal paranta  
taṭam tāḷ nārai ~iriyā ~ayirai+  
koḷu mīn ārkaiya maram-toṛum kuḷāalin 5  
*veḷ kai makaḷir* veḷ kuruk' oṅpum  
aliyā vilavin iliyā+ tivavin  
vayiriyā mākkal paṅ+ amaitt' eḷi  
maṅṅam naṅṅi maṅṅu cirai pāṭum  
akam kaṅ vaippiṅ nāṭu-maṅ aliya 10  
viravu vēru kūlamoṭu kuruti vēṭṭa  
mayir putai mā+ kaṅ kaṭiya kaḷara  
~amar kōḷ nēr ikant' ār eyil kaṭakkum  
perum pal yānai+ kuṭṭuvan  
varamp' il tānai paravā ~ūnkē. 15

29<sup>th</sup> song

### The girls with empty hands

The countries were indeed<sup>285</sup> pitiable (10c–d)  
[even] before [Kuṭṭuvaṅ’s] boundless army spread, (15)  
Kuṭṭuvaṅ with many great elephants, (14)  
who vanquished the difficult[-to-siege] fortress, after the formations which [were]  
murderous in battle went beyond [the walls], (13)  
while drumsticks were sounding on the fur-covered black eye<sup>286</sup> [of the drum], (12)  
after blood had been sacrificed together with variously mixed crops,— (11)  
[pitiable were the countries] with regions of vast places, (10)  
where the *vayiriyā*-people sing on the side of the streets reaching the village common,  
after they arose [from their places] after they performed melodies (*paṇ*) (8–9)  
[playing] on the strings which had not been dismantled [during] the unceasing festival, (7)  
where **girls with empty hands**<sup>287</sup> scare away the white *kuruku*-birds,<sup>288</sup> (6)  
because they gathered [on] all the trees around eating the fat *ayirai*-fishes,<sup>289</sup> (4d–5)  
while the *nārai*-birds with big, wide legs retreat (4a–c)  
which [birds] were spread on the paddy fields that produce drooping paddy, (3)  
where girls with bangles on their wrists pluck *vallai*-flowers,<sup>290</sup>  
after they laid the mortars, in which the paddy was beaten, [at] the plaintain[-tree].

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<sup>285</sup> In the light of Eva Wilden's oral comment, the position of *maṅ* as an assertive particle is weird and a later development as it is not stuck to the subject here. It might show that the poem is from later centuries or presents an exceptional particle usage.

<sup>286</sup> *kaṅ*: “the eye [of the drum]”, “the place [where the drum was stored]”. Here, we have to understand the eye of the drum, which was a dark circle made of clay in the middle of the drum’s leather surface. *Tamil Lexicon*, 683.

<sup>287</sup> *veḷ kai makalīr*: “girls with white hands” or “girls with empty hands”. Their hands could be white, because of the bangles, but I rather think that their hands are empty, since the birds stole the fishes which they supposed to bring home.

<sup>288</sup> *kuruku*: a kind of wading bird. *Tamil Lexicon*, 1014.

<sup>289</sup> *ayirai* same as *ayilai*: a kind of fish (*Cobitis thermalis*). *Dravidian Etymological Dictionary*, 191; *Tamil Lexicon*, 112.

<sup>290</sup> *vallai*: creeping bindweed (*Ipomoea aquatica*). *Tamil Lexicon*, 3552.



### 30.

peyar: pukanravāyam, turai: peruñcōrrunilai, vaṇṇam: oluku vaṇṇam, tūkkū: centūkkū.

inaṛ tatai nāḷal karai keḷu perum turai  
maṇi+ kalatt' aṇṇa mā ~itaḷ neytal  
pāc' aṭai+ paṇi+ kaḷi tuḷai+ puṇṇai  
vāl inaṛ+ paṭu ciṇai+ kuruk' irai koḷḷum  
alk' uṛu kāṇal oṅku maṇal aṭai karai 5  
tāl aṭumpu malainta puṇari vaḷai ṅarala  
~ilaṅku nīr muttamoṭu vār tukir eṭukkum  
taṇ kaṭal paṭappai mel pāḷaṇavum  
kāntal am kaṇṇi+ kolai vil vēṭṭuvar  
cem kōṭṭ' ā māṇ uṇoṭu kāṭṭa 10  
matan uṭai vēḷattu veḷ kōṭu koṇṭu  
poṇ+ uṭai niyamattu+ pili noṭai koṭukkum  
kuṇru talai maṇanta pul pulam vaippum  
kālam aṇṇiyum karump' arutt' oliyāt'  
ari kāl avittu+ pala pū viḷaviṇ 15  
tēm pāy marutam mutal paṭa+ koṇru  
veḷ talai+ cem puṇal parantu vāy mikukkum  
pala cūḷ patappariya veḷḷattu+  
ciṛai koḷ pūcaliṇ **pukanra ~āyam**  
muḷav' imiḷ mūt' ūr viḷavu+ kāṇū+ peyarum 20  
celum pal vaippiṇ paḷaṇa+ pālum  
ēṇal uḷavar varaku mīt' iṭṭa  
kāṇ miku kuḷaviya ~aṇpu cēr irukkai  
mel tiṇai nuvaṇai muṛai muṛai pakukkum  
pul pulam taḷiṇya puṛav' aṇi vaippum 25  
pal pūm cemmāl kāṭu payam māri  
~arakkatt' aṇṇa nuṇ maṇal kōṭu koṇṭ'  
oḷ nutal makalir kaḷaloṭu marukum  
viṇ+ uyarnt' oṅkiya kaṭaravum piṛavum

paṇai keḷu vēntarum vēḷirum onru molintu	30
kaṭalavum kāṭṭavum araṇ valiyār naṭuṅka	
muraṇ miḷu kaṭum kural vicump' aṭaip' atira+	
kaṭum ciṇam kaṭāy muḷaṅku mantiratt'	
arum tīral marapiṅ kaṭavuḷ pēṇiyar	
uyarntōṅ ēntiya ~arum peṛal piṇṭam	35
karum kaṇ pēy maḷai kai puṭaiyūu naṭuṅka	
neyttōr tūuya niṛai maḷai irum pali	
~eṛumpu mūcā irumpūtu marapiṅ	
karum kaṇ kākkaiyoṭu parunt' irunt' āra	
~ōṭā+ pūṭkai ~oḷ porī+ kaḷal kāl	40
perum camam tatainta ceru+ pukal maṛavar	
urumu nilam atirkkum kuraloṭu koḷai puṇarntu	
perum cōṛ' ukuttaṛk' eṛiyum	
kaṭum ciṇam vēntē niṅ taḷaṅku kural muracē.	

30<sup>th</sup> song

### The elated crowd

After kings with *paṇai*-drums, and chieftains had sworn an oath [against you], (30)  
[kings and chiefs] of the tender lands (*menpāl*) with gardens at the cool ocean, (8)  
where [people]<sup>291</sup> take up the long corals together with the pearls of the shiny water, (7)  
while the conches are sounded by the waves which attacked the *aṭumpu*-plant<sup>292</sup> that creeps (6)  
on the solid shore of the high-rising sand[-bed] at the permanent seashore-grove, (5)  
[where] *kuruku*-birds perched<sup>293</sup> on the drooping branches (4b–d)  
of the *punnai*-tree<sup>294</sup> with white clusters, after they stirred up<sup>295</sup> the cool backwaters with  
the green leaves (3–4a)  
of the *neytal*-flower with big petals which resembled the sapphire jewels (2)  
of the great harbour which is connected to the shore [which has] *ñālal*-trees<sup>296</sup> dense with  
clusters,— (1)  
[kings and chiefs] of the areas of low lands which are densely surrounded by hills, (13)  
[where] the hunters (*vēṭṭuvar*) with murderous bows and *kāntal*-chaplets,<sup>297</sup> (9)  
give the price of wine (*pilī*)<sup>298</sup> in the gold-possessing<sup>299</sup> markets, (12)  
after they brought the white tusks of rutting forest elephants together with the meat of wild cows  
(*āmān*) with red horns— (10–11)  
[kings and chiefs] of the division of the paddy fields with many excellent settlements, (21)  
where having seen the festival of the ancient town with sounding *mulavu*-drum (20a–c)  
**the elated crowd** departs, [because of] the clamour of [those who are] guarding (19, 20d)  
the flood, while many surrounding sand-heaps<sup>300</sup> are suffering [from the torrent], (18)  
when the red water with white surface spread and overflowed the sluices (17)  
[where people] felled a honey-flowing *marutam*-tree, so that its foot had perished, (16)  
on the festivals with many flowers, after [they] caused the end of the pruned stems (15)

<sup>291</sup> I interpret these lines as having an elliptical, indefinite subject (“people”).

<sup>292</sup> *aṭumpu*: hareleaf (*Ipomoea biloba*). *Dravidian Etymological Dictionary*, 65.

<sup>293</sup> *irai kollum*: “which takes a seat”.

<sup>294</sup> *punnai*: mast-wood (*Calophyllum inophyllum*). *Dravidian Etymological Dictionary*, 4343.

<sup>295</sup> *tulāi* (abs.): “having stirred up” < *tulāvu-tal* 5. v. tr. *Tamil Lexicon*, 2000.

<sup>296</sup> *ñālal*: fetid Cassia (*Cassia sophera*). *Dravidian Etymological Dictionary*, 2915.

<sup>297</sup> *kāntal*: Malabar glory lily (*Gloriosa superba*), a fiery colour flower of the high mountains. *Dravidian Etymological Dictionary*, 1451.

<sup>298</sup> *pilī*: toddy, fermented liquor. *Tamil Lexicon*, 2711. Here might refer to the Roman wine because of its high price.

<sup>299</sup> *pon uṭai niyamam*: “the gold-possessing market”, “the golden market”.

<sup>300</sup> The word *paṭappār* is a hapax legomenon; therefore, I accepted the POC’s suggestion: “sand-stronghold” (*maṇar kōṭṭai*).

cutting the sugar cane unceasingly even if it is not the [proper] season,— (14)  
[kings and chiefs] of the decorated woodland areas which are surrounded by the low lands, (25)  
where [people] divide the soft millet flour one by one<sup>301</sup> (24)  
at the firmly made (*vanṇu cēr*) residences with *kulavi*-flowers<sup>302</sup> in which the forests abound, (23)  
where the millet<sup>303</sup>[-harvesting] farmers heaped up the millet,— (22)  
[kings and chiefs] of the sky-touching lofty [paths of the] wilderness, (29a–c)  
where, having exchanged<sup>304</sup> the yield of the excellent forest for many flowers, (26)  
having taken the shellac<sup>305</sup>-like peaks of fine sand, (27)  
girls with bright foreheads are wandering with *kalal*-anklets,—<sup>306</sup> (28)  
[and kings and chiefs] of other [places],— (29d)  
o king of fierce anger, your *muracam*-drum with roaring voice (44)  
was beaten [to announce] that the great cooked rice (*peruñcōru*)<sup>307</sup> is poured, (43)  
after [your] warriors, who desire war, who were crowded on the great battlefield, (41)  
[who have] legs with spotted, bright anklets and the maxim not to run [away],— (40)  
joined to the melody with [their] voices which resemble the earth-shaking thunder, (42)  
when the black-eyed crows and kites perched and filled [themselves] full (39)  
according to the amazing tradition where ants do not swarm,<sup>308</sup> (38)  
with the great oblation (*pali*) of intense wine (*makil*) that is sprinkled with blood (*neyttōr*) (37)  
while black-eyed demonesses were trembling and clapping [their] hands, while they shivered  
[out of desire] (36)  
for the difficult-to-obtain *piṇṭam*<sup>309</sup> that was offered by the *uyarntōn* (35)  
to honour deities according to the tradition with the precious power (34)  
of the sounding *mantiram*,<sup>310</sup> (33c–d)

<sup>301</sup> *murai murai*: “order-order”, “according to the order”.

<sup>302</sup> *kulavi*: wild jasmine (*Jasminum angustifolium*). *Tamil Lexicon*, 1039.

<sup>303</sup> *ēnal*: ‘red millet’, ‘black millet’, ‘millet field’, ‘ear of corn’. *Tamil Lexicon*, 574.

<sup>304</sup> For *māru-tal* 5. v. tr. in the context of bartering flowers Cf. *Kuṇṭokai*, 269.

<sup>305</sup> The word *arakkam*, which is quite rare in the old texts, means either ‘shellac’ (< Skt. *rākṣā*) or ‘blood’ (< Skt. *rakta*). *Tamil Lexicon*, 115. According to Eva Wilden’s comment on this line: “the red *sand* is not really sand here, but a read powder piled into conic heaps the likes of which can still be seen on modern marketplaces.”

<sup>306</sup> *kalal*: heroic anklet worn by warriors. According to Eva Wilden’s comment on this line: “these women from the hill tribes are unlike normal women and actually wear *kalal*, in keeping with the fact that they come to the city all on their own in order to do business.”

<sup>307</sup> *peruñcōru*: “big rice”. The *Purapporuḷḅēṇpāmālai* (3. 23) and the *Tolkāppiyam Poruḷatikāram Purattinaiyiyal* (65: 9), together with their old commentaries, make it clear that there was a famous custom, when after the battle huge quantity of cooked rice was offered by the king to the warriors.

<sup>308</sup> See: pp. 398–399.

<sup>309</sup> *piṇṭam* (< Skt. *piṇḍa*): ‘anything globular or round’, ‘embryo’, ‘ball of rice’, ‘ball of cooked rice offered to the manes’, etc. *Tamil Lexicon*, 2656. Here it refers to balls of rice used in post-battle rituals.

<sup>310</sup> *mantiram* (< Skt. *mantra*): ‘Vedic hymn’, ‘sacrificial formula’, ‘incantation’, ‘spell’, etc. *Tamil Lexicon*, 3068.

having kindled (*kaṭāy*) [your] fierce anger, (33a–b)

while a fierce voice that abounds in enmity sounded and echoed in the sky (32)

so that strong warriors were trembling in [their] forts [on] the seas, in [the] forests. (31)

### III. patikam

imaiyavarampaṅ tampa ~amaivara  
~umparkāṭṭai+ taṅ kōl niṅṅi  
~akappā ~erintu pakal tī vēṭṭu  
mati ~uraḷ marapiṅ mutiyarai+ taḷi+  
kaṅ+ akam vaippiṅ maṅ vakutt' ittu+ 5  
karum kaḷirṅ' yāṅai+ puṅar nirai nīṭṭi  
~iru kaṭal nīrum oru pakal āṭi  
~ayirai paraii ~āṅṅal cāl munpōṭu  
~oṭuṅkā nal+ icai ~uyarnta kēḷvi  
neṭumpāratāyaṅār munt' ura+ kāṭu pōnta 10  
palyāṅaiaccelkelu kuṭṭuvaṅai+  
pālai+ kautamaṅār pāṭiṅār pattuppāṭṭu.

avai tām: aṭu ney+ āvuti, kayiru kuṅu mukavai, tatainta kāṅci, cīr cāl vellī, kāṅ uṅaṅku kaṭum  
neṅi, kāṭ' uru kaṭum neṅi, toṭanta kuvaḷai, uruttu varu malir niṅai, veḷ kai makaḷir, pukaṅṅa  
~āyam. ivai pāṭṭiṅ patikam.

pāṭi+ perṅa paricil: nīr vēṅṅiyatu koṅmiṅ eṅa yāṅum eṅ pāṅppaṅiyum cuvarkkam pukal  
vēṅṅum eṅa pāṅppāriṅ periyōrai+ kēṭṭu ~oṅpatu perum vēḷvi vēṅṅipikka+ pattām perum  
vēḷviyiṅ pāṅppāṅaiyum pāṅppaṅiyaiyum kāṅār āyiṅār.

imaiyavarampaṅ tampa palyāṅaiaccelkelu kuṭṭuvaṅ iru patt' ai yāṅṅu vīṅṅiruntāṅ.

### III. Panegyric

Pālai Kautamaṅār sang [these] ten songs (12)  
for Palyāṅaiccelkelu Kuṭṭuvan, (11)  
who had gone to the forest<sup>311</sup> following Neṭumpāratāyaṅār,<sup>312</sup> (10)  
[armed] with knowledge (*kēlvi*) that rose high [by means its] unceasing fame (9)  
[and] with strength that abounds in ability, after [he] worshipped<sup>313</sup> the Ayirai,<sup>314</sup> (8)  
[who] bathed on one day in the water of the two seas,<sup>315</sup> (7)  
[who] made the united rows of [his] black elephants<sup>316</sup> longer, (6)  
[who] donated lands by dividing the regions of the vast area, (5)  
[who] surrounded [himself] with old men alike in intelligence according to the tradition, (4)  
[who] sacrificed Akappā in the fire [in one] day by attacking [it], (3)  
[who] established Umparkāṭu [under] his [royal-]staff (*kōl*), (2)  
while [he] was befitting [to rule as being] the brother of Imaiavarampaṅ. (1)

These [ten songs] themselves [are]: The libation of heated ghī, The small scoops on ropes, The dense *kāñci*-trees, The Venus with abundant excellence, The harsh path, where the forest dried out, The harsh paths which experienced wilderness, The concatenated *kuvalai*-flowers, The increasing mass which furiously comes, The girls with empty hands, The elated crowd, [and this as] the panegyric of these ten.

Having sung, the [following] gifts have been obtained: [when the king] said: “What is desirable for you, take [it!]”, [he replied,] saying: “Me and my wife (*pārppani*) desire to enter the heaven (*cuvarkkam*)!”, [thus the king] asked the great men of the *pārppār* and made [them] to perform nine great sacrifices, [then] at the tenth great sacrifice [both] the priest (*pārppān*) and [his] wife became invisible.

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<sup>311</sup> Here, *kāṭu pōnta* refers to the ancient practice when a king resigned from politics around the end of his life and left for the forest to follow a reclusive lifestyle. See: pp. 424–425.

<sup>312</sup> The questionable *pāratāyaṅār*'s name might have come from the proper name Pāratāyaṅ < Skt. Bhāradvāja (*Tamil Lexicon*, 2620), so that the honorific plural could mean one particular person (a *rājaguru*? a *purohita*?) whose name was Pāratāyaṅār, or, as a de facto plural, they could have been influential *brāhmaṇas* belonging to the *bhāradvāja-gōtra*. It is easy to find another possible etymology of the Tamil name (< Skt. Bhārata?), but almost impossible to give a final answer to the question.

<sup>313</sup> *parai*: irregular abs. from the verb *parāvu-tal* 5. v. tr. *Tamil Lexicon*, 2507.

<sup>314</sup> Ayirai was an established place of worship, probably a hill.

<sup>315</sup> Here we see a victorious/ritual bath on the western and the eastern coasts of South India, most probably at the Malabar Coast in the Arabian Sea and at the Coromandel Coast in the Bay of Bengal. This could mean that the king had acquired territories on the Coromandel Coast or had temporarily taken possession of territories there.

<sup>316</sup> *kalir*' *yānai*: “elephant-elephant” means simply “elephants”.

Palyānaiccelkelu Kuṭṭuvan, the brother of Imayavarampan<sup>317</sup>, sat twenty-five years on the throne.

mūn̄rām pattu murr̄irru  
Thus ending the Third Decade.

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<sup>317</sup> There is a difference between 'Imayam' of this colophon and 'Imaiyam' of the *patikam*, however, both forms are paralelly exist.



## The Fourth Decade

(*nāṅkāṁ pattu*)

The poet: Kāppiyārru Kāppiyānār

The king: Kaḷaṅkāykaṅṅi Nārmuṭi Cēral

### 31.

peyar: kaṁaḷkural tuḷāy, tuṛai: centuṛai pāṭānpāṭṭu, tūkkū: centūkkū, vaṅṅam: oḷuku vaṅṅam.

kunru talai maṅantu kuḷū+ kaṭal uṭutta  
maṅ keḷu ṅālattu māntar ōrāṅku+  
kai cumant' alaṛum pūcal mātirattu  
nāl vēru naṅam talai ~oruṅk' eḷunt' olippa+  
teḷ+ uyar vaṭi maṅi ~eriyunar kal+ eṇa 5  
uṅṅā+ paim nilam paṅi+ tuṛai maṅṅi  
vaṅṅ' ūtu poli tār+ tiru ṅemar akalattu+  
kaṅ poru tikiri+ **kaṁaḷ kural tuḷāy**  
alaṅkal celvaṅ cē~ aṭi paravi  
neṅcu mali ~uvakaiyar tuṅcu pati+ peyara 10  
maṅi niṛam mai ~iruḷ akala nilā viripu  
kōṭu kūṭu matiyam iyal urr'-āṅku+  
tuḷāṅku kuṭi viḷu+ tiṅai tirutti muracu koṅṅ'  
āḷ kaṭaṅ iṛutta niṅ pūṅ kiḷar viyal māṛpu  
karuvi vāṅam taṅ taḷi talaiiya 15  
vaṭa terku vilaṅki vilaku talaitt' eḷiliya  
paṅi vār viṅṅu viṛal varai ~arṛē  
kaṭavuḷ aṅci vāṅatt' iḷaitta  
tūṅk' eyil katavam kāval koṅṅa  
~eḷūu nivant' aṅṅa parēr eṛuḷ muḷavu+ tōḷ 20  
veḷ tirai munnīr vaḷaiiya ~ulakattu  
vaḷ pukal niṛutta vakai cāl celvattu  
vaṅṅaṅ aṅaiyai-maṅ niyē vaṅṅu paṭa  
~olinta kūntal aṛam cāl kaṛpiṅ  
kuḷaikkū viḷakk' ākiya ~oḷ nutal poṅṅiṅ 25

iḷaikku viḷakk' ākiya ~am vāñk' unti  
 vicumpu vaḷaṅku makalir uḷḷum ciranta  
 cemmīṅ aṅaiyaḷ niṅ tol nakar+ celvi  
 nilam atirp' irāṅkala ~āki valaṅ ērpu  
 viyal paṅai muḷaṅkum vēl mūc' aḷuvatt' 30  
 aṅaṅkiya puṅaiyal polam kaḷal nōl tāḷ  
 oṅuṅkā+ tevvar ūkk' aṅa+ kaṅaii+  
 puṅa+koṅai ~eriyār niṅ maṅa+ paṅai koḷḷunar  
 nakaivarkk' araṅam āki+ pakaivarkku+  
 cūr nikaḷnt' arṅu niṅ tāṅai 35  
 pōr miku kurucil nī māṅṅaṅai palavē.

31<sup>st</sup> song

### The *tulāy* with fragrant clusters

The broad chest of yours on which ornaments emerge (14b–d)  
is like the victorious mountain [up to] the sky which overflowed with the dew (17)  
of the clouds, [mountain] with peaks that lies across from the North to the South and recedes  
[out of sight], (16)  
while a large amount of cool drops showered from the sky, (15)  
[the chest of yours] who fulfilled [your] manly duty (14a–b)  
after the *muracu*-drum was taken, setting right<sup>318</sup> the excellent family (*tiṇai*) of a declining lineage  
(*kuṭi*), (13)  
which have the nature of the full moon which joined the peaks (12)  
spreading [its] moonlight so that the sapphire-coloured collyrium-darkness vanished, (11)  
when people whose hearts were full of joy returned [to their] villages, [where they] sleep, (10)  
after [they] praised the red feet of the Lord<sup>319</sup> (*celvan*) who has a garland (9)  
of *tulāy*<sup>320</sup> **with fragrant clusters**, an eye-blinding discus (*tikiri*), (8)  
a chest [on which] Tiru (Śrī) abides [and] abundant garlands [on which] bees blow themselves  
up with [the nectar], (7)  
after [they] had bathed at the cool ghat of the green lands which had not been grazed, (6)  
[as] people who noisily hit the clear long-shaped<sup>321</sup> bells, (5)  
so that the crying clamour unitedly arose and sounded [in] the vast regions in [all] the four  
different directions, [after] the hands of the men were raised<sup>322</sup> (3–4)  
together, [who were men] of the earthly world (2)  
[which was] encircled by the sea [and] densely mingled with mountains. (1)

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<sup>318</sup> *tulaṅku kuṭi*: “swaying/perturbed/uprooted family”. The phrase *tulaṅku kuṭi* appears a few more times in the Fourth Decade (see 32: 7; 37: 7; IV. 12). We do not exactly know what happened to the dynasty, but this king seems to restore the kingdom's old glory. Was he, as it is said in Sanskrit, a *kulavardhana*?

<sup>319</sup> It is a description of Māl/Viṣṇu. The POC identifies him with Tirumāl of Tiruvaṅantapuram (now Tiruvananthapuram, Kerala). Marr pointed out that there were and are other vital shrines of Viṣṇu across Kerala (Marr 1985 [1958]: 314), so it is possible that the commentator's suggestion was only his best guess. What is more, from the *Periplus Maris Erythraei* (Chapter 54), we know that “Nelkynda is just about 500 stades from Muziris, likewise by river and sea, but it is in another kingdom, Pandiōn's” (Translated by Lionel Casson), so it seems that at least at the time when the *Periplus Maris Erythraei* was written (sometime between 50–70 CE) the southern parts of the Malabar Coast were on Pāṇṭiya hands.

<sup>320</sup> *tulāy*: sacred basil (*Ocimum tenuiflorum*), id. Skt. *tulasī*. *Tamil Lexicon*, 1999.

<sup>321</sup> Another possible interpretation is to translate *vaṭi maṇi* as ‘cast bell’. To see an example of making a cast bell, read *Kuruntokai*, 155.

<sup>322</sup> My translation here is based on the commentary of Turaicāmiṭṭillai (*makkaḷ tam talai mēl kai kūppi*). Turaicāmiṭṭillai 1973, 135.

You are certainly like the wealthy Vaṇṭaṇ,<sup>323</sup> (22d–23c)  
 who abounds in qualities (*vakai*) which were established by the generous praises (22a–c)  
 of the world, which is encircled by the sea with white waves, (21)  
 whose very beautiful, strong *mulavu*-drum[-like] shoulders [are] elevated like the cross-bar (*elu*) (20)  
 which brought<sup>324</sup> protection to the gate of the hanging fortress,<sup>325</sup> (19)  
 which was created in the sky, having feared the deity.<sup>326</sup> (18)  
 [Your] lady (*celvi*) of your old mansion is like the Red Star<sup>327</sup> (28)  
 [by which] even the minds of the sky-roaming [celestial] girls became exalted, (27)  
 [your lady, whose] beautiful, curved navel became the [source of] light for the golden [waist-]  
 jewellery, (25d–26)  
 [whose] bright forehead became the [source of] light for [her] earrings, (25a–c)  
 [whose] fidelity is abundant in virtues [and whose] tresses [were] sprouting,<sup>328</sup> (24)  
 so that bees swarm around. (23d)

You are glorious on many [counts], o Lord who abound in wars (36)  
 with your army, who appeared like Cūr (35)  
 to the enemies, [but] became a protection to the friends, (34)  
 [with] your men who bravely take up [their] weapons against those who do not attack [but]  
 turn [their] backs, (33)  
 after [you] urged forwards the untameable<sup>329</sup> enemies with [your] the sturdy, golden ankleted  
 legs, so that [their] strength perished, (31c–32)

<sup>323</sup> According to the *Pre-Pallavan Tamil Index*, Vaṇṭaṇ is the p. n. of a generous patron. *Pre-Pallavan Tamil Index*, 732.

<sup>324</sup> *kontu* (abs.): “having taken”.

<sup>325</sup> We find this “hanging fort” (*tūṅk’ eyil*) in other poems. In *Puṛaṇānūru*, 39: 5–6, we read about the Cōḷa king “who attacked the hanging fort of fierce strength which [was] difficult to approach” (*tūṅk’ arum kaṭum tīral tūṅk’ eyil erinta*). In *Cirupāṇāruppaṭai*, 81, we read about Cōḷa king with “large hands that shine with armlets, which attacked the hanging fort” (*tūṅk’ eyil erinta toṭi viḷaṅku taṭam kai*). The old commentaries available for *Puṛaṇānūru* and *Cirupāṇāruppaṭai* collect all the passages which contained information about the *tūṅk’ eyil*. This leads us to the *Cilappatikāram*, III. 29. 16: 4. where we read about “the Cōḷaṅ who attacked three of the hanging forts” (*tūṅk’ eyil mūṇr’ erinta cōḷaṅ*) and to *Maṇimēkalai*, 1: 4. where the Cōḷa king is depicted as “Cempiyaṅ of armleted arms who attacked the hanging fort” (*tūṅk’ eyil erinta toṭi tōḷ cempiyaṅ*). The old commentator here understood “forts which were moving in the sky, possessed by *asuras*, who became enemies to the protector of the *devas*” (*tēvar kaṭaku pakaivaṅ ākiya acurarkalūṭaiya ākāyatil acaikiṅṅa matilkaḷ*). Not counting the mediaeval commentaries, we can state that in the Caṅkam corpus and the epics, 1. this episode was connected to the Cōḷa king, and 2. the related phrases are very much formulaic. Regarding our passage, I think this could be connected either to the Cōḷa king’s action or to Śiva’s Tripurāri aspect. However, it is also possible that these two were somehow connected in some early unwritten legends.

<sup>326</sup> *kaṭavul aṅci*: “having feared the deity”. It is possible to understand a plural (“deities”) here thus it might underline the information found in the mediaeval commentary of *Maṇimēkalai* about the fort-builder *asuras*. Here in the *Paṭirruppattu*, we might also read about elliptical hostile beings (*asuras*?) who feared the deity/deities and, therefore, built a fort in the sky.

<sup>327</sup> *A Sanskrit-English Dictionary*, 82; *Tamil Lexicon*, 133.

<sup>328</sup> The sprouting (*olivarum*, *olinta*, etc.) tresses of women is a frequent and usual image in Caṅkam literature. Cf. *Narrai*, 6: 10; 141: 12; 313: 4.

<sup>329</sup> *oṭuṅkā* (neg.pecy.): “[who] is not restrained”, “[who] does not calm down”.

[you] with yielding garland (31a–b)

in the thicket crowded by spears when the wide *panai*-drum sounded (30)

increasingly [together with] the victory, after [you] became pitiless, shaking the earth. (29)

### 32.

peyar: kaḷaiyamal kaḷaṇi, tuṛai: centuṛai pāṭāṇpāṭṭu, tūkku: centūkku, vaṇṇam: oḷuku vaṇṇam.

māṇṭaṇai palavē pōr miku kurucil nī  
mātiram viḷakkum cāl̥pum cemmai̥yum  
mutt' uṭai maruppiṇ maḷa kaḷiṛu piḷiṛa  
mikk' eḷu kaṭum tār tuyttalai+ ceṇru  
tuppu+ tuvar pōka+ perum kiḷai ~uvappa 5  
~itt' āṇi' āṇā ~iṭam uṭai vaḷaṇum  
tuḷaṅku kuṭi tiruttiya valam paṭu venri̥yum  
ellām eṇṇiṇ iṭu kaḷaṅku tapuna  
koṇ+ oṇru maruṇṭaṇeṇ aṭu pōr+ kor̥rava  
neṭumiṭal cāya+ koṭum miṭal tumiya+ 10  
perum malai yāṇaiyoṭu pulam keṭa ~iṛuttu+  
taṭam tāḷ nārai paṭint' irai kavaram  
muṭantai nelliṇ **kaḷai ~amal kaḷaṇi+**  
piḷaiyā viḷaiyuḷ nāṭ' aka+ paṭuttu  
vaiyā mālaiyar vacaiyunar kaṛutta 15  
pakaivar tēett' āyiṇum  
ciṇavāy ākutaḷ iṛumpūt'-āl peritē.

32<sup>nd</sup> song

### The fields which are dense with bamboo

O you, the lord who abounds in battles, you are glorious on many [counts]!<sup>330</sup> (1)  
O you for whom [the prescription made by] the thrown *kalaniku*-beans fail, if I think about all (8)  
the triumphant victories which improved [your] perturbed family (7)  
and the fertility of the boundless places [which had been] given and populated, (6)  
so that the great relatives rejoiced, when [they were] entirely left by [their] strength, (5)  
after you went to the land [of your foes] with [your] increasingly rising, fierce vanguard, (4)  
when the young elephant bulls, whose tusks possess pearls,<sup>331</sup> were trumpeting, (3)  
[if I think about] the redness<sup>332</sup> [of the war] and [your] excellence that illuminates  
the great directions, (2)  
I am confused by one great<sup>333</sup> thing, o victor of murderous battles! (9)  
Indeed, it is a great marvel that you are not enraged (17)  
even if [you are] in the countries of [your] enemies (16)  
who became enraged as people who blame [you], people with not-reviling garlands, (15)  
after you stayed [there] with [your] big mountain-like elephants so that the fields perished (11)  
while you cut off the fierce strength [of] Neṭumiṭal,<sup>334</sup> so that [he] fell, <sup>335</sup> (10)  
after [you] annexed the country with unfailing production, (14)  
[and] with **fields which are dense with bamboos** [and] bending paddy, (13)  
where, having landed, the *nārai*-birds with big feet seized [their] food. (12)

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<sup>330</sup> The first line of this poem is the same as the last line of the 31<sup>st</sup> poem, but the components of the line are reversed. This is most probably the earliest example of *antāti* (Skt. *antādi*) in Tamil literary history (together with the Toṇṭi Decade of the *Aṅkurumūru*, the Cēra love anthology). This structure is characteristic of the decade as a whole since the last lines are more or less repeated at the beginnings of the subsequent poems. However, it is remarkable that the last line of the previous poem is not connected to the first line of the first poem, so it cannot be an entirely regular *antāti*.

<sup>331</sup> For the elephants whose tusks contain pearls, see e.g.: *Puṛaṇānūru*, 161: 16; 171: 11; *Naraiṇai*, 202: 2–3; *Kalittokai*, 40: 4–5.

<sup>332</sup> It is also possible to translate here *cemmai* as “impartiality”. *Tamil Lexicon*, 1598.

<sup>333</sup> U. Vē. Cāminātaiyar analyses *koṇ* as a “particle which denotes greatness” (*perumaiyaik kuṛikkum iṭaiccol*). Cāminātaiyar 1980, 79.

<sup>334</sup> POC: *neṭumiṭal* – [Atiyamāṅ Neṭumāṅ] Añci’s proper name (*añci iyaṟpeyarām*). See: *Pre-Pallavan Tamil Index*, 508.

<sup>335</sup> The form *cāya* could be also used as an irregular but often used perf. *pey.*, but the gemination of the subsequent hard consonant and the context both make it clear that here an infinitive has to be understood.

### 33.

peyar: varampil vellam, turai: vañcitturai pāṭānpāṭṭu, tūkku: centūkkum vañcittūkkum, vaṇṇam: oḷuku vaṇṇam.

irumpūt'-āl peritē koṭi+ tēr aṇṇal

vaṭi maṇi ~aṇaitta paṇai maruḷ nōl tāḷ

kaṭi marattāl kaḷiṇ' aṇaittu

neṭum nīra turai kalaṅka

mūḷtt' irutta viyal tāṇaiyoṭu

5

pulam keṭa neri-tarum **varampil vellam**

vāḷ matil āka vēl miḷai ~uyarttu

vil vicai ~umiḷnta vai muḷ+ ampin

cem vāy ekkam vaḷaiiya ~akaliṇ

kār iṭi ~urumiṇ uraṇum muraciṇ

10

kāl vaḷaṅk' ār eyil karutiṇ

pōr etir vēntar orūpa niṇṇē.



33<sup>rd</sup> song

### **The limitless flood**

It is indeed a great marvel, o majesty of a chariot with flags: (1)

**the limitless flood** [of your invasion] that crushes the fields so that [they] perished, (6)

together with [your] extensive army that swarmed [and] camped (5)

while the long water at the ghat had been stirred up, (4)

after you tied [your] elephant bull to the guarded tree (*kaṭimaram*),<sup>336</sup> (3)

[which elephant has] sturdy feet that resemble mortars, on which shapely bells<sup>337</sup>  
were fastened! (2)

After [you] raised a thicket (*mīlai*) of spears, while swords became a wall, (7)

the kings who opposed [you] in war will surrender to you, (12)

if [they] think [about your] difficult fortress which is roaming on legs, (11)

[fortress] with the *muracam*-drum that resounds like the thunder that roars during the rainy  
season, (10)

[fortress] with moats surrounded by blades with red edges (9)

[and] thorn[-like] sharp arrows hastily spat by the bows.<sup>338</sup> (8)

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<sup>336</sup> This act might refer to the humiliation of the enemies' totemistic tree (*kaṭimaram*) as the final act of the total defeat but could also refer to the descent of the enemies' king into vassal status. Cf. *Puṛaṇānūru*, 57: 10–11; 109: 10–13; 162; 336: 3–4; 345: 1.

<sup>337</sup> Another possible interpretation is to translate *vaṭi maṇi* as 'cast bell'.

<sup>338</sup> Another reading of *vil vicai* is "bow-machine". See: *Patirrupattu*, 22: 23.

### 34.

peyar: oṅpoṛi kaḷarkāl, tuṛai: tumpaiyaravam, tūkkū: centūkkum vañcittūkkum, vaṅṅam: oḷuku vaṅṅam.

orūpa niṅṅai ~oru perum vēntē

~ōṭā+ pūṭkai ~**oḷ poṛi+ kaḷal kāl**

irum nilam tōyūm viri nūl aṛuvaiyar

cem~+ uḷaiya mā ~ūrntu

neṭum koṭiya tēr micaiyum

5

ōṭai viḷaṅkum uru keḷu pukar nutal

poṅ+ aṅi yāṅai muraṅ cēr eruttiṅum

maṅ nilatt' amainta .....

māṛā maintar māṛu nilai tēya

muraic' uṭai+ perum camam tataiya ~ārpp' eḷa

10

~araicu paṭa+ kaṭakkum āṛṛal

purai cāl mainta nī ~ōmpalmāṛē.

34<sup>th</sup> song

**Legs with bright spotted *kalal*-anklets**

They will surrender to you, o great and unique king, (1)  
because of your defence,<sup>339</sup> o great and worthy strong man, (12)  
[who is] mighty, who overcomes so that the king<sup>340</sup> falls, (11)  
when noise arises, while the big battle,<sup>341</sup> which possesses the *muraicu*-drum,<sup>342</sup> becomes  
crowded (10)  
while the hostile state of the [enemies'] strong men who do not change [their minds],  
becomes weakened (9)  
..... which was settled on the permanent land, (8)  
on the malignant neck of [their] golden-ornamented elephants (7)  
with beautiful, spotted foreheads which shine with *ōtai*-ornaments, (6)  
on the top of the chariots with long flags, (5)  
after [they] mounted [their] horses with red mane (4)  
as being people in long garments<sup>343</sup> (*aruwaiyar*) [made from] spreading thread which touches  
the dark earth, (3)  
[who have] **legs with bright spotted *kalal*-anklets** [and] a resolution not to retreat. (2)

---

<sup>339</sup> Here *ōmpal* is a contracted v. n. means 'defending', 'guarding', 'protecting' (*Tamil Lexicon*, 625) and *māru* is a causal suffix (*Tamil Lexicon*, 3185).

<sup>340</sup> *araicu* < *aracu* (prob. < Skt. *rāja*).

<sup>341</sup> *camam* (prob. < Skt. *samara*): 'war', 'battle'.

<sup>342</sup> *muraicu* < *muracu* 'the royal drum'.

<sup>343</sup> Reading the other attestation (from the two!) of the word *aruwaiyar* (h. pl.), it seems that the Pāṇḍiya warriors used to wear a kind of long garment (*iru kōttu aruwaiyar*, *Neṭunalvātai*, 35). However, it does not really help us to identify the enemies.

### 35.

peyar: meyyāṭu parantalai, turai: vākaitturai pāṭānpāṭṭu, tūkku: centūkku, vaṇṇam: oḷuku vaṇṇam.

purai cāl mainta nī ~ōmpalmāre

~urai cāṇraṇa (v)āl perumai niṇ venri

~irum kaḷirṛ' ~yānai ~ilaṅku vāl maruppoṭu

neṭum tēr+ tikiri tāya viyal kaḷatt'

aḷak' uṭai+ cēval kiḷai pukā ~āra+

5

talai tumint' eñciya **mey+ āṭu parantalai**

~anti mālai vicumpu kaṇṭ'-anna

cem cuṭar koṇṭa kuruti maṇṇattu+

pēey āṭum vel pōr

vīyā yāṇar niṇ vayiṇāṇē.

10

35<sup>th</sup> song

### **Wasteland where bodies dance**

Your victory and [your] greatness [both] abound<sup>344</sup> in fame, (2)

because of your defense, o great and worthy strong man! (1)

On account of you, fertility will not fail (10)

in the victorious war,<sup>345</sup> [when] demonesses (*pēy*) dance (9)

in the village common [where] the blood had taken on a red glow (8)

that looked like the sky at nightfall (7)

in the **wasteland where bodies dance**, which remained there after [their] heads had been cut off,<sup>346</sup> (6)

while flocks of female and male owls<sup>347</sup> filled themselves full with the food (5)

[found] on the vast battlefield, on which wheels of tall chariots are scattered<sup>348</sup> (4)

together with the shiny white tusks of big elephant bulls. (3)

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<sup>344</sup> Here, *āl* has to be understood as an expletive that marks a finite verb (*cāṅṅana*), but it is also possible to split the sandhi in another way, reading *vāl perumai* “pure greatness”.

<sup>345</sup> *pōr*: fight, battle, war. *Tamil Lexicon*, 2966.

<sup>346</sup> Cf. *Cilappatikāram*, III. 26: 206–208. The headless torsos (*kabandha*) that retained vitality are well-known in Sanskrit literature. For a nice example, see: *Raghuvaṃśa*, VII. 51.

<sup>347</sup> Here, both the terms *aḷaku* and *cēval* mean ‘owl’. If we look at the 593<sup>rd</sup> *cūttiram* of the *Tolkāppiyam Poruḷatikāram Marappiyal*, we come to know that the term *cēval* could denote any male bird except the male peacock. However, *cūttiram* 600 and 601 inform us that the term *aḷaku* can be used only for the hen and the female of owl (*kōli*, *kūkai*) and also for peacocks, but latter had to be excluded because of what we read about *cēval*. If we follow these instructions of the *Tolkāppiyam*, translating female and male owls is the only way.

<sup>348</sup> *tāya* is an inf. from *tāvu-tal* v. 5. intr. ‘to leap’, ‘to spread’, ‘to move towards’, ‘to pace out a distance’, etc. *Tamil Lexicon*, 1851.

### 36.

peyar: vāṇmayāṅku kaṭuntār, tuṛai: kaḷavaḷi, tūkku: centūkku, vaṇṇam: oḷuku vaṇṇam.

vīyā yāṇar niṅ vayiṇāṇē

tāvāt' ākum mali peru vayavē

mallal uḷḷamoṭu vamp' amar+ kaṭantu

ceru miku muṇṇiṅ maṛavaroṭu talai+ ceṇṇu

paṇai taṭi puṇattin kai taṭipu pala ~uṭaṅ

5

yāṇai paṭṭa **vāḷ mayāṅku kaṭum tār**

māvum mākkalūm paṭu piṇam uṇṇiyar

poritta pōlum pulli ~eruttin

puṇ puṛa ~eruvai+ peṭai puṇar cēval

kuṭumi ~eḷāloṭu koṇṭu kilakk' iliya

10

nilam ili nivappiṅ nīl nirai pala cumant'

uru ~eḷu kūḷiyar uṇṭu makilnt' āṭa+

kuruti+ cem puṇal oḷuka+

ceru+ pala ceykuvai vāḷka niṅ vaḷaṇē.

36<sup>th</sup> song

**The fierce vanguard which was mingled with swords**

On account of you, fertility will not fail. (1)

[Your] abundant<sup>349</sup> strength has become unceasing. (2)

You [will] overcome in the new battles with [your] brilliant mind, (3)

you [will] march at the head together with [your] warriors, (4)

[and] you [will] make many battles (14a–b)

so that a red flood of blood [will] flow, (13)

while demons, [on account of whom] fear rises, will dance, after they ate<sup>350</sup> [and] rejoiced, (12)

after [they] carried the long rows of many [corpses] from the heaps dismounted on the field, (11)

so that the cocks and<sup>351</sup> hens of the *eruwai*-birds<sup>352</sup> (9)

with a small back and spotted neck as if it were imprinted,<sup>353</sup> (8)

together with the *elāl*-birds<sup>354</sup> with tufts descend downwards (10)

in order to eat from the fallen corpses of people and horses (7)

of **the fierce vanguard mingled with swords**, which caused many elephants to fall, (6)

after they cut off [their] trunks, [so that the field looked] like an upland with cut-off palmyra trees. (5)

May your wealth live long! (14c–d)

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<sup>349</sup> Here I analysed *mali* as a root noun from *mali-tal* 4. v. intr. Cf. *malivu* (*Tamil Lexicon*, 3104.).

<sup>350</sup> *uṇṭu* (abs.): ‘having consumed’. Since the original broader meaning of the verb allows it, it is possible that they were not just eating but also drinking from the river of blood.

<sup>351</sup> Here *puṇar* is a verbal root means ‘to unite’ and it stands for a quasi sociative.

<sup>352</sup> A bird of prey, which could be either a kite or an eagle. *Dravidian Etymological Dictionary*, 818.

<sup>353</sup> Remarkable that the same formulaic attributes are connected to pigeons (*puravu*) in *Patirrupattu*, 39: 10–11.

<sup>354</sup> *elāl*: an unidentifiable kind of bird, most probably a bird of prey which we can deduce from its vivid interest for corpses.

### 37.

peyar: valampaṭu venri, turai: centurai pāṭāṇpāṭṭu, tūkku: centūkku, vaṇṇam: oḷuku vaṇṇam.

vālka niṅ vaḷaṅē niṅ+ uṭai vāḷkkai

vāy moḷi vāyar niṅ pukaḷ ētta+

pakaivar āra+ paḷaṅkaṅ aruḷi

nakaivar āra nal kalam citaṅi

~āṅr' avint' aṭaṅkiya ceyir tīr cemmāl

5

vāṅ tōy nal+ icai ~ulakamoṭ' uyirppa+

tuḷaṅku kuṭi tiruttiya **valam paṭu venri**yum

mā ~irum puṭaiyal mā+ kaḷal puṅaintu

maṅ+ eyil eṅintu maṅavar+ tarī+

tol nilai+ ciṅappiṅ niṅ niḷal vāḷnarkku+

10

kōṭ' aṅa vaitta kōṭā+ koḷkaiyum

naṅru perit' uṭaiyaiyāl nīyē

vem tīral vēntē i~+ ulakattōrkkē.



37<sup>th</sup> song

### **The triumphant victories**

May your wealth last [long]! (1a–b)

After you graciously [caused] distress so that [your] enemies became full [of that], (3)

while people, [whose] mouths tell the truth, praised your fame (2)

[and] your life, (1c–d)

after you scattered good vessels, so that your friends became full [of that], (4)

o flawless majesty who is in self-control, after you become worthy [and] humble, (5)

for the people in this world, o, king of severe strength (13)

you possess very much (12)

**triumphant victories** which improved [your] perturbed family, (7)

so that [your] sky-touching fame breathes together with the world, (6)

[and] implemented, indivertible principles, so that partiality (*kōṭu*) perished (11)

of those who live in the shade<sup>355</sup> of [your] ancient permanent excellence (10)

after you adorned [yourself with] big *kalal*-anklets and big, dark garland,<sup>356</sup> (8)

[and] brought [your] warriors having attacked the tough<sup>357</sup> fort. (9)

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<sup>355</sup> The protective shade (*niḷal*) of the king's parasol can be seen *Patirrupattu*, 17: 9–14. I would think that it is the same, although elliptical, image here.

<sup>356</sup> The passage *mā irum puṭaiyal* perhaps refers to the palmyra-garland, which was particularly important to the Cēra kingdom. For example, read: *Patirrupattu*, 42: 1; 57: 2; 67: 13.

<sup>357</sup> I analysed *mann'eyil* as a “tough/permanent fort” (from the verb *manṇu-tal* v. 5. intr., *Tamil Lexicon*, 3130), but it is as possible as to translate “the king's (*man*) fort”, since these forms are homophonous.

### 38.

peyar: paricilar verukkai, turai: centurai pātānpāṭṭu, tūkku: centūkku, vaṇṇam: oḷuku vaṇṇam.

ulakattōrē palar-maṇ celvar  
ellār uḷḷum niṇ nal+ icai mikumē  
vaḷam talaimayaṅkiya paitiram tiruttiya  
kaḷaṅkāy+ kaṇṇi nār muṭi+ cēral  
eyil mukam citaiya+ tōṭṭi ~ēvaliṇ 5  
tōṭṭi tanta toṭi marupp' ~yāṇai+  
cem+ uḷai+ kali mā ~īkai vāl kaḷal  
ceyal amai kaṇṇi+ cēralar vēntē  
**paricilar verukkai** pāṇar nāl avai  
vāl nutal kaṇava maḷḷar ērē 10  
mai ~āra viḷaṅkiya vaṭu vāl mārpīṇ  
vacai ~il celva vāṇam varampa  
~iṇiyavai perīṇē taṇi taṇi nukarkēm  
taruk(a) eṇa viḷaiyā+ tā ~il neṅcattu+  
pakutt' uṇ tokutta ~āṇmai+ 15  
pirarkk' eṇa vālṭi nī ~ākalmārē.

38<sup>th</sup> song

### The wealth for the gift-seekers

[Among] those who are in [this] world, [there are] indeed many wealthy people. (1)  
Among all of them, [only] the fame of yours excels. (2)  
O Cēra with fibre crown of the *kaḷaṅkāy*-chaplet,<sup>358</sup> (4)  
who improved the country whose prosperity was very much disturbed, (3)  
o king of the Cēras with a chaplet, [which is a piece] of workmanship, (8)  
with whitish [golden]<sup>359</sup> *kaḷal*-anklet, with bustling horses with red manes, (7)  
with elephants whose tusks [have] rings, [elephants which] provided the guard (*tōṭṭi*),<sup>360</sup> (6)  
so that the gate of the fort was broken by means of the instigation of the goad (*tōṭṭi*),<sup>361</sup> (5)  
o bull of the warriors,<sup>362</sup> o husband of [your lady with] bright forehead,<sup>363</sup> (10)  
with a daily court [open] for the minstrels, [you who are] **the wealth for the gift-seekers**, (9)  
O man, [whose] border is the sky, o flawless lord (12)  
whose chest flourishes with scars which shine so that the flaws disappear, (11)  
If we obtain sweet things, let us enjoy them one by one (13)  
because of it being the case that you live thinking [that it is] for others, (16)  
[you who, by means of your] courage, had collected food<sup>364</sup> which was distributed, (15)  
[you] with a blemishless heart that would never wish [saying] “give me [from that]!”<sup>365</sup> (14)

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<sup>358</sup> The word *kaḷaṅkāy* seems to denote a kind of plant or flower. It has only two attestations in the Caṅkam corpus, here and in *Akaṅkāy*, 199: 22, where it appeared also as the part of the name of this particular Cēra king. It is, however, very possible that *kaḷaṅkāy* is the same as *kaḷaṅkāni* in *Puraṅkāy*, 177: 9, which is the same as *kaḷā* (*Tamil Ilakkīyaḥ Pēraḱarāṭi*, 646) means ‘a low spreading shrub’ or ‘a kind of berry’ (*Tamil Lexicon*, 814). The *Pre-Pallavan Tamil Index* (p. 244) also understands *kaḷaṅkāy kaṅṅi* as ‘a garland of blackberry’.

<sup>359</sup> According to Turaicāmiḱṭṭai, *vāṅ kaḷal* is “an excellent *kaḷal*-anklet made with gold” (*ponṅāḷ ceyta uyarṅta kaḷal*). Another possible interpretation is “divine (*vāṅ*) anklet”.

<sup>360</sup> See POC for *Patirrupṭṭu*, 25: 5, where *tōṭṭi* means ‘custody’ (*kāval*).

<sup>361</sup> *tōṭṭi*: ‘elephant hook or goad’, ‘hook’, ‘clasp’, ‘sharp weapon’. *Dravidian Etymological Dictionary*, 3547.

<sup>362</sup> Cf. Skt. *puruṣaṣabha*.

<sup>363</sup> It is a so-called exocentric or possessive compound (*anṅolittokai*), “an elliptical compound in which any one of the five *tokai-nilai*, q.v., that precede this in the enumeration, is used figuratively so as to signify something else of which this compound becomes a descriptive attribute.” *Tamil Lexicon*, 183.

<sup>364</sup> The commentaries of Turaicāmiḱṭṭai glosses *ūṅ* as *uṅavu* ‘food’. *Tamil Lexicon*, 406. Turaicāmiḱṭṭai 1973, 164.

<sup>365</sup> Cf. *vēlotu ninṅāṅ ‘iṭu’ enṅatu pōlum kōlotu ninṅāṅ iravu* (*Kural*, LVI. 552).

### 39.

peyar: ēval viyaṅṅṅai, tuṛai: vākai, tūkkū: centūkkū, vaṅṅam: oḷuku vaṅṅam.

piṛarkk' eṅa vāl̄ti nī ~ākalmāṛē

~emakk' il eṅṅār niṅ maṛam kūru kuḷāttar

tuppu+ tuṛai pōkiya vepp' uṭai+ tumpai+

kaṛutta tevvar kaṭi muṅai ~alaṛa

~eṭutt' eṛint' irānkum (m) **ēval viyal paṅai** 5

~urum eṅa ~atir-paṭṭu muḷaṅki+ ceru mikk'

aṭaṅkār āṛ araṅ vāṭa+ cellum

kālaṅ aṅaiya kaṭum ciṅam muṅpa

vāl̄itiṅ,

nūliṅ il̄aiyā nuṅ mayir il̄aiya

por̄itta pōlum pul̄li ~eruttiṅ 10

puṅ puṛa+ puṛaviṅ kaṅam nirai ~alaṛa

~alam talai vēlatt' ulavai ~am ciṅai+

cilampi kōliya ~alaṅkal pōrvaiyiṅ

ilaṅku maṅi miṭainta pacum poṅ paṭalatt'

avir il̄ai taii miṅ+ umil̄p' ilaṅka+ 15

cīr miku muttam taiiya

nār muṭi+ cēral niṅ pōr niḷal pukaṅṛē.

39<sup>th</sup> song

### The commanding wide *paṇai*-drum

Because of it being [the case that] you live, thinking “for others”, (1)  
the men, who assembled to declare your strength will not say “nothing for us”, (2)  
rejoicing in the shade that covers you,<sup>366</sup> o Cēra of the fibre crown (17)  
which has been tied with pearls that abound in superiority (16)  
so that it shone emitting glitters, after bright ornaments [were] fastened [on it] (15)  
in the hollows of the greenish gold, which had been set with shiny sapphire, (14)  
[looking] like the spider-made swinging net<sup>367</sup> (13)  
on the twiggy boughs of the *vēlam*-tree<sup>368</sup> with distressed crown, (12)  
while groups of doves cried, [which have] small backs, (11)  
spotted necks as if they had been imprinted,<sup>369</sup> (10)  
[and] fine crests as [their] ornaments were not spun brightly from thread.<sup>370</sup> (9)  
O strong man with fierce anger, which is similar to [the anger of] Kālaṅ,<sup>371</sup> (8)  
[you] who act so that the difficult[-to-obtain] fort of the disobedient became defeated, (7)  
after the battle had become intensified and **the commanding**<sup>372</sup> **wide paṇai-drum** roared  
resounding like thunder, (5c–6)  
[the drum which was] sounding, after it was taken [and] beaten, (5a–b)  
while the enraged enemies yelled on the defended frontier, (4)  
whose *tumpai*[-battle]<sup>373</sup> possessed severity, who mastered [their] strength. (3)

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<sup>366</sup> *niṅ pōr mīlal*: “the shade that covers (*pōr*, v. r.) you” or “the shade of your war”. I think the poet might play with the words here, so that we can associate this passage with the parasol of the king, as well as with his victorious battles.

<sup>367</sup> The *Akanānūru* 199 mentioned Nārmuṭi Cēral and his conquest against Naṅṅaṅ (Lines 18–22). What is particularly interesting is the image of the leafless branches of a tree woven by spiders (Lines 5–6), so we see the same image in both poems with the difference that in the *Akanānūru* the tree is a part of the description of the dangerous wilderness, but here it is compared to the crown of the king. We may conclude that one author knew the poem of the other.

<sup>368</sup> The tree called *vēlam* is the same as *vēl* and *vēlamaram*: ‘babul’, ‘Gens acacia’. *Tamil Lexicon*, 3838; *Tamil Ilakkiyaṭ Pēraḱarāṭi*, 2344. Cf. *Narriṅai*, 302: 8.

<sup>369</sup> It is remarkable that exactly the same attribute is connected to *eruvai*-birds in *Patirruppattu*, 36: 8–9.

<sup>370</sup> Since *ilai* means 1. ‘yarn’, ‘single-twisted thread’, 2. ‘darning’, 3. ‘ornament’, 4. ‘kind of necklace’, ‘garland’, 5. ‘string tied about the wrist for a vow’ (*Tamil Lexicon*, 353), here the poet not only plays with the words, but intends to clarify that the ornament (*ilai*) of these birds had not been made from white thread, despite the fact that the word *ilai* could have that meaning. Here the fine crests of the birds were probably distinguished from the white thread of the spiders below.

<sup>371</sup> Kālaṅ, also known as Kūrūru or Kūrūruvaṅ is the God of Death in Old Tamil poetry.

<sup>372</sup> It is possible to split the words reading *mēval viyaṅ paṇai*, “the wide *paṇai*-drum which is desirable”.

<sup>373</sup> *tumpai*: white dead nettle, *Leucas aspera*. *Tamil Lexicon*, 1972. The occurrence of this plant denotes a “literary setting” (*tiṅai*) that focuses on the battle. *Tolkāppiyam Poruḷatikāram Puṇṇaiṅaiyiyal*, cū. 70. In the poems that show the features of *tumpai tiṅai*, the warriors often wear *tumpai* garlands during the battle.

40.

peyar: nātukāṇ avircuṭar, turai: vīraliyārṛuppaṭai, tūkku: centūkku, vaṇṇam: oḷuku vaṇṇam.

pōr niḷal pukanṛa curramoṭ' ūr mukatt'  
 irāaliyarō peruma niṅ tāṅai  
 ~iṅ+ icai ~imiḷ ~murac' iyampa+ kaṭipp' ikūu+  
 puṅ tōḷ āṭavar pōr mukatt+ iruppa+  
 kāytta karantai mā+ koṭi viḷai vayal 5  
 vant' irai koṅṭaṅṛu tāṅai ~antil  
 kaḷainar yār iṅi+ pirar eṅa+ pēṅi  
 maṅ+ eyil maṅavar oli ~avint' aṭaṅka  
 ~oṅṅār tēya+ pū malaint' uraii  
 veḷ tōṭu niraiya vēnt' uṭai ~arum camam 10  
 koṅṛu puṛam perru maṅpatai nirappi  
 veṅṛi ~āṭiya toṭi+ tōḷ mīkai  
 ~eḷu muṭi kelīya tiru ṅemar akalattu+  
 poṅam kaṅṅi+ polam tēr naṅṅaṅ  
 cuṭar vī vākai+ kaṭi mutal taṭinta 15  
 tār miku maintiṅ nār muṭi+ cēral  
 puṅ kāl uṅṅam cāya+ teḷ kaḷ  
 vaṛitu kūṭṭ' ariyal iravalar+ taṭuppa+  
 tāṅ tara ~uṅṭa naṅai naṅavu maḷiṅtu  
 nīr imiḷ cilampiṅ nēriyōṅē 20  
 cellāyō-til cil vaḷai vīrali  
 malarnta vēṅkaiyiṅ vayanḱ' iḷai ~aṅintu  
 mel iyal maḷalir eḷil nalam ciṛappa+  
 pāṅar paim pū malaiya ~iḷaiyar  
 iṅ kaḷi ~aḷāa mel col amarntu 25  
 neṅcu mali ~uvakaiyar viyal kaḷam vāḷtta+  
 tōṭṭi nīvātu toṭi cēṛpu niṅṛu  
 pākar ēvaliṅ oḷ porī picira+  
 kāṭu talai+ koṅṭa **nāṭu kāṅ avir cuṭar**  
 aḷal viṭupu marīya maintiṅ 30  
 toḷil pukal yāṅai nalkuvaṅ palavē.

40<sup>th</sup> song

**Shiny flames which were visible across the country**

“O great man, let your army not stay (2)  
at the entrance of [our] village together with [your] retinue, which rejoices in the shade  
that covers [you]! (1)  
There, [your] army collected the taxes [on land],<sup>374</sup> having come (6)  
to the fertile paddy field with big creepers of the fruit-bearing *karantai*,<sup>375</sup> (5)  
while [other] warriors with wounded shoulders were resting on<sup>376</sup> the battlefield, (4)  
while the *muracu*-drum, which has sweet sounding tone, was beaten with  
drumsticks [and] roared. (3)  
Who else will weed now?” — after the people prayed like this, (7)  
after [he] smeared [your chest and] adorned [yourself] with flowers, so that the disobedients  
perished, (9)  
while the voices of the warriors [behind] the permanent walls became silent, (8)  
after [he] murdered (11a)  
in the difficult battle of the king who put on a row of white petals,— (10)  
the Cēra with the fibre crown, with strength that abounds [by means of] the vanguards (16)  
who chopped down the protected foot of the *vākai*-tree<sup>377</sup> with fire-like flowers (15)  
of *Nannan*<sup>378</sup> with golden chariot and golden chaplet, (14)  
[the Cēra] of a brilliant broad<sup>379</sup> chest [on which] seven crowns<sup>380</sup> have been united, (13)  
[the Cēra] with raised hands [and] armlet-wearing upper arms who danced [after] the  
victory,<sup>381</sup> (12)

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<sup>374</sup> I translated *īrai* (n.) as ‘tax’ derivable from *īru-ttal* 11. v. tr. ‘to pay (as a tax, a debt)’. *Dravidian Etymological Dictionary*, 521.

<sup>375</sup> *karantai*: Indian globe-thistle, *Sphaeranthus indicus*. *Dravidian Etymological Dictionary*, 1271.

<sup>376</sup> Here *mukattu* stands for a locative or means “at the entrance (*mukattu*) of the battlefield” (*pōr*). It might be possible to understand a poetic fancy here: they stayed “in the mouth of war”, just as one can say “jaws of death” in English.

<sup>377</sup> *vākai*: sirissa, *Albizzia*. *Dravidian Etymological Dictionary*, 5333.

<sup>378</sup> *Nannan*: name of several chieftains of the same dynasty ruling over different places in today’s northern Kerala and southern Karnataka.

<sup>379</sup> See: footnote 94.

<sup>380</sup> According to the POC on Line 11, it is believed that the Cēra kings won over seven kingdoms (*ēlu aracarai venṇi*) so that they wore the seven crowns of those kings on their chests. Another interesting hypothesis would be to understand those “crowns” as the “seven treasures” (*ratnāni*) of the king (chariot, elephant, horse, a jewel, [best] wife, [best] minister and [best] adviser) as a northern Indian borrowing. Gonda 1956: 145. However, this again seems to be a formulaic pattern, cf. *Patirruppattu*, 40:13; and a quasi-formulaic usage in 45: 6.

<sup>381</sup> This is perhaps a reference to the victorious *tuṇṅkai* dance. *Tamil Lexicon*, 1963.

after [he] satisfied the living beings driving away [his enemies],<sup>382</sup> (11b–d)  
 after he [too] enjoyed the *naravu*<sup>383</sup> [aged] with flower buds that was given by himself, (19)  
 while [not just] the slightly filtered toddy (*ariyaḷ*) made the supplicants to stay, (18)  
 [but] the clear toddy (*kaḷ*), while the weak trunk of the *unnam*-tree dried up,<sup>384</sup> (17)  
 [the Cēra with the fibre crown] is the man of the Nēri [Hill]<sup>385</sup> with slopes, [where] the water  
 sounds. (20)  
 O *virali* with rare bangles, why shall you not go<sup>386</sup> [to him]? (21)  
 He will bestow many [from his] elephants which desire [hard] works, (31)  
 which are strong, which changed [their minds, after] they left [because of] the fire (30)  
 with **shiny flames which** [were] **visible** [across] **the country** that turned [their] forest  
 into a [cultivated] land, (29)  
 when bright sparks were scattered [obeying] the commands of the mahouts (28)  
 after they stood [there] putting iron rings [on the elephants] without using [their] goads, (27)  
 while those whose hearts abounded [in] joy, praised the vast battlefield, (26)  
 having desired the endless [and] tender, sweet [and] joyful words (25)  
 of the young men who wore fresh flowers, of the bards (*pānar*), (24)  
 while the goodness [and] the gracefulness<sup>387</sup> of the women with tender nature excelled, (23)  
 wearing bright jewels resembling the blossoming *vēṅkai*-flower.<sup>388</sup> (22)

<sup>382</sup> Here we have *puṟam perru*, lit. “having obtained [their] back” which means that the king made the enemies turn back and run away from the battlefield.

<sup>383</sup> *naravu*: ‘toddy’, ‘honey’, ‘fragrance’, ‘p. n. of a Cēra city’. *Tamil Lexicon*, 2186.

<sup>384</sup> *unnai*: “A small tree with golden flowers and small leaves which, in ancient times, was invoked for omens before warriors proceeded to battle.” *Tamil Lexicon*, 488.

<sup>385</sup> Nēriyōṇ (p. n.): “the man of the Nēri [Hill]”, see: *Patirrupattu*, 30: 20, 67: 22.

<sup>386</sup> *cellāyōṭil*: *cellāy* (“you [will] not go”) + *ō* (interrogative particle) + *tīl* (a particle of wish, Wilden 2018, 51). Cf. *cellāmōṭil* in *Patirrupattu*, 57:6; 60: 3; and *cellāmō* in *Tinaimalai Nurrainpatu*, 77: 1.

<sup>387</sup> *elil*: ‘beauty’, ‘gracefulness’, ‘imposing appearance’, etc. *Tamil Lexicon*, 539.

<sup>388</sup> *vēṅkai*: East Indian kino tree, *Pterocarpus marsupium*. *Dravidian Etymological Dictionary*, 5520.



#### IV. patikam

ārā+ tiruviṅ cēralātarku

vēlāvi+ kōmāṅ

patumaṅ tēvi ~īṅra makaṅ muṅai

paṅippa+ piṅantu pal pukaḷ vaḷartt'

ūḷiṅ ākiya ~uayar perum cirappiṅ 5

pūḷi nāṅṅai+ paṅai ~eṅuttu+ taḷi

~uruḷ pūm kaṅampiṅ peruvāyil naṅṅaṅai

nilai+ ceruviṅ āṅṅalai ~aruṅt' avan

poṅ paṅu vākai muḷu mutal taṅintu

kuruti+ cem puṅal kuṅcaram iṅppa 10

ceru+ pala ceytu cem kaḷam vēṅṅu+

tuḷaṅku kuṅi tiruttiya valam paṅu veṅṅi+

kaḷaṅkāy+ kaṅṅi nār muṅi+ cēralai+

kāppiyaṅṅu+ kāppiyaṅṅar pāṅṅar pattu+ pāṅṅu.

avai tām: kamaḷ kural tuḷāy, kaḷai ~amal kaḷaṅi, varamp' il veḷḷam, oḷ porī+ kaḷal kāl, mey+  
āṅu paṅantalai, vāḷ mayaṅku kaṅum tār, valam paṅu veṅṅi, paricilar verukkai, ēval viyaṅ paṅai,  
nāṅu kāṅ avir cuṅar, ivai pāṅṅiṅ patikam.

pāṅi+ peṅṅa paricil: nārpaṅu nūṅ' āyiram poṅ oruṅku koṅuttu+ tāṅ āḷvatiṅ pākam koṅuttāṅ a+  
kō.

kaḷaṅkāy+ kaṅṅi nār muṅi+ cēral iru patt' ai yāṅṅu vīṅṅiruntāṅ.

#### IV. Panegyric

He [was] the son, whom the queen, [daughter of] Vēlāvi Kōmāṇ Patumaṇ,<sup>389</sup> (2–3c)  
gave birth to [the father,] Cēralātaṇ<sup>390</sup> of endless wealth, (1)  
[who] was born so that the frontlines trembled, (3d–4b)  
[who] caused to increase the many praises [about him], (4c–d)  
[who] incorporated Pūli country<sup>391</sup> raising [his] weapon [against it], (6)  
[country] with high superiority which happened by the destiny,<sup>392</sup> (5)  
[who] destroyed the strength of Naṇṇaṇ in the war for the position at Peruvāyil with the  
*kaṭampu*-tree<sup>393</sup> [which had] round flowers, (7–8d)  
[who] chopped the entire foot of his golden *vākai*-tree,<sup>394</sup> (8d–9)  
[who] led many battles, (11a–b)  
so that elephants were drifted away on the red flood of blood, (10)  
[who] sacrificed on the red battlefield, (11c–d)  
Kāppiyārru Kāppiyaṇār<sup>395</sup> sang these ten songs (14)  
to Kaḷaṅkāykkāṇṇi Nārmuṭi Cēral, (13)  
with triumphant victories that improved the perturbed family. (12)

These [ten songs] themselves [are]: The *tulāy* with fragrant clusters, The fields which are dense with bamboo, The limitless flood, Legs with bright spotted *kaḷal*-anklets, Wasteland where bodies dance, The fierce vanguard which was mingled with swords, The triumphant victories, The wealth for the gift-seekers, The commanding wide *paṇai*-drum, Shiny flames which were visible across the country, [and this as] the panegyric of these ten.

<sup>389</sup> *patumaṇ* (p.n.) < Skt. *padma*: “lotus” (?). It is either the name of the chief of the Āviyar tribe, to which Pēkaṇ belonged, or the name of the queen, one of the wives of Neṭuñcēralātaṇ. Remarkable that the same name appears in the VIII. *patikam* 2, as the mother of Celvakkāṭuñkō and the name without ‘Patumaṇ’ in VI. *patikam* 1–2. The same chiefs appear in the *Cilappatikāram*, III. 28: 198. *Pre-Pallavan Tamil Index*, 801.

<sup>390</sup> *Cēralātaṇ* (p.n.): here it is perhaps a short form of the name Neṭuñcēralātaṇ. Marr 1985 [1958]: 276–277.

<sup>391</sup> Pūlināṭu: part of the Cēra kingdom. *Pre-Pallavan Tamil Index*, 593.

<sup>392</sup> Here *ūli* means ‘fate’, ‘destiny’. Cf. *Kālitokai*, 130: 4.

<sup>393</sup> It is possible that the name of this town was Kaṭampin Peruvāyil, which was also suggested by Marr referring to the old commentary. Similar place names can be found in today’s South India, cf. Tirumullaivāyil, Tiruvālavāyil, Vākavācal, etc. However, I prefer to understand Peruvāyil as the place name and *kaṭampin* as its attribute, where the oblique case stands for a sociative.

<sup>394</sup> *vākai*: sirissa, *Albizzia*. *Dravidian Etymological Dictionary*, 5333.

<sup>395</sup> The first name of this poet might be derivable from an unidentified place name where he belonged: Kāppiyāru which was perhaps a riverside town. (*Pre-Pallavan Tamil Index*, 258) The second name, Kāppiyaṇār either refers to a clan, to the *kāpya-gotra* (*Tamil Lexicon Supplementum*, 216), or his name was simply Kāppiyaṇ which could be derivable from Skt. *kāpya*, which refers either to his job as a poet composing poetry (Kāppiyaṇ < Tam. *kāppiyam* < Skt. *kāpya*), or to his Sanskrit name (Kāppiyaṇ < Skt. *kāpya*, descendant of Kavi).

Having sung, [the following] gifts [had been] obtained: that king gave from the share of his palace forty [times] hundred-thousand gold [which] was given in one [instalment].

Kaḷaṅkāykkāṇṇi Nārmuṭi Cēral sat twenty-five years majestically [on the throne].

nāṅkāṁ pattu murṛirru.

Thus ending the Fourth Decade.

## The Fifth Decade

(*aintām pattu*)

The poet: Kācaru Ceyyuḷ Paraṇar

The king: Kaṭal Pīrakkōṭṭiya Ceṅkuṭṭuvan

### 41.

peyar: cuṭarvīvēṅkai, tuṟai: kāṭci vālttu, tūkku: centūkku, vaṇṇam: oḷuku vaṇṇam.

puṇar puri narampiṇ tīm toṭai paḷuniya  
vaṇar amai nal yāl ilaiyar poruppa+  
paṇ+ amai muḷavum patalaiyum pīravum  
kaṇ+ arutt' iyarriya tūmpoṭu curukki+  
kāvil takaitta tuṟai kūṭu kala+-paiyar 5  
kai val ilaiyar kaṭavuḷ paḷicca  
maṟa+ puli+ kuḷū+ kural cettu vaya+ kaḷiru  
varai cērp' eḷunta **cuṭar vī vēṅkai**  
pū ~uṭai+ perum ciṇai vāṅki+ piḷantu taṇ  
mā ~irum ceṇṇi ~aṇi peṟa milaicci+ 10  
cēer urra cel paṭai maṟavar  
taṇṭ' uṭai valattar pōr etirnt'-āṅku  
vaḷai ~amal viyal kāṭu cilampa+ piḷirum  
maḷai peyal māriya kaḷai tiraṅk' attam  
oṇr' iraṇṭ' ala pala kaḷintu tiṇ tēr 15  
vacai ~il neṭuntakai kāṅku vanticiṇē  
tāval uyyumō marrē tāvātu  
vaṅciṇam muṭitta ~oṇru molī maṟavar  
murac' uṭai+ perum camatt' aracu paṭa' kaṭantu  
vevvar ōccam peruka+ tevvar 20  
miḷak' eṟi ~ulakkaiyiṇ irum talai ~iṭittu  
vaik' ārpp' eḷunta mai paṭu parappiṇ  
eṭutt' ēṟ' ēya kaṭipp' uṭai viyal kaṇ  
valam paṭu cīrtti ~oruṅk' uṭaṇ iyaintu  
kāl uḷai+ kaṭum picir uṭaiya vāl uḷai+ 25

kaṭum pari+ puravi ~ūrnta niṅ  
paṭum tirai+ paṅi+ kaṭal uḷanta tāḷē.

41<sup>st</sup> song

### The *vēṅkai*-tree with glowing flowers

I came as one who wants to see [you,] the flawless paragon (16)  
with firm chariot, after I spent not just one or two, but many [days (15)  
on] the difficult paths, [where] bamboo dried up, while the showers of the clouds failed, (14)  
while [wild elephants] trumpeted so that [their voice] echoed in the vast jungle that abounds  
in gamboges,<sup>396</sup> (13)  
[trumpeted like] the people with sticks in their right [hands] facing battle, [12]  
warriors of the unitedly marching army, (11)  
after [those elephants] pulled down [and] broke off the flowery big branches of **the *vēṅkai*-  
tree with glowing flowers**,<sup>397</sup> while they got an ornament by putting [them] on their big  
dark heads, (8c–10)  
after [those] wild elephant bulls thought [they heard] the voice of a group of valorous tigers  
that rose [and] settled in the mountains, (7–8b)  
when skilful young men praised the deity (*kaṭavul*), (6)  
[who were] men with bags of instruments gathered at the ghat, [whose bags] had been  
fastened to a pole (*kāvu*)<sup>398</sup> (5)  
by tying the melodious *mulavu*-drum, the *patalai*-drum,<sup>399</sup> and others [into a bundle] together  
with the flutes (*tūmpu*) that were made by cutting the joints [of bamboo], (3–4)  
while [other] young men picked up [their] good, properly bending *yāl*,<sup>400</sup> (2)  
[on which] the sweet consonants of the attached, coiled strings were matured. (1)  
Will your legs get rid of the pain,<sup>401</sup> which conquered the cool sea with sounding waves, [legs  
of yours who] rode the horse with fast gallop (17a–b, 26–27)  
[and] whitish mane while the spray [of the sea] broke as the wind (*kāl*) howled (*uḷai*), (25)  
after you overcame so that the king fell in the great battle with<sup>402</sup> *muracu*-drum (19)

<sup>396</sup> *valai*: long-leaved two-sepalled gamboge. *Tamil Lexicon*, 3550.

<sup>397</sup> The topos of the tree-killing/attacking elephants is a well-known one in the Caṅkam texts. The elephants usually attack the *vēṅkai*-tree, because seeing its colours it could be confused with a tiger. The word *vēṅkai* itself could mean ‘tiger’ (*Tamil Lexicon*, 3820). See: *Kalittokai*, 38: 6–9; *Narriṅai*, 51: 8–11.

<sup>398</sup> According to Turaicāmpillai, here *kāvu* is the same as *kāvutai* (*Tamil Lexicon*, 903) or *kāvaṭi* (*Tamil Lexicon*, 900), “pole for carrying burdens on the shoulder”.

<sup>399</sup> *patalai*: ‘large-mouthed pot’, ‘kind of drum’, ‘single-headed large drum’. *Tamil Lexicon*, 2470. It might be the same as the instrument called *ghaṭam*.

<sup>400</sup> *yāl*: stringed musical instrument, kind of harp. *Dravidian Etymological Dictionary*, 5156.

<sup>401</sup> *tāval* is a hapax legomenon. It is explained by the POC as *varuttam* ‘suffering’, ‘pain’ (*Tamil Lexicon*, 3522), which meaning was accepted by U. Vē. Cāminātaiyar in his commentary. Cāminātaiyar 1980, 100.

<sup>402</sup> *murac*’ *uṭai peruṅcamam*: “the great battle with *muracu*-drum” or “the great, *muracu*-drum breaking battle”.

[and] with sworn warriors who accomplished their vow<sup>403</sup> (18)

without breaking [it], (17c–d)

after you pounded the black heads [of your] enemies like the pepper-pounding pestle, (20d–21)

so that the wealth of [your] friends was increased, (20a–c)

after you were in harmony with all [your] victorious reputations (*cīrtti*) (24)

with the wide eye [of your drum] which possesses a drumstick that fit to be raised [and]

beaten on [its] blackened surface from which continuous clamour arose?

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<sup>403</sup> *vañciṇam*: ‘oath’, ‘asseveration’. *Tamil Lexicon*, 3466. There is another way to understand this line if we follow the POC which glosses: *vañciṇam muṭittal*: “completion of the seizure of the circles/states of the foes” (*mārrār maṅṭalaṅkaḷaik koṅṭu muṭittal*). It is clearly based on the theory of *vañcittiṇai* described in *Purapporuḷveṅpāmālai*, 3: 1.

## 42.

peyar: tacumpu tuḷaṅku irukkai, tuṟai: centuṟai pāṭāṅpāṭṭu, tūkku: centūkku, vaṅṅam: oḷuku vaṅṅam.

irum paṅam puṭaiyal īkai vāṅ kaḷal  
mīṅ tēr koṭpiṅ paṅi+ kayam mūlki+  
ciral peyarnt'-aṅṅa neṭum veḷ+ ūci  
neṭum vaci paranta vaṭu vāḷ mārpīṅ  
ampu cēr uṭampīṅar+ cērntōr allatu 5  
tumpai cūṭātu malainta māṭci  
~aṅṅōr peruma nal nutal kaṅava  
~aṅṅal yāṅai ~aṭu pōr+ kuṭṭuva  
maint' uṭai nal+ amar+ kaṭantu valam tarī  
~iṅci vī virāya paim tār cūṭi+ 10  
cāntu puṟatt' eṟitta **tacumpu tuḷaṅk' irukkai+**  
tīm cēru viḷainta maṅi niṟam maṭṭam  
ōmpā ~īkaiyiṅ vaḷ makīḷ curantu  
kōṭiyar perum kiḷai vāḷa ~āṭ' iyal  
uḷai ~avir kalimā+ polintavai ~eṅṅiṅ 15  
maṅpatai maruḷa ~aracu paṭa+ kaṭantu  
muntu viṅai ~etir-vara+ peṟutal kāṅiyar  
oḷīru nilai ~uayar marupp' ēṅtiya kaḷiṟ' ūrntu  
māṅṅa maintaroṭu maṅṅar ēṅta niṅ  
tēroṭu curṅam ulakk' uṭaṅ mūya 20  
mā ~irum teḷ kaṭal mali tirai+ pauvattu  
veḷ talai+ kurūu+ picir uṭaiya+  
taṅ pala varūum puṅariyiṅ palavē.



42<sup>nd</sup> song

### The shining seat of vessels

[O you] with divine (*vān*) golden *kalal*-anklets, with garlands of dark palmyra[-fronds], (1)  
o great man among the similarly glorious men, (6d–7b)  
who fought, who [did] not wear *tumpai*[-garland]<sup>404</sup> (6a–c)  
[against] others than the united ones whose bodies were touched by arrows, (5)  
[ones] with chests with deep scars [on which] the long tips of long bright needles spread, (3c–4)  
which [needles repeatedly] came up like a kingfisher<sup>405</sup> (3)  
after it plunged into the cool lake, [over which it] circled [in order to] find fishes, (2)  
o husband of [the woman with] fine forehead, (7c–d)  
o Kuṭṭuvan [who are] murderous in war with [your] majestic elephant, (8)  
after you overcame in the intense good battle [and] brought victory, (9)  
after you put on a fresh garland combined with ginger flowers, (10)  
after you poured abundant liquor (*makil*) giving [generously] without saving [for yourself], (13)  
the sapphire-coloured<sup>406</sup> wine (*mattam*), which was matured [from] the sweet juice, (12)  
[wine from] **the shining<sup>407</sup> seat of vessels**, which had sandal-paste smeared on the outside,  
(11)  
if one counts those which were given [by you liberally], the horses with shiny plumes (15)  
[and] prancing nature, so that the dancers<sup>408</sup> and [their] great relatives lived [well], (14)  
there are numerous<sup>409</sup> like the many cool waves that come, (23)  
while the bright surface of the ocean with abundant tides of the vast, dark [and] clear seas was  
broken into a brilliant spray, (21–22)  
when the world of [your] relatives was filled with your chariots, (19d–20)  
while kings with honourable warriors praised [you], (19)

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<sup>404</sup> *tumpai*: white dead nettle (*Leucas aspera*). *Tamil Lexicon*, 1972. The occurrence of this plant denotes a “literary setting” (*tinai*) that focuses on the battle. *Tolkāppiyam Poruḷatikāram Puraiṭṭinaiyiyal*, cū. 70. In the poems that show the features of *tumpai tinai*, the warriors often wear *tumpai* garlands during the battle.

<sup>405</sup> This much-quoted simile of the poem describes the suturing of wounds as a surgical procedure, which is a testament to advanced medical knowledge in South India.

<sup>406</sup> The sapphire-coloured wine here is a possible reference to the Mediterranean wine that arrived in South India during the centuries of Indo-Roman trading relations. Since *mani* means not only ‘sapphire’ but ‘precious stone’, it is possible that the Tamil poet referred to the dark-coloured Roman import wine as a prestige-good of the king. However, without having further evidence, it is also possible that we are dealing here with a kind of toddy which has taken on the colour of the flower buds during the maturation process described by many poems.

<sup>407</sup> *tuḷaṅku-tal* v. 5. intr. ‘to shine’, ‘to be bright’, ‘luminous’, ‘to radiate’. *Tamil Lexicon*, 2001.

<sup>408</sup> *kōṭiyar*: professional dancers, cf. *Maturakkāñci*, 523. *Tamil Lexicon*, 1179.

<sup>409</sup> The last line of the poem has to be connected with *polintavai enniṅ* in Line 15.

after you overcame so that monarchs fell while the humanity (*manṣatai*)<sup>410</sup> became puzzled,  
after you rode your elephant bull which lifted [you up with its] high tusks [to] a splendid seat  
(*nilai*) (18)

in order to see the oncoming attainment of [gifts as] an ancient act.<sup>411</sup> (17)

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<sup>410</sup> Most probably refers to the subjects of the enemy kings.

<sup>411</sup> Here, I interpreted *untu vīnai* as an ancient act when the retinue of the king distributed gifts in the name of the monarch, while the king watched it from the neck of his royal elephant.

**43.**

peyar: ērāvēṇi, tuṛai: iyaṇmolivālttu, tūkku: centūkku, vaṇṇam: oḷuku vaṇṇam.

kavari mucci+ kār viri kūntal	
ūcal mēval cē ~īlai makalir	
ural pōl perum kāl ilaṅku vāḷ maruppiṇ	
perum kai mata mā+ puku-tariṇ avarruḷ	
viruntin vīḷ piṭi ~eṇṇu murai perāa+	5
kaṭavuḷ nilaiya kal+ oṅku neṭum varai	
vaṭa ticai ~ellai ~imayam āka+	
teṇṇam kumariyoṭ' āyiṭai ~aracar	
murac' uṭai+ perum camam tataiya ~ārpp' eḷa+	
col pala nāṭṭai+ tol kaviṇ alitta	10
pōr aṭu tāṇai+ polam tār+ kuṭṭuva	
~irum paṇai tiraṅka+ perum peyal oḷippa+	
kuṇru vaṛam kūra+ cuṭar ciṇam tikaḷa	
~aruvi ~arra perum vaṛal kālaiyum	
arum celal pēr ārr' irum karai ~uṭaittu+	15
kaṭi ~ēr pūṭṭunar kaṭukkai malaiya	
varaiv' il atir cilai muḷaṅki+ peyal ciṛant'	
ār kali vāṇam taḷi corint' āaṅk'	
uruvar āra ~ōmpāt' uṇṭu	
nakaivar āra nal kalam citari	20
~āṭu ciṛai ~arutta narampu cēr iṇ kural	
pāṭu viṛaliyar pal piṭi peruka	
tuy vī vākai nuṇ koṭi ~uḷiṇai	
veṇṇi mēval uru keḷu ciṛappiṇ	
koṇṭi maḷḷar kol kaḷiru peruka	25
maṇṇam paṭarntu maṛuku ciṛai+ pukku+	
kaṇṭi nuṇ kōl koṇṭu kaḷam vālttum	
akavalaṇ peruka māvē ~eṇṇum	
ikal viṇai mēvalai ~ākaliṇ pakaivarum	
tāṅkātu pukaḷnta tūṅku koḷai muḷaviṇ	30
tolaiyā+ karpa niṇ nilai kaṇṭikumē	

niṅam cuṭu pukaiyoṭu kaṅal ciṅam taviṛātu

niramp' akalp' aṛiyā ~**ērā** ~**ēni**

niṛaintu neṭit' irā+ tacumpiṅ vayiriyar

uṅṭ'-eṅa+ tavāa+ kaḷḷiṅ

35

vaḷ kai vēntē niṅ kali maḷiḷāṅē.

43<sup>rd</sup> song

### The shelves that cannot be climbed

O Kuṭṭuvan̄ with gold garland [and] with the army murderous (11)  
in battle, who ruined the ancient beauty of many famous countries<sup>412</sup> (10)  
when clamour emerged, while [kings] crowded on the great battlefield that possessed the  
*muracu*-drum, (9)  
kings between the southern Kumari<sup>413</sup> (8)  
[and] the Imayam<sup>414</sup> which became the boundary of the northern direction, (7)  
the tall mountain which rises with rocks, which has the state of the deity,<sup>415</sup> (6)  
[where,] if [women] enter the rutting elephants with massive trunks, (4a–c)  
shiny white tusks, and big mortar-like feet, (3)  
the way to count the new desirable elephant cows fails among them,<sup>416</sup> (4d–5)  
women with swinging desirable red jewels (2)  
[and] spreading tresses black like the yak's tuft,—<sup>417</sup> (1)  
even at the time of the great famine without waterfalls (14)  
when the anger of the Sun shines, when the drought is abundant among the hills, (13)  
when the big rains vanish and the bamboos dry up, (12)  
[even at that time] the difficult[-to-stop] flowing big river broke [its] dark shores, (15)  
the rain had increased [and] endlessly reverberating roars<sup>418</sup> [of thunder] rumbled, (17)  
while [those] people, who fastened [their] new<sup>419</sup> plough, put on *kaṭukkai*-flowers,—<sup>420</sup> (16)  
like the raindrops drip from the crowded, clamorous sky, (18)  
[you] showered good vessels, so that [your] friends became full,<sup>421</sup> (20)  
having consumed without saving, so that people who witnessed [it] became satisfied, (19)  
let the singing *virālis* obtain many elephant cows, (22)

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<sup>412</sup> This kind of cleft sentence, in which the actual direct object is embedded in the verb and the possessor of that is marked by accusative instead of genitive, is typical from the *bhakti* literature onwards and very rare in the Caṅkam texts,

<sup>413</sup> Kaṇṇiyākumari or Cape Comorin is the southernmost point of the Indian peninsula.

<sup>414</sup> Imayam (p.n.) < Skt. Himālaya.

<sup>415</sup> Here the god (*kaṭavul*) who has a seat/state in the Himalaya might be Śiva, so this could be one among the earliest Tamil references of him.

<sup>416</sup> Obscure passage.

<sup>417</sup> POC: *mucci* – “tufted head” (*koṇṭaimuṭi*).

<sup>418</sup> POC: *cilai* – *cilattal* (v. n.).

<sup>419</sup> Here, I followed Agesthalingom (Agesthalingom 1979, 42), who understood *kaṭi* as ‘new’, which is one of the possible meanings of the word. See: *Tolkāppiyam Collatikāram*, cū. 383. Another reading is “the plough (*ēṟ*) [which] bites/cuts (*kaṭi*) [the ground]”.

<sup>420</sup> *kaṭukkai*: Indian laburnum (*Cassia fistula*), same as *konrai*. *Tamil Lexicon*, 1168.

<sup>421</sup> This formulaic (or allusoric?) line (*nakavar āra nal kalam citari*) is the same as *Patirruppattu*, 37: 4.

[*virālis*, whose] sweet voice, which excelled<sup>422</sup> [the *kinnaram* with] fluttering wing,<sup>423</sup> joined to the strings! (21)

Let the plundering (*koṅṭi*)<sup>424</sup> strong men (*maḷḷar*) obtain murderous elephant bulls, (25)

[men, who are] glorious, fearful, and longing [for] victory, (24)

[who have] the soft flower of the *vākai*-tree and the delicate creeper of *ulīṅṅai*!<sup>425</sup> (23)

Let the *akavalan*-bard<sup>426</sup> obtain horses, (28a–c)

[who] praised the battlefield taking [his] fine stick with joints (*kaṅṭi*) (27)

after he set out to the village common [and] entered the side of the street! (26)

O man of the fidelity that does not perish, (31a–b)

with a melodiously sounding *mulavu*-drum which praised [you] that none of [your] enemies could bear, (29d–30)

we saw your state in your bustling court, o king with generous hands, (31b–d, 36)

[which court bustles,] because [your] unceasing toddy (*kaḷ*) had been drunk<sup>427</sup> (35)

by the musicians (*vayiriyar*) from the pots which do not remain filled for a long, (34)

[pots from] **the shelves** (*ēṇi*) **that cannot be climbed**<sup>428</sup> [as a ladder (*ēṇi*)], [shelves, which] know neither exhaustion nor fullness,<sup>429</sup> (33)

[shelves in your court, where] the heat of the fire together with the smoke of the burning meat does not cease. (32)

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<sup>422</sup> *arutta* (perf.pey.): lit. “cut-off”.

<sup>423</sup> I followed Turaicāmiṭṭai, whose commentary is based on POC, which understood *āṭu cirai* as a metonymy (*ākuṭeyar*) that refers to the *kinnaram* (< Skt. *kinnara*). Turaicāmiṭṭai 1973, 198.

<sup>424</sup> POC: *koṅṭi* – *kollai*.

<sup>425</sup> *ulīṅṅai*: Balloon vine, *Cardiospermum halicacabum*. *Tamil Lexicon*, 468.

<sup>426</sup> *akavalan*: a group of bards who mastered the metre called *akaval*. POC: “singing *pāṇan*” (*pāṭum pāṇan*).

<sup>427</sup> Here, *uṅṅa* has to be understood as a causal absolute.

<sup>428</sup> The negative signifier *ēṇā* is a *velippatai* here which distinguishes the ‘ladder’ (*ēṇi*) from this ‘unscalable’ one which is, according to the POC, a *kōkkāli* means a “bracket in a wall for holding pots” (*Tamil Lexicon*, 1169).

<sup>429</sup> In Line 33, the words *nirampu* and *akalpu* are old type of absolutes which I translated as nouns here.

#### 44.

peyar: nōy<sub>1</sub>tapu nō<sub>2</sub>toṭai, tuṛai: centuṛai pāṭānpāṭṭu, tū<sub>1</sub>kku: centū<sub>1</sub>kku, vaṇṇam: o<sub>1</sub>luku vaṇṇam.

nilam puṭai <sub>1</sub> pp'-a <sub>1</sub> ṇṇa ~ār <sub>1</sub> pp'-oṭu vicumpu tuṭaiyū	
vā <sub>1</sub> ṇ tōy vel koṭi tēr micai nuṭā <sub>1</sub> ṅka+	
periya ~āy <sub>1</sub> iṇum amar kaṭantu peṛ <sub>1</sub> ra	
~ariya ~e <sub>1</sub> ṇṇāt' ōmpātu vīci+	
kalam cela+ curattal allatu kaṇ <sub>1</sub> aviṇum	5
kaḷaik' eṇa ~a <sub>1</sub> riyā+ kacaṭ' il neṅcatt'	
āṭu naṭai ~a <sub>1</sub> ṇṇal niṇ pāṭu-makaḷ kāṇiyar	
kāṇiliyarō niṇ pukaḷ <sub>1</sub> nta yākkai	
muḷu vali tuṅcum <b>nōy tapu nōl toṭai</b>	
nuṇ koṭi ~u <sub>1</sub> liṅṅai vel pōr aṛ <sub>1</sub> ukai	10
cēṇaṇ āy <sub>1</sub> iṇum kēḷ eṇa moḷ <sub>1</sub> intu	
pulam peyarnt' oḷitta kaḷaiyā+ pūcar <sub>1</sub> k'	
araṇ kaṭā ~u <sub>1</sub> rī ~aṇaṅku nikaḷ <sub>1</sub> nt'-a <sub>1</sub> ṇṇa	
mōkūr maṇṇaṇ muracam koṇṭu	
neṭu moḷi paṇitt' avaṇ vēmpu mutal taṭintu	15
muracu ceya muracci+ kaḷi <sub>1</sub> ru pala pūṭṭi	
~o <sub>1</sub> lukai ~uytta koḷu ~il paim tuṇi	
vai+ talai maṇanta tuy+ talai+ kū <sub>1</sub> kai	
kavalai kavarrum kurālam parantalai	
murac' uṭai+ tāyatt' aracu pala ~ōṭṭi+	20
tuḷaṅku nīr viyal akam āṇṭ' iṇitu kaḷ <sub>1</sub> inta	
maṇṇar maṇaitta tāḷi	
vaṇṇi maṇrattu viḷaṅkiya kāṭē.	

44<sup>th</sup> song

### The sturdy limbs destroyed by pain

After you showered [gifts] without saving [for yourself], without saying that [those] things [are] rare, (4)

[things] which were obtained after you overcame in battle, even if [those] things [are] big, (3) [you showered them,] while sky-touching, victorious flags sway on the top of the chariots, (2) rubbing the sky with clamour<sup>430</sup> which was as if the earth had been beaten, (1)

Let your songstresses see [your] majesty with dancing gait (*āṭu naṭai*), (7) with flawless heart, [you, who] know nothing, not even [in your] dreams, but springing forth [gifts], when jewels leave [your hands, and least of all] asking [us] to remove<sup>431</sup> [those jewels]!<sup>432</sup> (5–6)

After you said that Aṟukai<sup>433</sup> of victorious battle [who had] fine *uḷiṇai*-creeper is your relative (*kēḷ*), even if he [was] far away, (10–11)

after you returned to the lands, (12a)

after you took the *muracam*-drum of the king Mōkūr<sup>434</sup> who entered like the *aṇaṅku* (14)

making the fort have an urge for resistance (*pūcal*) [against] removing the hidden things (*oḷitta*), (12b–13b)

after you made [him, who had] high words [of promises],<sup>435</sup> humble, cut off the foot of his *vēmpu*-tree,<sup>436</sup> (15)

accomplished to make a *muracu*-drum [from the tree] and tied [your] many elephant bulls [to the rest of the trunk],<sup>437</sup> (16)

after you drove away many kings with *muracu*-possessing patrimony (*tāyam*) (20)

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<sup>430</sup> Reading *ārpp*'-ōṭu, the position of the sociative suffix (*oṭu*) at the beginning of a metrical foot (*cēṛ*) is, to put it mildly, weird and irregular.

<sup>431</sup> *kaḷaika* (subj. Wilden 2018, 114.): “let [us] remove!”.

<sup>432</sup> U. Vē. Cāminātaiyar glosses *nīkkuka* (subj.) for *kaḷaika* (subj.), ‘to liberate’, ‘to remove [miseries]’. Cāminātaiyar 1980, 111.

<sup>433</sup> According to the POC, Aṟukai (p. n.) is “a minor tributary chief who has become a friend for the Cēras, [but] an enemy for the king Mōkūr” (*mōkūr manṇaṅukku pakai āy cēraṅukku naṭp' āy iruppāṅ or kuṇṇilamaṇṇan*). Interestingly, neither the *Tamil Lexicon* nor the *Pre-Pallavan Tamil Index* contains an entry on Aṟukai, the chief.

<sup>434</sup> Mōkūr (p. n.) is a chieftain (or the name of several rulers of the same dynasty, cf. Naṇṇan) of the age, who might be connected to a Mauryan invasion from the North, and whose court was visited by the *kōcar*-tribe. *Pre-Pallavan Tamil Index*, 713.

<sup>435</sup> Perhaps another possible interpretation is to understand the word *neṭumoli* which means ‘eulogy’, ‘praise’ (*Tamil Lexicon*, 2340) as a metonymy for Mōkūr (“[he who is equal to] eulogy”).

<sup>436</sup> *vēmpu*: neem, margosa, *Azadirachta indica*. *Dravidian Etymological Dictionary*, 5531.

<sup>437</sup> This act can be understood as the final humiliation of the defeated king, or I would instead think, the enemies’ descent into the vassal status as the poetic image suggests, in which the chopped totemistic tree had been tied to the royal elephant, one of the important insignias of the king (cf. *Tolkāppiyam Poruḷatikāram Maraṇṇiyal*, 72, cū. 616).



on the wastelands with owls (*kurāl*)<sup>438</sup> [which feel] distressed anxiety<sup>439</sup> (19)  
 [caused] by [other] owls (*kūkai*) with a soft head which forgot the place where they put (18)  
 the fresh fatless chops [of the corpses] which had [already] been carried away by carts, (17)  
 after [you] ruled the vast inland [surrounded by] the swaying water,— (21a–c)  
 at the burial ground (*kātu*)<sup>440</sup> which shines on the square with *vanni*-trees,<sup>441</sup> (23)  
 [where are] urns (*tālī*), [in which] kings, who sweetly passed away, had been buried, (21c–22)  
 may [your songstresses] not see<sup>442</sup> your famous (*pukalnta*)<sup>443</sup> body [there], (8)  
 [your] **sturdy limbs destroyed by pain**, [in which your] entire strength [falls] asleep!<sup>444</sup> (9)

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<sup>438</sup> *kurāl*: ‘tawny colour’, ‘a kind of owl’, ‘cow’. *Tamil Lexicon*, 1013.

<sup>439</sup> Another interpretation is to take *kavalai* ‘crossroad’ or ‘forking branches’ (*Tamil Lexicon*, 790) as an unmarked locative.

<sup>440</sup> Same as *cuṭukātu*. *Tamil Lexicon*, 855. One might prefer to translate *kātu* literally as ‘wilderness’, which might result a less specific interpretation, but a more accurate reading.

<sup>441</sup> *vanni*: *Prosopia spicigera*. *Dravidian Etymological Dictionary*, 5330.

<sup>442</sup> The word *kāṇṭiyarō* is a negative optative from *kāṇ(ṇu)-tal* v. 13. tr. ‘to see’, with an *ōkāram* at the end, which is perhaps a particle of politeness (Wilden 2018, 113).

<sup>443</sup> Literally “the body which was praised”.

<sup>444</sup> It is a kind of anomalous circular construction (*pūttuṭṭil*) here, in which not the first line has to be connected to the last, but Line 8, where anyway we find our main predicate (*kāṇṭiyarō*).

45.

peyar: ūntuvai aṭicil, turai: centurai pāṭānpāṭṭu, tūkku: centūkku, vaṇṇam: oḷuku vaṇṇam.

polam pūn tumpai+ porī kiḷar tūṇi+  
purr' aṭānk' araviṇ oṭuṅkiya ~ampin  
nociv' uṭai villiṇ nociyā neñciṇ  
kaḷiṇ' eṇintu murinta katuvāy eḷkin  
vilumiyōr tuvaṇṇiya ~akam kaṇ nāṭpin 5  
eḷu muṭi mārpīṇ eytiya cēral  
kuṇṭu kaṇ akaliya matil pala kaṭantu  
paṇṭum paṇṭum tām uḷ alitt' uṇṭa  
nāṭu keḷu tāyattu naṇam talai ~aruppattu+  
katavam kākkum kaṇai ~eḷu ~aṇṇa 10  
nilam peru tiṇi tōḷ uyara ~ōcci+  
piṇam piṇānk' aluvattu+ tuṇānkai ~āṭi+  
cōru vēṇ' eṇṇā ~**ūṇ tuvai ~aṭicil**  
ōṭā+ pīṭar uḷ vaḷi ~iruttu  
muḷ+ iṭup' aṇiyā ~ēṇi+ tevvar 15  
cilai vicai ~aṭakkiya mūri veḷ tōḷ  
aṇaiya paṇpin tāṇai maṇṇar  
iṇi yār uḷarō niṇ muṇṇum illai  
maḷai koḷa+ kuṇaiyātu puṇal puka niṇaiyātu  
vilaṅku vaḷi kaṭavum tuḷānk' irum kamañcūl 20  
vayaṅku maṇi ~imaippiṇ vēl iṭupu  
muḷāṅku tirai+ paṇi+ kaṭal maṇutticiṇōrē.

45<sup>th</sup> song

### The food with meat curry

O Cēra [king] who obtained seven crowns with your chest (6)  
on the battlefields<sup>445</sup> with vast areas which were crowded by excellent men (5)  
with diminishing<sup>446</sup> broken blades since they attacked elephant bulls, (4)  
[men] with unbending hearts<sup>447</sup> [but] flexible bows<sup>448</sup> (3)  
[and] arrows which were restrained in the quivers like the withdrawn snake in the anthill, (2)  
[quivers, on which] marks<sup>449</sup> of the *tumpai* with golden flowers emerge, (1)  
after [you] overcame the many walls which had moats in the deep, (7)  
after [you] danced the *tunānkai* on the battlefield,<sup>450</sup> where corpses were piled up, (12)  
risingly raising [your] strong arms which obtained lands, (11)  
which are like the cylindrical crossbar (*elu*) that protects the gate (10)  
of the fort (*arupam*) of broad areas [which were] the heritage (*tāyam*) of [those] countries (9)  
that [you] annexed, after [you] ruined their inlands (*u*) in very ancient times, (8)  
after [you] stayed on the inner paths with the ones whose pride is not to flee, (14)  
[who had] **food** (*aticil*) **with meat curry**,<sup>451</sup> in which [meat] was inseparable from the boiled  
rice, (13)  
[those] kings with armies, whose nature is similar (17)  
to the bright solid shields which stop the hasty [arrows of the] bows,<sup>452</sup> (16)  
[who are] enemies with borders (*ēṇi*), where thorns had never been planted [for defence], (15)  
who are they now? None [of them] is in front of you, (18)  
[since] they are ones who did not let [pass] the cool ocean with roaring waves, (22)  
[after you] planted<sup>453</sup> [your] spear with shiny sapphire[-like] glittering, (21)

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<sup>445</sup> Same as *nāṭpu*: battle, fight, battlefield. *Tamil Lexicon*, 1684.

<sup>446</sup> *katuṅāy*: ‘being scarred’, ‘diminishing’, ‘decreasing’. *Tamil Lexicon*, 714.

<sup>447</sup> *neñcu*: ‘mind’, ‘conscience’, ‘heart’, ‘chest’. *Tamil Lexicon*, 2332.

<sup>448</sup> It is possible to split the sandhis in another way reading *noṅṅu* and *noṅṅā* derivable from *noci-tal* v. 4. intr.

<sup>449</sup> *pori*: ‘dot’, ‘spot’, ‘stripe’, ‘mark’, ‘impression’, etc. *Tamil Lexicon*, 2946.

<sup>450</sup> Turaicāmiṭṭiṭṭai glosses *aluvam* as ‘battlefield’ (*pōrkkalam*). Turaicāmiṭṭiṭṭai 1973, 210. The *Tamil Ilakkiyaṭ Pēraṅkarāṭi* (p. 176) has *pōrkkalam* as the fourth possible meaning of *aluvam*. Cf. *Narriṅṅai*, 319: 7–8.

<sup>451</sup> Here *tuṅai* is a dish made from rice and meet, which is consistent with the fifth and sixth meaning of *tuṅai* found in *Tamil Lexicon*, (p. 1999). Cf. *Puraṅṅānūru*, 14: 13–14. For more, see Chevillard 2022, 132–135.

<sup>452</sup> *cilai vicai*: “the haste of the bow”, “bow-mechanism”. If we choose the first interpretation, *vicai* (‘haste’) might be a metonymy for arrows. If we prefer the second one, we might see a mechanism similar to *aiyavi* here. Cf. Footnote 121.

<sup>453</sup> *iṭṭu* (abs.): ‘having placed’, ‘having kept’, ‘having thrown’, etc. *Tamil Lexicon*, 283. Another possible reading is that the king threw his spear.

[the ocean with] swaying fully pregnant [clouds] which had been urged by the athwart[-  
blowing] wind, (20)

[the ocean, which] cannot be filled, while the rivers enter, and cannot be diminished, while it  
receives the rain.<sup>454</sup> (19)

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<sup>454</sup> We find a rather similar formulaic line in *Maturaikkāñci*: *maḷai koḷa kuraiyātu puṇal puka mīkātu* (*Maturaikkāñci*, 424).

**46.**

peyar: karaivāy paruti, turai: centurai pātānpāṭṭu, tūkku: centūkku, vaṇṇam: oḷuku vaṇṇam.

ilaiyar kulaiyar narum taṇ mālaiyar  
cuṭar nimir avir toṭi ceritta muṅkai+  
tirai viṭu tiru maṇi ~ilaṅku mārpai  
vaṇṭu paṭu kūntal muṭi puṇai makaḷir  
toṭai paṭu pēr(i) yāl pālai paṇṇi+ 5  
paṇiyā marapai uliṇai pāṭa  
~iṇitu puṇam tant' avarkk' iṇ makiḷ curattaliṇ  
curam pala kaṭavum *karaivāy paruti*  
~ūr pāṭṭ' eṇṇ' il paim talai tumiya+  
pal ceru+ kaṭanta kol kaḷir' ~yānai 10  
kōṭu naral pauvam kalaṅka vēl iṭṭ'  
uṭai tirai+ parappil paṭu kaṭal oṭṭiya  
vel pukal+ kuṭṭuvan kaṇṭōr  
celkuvam eṇṇār pāṭupu peyarntē.

46<sup>th</sup> song

### **The wheels with bloody ridge**

After women performed *pālai*[-melody<sup>455</sup>] on the stringed big *yāl*,<sup>456</sup> [women] with ornamented hairknots [and] tresses swarmed around by bees, (4–5)  
with bosoms on which bright brilliant sapphires shone, (3)  
with forearms on which bangles with splendour extending [like] the Sun (*cuṭar*) had been put tightly, (2)  
[women] who [wear] fragrant cool garlands, earrings, and jewels, (1)  
because [you] shower<sup>457</sup> for them sweet joy/toddy<sup>458</sup> after [you] sweetly provided [them] protection, (7)  
when they were singing *uliñai*[-songs]<sup>459</sup> according to [their] not-declining (*paṇiyā*) tradition, (6)  
after [you] planted [your] spear,<sup>460</sup> while, the ocean [where] the conch shells (*kōtu*)<sup>461</sup> sounded, was stirred up, (11)  
[you] with murderous elephant bulls, which overcame in many battles, (10)  
when ***the wheels with bloody ridge*** cut off the countless fresh heads at the crawling advent, [which wheels] were driven<sup>462</sup> through the many deserts (*curam*),— (8–9)  
the ones who have seen [you,] Kuṭṭuvan with victorious praise, (13)  
will not say that “we go [and] return!”<sup>463</sup> after they sang [for you] (14)  
[who] drove back the sea,<sup>464</sup> which had a [huge] extent of breaking waves. (12)

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<sup>455</sup> *pālai*: melody of the barren tract (*pālai nilaṭ perum paṇi*). *Tamil Icaip Pērakarāṭi*, 372.

<sup>456</sup> The performance of *pālai*-melodies on the *pēriyāl* can be found in *Patirruppattu*, 57: 8; 66: 2.

<sup>457</sup> Here *curattaliṅ* (v. n. + obl.) stands for a causal clause.

<sup>458</sup> *makil*: ‘joy’, ‘intoxication’, ‘toddy’. *Tamil Lexicon*, 2994.

<sup>459</sup> *uliñai*: a heroic literary setting, a *purattiṇai* that talks about the siege of forts. *Tamil Icaip Pērakarāṭi*, 95.

<sup>460</sup> *iṭṭu* (abs.): “having placed”, “having kept”, “having thrown”, etc. *Tamil Lexicon*, 283. Another possible reading is that the king threw his spear.

<sup>461</sup> Turaicāmiṭṭillai: *kōtu* – *caṅku*. *Agesthialingom*: *kōtu* – conch. *Agesthialingom* 1979, 57.

<sup>462</sup> *kaṭavum* (imp. pey.): “which causes to ride”, “which drives”, “which urges”. *Tamil Lexicon*, 662.

<sup>463</sup> According to the analysis of *Agesthialingom*, the verb *celkuvam* is a non-past finite form: “we (will) go”. *Agesthialingom* 1979, 185.

<sup>464</sup> The most important title of Ceṅkuṭṭuvan (*kaṭal piṛakk’ oṭṭiya*) is reflected in this description.

47.

peyar: nan̄n̄utal viṛaliyar, tuṛai: centuṛai pāṭānpāṭṭu, tūkkū: centūkkū, vaṇṇam: oluku vaṇṇam.

aṭṭ' āṇāṇē kuṭṭuvaṇ aṭu toṛum

perṛ' āṇārē paricilar kaḷirē

varai micai ~ili-tarum aruviyiṇ māṭattu

vaḷi muṇai ~avir-varum koṭi nuṭaṅku teruvil

cori curai kavaram ney vaḷip' urāliṇ

5

pāṇṭil viḷakku+ parūu+ cuṭar aḷala

**nal nutal viṛaliyar** āṭum

tol nakar varaippiṇ avaṇ urai ~āṇāvē.

47<sup>th</sup> song

### **Vir̥alis with delicate forehead**

The always murderous Kuṭṭuvan̄ is never done with killing.<sup>465</sup> (1)

Whenever he kills, the gift-seekers never end up obtaining elephants.<sup>466</sup> (2)

His fame will never end<sup>467</sup> within the boundaries of the ancient palace (*nakar*), (8)

where **vir̥alis with delicate forehead** dance, (7)

while the flame burns, after the light on the [lamp's] bowl<sup>468</sup> became larger, (6)

because<sup>469</sup> the clear butter (*ney*), which seized the hollows to be poured, spread [and] overflowed, (5)

[dance] on the streets where brightening flags sway on the windy places<sup>470</sup> (4)

at the storied houses (*mātam*), [which flags looked] like [many] waterfalls<sup>471</sup> rushing from the top of the mountain. (3)

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<sup>465</sup> *āṇāṇ*: neg. m. sg. from \**āṇ* v. 3.?<sup>?</sup> tr./intr. 'to end'.

<sup>466</sup> *āṇār*: neg. h. pl. from \**āṇ* v. 3.?<sup>?</sup> tr./intr.

<sup>467</sup> *āṇā*: neg. n. pl. from \**āṇ* v. 3.?<sup>?</sup> tr./intr.

<sup>468</sup> POC glosses *kāl-vilakku* ("standing lamp"?) for *pāṇṭil vilakku* which was, according to the Tamil Lexicon, a standard-lamp. *Tamil Lexicon*, 2598.

<sup>469</sup> Here *urālin* (v. n. + obl.) stands for a causal clause.

<sup>470</sup> Another reading is "in the wind" (*vali muṇai*), in which *muṇai* would be an unusual locative suffix.

<sup>471</sup> As a possible interpretation, this poem might describe a short description of a royal palace that may have been the antecedent of the mediaeval Dravidian-style temple complexes, in which simile, the storied houses looked like mountains, and the swaying flags looked like waterfalls rushing from the top.



**48.**

peyar: pērelil vāḷkkai, tuṛai: iyaṇmolivāḷttu, tūkku: centūkku,vaṇṇam: oḷuku vaṇṇam.

paim poṇ tamarai pāṇar+ cūṭṭi  
 ~oḷ nutal viṛaliyarkk' āram pūṭṭi+  
 keṭal arum pal pukal nilaii nīr pukku+  
 kaṭaloṭ' uḷanta paṇi+ tuṛai+ paratava  
 ~āṇṭu nīr+ perra tāram iṇṭ' ivar 5  
 kollā+ pāṭark' eḷitiṇ iyum  
 kallā vāymaiyaṇ iyaṇ eṇa+ ta(m)+ tam  
 kai val iḷaiyar nēr kai niraippa  
 vaṇaṅkiya cāyal vaṇaṅkā ~āṇmai  
 muṇai cuṭu kaṇai ~eri ~erittaliṇ peritum 10  
 ikaḷ kaviṇ aḷinta mālaiyoṭu cāntu pular  
 pal porī mārpa niṇ peyar vāḷiyarō  
 niṇ malai+ piṛantu niṇ kaṭal maṇṭum  
 mali puṇal nikaḷ-tarum tīm nīr viḷaviṇ  
 polil vati vēnil **pēr eḷil vāḷkkai** 15  
 mēvaru cuṛramōṭ' uṇṭ' iṇṭu nukarum  
 tīm puṇal āyam āṭum  
 kāṅciyam perum tuṛai maṇaliṇum palavē.

48<sup>th</sup> song

### **A great and high life**

O fisherman<sup>472</sup> of the cool harbour, which was conquered by the sea,<sup>473</sup> (4)  
after [you] entered the water [and] established [your] abundant fame, which is difficult to lose, (3)  
after [you] put a necklace<sup>474</sup> on the *viṅalis*<sup>475</sup> with bright forehead, (2)  
[and] adorned the minstrels (*pāṇar*) with greenish golden<sup>476</sup> lotuses,<sup>477</sup> (1)  
may your name live [long], o man of the chest with many lines (12)  
of the dried sandal-paste [and] with a garland on which the beauty of all the petals perished (11)  
because of the burning<sup>478</sup> of the intensely hot fire on the frontier, (10)  
[man who has] valour which is not humble, [but has a] nature which is humble, (9)  
when the skilful youngsters<sup>479</sup> stretch out each of [their] hands, saying that “this man is a man  
of truth [that he did] not learn, (7–8)  
[who] easily gives goods (*tāram*) which were obtained there, on the water, for the songs  
of these people here, [which songs were] not kept [to themselves,]— (5–6)  
[may your name live] even more [years] than the [number of] sand[-particles] in your great  
harbour with *kāñci*-trees, (18)  
where [your] retinue dances at the sweet flood (17)  
which they enjoy sweetly, eating together with [their] desirous<sup>480</sup> relatives (16)  
with **a great and high life** in summer<sup>481</sup> that stays in the groves (15)  
with the festival of sweet water that occurs (14)  
by the abundant flood which was born in your hills and enriches your sea. (13)

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<sup>472</sup> *paratavar*: ‘the inhabitants of maritime tract’, ‘fishing tribes’. *Tamil Lexicon*, 2496.

<sup>473</sup> Turaicāmiṭṭipīlai: *kaṭalōṭu ulanta* – “[who] performed a difficult battle with the enemies [from] the sea” (*kaṭarṭpakaivarōṭu ariya pōraic ceyta*). However, I translated *ulanta* (< *ula-ttal* v. 4. tr., *Tamil Lexicon*, 466) as “conquered”, and understood the sociative suffix of *kaṭal* as instrumental (*verrumai-mayakkam*).

<sup>474</sup> *āram*: ‘necklace of pearls’, ‘garland of flowers’, etc. *Tamil Lexicon*, 242.

<sup>475</sup> *viṅali*: a female performer who was most probably a dancer and/or a singer.

<sup>476</sup> *pacum poṇ*: fine gold. *Tamil Lexicon*, 2400.

<sup>477</sup> Cf. *Puranānūru*, 11: 15–17, where another Cēra king gave a “lotus crafted in the bright flames” (*oḷ alal purinta tāmarai*) to the minstrel (*pāṇmakar*).

<sup>478</sup> Here *erittalin* (v. n. + obl.) stands for a causal clause.

<sup>479</sup> Another interpretation would result in understanding *ilaiyar* as “they [at] the fence/enclosure (*ilai* < *miḷai*)”. *Tamil Lexicon*, 359.

<sup>480</sup> Here, *mēvaru* is a contracted verbal compound from *mēvu+varu* (“to be fitted for”). Wilden 2018, 153; *Tamil Lexicon*, 3360.

<sup>481</sup> *vēṇil*: ‘summer season’, ‘heat’, etc. *Tamil Ilakkīyap Pērakarāti*, 2349.

49.

peyar: ceṅkai maṟavar, turai: viṟaliyārruppaṭai, tūkku: centūkku, vaṇṇam: oḷuku vaṇṇam.

yāmum cērukam nīyirum vammīṅ  
tuyalum kōtai+ tuḷaṅk' iyal viṟaliyar  
koḷai val vālkkai num kiḷai ~iṅit' uṇṇiyar  
kaḷiṟu parant' iyala+ kaṭum mā tāṅka  
~oḷiṟu koṭi nuṭaṅka+ tēr tirintu koṭpa 5  
~eḷḷu turant' eḷu-tarum kai kavaraṅ kaṭum tāṅ  
vel pōr vēntarum vēḷiṟum oṇṇu moḷintu  
moy vaḷam cerukki mocintu varum mōkūr  
valam-paṭu kuḷūu nilai ~atira maṇṭi  
neyttōr totṭa ***cem kai maṟavar*** 10  
niṟam paṭu kuruti nilam paṭarnt' oḷi  
maḷai nāḷ puṇaliṅ aval parant' oḷuka+  
paṭu piṇam piṇaṅka+ pāl pala ceytu  
paṭu kaṅ muracam naṭuvaṅ cilaippa  
vaḷaṅ ara-nikaḷntu vālunar palar paṭa+ 15  
karum ciṅai viṟal vēmp' aṟutta  
perum ciṅam+ kuṭṭuvaṅ kaṅṅaṅam varaṅkē.

49<sup>th</sup> song

### The warriors with red hands

Let us also join!<sup>482</sup> You too come! (1)

May your relatives eat sweetly, [whose] livelihood is the ability of [performing] melodies<sup>483</sup> (3)  
[for you,] *virālis* with swaying gaits<sup>484</sup> and swaying garlands! (2)

[Let us also join] in order to return as people who have [already] seen the much enraged  
Kuṭṭuvaṅ,<sup>485</sup> (17)

who cut off the strong<sup>486</sup> *vēmpu*-tree<sup>487</sup> with black branches, (16)

so that many of those who lived fell, after [their] wealth happened to perish, (15)

while the *muracam*-drum with its beaten eye resounded in the middle, (14)

after he caused many desolations, while the [heaps of] fallen corpses were lofty, (13)

when the blood (*kuruti*) rolled, spreading in the depressions [of the lands] like the flood of a  
rainy day (12)

overspreadingly running on the ground, [the blood] from the vital spots of **warriors with  
red hands** that had touched blood (*neyttōr*),— (11)

while, after [Kuṭṭuvaṅ] attacked, the stand of the victorious crowd of Mōkur was  
trembling, (8d–9)

where kings and chieftains of victorious battles had come after they declared an oath, (7)

swarmed [with their armies and] became arrogant [from their] concentrated strengths, (8a–c)

[kings and chieftains] with fierce vanguards with seizing divisions, which rise driving [their]  
blades into [the crowd], (6)

while [their] chariots were rolling to and fro,<sup>488</sup> shiny flags were swaying, (5)

swift horses carried [soldiers], and elephant bulls spread and advanced. (4)

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<sup>482</sup> *cērukam* (subj.): “let us join!”.

<sup>483</sup> *koḷai*: ‘song’ (*pāṭal*), ‘melody’ (*icai*). *Tamil Icaip Pērakarāti*, 204.

<sup>484</sup> Translating *tuḷaiṅk’ iyal*, I would prefer to understand either “swaying gait” or “shining nature”. *Tamil Lexicon*, 301; 1987. Here, I chose “swaying gait”; thus, the poet might compare the swaying gait to the swinging garland (*tuyalum kōtai*) in the same line.

<sup>485</sup> To understand the poem, we have to connect the first line to the last in a circular construction (*pūttu vil*).

<sup>486</sup> Turaicāmiṭṭipillai: *virāḷ* – “strength” (*vaṅmai*), PPI: “strength”. We chose the same meaning, although the usual old meanings of *virāḷ* are either victory or bravery. *Tamil Lexicon*, 3733.

<sup>487</sup> *vēmpu*: neem, margosa, *Azadirachta indica*. *Dravidian Etymological Dictionary*, 5531.

<sup>488</sup> *koṭṭa* (inf.): “revolving”, “whirling round”, “roaming”. *Tamil Lexicon*, 1128. POC: *koṭṭa* – *tiriya*.

50.

peyar: veruvaru puṇarṛār, tuṛai: vañcittuṛai pāṭānpāṭṭu, tūkku: centūkku, vaṇṇam: oḷuku vaṇṇamum  
corṅcīr vaṇṇamum.

mā malai muḷakkiṇ māṇ kaṇam paṇippa+  
 kāl mayāṅku kataḷ uṛai ~āliyoṭu citari+  
 karump' amal kaḷaṇiya nāṭu vaḷam poliya  
 vaḷam keḷu ciṛappiṇ ulakam puraii+  
 cem kuṇakk' oḷukum kaluḷi malir niṛai+ 5  
 kāviri ~aṇṇiyum pū viri puṇal oru  
 mūnr' uṭaṇ kūṭiya kūṭal aṇaiyai  
 kol kaḷiṛr',  
 uravu+ tirai piṛaḷa ~a+ vil picira+  
 purai tōl varaippin ekku mīṇ avir-vara  
 viravu+ paṇai muḷaṅk' oli verīya vēntarkk' 10  
 araṇam ākiya **veru-varu puṇal tār**  
 kal-micaiyavvum kaṭalavum piṛavum  
 aruppam amaiya ~amar kaṭant' urutta  
 ~āḷ mali maruṅkiṇ nāṭ' akappaṭuttu  
 nal+ icai naṇam talai ~iriya ~oṇṇār 15  
 urupp' aṛa nirappiṇai ~ātaliṇ cāntu pularpu  
 vaṇṇam nīvi vakai vaṇapp' uṛra  
 vari ṇimir' imirum mārpu piṇi makaḷir  
 viri mel kūntal mel+ aṇai vatintu  
 kol piṇi tirukiya mārpu kavār muyakkattu+ 20  
 poḷutu koḷ marapiṇ mel piṇi ~aviḷa  
 ~evaṇ pala kaḷiyumō peruma pal nāl  
 pakai vemmaiṇiṇ pācaṛai marī+  
 pāṭ' arit' iyainta ciṛu tuyil iyalātu  
 kōṭu muḷaṅk' imiḷicai ~eṭuppum 25  
 piṭu keḷu celvam marīya kaṇṇē.

50<sup>th</sup> song

### The frightening flood-like vanguard

After you protected the world with [your] prosperous superiority, (4)  
so that the wealth of the country overflowed, [the country, which] has fields dense with  
sugarcane, (3)  
after the wind-bewildered hasty raindrops were scattered together with hailstones (*āli*), (2)  
while the herds of deer were trembling because of the thunders at the big mountains, (1)  
you are like the confluence (*kūṭal*), where the three united in one: (7)  
[two] streams on which flowers open besides the Kāviri<sup>489</sup> (6)  
with flooding copiousness of muddy water, which flows straight to the East,— (5)  
after [you] annexed the country with [country]sides that abounded in infuriated men, (13d–14)  
after [you] overcame in battle, so that the fortresses of the hill-tops, of the ocean and of other  
[places] became subdued (12–13c)  
[by your] **frightening flood**[-like] **vanguard** which became the protection (11)  
for the kings (*vēntar*) who were frightened by the roaring sound of the various *paṇai*-drums, (10)  
while the star[-like] blades started to glitter at the enclosure of eminent shields, (9)  
when those bows drizzled [the arrows], while the strong tide of the murderous elephants was  
advancing, (8)  
because you are the one who is complete so that the anger of the disobedient perished (15d–16b)  
while the fame left [their] vast dominions, (15a–c)  
how many [days], o great man, would pass [until] the soft slumber<sup>490</sup> fades according to the  
tradition of the time of embrace, (21–22c)  
when [women] seize [your] chest which changed [on their] killing distress, (20a–c)  
staying in [your] soft bed [among] the soft spreading tresses (19)  
of the women clinging to [your] chest, where striped bees hum, (18)  
[chest, which] had a beauty of [various] kinds after unguent (*vannam*) had been smeared [on it  
and] the sandal-paste (*cāntu*) had dried, (16d–17)  
after [you] stayed many days [in [your] military camp of hostile severity (23)  
[where your] eyes, which were focussed on the mighty wealth, (26)  
had been woken up by the curved, roaring drums (*imilicai*)<sup>491</sup> (25)

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<sup>489</sup> *kāviri* (p. n.): Kāvēri river.

<sup>490</sup> POC glosses *piṇi* as *urakkam* 'slumber'.

<sup>491</sup> POC: *imilicai* – *iyamaram* 'a kind of drum'. *Tamil Lexicon*, 300. One might prefer to translate *kōtu* as *caṅku* "conch" and *imil icai* as "humming sound".

after a little nap was not possible neither<sup>492</sup> the difficult[-to-obtain] sleep?<sup>493</sup> (24)

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<sup>492</sup> *iyainta* (perf. pey.): “which was joined”.

<sup>493</sup> According to my understanding, the king spent many days in the military camp without sleeping, so now he enjoys his sweet slumber. At the same time, his women have to wait for him to awaken and reactivate himself as a lover.

## V. patikam

vaṭavar uṭkum vāṅ tōy vel koṭi+  
kuṭavar kōmāṅ neṭuñcēralātaṅku+  
cōlaṅ maṅakilli ~inra maṅaṅ  
kaṭavuḷ pattini+ kal kōḷ vēṅṭi+  
kāl navil kāṅam kaṅaiyiṅ pōki 5  
~āriya ~aṅṅalai vīṭṭi+ pēr icai  
~in pal aruvi+ kaṅkai maṅṅi  
~iṅam teri pal+ āṅ kaṅroṭu koṅṭu  
mārā valvil iṭumpiṅ puratt' irutt'  
uru puli ~aṅṅa vayavar vīla+ 10  
ciṅu kural neytal viyalūr nūri  
~a+ karai naṅṅi+ koṭukūr eṅintu  
paḷaiyaṅ kākkum karum ciṅai vēmpin  
murarai muḷu mutal tumiya+ paṅṅi  
vāl ilai kaḷitta naṅum pal peṅṭir 15  
pal+ irum kūntal muraṅciyāl  
kuṅcara ~oḷukai pūṭṭi vem tirāl  
ārā+ ceruviṅ cōla kuṭikk' uriyōr  
oṅpatiṅmar vīla vāyil puratt' iruttu  
nilai+ ceruviṅ āṅṅalai ~aṅuttu+ 20  
keṭal arum tāṅaiyoṭu  
kaṭal piṅakk' oṭṭiya ceṅkuṭṭuvaṅai+ karaṅam amainta  
kāc' aṅu ceyyuḷ paraṅar pāṅiṅār pattuppāṭṭu.

avai tām: cuṭar vī vēṅkai, tacumpu tuḷaṅk' irukkai, ēṅā ~ēṅi, nōy tapu nōl toṭai,  
ūṅ tuvai ~aṅicil, karai vāy+ paruti, nal nutal viṅaliyar, pēr elil vāḷkkai, cem kai maṅavar,  
veru-varu puṅal tār. ivai pāṅṅiṅ patikam.

pāṅi+ peṅra paricil: umpaṅkāṭṭu vāriyaiyum taṅ maṅaṅ kuṭṭuvaṅ cēralaiyum koṭuttāṅ a+ kō.

kaṭal piṅakk' oṭṭiya ceṅkuṭṭuvaṅ aim-pattai yāṅṭu vīṅṅiruntāṅ.



## V. Panegyric

He [was] the son who was born from Cōlaṅ Maṅakiḷḷi,<sup>494</sup> (3)  
to [his father] Neṭuñcēralāṭaṅ, the king of the Westerners (2)  
with sky-touching victorious flag that is feared by the northerners, (1)  
[the son who] desired to take a rock (*kal kōḷ*)<sup>495</sup> for the divine (*kaṭavuḷ*) Pattini,<sup>496</sup> (4)  
[who] slid like an arrow through the forest where the wind whispers,<sup>497</sup> (5)  
[who] killed the *āriya* majesty,<sup>498</sup> (6a–c)  
[who] bathed in the famous Kaṅkai (Gaṅgā)<sup>499</sup> with many sweet waterfalls, (6d–7)  
[who] brought back many cows with [their] calves chosen [as good ones] from the herd, (8)  
[who] camped outside of Iṭumpil<sup>500</sup> of unwavering strong bows, (9)  
[who] destroyed Viyalūr<sup>501</sup> of *neytal*-flowers with small clusters, (10)  
so that [its] strong men fell who were like tigers that are encountered, (11)  
[who] attacked Koṭukūr<sup>502</sup> after he approached that [other] seashore, (12)  
[who] accomplished<sup>503</sup> to chop down the entire foot of the hard trunk<sup>504</sup> (14)  
of the *vēmpu*-tree [which had] dark branches [and] was guarded by Palaiyan,<sup>505</sup> (13)  
[who] fastened the elephant cart by the ropes<sup>506</sup> of the dark tresses (16)

<sup>494</sup> Analysing the proper name Maṅakiḷḷi, there is no doubt that the name has to be connected to the ancient Cōla dynasty as many of the Cōla kings bore the title Kiḷḷi (*Tamil Lexicon*, 938). The proper name Cōlaṅ (masc. sing.), which precedes Maṅakiḷḷi, is perhaps a reference to an unnamed Cōla king (as an unmarked genitive) and the name Maṅakiḷḷi could be the name of the queen (and mother of Ceṅkuṭṭuvaṅ), however its use for a woman is weird.

<sup>495</sup> Here, we see a reference to the epic *Cilappatikāram* and the story when the Cēra king marched to the North to select a stone to carve a Pattini statue. See: *Cilappatikāram*, III. 26. (*kaṅkōṭ-kātai*). In the *Tolkāppiyam Poruḷatikāram Purattinaiyiyal* (cū. 63: 19–20), Tolkāppiyāṅār used the same terms for describing the different stages of the erection of a hero-stone (*naṭukal*) as the chapter names appear in *Cilappatikāram*, (III. 25–29). It is a matter of debate (mostly chronology) who borrowed from whom, although it is also possible that both or (all three) are remnants of an older tradition.

<sup>496</sup> Pattini (p. n. < Skt. *patnī*): ‘wife’, ‘chaste wife’, ‘Kaṅṅaki, the heroine of the *Cilappatikāram*’ (cf. *pattinikkaṭavuḷ*). *Tamil Lexicon*, 2466.

<sup>497</sup> *navil-tal* v. 3. tr. ‘to say’, ‘to talk’, ‘to declare’, ‘to sing’, etc. *Tamil Lexicon*, 2181.

<sup>498</sup> Cf. *Cilappatikāram*, III. 26: 211–219.

<sup>499</sup> Ceṅkuṭṭuvaṅ’s visit to the Gaṅgā is reflected in *Cilappatikāram*, III. 27: 11–24.

<sup>500</sup> According to *Cilappatikāram*, III. 28: 118, Iṭumpil (“cruel place”?) was a place where Ceṅkuṭṭuvaṅ camped with his army. It might be the same as Iṭumpāvaṅam sung by Campantar (*Tēvāram*, I. 17).

<sup>501</sup> According to *Cilappatikāram*, III. 28: 114–115, Viyalūr was a village/town with *neytal*-flowers which had small clusters (*cīru kural neytal*), and elephants sleeping on the pepper-growing slopes. If the description is true, then Viyalūr must have been a town in some mountains, but it may also be located close to the coastal areas (*neytal tiṅai*).

<sup>502</sup> Koṭukūr was a village/town conquered by Ceṅkuṭṭuvaṅ.

<sup>503</sup> Here *paṅṅu-tal* v. 5. tr. ‘to make’, ‘to effect’, ‘to accomplish’, is an auxiliary verb that became very productive in later ages, but it can also be found elsewhere in the Caṅkam poems, e. g. *Akaṅānūru*, 45: 10; 145: 12.

<sup>504</sup> *murarai*: hard, stout trunk of a tree. *Tamil Lexicon*, 3277.

<sup>505</sup> Palaiyan: chief of Mōkūr. His totemistic tree was a *vēmpu*-tree. Cf. *Matuwaikkāñci*, 508; *Cilappatikāram*, III. 27: 124.

<sup>506</sup> It seems that the same custom is attributed to Naṅṅai in *Narriṅai*, 270: 8–9, in which poem we see a “cord of tresses of Naṅṅai” (*naṅṅai kūntal muraṅciyū*). What is more, the author of *Narriṅai* 270 is Paraṅar, just as the author of this decade. The triumphant arrival of the elephant carts appears in *Cilappatikāram*, III. 27: 254–255.

of the many scented wives [of the enemies], whose jewels [had been] taken off [by him], (15)  
 [who] camped outside of Vāyil,<sup>507</sup> so that nine (19)  
 heirs of the Cōla family fell [because of their] unending, harsh and wrathful quarrel (*ceru*), (18)  
 [who] cut their strength in a long-lasting battle,— (20)  
 Paraṇar<sup>508</sup> of flawless poetry [and] of focused mind sang [these] ten songs on Ceṅkuṭṭuvaṅ  
 who drove back the sea (22–23)  
 with [his] army, which [was] difficult to defeat. (21)

These [ten songs] themselves [are]: The *vēṅkai*-tree with glowing flowers, The shining seat of  
 vessels, The shelves that cannot be climbed, The sturdy limbs destroyed by pain, The food with  
 meat curry, The wheels with bloody ridge, Viralis with delicate forehead, A great and high life,  
 The warriors with red hands, The frightening flood-like vanguard, [and this as] the panegyric  
 of these ten.

Having sung, the [following] gifts [had been] obtained: that king gave Umparkāṭu with [its  
 incoming] taxes and [also] his [own] son Kuṭṭuvaṅ Cēral [as an intendant].

Ceṅkuṭṭuvaṅ who drove back the sea sat fifty-five years majestically [on the throne].

Thus ending the Fifth Decade.

aintām pattu mur̥ir̥ru.

<sup>507</sup> In *Cilappatikāram*, III. 28: 116–117, Ceṅkuṭṭuvaṅ won at Nērivāyil (same as Vāyil here) over nine kings (*onpatu manṇar*). Nērivāyil was perhaps a town south of Uraiyūr. *Pre-Pallavan Tamil Index*, 413.

<sup>508</sup> Paraṇar was one of the most famous Caṅkam poets. For more, see: *Pre-Pallavan Tamil Index*, 531.

## The Sixth Decade

(*ārām pattu*)

The poet: Kākkaipāṭṭiyār Naccellaiyār

The king: Āṭukōṭṭpāṭṭu Cēralāṭaṅ

### 51.

peyar: vaṭuvaṭu nuṅṅayir, tuṛai: vañcittuṛai pāṭāṅpāṭṭu, tūku: centūkkum vañcittūkkum, vaṅṅam: oḷuku vaṅṅamum coṛcīr vaṅṅamum.

tuḷaṅku nīr viyal akam kalaṅka+ kāl pora  
viḷaṅk' irum puṅari ~urum eṅa muḷaṅkum  
kaṭal cēr kāṅal kuṭa pulam muṅṅi+  
kūval tuḷanta taṭam tāḷ nārai  
kuvi ~iṅar ṅāḷal mā+ ciṅai+ cēkkum 5  
vaṅṅ' irai koṅṭa taṅ kaṭal parappiṅ  
aṭump' amal aṭaikarai ~alavaṅ āṭiya  
**vaṭu ~aṭum nuṅ+ ayir** ūtai ~uṅṅarūm  
tū ~irum pōntai+ poḷil aṅi+ poli-tant'  
iyaliṅal olkiṅal āṭum maṭam makaḷ 10  
veṛi ~uru nuṭakkam pōla+ tōṅṅri+  
perum malai vayiṅ vayiṅ vilaṅkum aru maṅi  
~ara vaḷaṅkum perum teyvattu  
vaḷai ṅāralum paṅi+ pauvattu+  
kuṅa kuṭa kaṭalōṭ' āyiṭai maṅanta 15  
pantar antaram vēyntu  
vaḷ piṅi ~aviḷnta kaṅ pōl neytal  
naṅai ~uru naṅaviṅ nāṭ' uṭaṅ kamaḷa+  
cuṭar nutal maṭam nōkkin  
vāḷ nakai ~ilaṅk' eyirṅ' 20  
amiḷtu poti tuvar vāy acai naṭai viraliyar  
pāṭal cāṅṅru nīṅṅai ~uraitaliṅ  
veḷ vēḷ aṅṅal melliyaṅ pōṅm eṅa  
~uḷḷuvar-kollō niṅ uṅarātōrē

maḷai tavaḷum perum kuṇṛattu+	25
ceyir' uṭaiya ~arav' eṛintu	
kaṭum ciṇattam miṭal tapukkum	
perum ciṇa+ puyal ēṛ' aṇaiyai	
tāṅkunar,	
taṭam+ kai yāṇai+ toṭi+ kōṭu tumikkum	
eḷk' uṭai valattar niṇ paṭai vaḷi vāḷnar	30
maṛam keḷu pōntai veḷ tōṭu puṇaintu	
nirāṃ peyar kaṇṇi+ parunt' ūṛ' aḷappa+	
tū+ kaṇai kiḷitta mā+ kaṇ taṇṇumai	
kai val iḷaiyar kai ~alai ~aḷuṅka	
māṛṛ' arum cīṛṛattu mā ~irum kūṛṛam	35
valai viritt' aṇṇa nōkkalai	
kaṭiyai ~āl neṭuntakai ceruvattāṇē.	

51<sup>st</sup> song

**The fine sand that hides the scars**

After [you] approached the western land<sup>509</sup> with groves merged with the sea, (3)  
where the huge shiny waves roar like thunder; (2)  
while the wind blows so that the vast inside of the billowing water has been stirred up, (1)  
after [you] covered the open spaces of the harbour [with a roof] (16)  
where the eastern met the western sea, (15)  
at the cool ocean, which sounds with conches (14)  
[of] the great god<sup>510</sup> (*perum teyvam*) who roams [along with] snakes (13)  
[with] rare sapphires (*maṇi*) that lay athwart here and there [in] the big mountain, (12)  
[which snakes] appeared like the possessed (*veri-uru*) tremble of the innocent girl who dances,  
frisks<sup>511</sup> and trembles<sup>512</sup> (10–11)  
after the groves were ornately flourishing by themselves with big whitish *palmyra* trees, (9)  
where the cold wind [vigorously] urges **the fine sand that hides the scars** (8)  
on the settling shore, [which scars] were caused by the dancing crabs, [the shore which is]  
dense with *aṭumpu*[-creeper]<sup>513</sup> (7)  
at the expanse of the cool sea, where bees settled down, (6)  
where the broad-footed *nārai*-bird, which stirred up [the water of] the well,<sup>514</sup> (4)  
rests on the big branches of the *ñālal*-tree with heaps of clusters,— (5)  
after you become worthy of the songs (22a–b)  
of the *viraliyar* with swaying gait, ambrosia-filled, red-coral[-like] mouth, (21)  
shiny teeth, lustrous smile, (20)  
glowing forehead, [and] innocent glances, (19)  
while the toddy (*naravu*) was fragrant across the country, which had [aged with] flower buds (18)  
of the *neytal*-flower with big outer petals, which [flowers] resembled opened eyes,— (17)  
because you resided [here] being the one who extended [your staying], (22c–d)  
those who have not [yet] understood your [nature], will they think that (24)

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<sup>509</sup> POC: “the division west from his capital” (*tan nakarikku mēlpāl*). It is very likely that the poet referred to the Malabar Coast.

<sup>510</sup> For an attempt to identify the deity here, read: pp. 400–401.

<sup>511</sup> Cf. *Tirumurukāruppatai*, 215.

<sup>512</sup> Cf. *Cīrupāṇāruppatai*, 135.

<sup>513</sup> *aṭumpu*: hareleaf (*Ipomoea biloba*). *Dravidian Etymological Dictionary*, 65.

<sup>514</sup> *kūval* (id. Skt. *kūpa*): well. *Tamil Lexicon*, 1077.

[your] majesty with shining<sup>515</sup> spear is like<sup>516</sup> someone with tender nature? (23)  
 You are the one who resembles the thunder of the greatly enraged cloud (28)  
 which destroys the fierce wrathful strength (27)  
 after attacking the poisonous snake (26)  
 of the big hills where clouds creep. (25)  
 O [our] paragon, you are indeed fierce in the battle (37)  
 [as] you are of the sight which is like the thrown net (36)  
 of the huge and dark God of Death (Kūr̥ram), [whose] anger is difficult to change, (35)  
 while the hand-beatings of the skilful musicians (*ilaiyar*) became silent (34)  
 [musicians] with *taṇṇumai*-drums of dark eyes which were torn apart by [your] pure<sup>517</sup> arrows,  
 (33)  
 when kites consider to approach [the bloody] chaplets [which had] changed [their] colour [in  
 the battle] (32)  
 after the protectors [of the world] adorned [themselves] with the white frond of the valorous  
*palmyra* tree, (29a–31)  
 [being] someones who live [by following] the path of your army of strong men with blades (30)  
 which cut off the ringed tusks of the elephants with wide trunks. (29)

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<sup>515</sup> Another reading is “white (*vel*) spear”, which suggests that he does not fight with it.

<sup>516</sup> *pōnm* (contracted imp. *pey.*) < *pōlum*.

<sup>517</sup> Or: “fleshy arrows”. *Tamil Lexicon*, 2008.

52.

peyar: ciṛuceṅkuvaḷai, tuṛai: kuravainilai, tūkku: centūkku, vaṇṇam: oḷuku vaṇṇam.

koṭi nuṭaṅkum nilaiya kol kaḷiṛu miṭaintu  
 vaṭi maṇi neṭum tēr vēṛu pulam parappi  
 ~arum kalam tarīyar nīr micai nivakkum  
 perum kali vaṅkam ticai tirint' -āṅku  
 mai ~aṅint' eḷu-tarum mā ~irum pal tōl 5  
 mey putai ~araṇam eṇṇāt' eḷku cumantu  
 muṇ camatt' eḷu-tarum vaṅkaṇ āṭavar  
 tolaiyā+ tumpai tevvaḷi viḷaṅka  
 ~uyar nilai ~ulakam eytiṇar palar paṭa  
 nal+ amar+ kaṭanta niṇ cel+ uṛaḷ taṭa+ kai 10  
 ~irappōrkku+ kavital allatai ~iraiiya  
 malarp' aṛiyā ~eṇa+ kēṭṭikum iṇiyē  
 cuṭarum pāṇṭil tiru nāru viḷakkattu  
 muḷā ~imil tuṇaṅkaikku+ taḷū+ puṇai ~āka+  
 cilaippu val+ ēṛriṇ talai+ kai tantu nī 15  
 naḷintaṇai varutal uṭaṇṇaṇaḷ āki  
 ~uyalum<sup>518</sup> kōtai ~ūral am titti  
 īr itaḷ maḷai+ kaṇ pēr iyal arivai  
 ~oḷ itaḷ avil akam kaṭukkum cīr aṭi+  
 pal cem<sup>519</sup> kiṇkiṇi ciṛu paraṭ' alaippa+ 20  
 kol puṇal taḷiriṇ naṭuṅkuvaṇaḷ niṇru niṇ+  
 eṇiyar ōkkiya ciṛu cem kuvaḷai  
 ~ī ~eṇa ~irappavum ollāl nī ~emakk'  
 yāraiyo ~eṇa+ peyarōḷ kaiyatai  
 katum-eṇa ~urutta nōkkamōṭ' atu nī 25  
 pāal vallāy āyiṇai pāal  
 yāṅku vallunaiyo vālka niṇ kaṇṇi

<sup>518</sup> Here, U. Vē. Cāminātaiyar gives *uyavum* (“suffering”, imp. pey.) which I did not find very fortunate, unlike the variant reading *uyalum* (“swaying”, imp. pey.) which can be found in Ms. UVSL 98a [303. v. 10.], thus I emended the edited text here.

<sup>519</sup> Although the odd phrase *pal cila kiṇkiṇi* was suggested by U. Vē. Cāminātaiyar in his edited text (1904), he himself offers another possible (and more convincing) reading at the end of the notes (*pal cem kiṇkiṇi*). Finally, I chose to emend his edited text for *pal cem kiṇkiṇi* that I found attested in Ms. UVSL 98a [303. v. 11.].

~akal irum vicumpiṅ pakal-iṭam tariīyar  
teṛu katir tikaḷ-tarum uru<sup>520</sup> keḷu ṅāyirṛ'  
urupu kiḷar vaṅṅam koṅṭa  
vāṅ tōy veḷ kuṭai vēntar tam eyilē.

30

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<sup>520</sup> I emended Cāminātaiyar's *ulu* for *uru* which variant can be found in UVSL 98a [303. r. 1.].



52<sup>nd</sup> song

**Little red *kuvalai*-flowers**

We now heard<sup>521</sup> that your thunderbolt-like large hands do not open (10c–d, 12)  
to beg, [but] only for showering [gifts] to the supplicants, (11)  
[the hands of yours who] overcame in good battles (10a–b)  
so that many [of your foes] fell as ones who obtained the world of upper state,<sup>522</sup> (9)  
when the unfading *tumpai*-flowers<sup>523</sup> were shining on [their] hostile paths,<sup>524</sup> (8)  
[whose] cruel<sup>525</sup> men were rising before the battle (7)  
carrying [their] blades without considering the body-covering protection (6)  
of the many huge [and] dark leather[-shields] which beautifully arose [like] the clouds, (5)  
[as they] turned in direction like the great bustling ships (*van̄kam*) (4)  
which float on top of the water in order to bring precious vessels,<sup>526</sup> (3)  
after the tall chariots with shapely<sup>527</sup> bells spread on the various lands (2)  
[and] the murderous elephant bulls, on which flags swayed,<sup>528</sup> crowded.— (1)  
After you, [who were] like a strong roaring bull, gave your first hand (15)  
[to other women], so that [you] became [their] support by embracing [them] for the sake of  
*tuṇankai*-dance with rumbling *mulavu*-drum, (14)  
in the brilliant fragrant light of the glowing lamp (*pāṇṭil*), (13)  
after She became enraged by your coming as somebody who happened to get closer, (16)  
after She was standing [there] as one who shivers like the sprouts in the murderous flood,  
(21a–d)  
while [her] many red anklets on her small feet that resemble the opening insides of bright  
petals, tinkled on the narrow ankles [of her, (19–20)  
your] woman of great nature, [who has] wet eyes with moist eyelashes, (18)

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<sup>521</sup> Here, *kēṭṭikum* is a first-person plural perfective finite verb (“we heard”). Wilden 2018, 77.

<sup>522</sup> The phrase *uyar nilai ulakam* refers to an otherworldly place where brave heroes get.

<sup>523</sup> It is possible that these *tumpai*-flowers (garlands?) were crafted from metal (gold?), and that is why the poet called them unfading (*tolaiyā*).

<sup>524</sup> Another way is to take *vali* as a locative.

<sup>525</sup> *van̄kaṇ*: ‘cruelty’, ‘bravery’, ‘enmity’, ‘envy’, ‘evil eye’. *Tamil Lexicon*, 3562.

<sup>526</sup> Given the historical setting of the early centuries AD, it is rather possible that *arum kalam* referred here to the precious/rare *amphorae* from the Mediterranean. However, the flexibility of these words allows us to understand precious/rare jewels or other types of vessels, including ships.

<sup>527</sup> Or: “cast bells” (*vaṭi maṇi*).

<sup>528</sup> In a literal translation: “having the state (*nilaiya*) that sways (*nuṭankum*) [with] flags (*koṭi*)”.

[who has] pretty beauty-spots<sup>529</sup> that creep up [on her skin, and] a garland that sways [on her neck],— (17)

while [you] begged<sup>530</sup> [her] saying to give [back] (23a–b)

the **little red kuvalai**[-flowers]<sup>531</sup> which were raised [by her] in order to beat you, (21d–22)  
she refused [and] returned with what [was in her] hand (*kaiyatai*), saying, “Who are you for us?”. (23c–24)

You, whose sight became angry fast, became the one who is [now] unable to master [her]. (24d–26b)

How will you be able to rule, may your chaplet live [long], (26d–27)

the fortresses of the kings (*vēntar*) with white sky-touching parasols (31)

which had (*koṇṭa*) the radiating nature with a shape (30)

of the beautiful Sun whose scorching rays are shining (29)

in order to give daytime in the vast dark sky? (28)

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<sup>529</sup> *titti* (prob. < Skt. *sidhma?*): yellow spreading spots on the body. *Tamil Lexicon*, 1875.

<sup>530</sup> Here *irappavum* is a concessive infinitive.

<sup>531</sup> *ceṅkuvalai* same as *ceṅkalunīr*. ‘purple Indian water-lily’ (*Nymphaea odorata*), ‘red Indian water-lily’. *Tamil Lexicon*, 1579.

### 53.

peyar: kuṅṭukan akali, turai: centurai pāṭānpāṭṭu, tūkku: centūkku, vaṅṅam: oḷuku vaṅṅam.

veṅṅu kalam tariiyar vēṅṭu pulatt' irutt' avar  
vāṭā yāṅar nāṭu tirai koṭuppa  
nalkiṅṅai ~ākumati ~em+ eṅṅ' aruḷi+  
kal piṅṅai vaippiṅṅ kaṭar' arai (y)āṭṭa niṅṅ  
tol pukaḷ mūt' ūr+ celkuvai ~āyiṅṅ 5  
cem poṅṅi+ cilampoṭ' aṅṅi+ tālai tūṅṅum  
entira+ takaippiṅṅ amp' uṭai vāyil  
kōḷ val mutalaiya **kuṅṭu-kaṅ akali**  
vāṅṅ ura ~ōṅṅkiya vaḷaintu cey puricai  
~oṅṅā+ tevvar muṅṅai keṭa vilaṅṅi 10  
niṅṅṅiṅṅ tanta maṅṅṅ' eyil allatu  
muṅṅṅum piṅṅṅum niṅṅ muṅṅṅōr ōmpiya  
~eyil mukappaṭuttal yāvatu vaḷaiyiṅṅum  
piriṅṅ' āru ceṅṅmati ciṅṅam keḷu kurucil  
eḷū+ puṅṅam-tarū+ poṅṅ piṅṅi+ palakai+ 15  
kuḷū nilai+ putaviṅṅ katavu mey kāṅṅiṅṅ  
tēm pāy kaṭāṭṭoṭu kāḷ-kai nīvi  
vēṅṅkai veṅṅra poṅṅi kiḷar pukar nutal  
ēntu kai curuṭṭi+ tōṭṭi nīvi  
mēmpaṭu vel koṭi nuṭāṅṅa+ 20  
tāṅṅkal ākā ~āṅṅku niṅṅ kaḷiṅṅē.

53<sup>rd</sup> song

### Moats with deep spaces

After [you] won [and] camped on the desired land in order to bring [back] jewels, (1a–d)  
may you become the one who grants that they will be given their countries with unfading  
fertility as tributes! (2–3b)

After [you] graciously talked to us, (3c–d)  
if you march [back] to your old town with ancient fame, where the waist [of the town] is tied  
around with forests [and] with places which shine with rocks,<sup>532</sup> (4–5)  
how about [you] confronting [those] fortresses (13)  
which were protected by your ancestors/ministers (*munṅōr*),<sup>533</sup> [forts] in front [of you] and  
behind, (12)  
except [this] durable fort that was given [to the kingdom] by you [yourself], (11)  
after it laid athwart [on your way], so that the frontline of [your] disobedient enemies  
perished, (10)

[which fort had] sky-touching high walls made in a way to curve, (9)

**moats with deep spaces**<sup>534</sup> [having] murderous<sup>535</sup> crocodiles, (8)

[and] gates<sup>536</sup> which possessed arrows [in] a row of machines (7)

on which ornamented foliage (*talai*) hung together with red spotted iron rings (*cilampū*)?<sup>537</sup> (6)

[If you march back to your old town,] go another path even if that is curved! (13d–14b)

O enraged lord, (14c–d)

if [your elephants] truly see the doors of the many storied gates<sup>538</sup> (16)

with metal-fastened plates protected by wooden cross-bars, (15)

your elephant bulls will not endure [to stop] there (22)

when the victorious eminent flags sway, (21)

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<sup>532</sup> One might prefer to translate *kal* as ‘mountain’ (cf. *Puṅṅānūru*, 17: 1), although I stuck to its original meaning as ‘rock’.

<sup>533</sup> *munṅōr*: ‘minister’ (*mantiri*). *Tivākaram*, 186.

<sup>534</sup> Or we can translate *kaṅ* as a mere locative (“in the depth”).

<sup>535</sup> *kōḷ val*: “strength to kill”. I translated it as “murderous” following the way how I translated *kai val* as “skilful” (cf. *Patirruppattu*, 41: 6).

<sup>536</sup> This description probably refers to the weapon/machine called *aiyavi*. Cf. *Patirruppattu*, 22: 22–23 and notes.

<sup>537</sup> It is very uncertain what the description refers to. As far as I could not find a parallel description (not even in the weapon catalogue of *Cilappatikāram*, II. 15: 207–215), I would instead think that the rings and the foliage served as either a camouflage for the arrow machine or as an infuriating bait for the enemy since these things might look like kidnapped women on the walls (cf. “dolls and balls” on the fort’s wall in *Tirumurukāruppaṭai*, 68).

<sup>538</sup> POC: *kulūu nilaiṭ putavu* – “the *kōpuram*-gate that was made into many levels (*nilam*)” (*pala nilam ākac ceyta kōpuravāyil*). It is indeed possible that we see here the antecedent of *kōpurams*.

after they got past the firm sticks (*kāḷkai*)<sup>539</sup> because of [their] honey-flowing rut, (17)  
after they got past the goad (*tōṭṭi*) folding [their] raised trunks (19)  
[in front of their] tawny foreheads with shining spots, which [trunks] defeated tigers (*vēṅkai*). (18)

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<sup>539</sup> I understood here *kāḷkai* as the verbal root *kāḷ* (*Tamil Lexicon*, 904) + *kai* as a nominal suffix (Wilden 2018, 30). We probably see an extended usage of the word *kai* (*Tamil Lexicon*, 1098) for ‘rod’ and ‘stick’. The third, but perhaps not the last, possibility is to connect *kai* ‘hand’ to *nīvi* (abs.), which makes an (intensified?) compound verb. However, I have not yet found a good reason to believe in Agesthalingom’s gloss as an ‘iron rod’ (Agesthalingom 1979, 49). It is also possible that the weird word *kāḷkai* in Line 17 had been used for poetic reasons because it rhymes with *vēṅkai* and *ēntu kai* in Lines 18–19.

#### 54.

peyar: nillāttānai, turai: kāṭcivālttu, tūkkū: centūkkū, peyar: nillāttānai, vaṇṇam: oḷuku vaṇṇam.

valliyai ~enraliṅ kāṅku vantiṅē  
~ulliyatu muṭitti vāḷka niṅ kaṅṅi  
vīnk' irai+ taṭaiya ~amai maruḷ paṅai+ tōḷ  
ēnt' eḷil maḷai+ kaṅ vaṅaintu varal iḷa mulai+  
pūm tukil alkul tēm pāy kūntal 5  
miṅ+ iḷai viṅaliyar niṅ maṅam pāṭa  
~iravalar puṅkaṅ tīra nāḷ-torūm  
urai cāl nal kalam varaiv' iḷa vīci  
~aṅaiyai ~ākalmāre ~eṅaiyatūm  
uyar nilai ~ulakattu+ cellāt' ivaṅ niṅr' 10  
iru nilam maruṅkiṅ neṭitu maṅṅiyarō  
nilam tapa viṭūm ēṅi+ pulam paṭarntu  
paṭu kaṅ muracam naṭuvaṅ cilaippa+  
tōmara valattar nāmam ceymmār  
ēval viyaṅkoṭṭ' iḷaiyarot' eḷu-tarūm 15  
ollār yānai kāṅiṅ  
**nillā+ tānai** ~irai kiḷavōyē.

54<sup>th</sup> song

### The army that does not stand still

Because they say<sup>540</sup> that you are generous, I came<sup>541</sup> [here, so] let me see<sup>542</sup> [you]! (1)  
What [you] think of, may you accomplish!<sup>543</sup> Let your chaplet live [long]! (2)  
After you donate every day unending good jewels<sup>544</sup> which abound in fame, (7d–8)  
so that the misery of supplicants comes to an end (7a–c)  
while *viralis* sing your valour, [whose] jewels [are like] lightning,<sup>545</sup> (6)  
[on whose] tresses honey flows [from the flowers], [whose] hips [are covered with] garments of  
flowers, (5)  
[who have] shapely<sup>546</sup> growing, young breasts,<sup>547</sup> [whose] moist eyes have high beauty, (4)  
[and whose] thick shoulders resemble bamboos with large rounded joints,— (3)  
because you became the one who is like [this], (9a–b)  
after you stopped here only for a while<sup>548</sup> without going to the world of upper state, (9d–10)  
may you please live long<sup>549</sup> in<sup>550</sup> [this] vast world, (11)  
o lord, chief of an **army that does not stand still**, (17)  
if [they] see the elephants of the disobedient (16)  
who rise together with the young [soldiers] obeying<sup>551</sup> the commands, (15)  
in order to cause fear<sup>552</sup> as men [who carry] javelins (*tōmara*)<sup>553</sup> in [their] right hands, (14)  
when the *muracam*-drum with beaten eye echoes in the middle, (13)  
after they set out for the places at the borders leaving lands behind to perish. (12)

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<sup>540</sup> Here *enraḷin* (contracted v. n. + obl.) stands for a causal clause.

<sup>541</sup> Here, the obscure *vantiḷin* is either a subjunctive/optative, an imperative, or a first-person singular perfective “personal verb”. Rajam 1992, 585.

<sup>542</sup> *kāṅku*: first person singular subjunctive from the verb *kāṅ-tal* v. 13. ‘to see’.

<sup>543</sup> *muṭṭiti* (second person sing. subj.): “may you accomplish!”.

<sup>544</sup> *kalam*: jewel, vessel, ship. *Tamil Lexicon*, 778.

<sup>545</sup> Cf. *Paripāṭal*, 11: 135.

<sup>546</sup> I assume that the abs. *vaṅaintu* requires an adverbial usage here (“formingly”, “shapely”). *Tamil Lexicon*, 3569.

<sup>547</sup> The same formulaic pattern (*vaṅaintu varal ila mular*) appears in *Akanāṅūru*, 58: 7.

<sup>548</sup> *enaiyatūm* (*aḷaṭetai*): ‘even a little’. *Tamil Lexicon*, 550.

<sup>549</sup> Here the *ōkaram* denotes politeness.

<sup>550</sup> Here *maruḷiṅ* stands for a locative.

<sup>551</sup> Here *viyaṅkoṅṭu* (abs. *Tamil Lexicon*, 3686) perhaps requires an adverbial usage (“obeyingly rising”).

<sup>552</sup> *ceymmār* (inf.): “in order to do”.

<sup>553</sup> *tōmara* (< Skt. *tomara*): ‘javelin’, a hapax legomenon.

55.

peyar: tuñcum pantar, turai: centuraippātānpāttu, tūkku: centūkku, vaṇṇam: oḷuku vaṇṇam.

ānrōḷ kaṇava cānrōr puravala  
niṇṇu nayantu vantaṇeṇ aṭu pōr+ korṇava  
~iṇṇu+ icai+ puṇari ~iraṅkum pauvattu  
nal kalam veṇṇukkai **tuñcum pantar**+  
kamaḷum tālai+ kāṇalam perum turai+ 5  
taṇ kaṭal paṭappai nal nāttu+ poruna  
ce+ ~ūṇ tōṇrā veḷ tuvai mutirai  
vāl ūṇ valci maḷavar meymmarai  
kuṭavar kōvē koṭi+ tēr aṇṇal  
vārār āyiṇum iravalar vēṇṭi+ 10  
tēriṇṇu tant' avarkk' ār patam nalkum  
nacai cāl vāy-moḷi ~icai cāl tōṇral  
vēṇṭuva ~aḷavaiyuḷ yāṇṭu pala kaliya+  
peytu puṇam-tantu poṅkal āṭi  
viṇṭu+ cērnta veḷ maḷai pōla+ 15  
ceṇṇrāliyarō peruma ~alkalum  
naṇam talai vēntar tār aḷint' alara  
niṇṭu varai ~aṭukkatta nāṭu kai+ koṇṭu  
porutu ciṇam taṇinta ceru+ pukal āṇmai+  
tāṅkunar+ takaitta ~oḷ vāl 20  
ōṅkal uḷḷattu+ kurucil niṇṇu nālē.



55<sup>th</sup> song

### The sleeping arbour

O husband of [your] excellent woman!<sup>554</sup> O protector of paragons! (1)

Longing for you,<sup>555</sup> I came, o victor of murderous battle! (2)

O fighter of the good country with gardens at the cool sea (6)

around the big harbour, which have fragrant *tālai*-groves<sup>556</sup> (5)

at **the sleeping arbour** (*pantar*),<sup>557</sup> [and] with wealth of the good vessels<sup>558</sup> (4)

of the ocean where sweetly melodious waves resound! (3)

O king of the western people, (9a–b)

the body shield of warriors [who have] food with white meat, (8)

lentils, [and] white curry in which red meat does not appear!<sup>559</sup> (7)

O majesty of chariots with flags! (9c–d)

O chief who is worthy of the songs (*icai*) with truthful words (*vāymoli*)<sup>560</sup> which abound in desires, (12)

who bestowed satiating cooked rice to the people (*avar*) after [it] had been brought by a chariot, (11)

even if they did not come [but] desired [it as being] supplicants! (10)

While, within the measure which was required, many years passed, (13)

o great man, may your days not pass (16a–c, 21d)

similarly to the white clouds which joined to the mountains, (15)

swayed as foam, protected and showered, (14)

o chief of exalted heart, (21a–b)

[who has] a bright sword which destroyed the protectors (20)

[of the enemies, whose] manliness desires battle, whose anger had become mitigated [once he] fought, (19)

laying hands on the country<sup>561</sup> with slopes of the long mountains, (18)

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<sup>554</sup> *āṅṅōl*: “worthy she”, “excellent she” (probably from \**āl-tal* v. 3. intr. same as *cāl-tal* v. 3. intr. *Tamil Lexicon*, 1389).

<sup>555</sup> Here the oblique (*nin*) stands for accusative.

<sup>556</sup> *kāṇalam* (adj.): “grove-having”.

<sup>557</sup> Although the word *pantar* is either an arbour (*Patirrupattu*, 51: 16) or the proper name of a Cēra town/harbour (*Patirrupattu*, 67: 2; 74:6), it seems that the word itself also meant “storehouses” (*paṅṭacālaikal*) at least at the time when the old commentary had been composed. For more, see pp. 351–352.

<sup>558</sup> *kalam*: ‘jewel’, ‘vessel’, ‘ship’. *Tamil Lexicon*, 778.

<sup>559</sup> POC: *cevvūṅṅōṅṅā veṅṭuvai* – “the white curry (*tuvai*) from the hacked and exsanguinated goat, [in which] the red meat, which was caught by himself, does not appear. (*araittuk karaitta maiyāl tannir pukka cevvūṅṅōṅṅā velliya tuvai*).

<sup>560</sup> It is possible that the word *vāymoli* already meant a style of uttering hymns. *Tamil Lexicon*, 3599–3600.

<sup>561</sup> Or we may translate it as a plural (“countries”).

while the kings (*vēntar*) of vast lands were wailing day by day, [because their] vanguards<sup>562</sup> vanished! (16d–17)

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<sup>562</sup> Another interpretation would result: “[because their] garlands (*tār*) vanished”.

56.

peyar: vēntu meymmaranta vālcci, turai: oļvāl amalai, tūkku: centūkku, vaņņam: oļuku vaņņam.

vilavu vīrr'-irunta viyal ul ānkaņ

kōṭiyar muļaviņ munņar āṭal

vallān allān vālka ~avaņ kaņņi

valam-paṭu muracam tuvaippa vāl uyartt'

ilaņkum pūņaņ polam koṭi ~uļiñaiyaņ

5

maṭam perumaiyiņ uṭaņru mēl vanta

vēntu mey+ **maranta vālcci**

vīnt' uku pōr+ kaṭatt' āṭum kōvē.

56<sup>th</sup> song

**The lives that were left by the bodies of the kings**

May his chaplet live long; he is not someone who is able (3)  
to dance in front of the *mulavu*-drum of the *kōṭiyar*[-people],<sup>563</sup> (2)  
there, in the wide place [where] the festival was held with dignity,<sup>564</sup> (1)  
[but] the one with ornaments that shine, (5a–b)  
after he raised [his] sword, while the victorious *muracam*-drum resounded, (4)  
[and] the one with golden flags of *ulīñai*-flowers<sup>565</sup> (5c–d)  
o the king who is dancing on the battlefield, where [warriors] perish [and] fall, (8)  
[where] the *lives*<sup>566</sup> *had left*<sup>567</sup> *the bodies of the* [enemies'] *kings*, (7)  
who came up after they got enraged because of the greatness of [their] ignorance! (6)

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<sup>563</sup> *kōṭiyar*: professional dancers, cf. *Maturaikkāñci*, 523. *Tamil Lexicon*, 1179.

<sup>564</sup> Here, I agreed with Turaicāmiṭṭai, who explains this line as *vilavānatu mikka ciraṭṭaṭṭaṭṭa etukkappaṭṭa*. The verb *vīriru-tal* ('to sit majestically', 'to rule'), however, is a bit weird here. Turaicāmiṭṭai 1973, 268.

<sup>565</sup> *ulīñai*: balloon vine, *Cardiospermum halicacabum*. *Tamil Lexicon*, 468. Flower that symbolically denotes 'siege'.

<sup>566</sup> *vālc̥ci*: 'living', 'prosperity', 'wealth', 'felicity'. *Tamil Lexicon*, 3620.

<sup>567</sup> Regarding the whole passage (*vēntu meṅ maranta vālc̥ci*), the POC understands "the lives that left their bodies, after they, the fleeing kings got scared" (*māruvēntar aṅcit taṅkaḷ meṅyai maranta vālc̥ci*). Thus, I followed the old commentator; however, all the possible meanings of *vālc̥ci* would result in new possible readings of Line 7, so it seems to remain the translator's responsibility to decide.

57.

peyar: cilvaḷai viṛali, tuṛai: viṛaliyāruppaṭai, tūkku: centūkku, vaṇṇam: oḷuku vaṇṇam.

ōṭā+ pūṭkai maṛavar miṭal tapa ~irum paṇam puṭaiyalotu vāl kaḷal civappa+ kuruti paṇirrum pulavu+ kaḷattōṇē tuṇaṅkai ~āṭiya valam-paṭu kōmāṇ melliya vakuntil cīṛ aṭi ~otuṅki+ cellāmō-til <b><i>cil vaḷai viṛali</i></b> pāṇar kaiyatu paṇi toṭai narampiṇ viral kavār pēr(i) yāl pālai paṇṇi+ kural puṇar iṇ+ icai+ taḷiṅci pāṭi ~iḷam tuṇai+ putalvar nal vaḷam payanta vaḷam keḷu kuṭaiccūl aṭaṅkiya koḷkai ~āṇṛa ~aṛiviṇ tōṇṛiya nal+ icai ~oḷ nutal makalir tuṇitta kaṇṇiṇum iravalar puṅkaṇ aṅcum purav' etirkoḷvaṇai+ kaṇṭaṇam vararḱē.	5 10 15
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57<sup>th</sup> song

### Virali with few bangles

[Our] victorious king who danced the *tunankai* (4)  
is the man of [his] flesh-reeking military camp,<sup>568</sup> who sprinkles the blood,<sup>569</sup> (3)  
so that [his] pure anklets together with [his] big palmyra-garland redden, (2)  
while the strength of the [enemies'] warriors with maxim not to retreat perishes. (1)  
After [our] small feet walked on the tender<sup>570</sup> roads, (5)  
o **virali with few bangles**, shall we not go<sup>571</sup> (6)  
in order to come back as ones who have seen the man who accepts<sup>572</sup> the tributes (*puravi*), (15)  
who fears the distress of the supplicants (14)  
more than the angry eyes of [his] women with bright forehead, (13)  
with fame that appeared [because of her] excellent knowledge, (12)  
with controlled maxims and rich anklets, (11)  
who gave birth to the good wealth: [his] sons, [his] young companions, (10)  
[to come back as ones who have seen him, after we] sang<sup>573</sup> the sweet melody of *talīñci*<sup>574</sup> [in  
which] the voices united, (9)  
[after] the bards (*pāṇar*) performed<sup>575</sup> the *pālai*-melody<sup>576</sup> on the big *yāl* which [was] in [their]  
hands, [on which their] fingers caught the expanding, tied strings. (7–8)

<sup>568</sup> POC: *kaḷam* – “the military camp joined to the crowded battlefield” (*ṅṅṅukkaḷattai aṇainta pācarai*).

<sup>569</sup> A reference to the post-battle *bali*-sacrifice.

<sup>570</sup> It might be also possible that *melliya* (n. pl.) refers to the ‘feet’, but in this case the word order is weird.

<sup>571</sup> *cellāmōtil*: *cellām* (“we [will] not go”) + *ō* (interrogative particle) + *til* (a particle of wish, Wilden 2018, 51). Cf. *Patirruppattu*, 60: 3; *Tiṇaimālai nūrraiṃpatu*, 77: 1. In his dissertation, Buchholz notes on *cellāmō* that “-ō forms a rhetorical question. The more literal translation “will we not go?” would be misleading, since it implies a positive answer, whereas *cellāmō* implies a negative answer”. Buchholz 2017, 111. However, the *ōkāram* as interrogative particle could also mean ‘doubtfulness’ (“zweifelnde Frage”, Beythan 1943, 74) that I gave back in my translation with an additional ‘why’.

<sup>572</sup> *etirkoḷvan*: “he who go towards a guest”, “he who receive”, “he who accept”. *Tamil Lexicon*, 522.

<sup>573</sup> In my construction, *cellāmō* (finite verb), *kaṇṭaṇam* (*murreccam*), and *pāṭi* (abs.) form the sequence of events, and *paṇṇi* (abs.) is a subject-changing absolutive with *pāṇar* as its subjects.

<sup>574</sup> POC: *talīñci* – “the song that is based on the meaning of the *turai* called *talīñci*” (*talīñci eṇṇum turaiṇ poruḷ mēl tanta pāṭal*). According to *Tamil Icaip Pēraḱarāṭi* (p. 267) *talīñci* is a *mērcempālai* (*kaḷyāṇi*), a secondary melody-type of the *pālai* class. *Tamil Lexicon*, 3362. The *Tamil Lexicon*, (p. 1797) claims that it is either a theme (*turai*) describing the honour and presents offered by the king to the soldiers maimed in battle, a theme describing the valour of a warrior who does not pursue and destroy a routed adversary in full retreat, or a theme describing the guarding of a narrow passage through which an enemy might enter. Since we see the king as someone who accepts the tributes in Line 15, I think the interpretation based on the first theme (*turai*) given by the *Tamil Lexicon* (based on *Tolkāppiyam Poruḷatikāram Purattinaiyiyal* cū. 65: 12.) is the possible one here.

<sup>575</sup> I analysed *paṇṇi* as a subject-changing absolutive with *pāṇar* as its subject.

<sup>576</sup> *pālai*: melody of the barren tract (*pālai nilaḷ perum paṇ*). *Tamil Icaip Pēraḱarāṭi*, 372.

58.

peyar: ēviḷaṅku taṭakkai, turai: centuraippāṭāṅpāṭṭu, tūkku: centūkku, vaṅṅam: oḷuku vaṅṅam.

āṭuka viraliyar pāṭuka paricilar  
vel tōṭṭ' acaitta ~oḷ pūm kuvaḷaiyar  
vāḷ mukam poṛitta māṅ vari yākkaiyar  
cel+ uraḷ maravar tam kol paṭai+ tariiyar  
inr' initu nukarntaṅam āyiṅ nāḷai 5  
maṅ puṅai ~iñci matil kaṭant' allat'  
uṅkuvam allēm pukā ~eṅa+ kūri+  
kaṅṅi kaṅṅiya vayavar perum makaṅ  
poy paṭup' ariyā vayan̄ku cem nāviṅ  
eyil eṛi val vil **ē viḷaṅku taṭa+ kai** 10  
~ēnt' eḷil ākattu+ cāṅṅōr meymmarai  
vāṅavarampaṅ eṅpa kāṅattu+  
kaṅṅ' icai+ citaṭi porī ~arai+ poruntiya  
cīriy(a) ilai vēlam periya tōṅṅum  
pul pulam vittum val kai viṅaiṅar 15  
cīr uṭai+ pal pakat' olippa+ pūṭṭi  
nāñcil āṭiya koḷu vaḷi maruṅkiṅ  
alaṅku katir+ tiru maṅi perūum  
akal kaṅ vaippiṅ nāṭu kilavōṅē.

58<sup>th</sup> song

### The large hands that shine with arrows

May the *virālis* dance! May the gift-seekers sing! (1)

After he<sup>577</sup> declared: (7c–d)

“If we are ones who sweetly enjoyed this day (5)

in order to distribute their murderous weapons to the thunderbolt-like warriors (4)

[who are] people having bodies with glorious scars imprinted by the edges of swords, (3)

people having bright flowers of *kuvalai* tied with white fronds,<sup>578</sup> (2)

we will not eat food [from now], (7a–c)

unless [we] conquer tomorrow the walls with ramparts made from earth!”<sup>579</sup> (6)

they say<sup>580</sup> (12c)

the great son of strong men with<sup>581</sup> chaplets,— (8)

he whose limit is the sky (*vāṇavaramban*), (12a–b)

the body shield<sup>582</sup> of the paragons, [who have] a chest with eminent grace (11)

[and] **large hands that shine with arrows** of the strong bow which attacks the fortresses,  
(10)

[who has] a shiny, refined tongue, which is not able to lie,— (9)

[is] the lord of the country of the lands with vast areas (19)

where [workers] obtain brilliant sapphires with glittering rays (18)

at the sides of the fertile furrows where the plough moved around, (17)

[after] many from the good (*cīr*) oxen had been yoked while they lowed, (16)

[yoked] by the workers with strong hands, who sow on the lowlands (15)

where the *vēlam*-trees with small leaves appear big (14)

[with small leaves] attached to the scorched trunks, [where there are] crickets with chirping<sup>583</sup>  
sound (13) [around] the forests. (12d)

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<sup>577</sup> I assume that the absolutive *kūri* has to be connected to the king’s person so that it is a subject-changing absolutive since our finite verb (*enpa*) has a general subject (“they say”). This is necessarily the cause, seeing the cause-effect in this poem (“having declared ...”, “they say”).

<sup>578</sup> It is a reference to the fronds of the *palmyra*-tree which was particularly important to the Cēra kingdom.

<sup>579</sup> Here we see an important reference to the most common type of fortress which had been built from earth/mud or mudbricks.

<sup>580</sup> Here *enpa* is our main predicate (“they say”), not counting Line 1 which itself contains two separate sentences.

<sup>581</sup> I understood *kaṇṇiya* as a perf. pey. which means ‘attached’, but in translation I gave back this meaning with a mere sociative. Another option is to understand *kaṇṇiya* as an adj. ‘having chaplet’, then the phrase ‘*kaṇṇi kaṇṇiya*’ is a difficult-to-translate figura etymologica. The third option is to understand *kaṇṇiya* as a Skt. loanword < *ganyā* (*Tamil Lexicon*, 695), in this case, we read ‘strong men whose honour is in [their] chaplets’.

<sup>582</sup> Here *meyymarai* is an apposition of *vāṇavaramban*.

<sup>583</sup> *kaṇṅku* (v.r.): lit. ‘to sound’.



59.

peyar: mākūr tiṅkaḷ, tuṟai: centuṟaippāṭāṅpāṭṭu, tūkku: centūkku, vaṅṅam: oḷuku vaṅṅam.

pakal niṭ' ākāt' iravu+ polutu peruki

māci niṅṟa **mā kūr tiṅkaḷ**

paṇi+ curam paṭarum pāṅ-makaṅ uvappa+

pul+ iruḷ viṭiya+ pulampu cēṅ akala+

pāy iruḷ nīnka+ pal katir parappi

5

ñāyīru kuṅam-mutal tōṅṟiyāaṅk'

~iraval mākkal ciṟu kuṭi peruka

~ulakam tāṅkiya mēmpaṭu kaṟpiṅ

villōr meymmaṟai vīṟ' irum koṟṟattu+

celvar celva cērntōrkk' araṅam

10

aṟiyāt' etirntu tuppīṅ kuṟai ~urru+

paṅintu tiṟai tarupa niṅ pakaivar āyiṅ

ciṅam cela+ taṅiyumō vālka niṅ kaṅṅi

pal vēru vakaiya naṅam talai ~iṅṭiya

malaiyavum kaṭalavum paṅṅiyam pakukkum

15

āru muṭṭ' urāat' aṟam purint'-oḷukum

nāṭal cāṅṟa tuppīṅ paṅai+ tōḷ

pāṭu cāl nal kalam tarūum

nāṭu puṟam-tarutal niṅakku-mār kaṭaṅē.

59<sup>th</sup> song

### The month when animals shrink

O victorious lord among the prosperous ones,<sup>584</sup> (10a–b)  
who sits majestically [on your throne,] the body shield of bowmen, (9)  
with an outstanding knowledge (*karpu*) which supports the world, (8)  
while the small families of the begging people prosper, (7)  
[you who sit] as if the Sun appeared in the east (6)  
spreading many rays so that the pervasive darkness departed, (5)  
when the lonesome distances vanished, and the low darkness came to an end, (4)  
when the minstrel (*pāṇmakan*), who set out to the chilly desert, rejoiced (3)  
in **the month** [called] *māci*,<sup>585</sup> **when animals** rest and **shrink** [from cold], (2)  
after [the *māci*-month] increased the time of the night without lengthening the day,—<sup>586</sup> (1)  
if your enemies humbly give tributes, (12a–b)  
after [their] strength became diminished,<sup>587</sup> since they opposed [you] without knowing (11)  
[you as] the shelter for your friends, (10c–d)  
will [your] anger cool down so as to be gone [completely]? May your chaplet live [long]! (13)  
For you<sup>588</sup> the duty is the protection of the country, (19)  
[you, who] gives good jewels<sup>589</sup> worthy for songs, (18)  
[you] with strong, *paṇai*[-drum-like] shoulders which were worthy to examine, (17)  
[whose lineage] flows by establishing virtue (*aṛam*) without having obstacles on the way, (16)  
[you, who] distributes the goods of the seas and of the mountains (15)  
where the vast areas with many different divisions<sup>590</sup> came together. (14)

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<sup>584</sup> Or it perhaps means a bit more (as an unmarked *genitivus partitivus*?): “the richest among the rich ones”.

<sup>585</sup> *māci*: ‘the eleventh solar month (February–March)’, ‘the tenth *nakṣatra*’. *Tamil Lexicon*, 3147. Another interpretation is “the month (*tiṅkaḷ*), [when] the animals (*mā*), which stood (*niṅra*) in the mist (*māci*, *Tamil Lexicon*, 3146), shrink (*kū*) [from cold]”.

<sup>586</sup> This is an accurate observation of the shorter length of the days in South India during February and March.

<sup>587</sup> *tuppiṅ kurai urru*: lit. “having had the deficiency of strength”.

<sup>588</sup> In *niṅakkumār* the particle *mār* is an unexplained one (an expletive?). *Tamil Lexicon*, 3168.

<sup>589</sup> Or we may translate ‘vessels’ if we consider the trade in Line 15.

<sup>590</sup> The phrase *pal vēru vakaiya* may refer to the different *tiṅais*, literary landscapes of the Cēra country.

60.

peyar: marampaṭutūṅkaṇi, turai: viraliyārruppaṭai, tūkku: centūkku, vaṇṇam: oḷuku vaṇṇam.

kolai viṇai mēvarru+ tāṇai tāṇē

~ikal viṇai mēvalaṅ taṅṭātu vīcum

cellāmō-til pāṇmakal kāṇiyar

miṇṇiru puṇam mūcavum tīm cuvai tiriyaṭ'

aram pōlkallā **maram paṭu tīm kaṇi** 5

~am cēr' amainta muṇṭai viḷai paḷam

āru cel mākkatṭ' oṅy takai taṭukkum

(m)arāa viḷaiyuḷ arāa yāṇar+

toṭai maṭi kaḷainta cilai ~uṭai maṇavar

poṅku picir+ puṇari maṅkuloṭu mayaṅki 10

varum kaṭal ūtaiyiṅ paṅikkum

tuvvā naraviṅ cāy inattāṇē.

60<sup>th</sup> poem

### The sweet fruit which fell from the tree

[His] army desires murderous acts.<sup>591</sup> He, (1)  
the one who desires hostile deeds will give [us gifts] unceasingly.<sup>592</sup> (2)  
O songstresses, why shall we not go<sup>593</sup> in order to see [him], (3)  
the one with a brilliant company in Naṛavu that could not be consumed,<sup>594</sup> (12)  
where [warriors (*maṛavar*)] shiver in the cold wind of the coming sea, (11)  
after the waves with foamy sprays together with the clouds became bewildered, (10)  
warriors who possess bows whose laziness of the strings had been removed, (9)  
[Naṛavu] of unceasing fertility and unchangeable yield, (8)  
[where] the ripened, egg-shaped fruit<sup>595</sup> [given] to the people who are going [on] the road  
impedes the tired propensity [to advance, fruit which] became abundant in fine juice, (6–7)  
**the sweet fruit which fell from the tree** [which] was never cleft by rasp,<sup>596</sup> (5)  
where bees swarmed around without turning away from its honey taste. (4)

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<sup>591</sup> Because of the *ēkāram*, I understood Line 1 as a separate sentence.

<sup>592</sup> Line 2 is the second separate sentence in this poem with the finite verb *vīcum* (s. 3. habitual future).

<sup>593</sup> *cellāmōṭil*: *cellām* (“we [will] not go”) + *ō* (interrogative particle) + *til* (a particle of wish, Wilden 2018, 51). Cf. *Paṭirrupattu*, 60: 3; *Tiṇaimālai nūrraimpatu*, 77: 1. The verb *cellāmōṭil* is the predicate of the third separate sentence in this poem.

<sup>594</sup> POC: *naṛavu* – “a village/town” (*ōrūr*). The word *tuṅvā* (neg. pey. “not-eaten”, “not-consumed”) is a negative signifier (trad. *velippatai*) which distinguishes the *naṛavu* as a ‘town’ from the *naṛavu* as the ‘toddy’. If we do not accept the existence of Naṛavu as a town, we may translate *tuṅvā naṛavu* as inexhaustible toddy. An intermediate solution may be to assume that the ambiguity was, in fact, the intention of the poet.

<sup>595</sup> The egg-shaped fruit was either a mango or a jackfruit, although a big number of other sweet fruits can be compared to an egg.

<sup>596</sup> Here, *aram pōlkallā* (negative form with the suffix *kallā*) perhaps refer to the tree’s sanctity or to the tree as a totemistic one which was not yet attacked or harmed by anyone.

## VI. patikam

kuṭa+ kō neṭuñcēralātar̥ku vēeḷ  
āvi+ kōmāṇ tēvi ~īṇra makaṇ  
taṇṭāraṇiyattu+ kōṭpaṭṭa varuṭaiyai+  
tonṭi ~uḷ tantu koṭuppittu+ pārppārkkku+  
kapilaiyoṭu kuṭa nāṭṭ' ōr ūr ittu 5  
vāṇavarampaṇ eṇa+ pēr iṇitu viḷakki  
~ēṇai maḷavarai+ ceruviṇ curukki  
maṇṇarai ~ōṭṭi+  
kuḷavi koḷvāriṇ kuṭi puṇam-tantu  
nāṭal cāṇra nayaṇ uṭai neñciṇ 10  
āṭukōṭpāṭṭu+ cēralātaṇai  
yāṭta ceyyuḷ aṭaṅkiya koḷkai+  
kākkaiṭāṇiyār nacceḷḷaiyār pāṭiṇār pattu+ pāṭṭu.

avai tām: vaṭu ~aṭum nuṇ ayir, ciṇu cem kuvalai, kuṇṭu kaṇ+ akaḷi, nillā+ tāṇai, tuñcum pantar,  
vēntu mey+ maṇanta vāḷcci, cil vaḷai viṇali, ē viḷaṅku taṭa+ kai, mā kūr tiṅkaḷ, maram paṭu tīm  
kaṇi, ivai pāṭṭiṇ patikam.

pāṭi+ perra paricil: kalaṇ aṇika ~eṇru avarkku oṇpatu kā+ poṇnum nūr' āyiram kāṇamum  
koṭuttu+ taṇ pakkattu+ koṇṭāṇ a+ kō.

āṭukōṭpāṭṭu+ cēralātaṇ muppatt' eṭṭ' ~yāṇṭu vīṇṇiruntāṇ.

## VI. Panegyric

He, [who was] the son whom the queen, [daughter of] Vēḷ Āvi Kōmāṇ gave birth, (1d–2)  
to the father, Neṭuñcēralātaṇ,<sup>597</sup> the western king, (1a–c)  
[the son who] brought mountain-sheep which were taken in Taṇṭāraṇiyam<sup>598</sup> (3)  
into Toṇṭi<sup>599</sup> [and] ordered to distribute<sup>600</sup> [them, he who] gave to the seers (*pārppār*)<sup>601</sup> (4)  
a village in the western country (*kuṭanāṭu*)<sup>602</sup> together with tawny cows (*kapilai*), (5)  
[who] caused the name of Vāṇavarampaṇ<sup>603</sup> to shine sweetly, (6)  
[who] decimated in battles the warriors of others, (7)  
[who] caused to run [their] kings, (8)  
[who] gave protection to the villages against those who take cattle,<sup>604</sup> (9)  
whose loving heart [was] worthy for investigation,<sup>605</sup> (10)  
to Āṭukōṭpāṭṭu Cēralātaṇ, (11)  
Kākkaipāṭiṇiyār Naccellaiyār,<sup>606</sup> the poetess [whose] maxims were controlled by [her] poetic  
compositions (*yātta ceyyuḷ*), sang [these] ten songs. (12–13)

These [ten songs] themselves [are]: The fine sand that hides the scars, Little red *kuvalai*-flowers,  
Moats with deep spaces, The army that does not stand still, The sleeping harbour, The lives that  
were left by the bodies of the kings, Viṇali with few bangles, The large hands that shine with  
arrows, The month, when animals shrink, The sweet fruit which fell from the tree, [and this as]  
the panegyric of these ten.

Having sung, the [following] gifts [had been] obtained: [after the king] said: “adorn [yourself]

<sup>597</sup> It seems that Āṭukōṭpāṭṭu Cēralātaṇ was the brother of Kaḷaṅkāyḱkaṇṇi Nārmuṭi Cēral, whose father was Neṭuñcēralātaṇ and whose mother was the queen (*tēvi*) who belonged to the dynasty of Vēḷ Āvi Kōmāṇ.

<sup>598</sup> Taṇṭāraṇiyam (p. n.): ‘an ārya country’ (*ōr āriya nāṭu*). *Tamil Ilakkīyaṭ Pērakarāti*, 966. It is perhaps the same as the legendary Daṇḍakāraṇya in the Deccan, between the Narmadā and the Godāvari. *Pre-Pallavan Tamil Index*, 411, *Geographical Dictionary*, 114.

<sup>599</sup> Toṇṭi (p. n.): the most-mentioned Cēra settlement, a port on the Malabar Coast which appears only two times in the *Patirruppattu*, (here and as *toṇṭiyōr* in 88: 21), but in several other poems of the Caṅkam corpus: *Akanānūru*, 10: 13; *Aiṅkuṇūru*, 171: 3; 172: 2; 173: 2; 174: 1; 175: 4; 176: 1; 177: 4; 178: 3; 179: 3; 180: 4; *Kūruṇṭokai*, 128: 2; 210: 2; 238: 4; *Nārriṇai*, 8: 9; 18: 4; 195: 5; *Puranānūru*, 48: 4.

<sup>600</sup> *koṭuppiṭtu* (caus. abs.): “having made to give”.

<sup>601</sup> *pārppār*: ‘seers’ (< *pār-ttal* v. 11. tr. ‘to see’), *brāhmaṇas*.

<sup>602</sup> Kuṭa Nāṭu was the western part of the ancient Tamil-speaking South. *Pre-Pallavan Tamil Index*, 282.

<sup>603</sup> The same title appears in *Patirruppattu*, 58: 12.

<sup>604</sup> As another option, Agesthalingom suggests understanding “those who protect (*koḷvār*) the young children (*kuḷavi*)”.

<sup>605</sup> The passage *nāṭal cāra* appears also in *Patirruppattu*, 59: 17.

<sup>606</sup> Kākkaipāṭiṇiyār Naccellaiyār was a famous poetess who composed also the *Kūruṇṭokai* 210 and the *Puranānūru* 278.

with jewels!”, [and] gave hundred-thousand *kāṇam*<sup>607</sup> and nine *kā*-measure<sup>608</sup> of gold to her, that king brought [her] to his place.

Āṭukōtpāṭṭu Cēralātan̄ sat thirty-eight years majestically [on the throne].

Thus ending the Sixth Decade.

āṛām pattu murriṛru.

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<sup>607</sup> *kāṇam*: ‘an ancient weight’, ‘an ancient gold coin’, ‘gold’. *Tamil Lexicon*, 859.

<sup>608</sup> *kā*: ‘a standard weight’, ‘hundred *palam*’. *Tamil Lexicon*, 840.

## The Seventh Decade

(*ēlām pattu*)

The poet: Kapilar

The king: Celvakkattuṅkō Vāliyātaṅ

### 61.

peyar: pulāam pācarai, turai: kāṭcivālttu, tūkku: centūkku, vaṇṇam: oḷuku vaṇṇam.

palāam paḷutta pacum puṇ+ ariyal  
vāṭai turakkum nāṭu keḷu perum viral  
ōvatt' aṇṇa viṇai puṇai nal+ il  
pāvai ~aṇṇa nallōḷ kaṇavaṇ  
ponniṇ aṇṇa pūviṇ ciṇi ~ilai+ 5  
pul kāl uṇṇattu+ pakaivaṇ em kō  
pularnta cāntiṇ pularā ~īkai  
malarnta mārpiṇ mā vaḷ pāri  
muḷavu maṇ pulara ~iravalar iṇaiya  
vārā+ cēṇ pulam paṭarntōṇ aḷikk' eṇa 10  
~irakku vārēṇ eṇci+ kūrēṇ  
īttat' iraṅkāṇ ī+ torum makilāṇ  
ī+-torum mā vaḷliyaṇ eṇa nuvalum niṇ  
nal+ icai tara vanticiṇē ~oḷ vāḷ  
uravu+ kaḷirru+ **pulāam pācarai** 15  
nilaviṇ aṇṇa veḷ vēḷ pāṭiṇi  
muḷaviṇ pōkkiya veḷ kai  
vilaviṇ aṇṇa niṇ kali makilāṇē.



61<sup>st</sup> song

### The flesh-reeking military camp

[The man] with great victory [from] the country where the northern wind disperses (2)  
the sap<sup>609</sup> [from] the fresh wound of the ripened [fruit] of the jack tree, (1)  
the husband of [his] image-like<sup>610</sup> fine woman (4)  
in [his] fine house which was fashioned by workmanship like a painting,<sup>611</sup> (3)  
the greatly generous Pāri<sup>612</sup> with blooming chest (8)  
[whose] sandal paste had dried, [but whose] bestowals [were] unfading,<sup>613</sup> (7)  
our king, the enemy of the *unnam*-tree<sup>614</sup> with a small trunk, (6)  
little leaves and gold-like flowers, (5)  
set out<sup>615</sup> to a distant land [from where there is] no return, (10a–c)  
so that the supplicants despaired while the clay dried on the *mulavu*-drum. (9)  
I did not come to beg [you], saying, “Have pity [on me]!”. (10d–11b)  
I do not speak by decreasing<sup>616</sup> [your greatness].<sup>617</sup> (11c–d)  
In your bustling court, which is like a festival (18)  
for the white<sup>618</sup> hands that agitated the *mulavu*-drums (17)  
for the songstresses (*pāṭiṇi*) with moonlight-like bright spears,<sup>619</sup> (16)  
[in the court at] **the flesh-reeking military camp** with strong elephant bulls (15)  
[and] bright swords, I have come to spread<sup>620</sup> the fame (*nallicai*) (14)  
of yours, declaring, “He is a great donor who always gives! (13)  
He delights in every [act of] giving! He is someone who does not repent for what he gave!” (12)

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<sup>609</sup> For *ariyal*, the POC glosses *tēṇ*, which means ‘honey’, ‘toddy’, ‘sap’, or ‘juice’. *Tamil Lexicon*, 2072. The original meaning of *ariyal* is toddy. *Tamil Lexicon*, 128. I translated *ariyal* as ‘sap’ so that it covers all the possible meanings, but still, it is likely that we should understand a kind of honey.

<sup>610</sup> This part perhaps refers to *kolliṭṭipāvai*, the “woman-shaped statue in the Kolli hills believed to have been carved by the celestials and to have the power of fascinating all those who look at it”. *Tamil Lexicon*, 1157.

<sup>611</sup> *ōvam* (< *ōviyam*): painting, portrait, picture. *Tamil Lexicon*, 631.

<sup>612</sup> Pāri was the chief of Parampu Nāṭu (*Puranānūru*, 110), friend of Kapilar. *Pre-Pallavan Tamil Index*, 557.

<sup>613</sup> *pularā* (neg. pey.): “unfading”, “unwithering”. *Tamil Lexicon*, 2786.

<sup>614</sup> *unnam*: “a small tree with golden flowers and small leaves which, in ancient times, was invoked for omens before warriors proceeded to battle”. *Tamil Lexicon*, 488.

<sup>615</sup> The POC suggests understanding here the end of the first sentence, which was followed by U. Vē. Cāminātaiyar too. Cāminātaiyar 1980, 161.

<sup>616</sup> *eñci* (abs.): “having diminished”. *Tamil Lexicon*, 511.

<sup>617</sup> Here I followed U. Vē. Cāminātaiyar who glosses: *nin perunaiyaiṅk kuraittuk kūramāṭṭēṇ*. Cāminātaiyar 1980, 161.

<sup>618</sup> *vel kai*: “empty hand”, “white hand”, “bright hand”, “pure hand”. *Tamil Lexicon*, 3790.

<sup>619</sup> These songstresses (*pāṭiṇi*) carry bright spears, which might suggest that they performed heroic compositions or they were associated with Korṟavai. Without parallels and old commentary, we cannot be sure what is the exact meaning behind this phrase.

<sup>620</sup> The infinitive *tara* would literally mean ‘to give’, ‘to bestow’.

**62.**

peyar: varaipōl iñci, tuṛai: centuṛai pāṭānpāṭṭu, tūkkū: centūkkū, vaṇṇam: oḷuku vaṇṇam.

ilai ~aṇint' elu-tarum pal kalirru+ tolutiyōṭu  
 maḷai ~eṇa maruḷum mā ~irum pal tōl  
 ekku paṭai ~arutta koy cuval puraviyōṭu  
 maint' uṭai ~ār eyil puṭai-paṭa vaḷaii  
 vantū puratt'-irukkum pacum picir oḷ aḷal 5  
 ṇāyiru palkiya māyamoṭu cuṭar tikaḷ+  
 pollā mayaloṭu pāṭimilp' uḷitarum  
 maṭaṅkal vaṇṇam koṇṭa kaṭum tiral  
 tuppu+ tuṛai-pōkiya korra vēntē  
 puṇal poru kiṭaṅkiṅ **varai pōl iñci** 10  
 vaṇaṅk' uṭai+ taṭa+ kaiyar tōṭṭi ceppi+  
 paṇintu tirai tarupa niṅ pakaivar āyiṅ  
 pul+ uṭai viyal pulam pal+ ā parappi  
 vaḷaṅ uṭai+ ceṛuviṅ viḷaintavai ~utirnta  
 kaḷaṅ aru kuppai kāñci+ cērtti 15  
 ~ariyal ārkai vaḷ kai viṇainar  
 aruvi ~āmpal malainta ceṇṇiyar  
 āṭu ciṛai vari vaṇṭ' oṇṇum  
 pāṭal cāṇra ~avar akam talai nāṭē.

62<sup>nd</sup> song

### The mountain-like ramparts

O victorious king who accomplished [your] strength, (9)  
[king] with fierce vigour that recalled<sup>621</sup> the nature of the God of Death (Maṭaṅkal), (8)  
[the god] who roams around by roaring<sup>622</sup> with a vicious frenzy (*pollā mayal*), (7)  
[the god] with a radiating glitter together with the illusion<sup>623</sup> of a multiplied Sun<sup>624</sup> (6)  
with bright flames and yellow sparks,—[king who] encamped after [you] came, (5)  
after [you] surrounded the strong and difficult[-to-conquer] fort in order to approach [it] (4)  
with horses [which have] trimmed mane cut by the weapon with a blade, (3)  
with many big and dark shields which could be confused with clouds, (2)  
[with] a rising multitude of many elephant bulls adorned with ornaments, (1)  
if your enemies humbly give tributes, (12)  
after [they] said “Tōṭṭi!”<sup>625</sup> [as being] someone with large, greeting<sup>626</sup> hands (11)  
at **the mountain-like ramparts** with moats in which the water dashes against [the edges], (10)  
their country with vast areas is worthy of songs, (19)  
[where] people who wore chaplets of *āmpal*-flower<sup>627</sup> [collected at] the waterfalls (17)  
drive away the striped bees with flapping<sup>628</sup> wings, (18)  
[who are] workers with strong hands, [who] drink toddy, (16)  
after they put down [their] *kāñci*[-garlands]<sup>629</sup> at the unwinnowed heap [of crops] (15)  
which had withered [and] which had ripened on the fertile paddy field, (14)  
after [their] many cows spread on the vast, grassy fields. (13)

<sup>621</sup> *koṅṭa* (perf. pey.): lit. “which took”.

<sup>622</sup> *pāṭimilpu* (abs.): “having roared”. *Tamil Lexicon*, 2594.

<sup>623</sup> *māyam*: ‘illusion’, ‘deception’. *Tamil Lexicon*, 3165.

<sup>624</sup> The God of Death (Kāla, Yama) was the son of Sūrya in northern Indian mythologies. Therefore, it might be the idea on which our comparison is based. *Purāṇic Encyclopaedia*, 367.

<sup>625</sup> According to the *Tamil Ilakkīyaṭ Pēraḱarāṭi*, *tōṭṭi* means here a greeting about which no other ancient information has survived. *Tamil Ilakkīyaṭ Pēraḱarāṭi*, 1235. However, we see *tōṭṭi vaṇakkam* in *Peruṅkatai*, I. 45. 64. In his commentaries on *Peruṅkatai*, U. Vē. Cāminātaiyar claims that it is a “goad-like greeting” (*aiṅkucaṁ pōṅṅa vaṇakkattai*) when the person bends like a goad. A similar idea is the *vilvaṇakkam* (*Kural*, 827), or the reverential bowing known as *daṇḍa-praṇāma* (*A Sanskrit-English dictionary*, 399).

<sup>626</sup> We can split the sandhi either as *vaṇaṅk’ uṭai* or *aṅaṅk’ uṭai*. The first would confirm the idea of *tōṭṭi* as a greeting, the second would qualify the hands (“awful hands”?).

<sup>627</sup> *āmpal*: *Nymphaea pubescens*. Rajeswari 2020, 149.

<sup>628</sup> *āṭu cūrai*: lit. “moving wings”, “dancing wings”.

<sup>629</sup> I think we have to understand this as they put down their *kāñci*-garlands because they just surrendered, and it was time to cultivate the neglected lands. Cf. *kāñcittūṇai*, *Tamil Lexicon*, 847.

### 63.

peyar: aruvi āmpal, turai: centurai pāṭāṇpāṭṭu, tūkku: centūkku, vaṇṇam: oḷuku vaṇṇam.

pārppārkk' allatu paṇip' aṛiyalaiyē	
paṇiyā ~ullamoṭ' aṇi-vara+ kelī	
naṭṭōrkk' allatu kaṇ+ aṅcalaiyē	
vaṇaṅku cilai poruta niṇ maṇam kamaḷ akalam	
makalīrkk' allatu malarpp' aṛiyalaiyē	5
nilam tīram peyarum kālai ~āyiṇum	
kiḷanta col nī poypp' aṛiyalaiyē	
cīri ~ilai ~uḷiṅnai+ teriyal cūṭi+	
koṇṭi mikai paṭa+ taṇ tamil ceṛittu+	
kuṇru nilai taḷarkkum urumiṇ cīri	10
~oru muṇṇ' iruvar oṭṭiya ~oḷ vāḷ	
ceru miku tānai vel pōrōyē	
~āṭu perṇ' aḷinta maḷḷar māri	
nī kaṇṭaṇaiyēm eṇraṇar nīyum	
num nukam koṇṭ' iṇum veṇrōy atāṇāl	15
celva+ kōvē cēralar maruka	
kāl tirai ~eṭutta muḷaṅku kural vēli	
naṇam talai ~ulakam ceyta naṇṇ' uṇṇeṇiṇ	
aṭai ~aṭupp' aṛiyā <b>~aruvi ~āmpal</b>	
āyira vellā ~ūli	20
vāliyāta vāliya palavē.	

63<sup>rd</sup> song

### The cascade of *āmpals*

You do not know to make obeisance to others than the seers (*pārppār*).<sup>630</sup>(1)

You do not fear eyes other than of [your] friends, (3)

after [you] joined [them] with a heart that is not humble in order to start adorning<sup>631</sup> [them]. (2)

You do not know widening<sup>632</sup> [your] chest [which is] redolent with fragrance when it fights<sup>633</sup> with a bending bow, to others than [your women]. (4–5)

You do not know falsity in [your] spoken<sup>634</sup> words, (7)

even if the time [has come] which changes the elements (*tīram*) of the earth.<sup>635</sup> (6)

You are of a victorious war, [who have] an army that abounds in battles, (12)

[who have] a bright sword which drove away two [rulers]<sup>636</sup> in one go, (11)

after [you] got enraged like the thunder which makes the stability of the hills infirm, (10)

after [you] united the cool Tamil [regions],<sup>637</sup> so that tributes (*koṇṭi*) happened [to become] abundant, (9)

after [you] wore a garland of *uliñai*-flowers with small leaves! (8)

After they retreated once [you] achieved victory, the defeated warriors (*mallaṛ*) said, “We are similar to those who were seen by you!”. (13–14)

You had been victorious again, after you also took up the burden of your [family], (14d–15)

therefore, o wealthy king, o descendant of the Cēras, (15d–16)

if there is something worthy which had been done in this world with wide places, (18)

with fences that have roaring sound, which were raised from the waves by the wind, (17)

o Vāliyātaṅ, [then] live through many (21)

aeons (*ūli*),<sup>638</sup> [as many] as thousands of *vellam*,<sup>639</sup> (20)

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<sup>630</sup> *pārppār*: seers (< *pār-ttal* v. 11. tr. ‘to see’), *brāhmaṇas*.

<sup>631</sup> In *aṇi-vara*, I analyse *aṇi* as a verbal root (*aṇi-tal* v. 4. tr. ‘to adorn’, *Tamil Lexicon*, 62) and *vara* as an infinitive (*vā/varu-tal* v. 13. intr. ‘to come’) of an auxiliary that denotes the starting of an action. Wilden 2018, 155.

<sup>632</sup> Here the transitive form means intensification, instead of a causative sense.

<sup>633</sup> I analysed *poruta* as an infinitive from *porutu-tal* v. 5. intr. *Tamil Lexicon*, 2933.

<sup>634</sup> *kīlanta* (perf. pey.) < *kīla-ttal* v. 12 tr. ‘to express clearly’. *Tamil Lexicon*, 938.

<sup>635</sup> The poet perhaps referred to the decay of the world at the end of the Kali Yuga.

<sup>636</sup> POC: “the Cōḷaṅ and the Pāṇṭiyaṅ” (*cōlanum pāṇṭiyanum*).

<sup>637</sup> POC: *tamiḷ ceṟittu* – “having caused to cut through/divide (*Tamil Lexicon Supplementum*, 120) all the Tamil armies of the determined ones [of the foes]” (*mārrāratu tamilḷ paṭaiyai yellām iṭaiyaṟaṭ paṭutti*). I chose another meaning of *ceṟi-ttal*: ‘to unite’ (*Tamil Lexicon*, 1612).

<sup>638</sup> *ūli*: ‘time of universal deluge and destruction of the world’, ‘aeon’, ‘very long time’. *Tamil Lexicon*, 502.

<sup>639</sup> *vellam*: ‘a big number’, ‘flood’, etc. *Tamil Lexicon*, 3791.

[as many] as ***a cascade of āmpals***<sup>640</sup> which are not attached to leaves!<sup>641</sup> (19)

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<sup>640</sup> *āmpal*: *Nymphaea pubescens*, but here it clearly denotes a very high number. *Tamil Lexicon*, 233.

<sup>641</sup> Here the *velippatai* type of negative signifier warns us to search for another meaning than the usual one ('waterlily', 'bamboo', etc.).

**64.**

peyar: uraicālvēlvi, turai: kāṭcivālttu, tūkku: centūkku, vaṇṇam: oḷuku vaṇṇam.

valampaṭu muraciṇ vāy vāl̥ kor̥rattu+	
polam pūṇ vēntar palar-tilamma	
~aṛam karaintu vayan̄kiya nāviṇ piṛaṅkiya	
~ <b>urai cāl vēlvi</b> muṭitta kēlvi	
~antaṇar arum kalam ēṛpa nīr paṭṭu	5
~irum cēr̄ āṭiya maṇal mali muṛṛattu+	
kaḷiṛu nilai muṇaiiya tār arum takaippin̄	
puṛam ciṛai vayiriyar+ kāṇiṇ vallē	
~ekku paṭai ~aṛutta koy cuval puravi	
~alaṅkum pāṇṭil ilai ~aṇint' im eṇa	10
~āṇā+ koḷkaiyai ātaliṇ a+ vayiṇ	
mā ~irum vicumpil pal mīṇ oḷi keṭa	
ṇāyiṛu tōṇriyāṅku māṛṛār	
uru muraṇ citaitta niṇ nōl tāl vāltti+	
kāṇku vanticiṇ kaḷal toṭi ~aṇṇal	15
mai paṭu malar+ kaḷi malarnta neytal	
itaḷ vaṇapp' urra tōṛramoṭ' uyarnta	
maḷaiyiṇum perum payam poḷiti ~ataṇāl	
paci ~uṭai ~okkalai ~orīya	
~icai mēm tōṇral niṇ pācaraiyāṇē.	20

64<sup>th</sup> song

### The sacrifices which are worthy of fame

Would that the golden ornamented kings be many<sup>642</sup> (2)  
with triumphs of the truthful<sup>643</sup> swords, and with victorious *muracam*-drums. (1)  
Because you [are] someone with immortal (*ānā*) principles, (11a–c)  
while [you] say, “give away the moving<sup>644</sup> oxen<sup>645</sup> having adorned with jewels (10)  
[and] the horses with trimmed mane cut by a weapon with a blade (9)  
quickly, if you see the musicians (*vayiriyar*)<sup>646</sup> outside the walls (8)  
which are difficult [to conquer for the] vanguards, [where] elephants which bathed in the dark  
mud, disliked standing in the sandy front yard (6–7)  
after the water was poured when rare vessels were raised by the gracious ones (*antaṇar*)<sup>647</sup> (5)  
[with a] complete knowledge (*kēlvi*)<sup>648</sup> [of] **sacrifices** (*vēlvi*)<sup>649</sup> [which are] **worthy of fame** (4)  
[that] was glittering on [their] tongues that [became] brightened by explaining<sup>650</sup> the virtues  
(*aram*)!” (3)  
after [you]<sup>651</sup> appeared that place<sup>652</sup> like the sun so that the brightness of  
many stars disappeared in the dark vast sky, (11d–13b)  
after [I] praised the sturdy legs of yours [who] destroyed the enmity of the disobedient, (13d–14)  
I came to see you, o majesty, with anklets and bangles! (15)

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<sup>642</sup> In *palartilamma*, the particle *til* is, agreeing with the POC, an *oliyicai* (“omitted sound”, see: *Tamil Lexicon*, 606) that has an implied expression, perhaps a kind of assertive function here, and is not a particle for desire (*vilaiṅu*) or time (*kālam*). *Tamil Lexicon*, 1924. The particle *amma* denotes either lament or invitation of attention (Wilden 2018, 51), possibly the second. I also assume that here, we have to deal with a rhetorical question. It is, however, very difficult to translate these particles since the combination of these two is not very frequent.

<sup>643</sup> If we prefer to translate *vāy* as “edge [of the sword]” which is another extended meaning given by the *Tamil Lexicon*, then *vāy vāl* is a “sharp sword”.

<sup>644</sup> *alankum* (imp. pey.): “moving”, “shaking”, “dangling”. It might also be possible to choose one from the *Piṅkalam* provided meanings: “shining” or “glittering” (*Tamil Lexicon*, 144); however, it would not reflect the old, attested meanings of the verb *alaṅku-tal* v. 5. intr.

<sup>645</sup> Here I followed the old commentary (*tēr pūṇum erutukaḷ*) and U. Vē. Cāminātaiyar (*nārai erutu*; Cāminātaiyar 1980, 169) who both understand *pāṇṭil* as *erutu* ‘ox’. However, I cannot exclude the possibility of understanding *pāṇṭil* as having the usual ‘lamp’ meaning or translating it as ‘chariot’ (*Tamil Lexicon*, 2598).

<sup>646</sup> *vayiriyar*: ‘professional dancers’, ‘actors’ or ‘professional musicians’ (at the entry *vayiriyamākkal*, *Tamil Lexicon*, 3500).

<sup>647</sup> *antaṇar*: ‘the gracious ones’, ‘brāhmaṇas’, ‘sages’, ‘vedāntins’. *Tamil Lexicon*, 80.

<sup>648</sup> One might understand two attributes: *antaṇar* with complete knowledge/accomplished *śruti*/completed studies (*mutitta kēlvi*) and with sacrifices worthy for fame (*urai cāl vēlvi*).

<sup>649</sup> Not counting the attestations of the probably later *patikams*, this is the first time the word *vēlvi* appears in the decade poems. Before that, the texts used a more specific term, the *āvuti*.

<sup>650</sup> Here I suggest an adverbial usage of the absolutive *karaintu*.

<sup>651</sup> I found it also possible to understand the poet Kapilar as the subject of *tōṇṇi-~āṅku*, in this case, using an immodest analogy, Kapilar himself appeared like the sun so that the other shining stars (other minstrels?) disappeared on the sky.

<sup>652</sup> According to the POC, here *avayin* could refer to the town of the king (*niṅ ūr iṭattu*).



You may shower wealth even more than the clouds, (18a–c)  
[you who] became lofty using [your] appearance which had the beauty of the petals (17)  
of the *neytal*-flower that blossomed in the backwaters with blackened flowers, (16)  
thus you may rescue [my] hungry kinsfolk, (19)  
o greatness of eminent fame in your military camp! (20)

65.

peyar: nālmakilirukkai, turai: paricirururai pātānpāṭṭu, tūkku: centūkku, vaṇṇam: oḷuku vaṇṇam.

eri piṇam iṭariya cem maru+ kuḷampin  
pari ~uṭai nal mā viri ~uḷai cūṭṭi  
malaitta tevvar maṛam tapa+ kaṭanta  
kāñci cāṇra vayavar peruma  
villōr meymmaṛai cērntōr celva 5  
pūṇ aṇint' elīliya vaṇaintu varal iḷa mulai  
māṇ vari ~alkul malarnta nōkkin  
vēy puraip' elīliya viḷaṅk' irai+ paṇai+ tōḷ  
kāmar kaṭavuḷum āḷum kaṛpin  
cēṇ+ nāru naṛu nutal cē ~iḷai kaṇava 10  
pāṇar puravala paricilar verukkai  
pūṇ aṇintu viḷaṅkiya pukaḷ cāl mārpa niṇ  
**nāḷ makil irukkai** ~iṇitu kaṇṭikumē  
tīm toṭai narampin pālai vallōn  
paiyuḷ uruppin paṇṇu+ peyartt'-āṅku+ 15  
cēru cey māriyiṇ aḷikkum niṇ  
cāru paṭu tiruviṇ (n)aṇai makilāṇē.

65<sup>th</sup> song

### The seat at the daily court

O great man among the strong ones who were worthy for *kāñci*[-songs],<sup>653</sup> (4)  
who overcame [in battle], so that the valour of the enemies who opposed [you] failed, (3)  
after [you] adorned [your] galloping good horse with a spreading plume, (2)  
[your horse] with red-stained hoofs that struck against the chopped corpses, (1)  
o body shield of the archers, o lord of [your] retinue,<sup>654</sup> (5)  
o husband of the [queen with] red jewels,<sup>655</sup> with a fragrant forehead that smells from afar,  
(10)  
with a fidelity that outranks even the desirable deity,<sup>656</sup> (9)  
with rounded shoulders [having] shining joints which are beautiful while resembling the  
bamboo, (8)  
with blooming glances, with gloriously curved hips, (7)  
[and] with shapely growing young breasts, which are beautiful when adorned with ornaments, (6)  
o benefactor of the minstrels (*pānar*), o wealth of the gift-seekers! (11)  
o man of the chest which is worthy of the praises, which was shining when adorned with  
ornaments, (12a–d)  
we sweetly saw **the seat at** your **daily court** (12d–13)  
in mirth<sup>657</sup> that is similar (*anai*) to the festive brilliance<sup>658</sup> (17)  
of yours who nourish [us] like the rain which makes mud, (16)  
who changed [our mode of life] like [how] the musical mode<sup>659</sup> with *paiyul*-components<sup>660</sup> (15)  
[had been changed by] the master of *pālai*-melody<sup>661</sup> on the sweetly fastened strings. (14)

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<sup>653</sup> Here the word *kāñci* most probably refers to the *tiñai* that proclaims either the instability of earthly things or the warriors who defend themselves in the battle. *Tamil Lexicon*, 847.

<sup>654</sup> *cēmtōr*: lit. ‘the ones who joined’, retinue, friends, relatives, etc. See: *cēmtār*, *Tamil Lexicon*, 1634.

<sup>655</sup> What we see here is a so-called exocentric or possessive compound (*aṇṇmolittokai*), “an elliptical compound in which any one of the five *tokai-nilai*, q.v., that precede this in the enumeration, is used figuratively so as to signify something else of which this compound becomes a descriptive attribute.” (*Tamil Lexicon*, 183) Here it refers to the queen.

<sup>656</sup> The desirable deity is perhaps Aruntati (< Arundhatī). *Tamil Lexicon*, 133.

<sup>657</sup> I agreed with the POC, which understands “daily court” (*ōlakkam*) for *nāḷ makil*. This might exclude the possibility of reading ‘court’ again in Line 17 unless we understand *nāḷ makil* as the institutionalised “daytime audience” and *makil* as its location. Instead, I translated *makil* as ‘mirth’ and read *anai* (v. r. ‘to be similar’) instead of *nanai* (v. r. ‘to be wet’), although this is not what the old commentator read.

<sup>658</sup> Another reading would result to understand “the delightful throne at daytime (*nāḷ makil irukkai*, Line 13) in the wet court (*nanai makilāṇē*, Line 17) with festive/intoxicated brilliance (*cāru paṭu tiruvīn*, Line 17).

<sup>659</sup> *paṇṇu peyarittal*: ‘shift of tonic’, ‘change of musical mode’. *Tamil Icaip Pērakarāti*, 352.

<sup>660</sup> This description refers to *kāñci* songs (*Tamil Icaip Pērakarāti*, 389) and with it perhaps to the *kāñci* in Line 4.

<sup>661</sup> *pālai*: ‘melody of the barren tract’ (*pālai nilap perum paṇ*). *Tamil Icaip Pērakarāti*, 372.



66<sup>th</sup> song

### The bees which surround the bushes

O old truth[-saying]<sup>662</sup> beggar who goes as being one who is thinking<sup>663</sup> [of the Cēra king], (3)  
by performing the *pālai*-melody on the spacious, big *yāl* (2)  
on which the sweet consonants of the big, bending neck were matured, (1)  
they say [that the king] will grant [you] an *amḥaṇa* measure<sup>664</sup> of paddy as food to eat,  
which abundantly went<sup>665</sup> [beyond] the [rim of the] receptacle (*urāi*), (7d–9c)  
along with elephant bulls, which were brought as tributes in former times (7a–c)  
from the thicket<sup>666</sup>, which was dense with corpses who were caused to retreat [by the king] while  
killing<sup>667</sup> [them], (6)  
after he destroyed the disobedient, while the battle with spear-possessing troops<sup>668</sup> was dense, (4d–5)  
after [he] declared an oath<sup>669</sup> using [his] *muracam*-drum with thundering sound, (4a–c)  
[he will grant as the one] of [great] appearance that resembles the summit with groups of auroral  
(*nāl*)<sup>670</sup> clouds, (11)  
[he] with an array of [his] difficult[-to-defeat] vanguard<sup>671</sup> which endured the enmity (10)  
of the enraged ones, (9d)  
[he will grant as] the lord of the country of areas with wide places, (20)  
where brilliant sapphires with shining rays can be obtained (19)  
from the mounds with red pebbles which are mixed with white crystals,<sup>672</sup> (18)  
where **bees**,<sup>673</sup> **which surround the bushes** of the blossomed jasmine, (16)  
dwell among the joined clusters of the emetic nut (*pitā*) in the forest, (17)

<sup>662</sup> Cf. *Akanānūru*, 98: 9–10.

<sup>663</sup> In *paṭarṁtaṇai*, I analysed *paṭar* as ‘to think’ following the POC (*paṭartal – niṇaiṉu*), although this is not the usual, old meaning of the verb. *Tamiḷ Ilakkiyaḥ Pēraḥarāṭi*, 1513. The *Tamiḷ Lexicon* (p. 2432) claims that this meaning is attested as “to think of, consider” in *Perumpāṇāruppaṭai*, 35 (sic!), but the reference is wrong since *paṭarkuṉir* can be found in Line 37, and I cannot see the reason why it should not be translated there as ‘to set out’ (*paṭarkuṉir – ’you as the one who set out’*) as far as there is no available commentary for that.

<sup>664</sup> According to the POC, *amḥaṇam* (< Pā. *amḥaṇa/ambaṇa* < Skt. *amaṇa*) is a measure of capacity, equal to a *marakkāl*, “a grain measure, varying in different places = 8 paṭi = 1/12 kalam = 400 cu. in., as originally made of wood” (*Tamiḷ Lexicon*, 3082).

<sup>665</sup> POC: *urāi pōtal* – “the scattering that does not end in the receptacle” (*urāiyitam mutiyā tolital*).

<sup>666</sup> The *Tamiḷ Ilakkiyaḥ Pēraḥarāṭi* believes that in *Narriṇai*, 349: 7, *aluvam* means ‘battlefield’ (*pōṅkaḷam*) that might fit here, still I stuck to translating it as ‘thicket’ very much close to its old meaning as ‘depth’.

<sup>667</sup> I read *konru* having an adverbial usage.

<sup>668</sup> *kuḷū*: ‘class’, ‘assembly’, ‘crowd’. *Tamiḷ Lexicon*, 1035.

<sup>669</sup> POC: *onrumolital* – “declaring an oath” (*vañcinaiṅkūral*).

<sup>670</sup> Here, I understood *nāl* as *viṭiyal* ‘dawn’. *Tamiḷ Ilakkiyaḥ Pēraḥarāṭi*, 1341.

<sup>671</sup> Within this decade, we found another reference to *tār arum takaiḥpin* (64: 7), where I translated “walls [which are] difficult [to conquer for the] vanguards”. We may consider this reading here as well.

<sup>672</sup> *paḷiṅku* (< Skt. *sphaṭika*): ‘crystal’, ‘crystal quartz’. *Tamiḷ Lexicon*, 2554.

<sup>673</sup> *paṇavai*: “the flying thing”, here: bee (POC: *vaṇṭi*).

so that they resembled the soft flowers of the divine<sup>674</sup> *vākai*-tree<sup>675</sup>, which (15)  
had been tied with Palmyra fronds on the warriors who fell in war (14)  
[which was] like a festival of swords,<sup>676</sup> [when swords are] examined as garlands (13)  
with extensively shining blades that rise up to the shields. (12)

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<sup>674</sup> POC: *kaṭavul vākai* – “the *vākai*-tree in which a deity, the Goddess of Victory abides” (*verriṃaṭantaiyākiya kaṭavulvālum vākai*). Most probably the word *verriṃaṭantai* denotes Korṛavai.

<sup>675</sup> *vākai*: ‘sirissa’, *Albizzia*. *Dravidian Etymological Dictionary*, 5333. Considering the flowers of the *vākai*-tree, this description is quite a comparison.

<sup>676</sup> It is perhaps the same imagination as *raṇotsava* or *yuddhotsava* in Sanskrit literature, cf. *Subhāṣitaratnaśoṣa* 1576, Bhāsa: *Dūtavākya*, I. 4; Bhaṭṭanārāyaṇa: *Veṇiśaṃhāra*, 6. 10; *Mahābhārata*, VII. 35. 5; Daṇḍin: *Kāvyaḍarśa*, 2. 269, etc.

67.

peyar: veṇṇōlkkāṇṇi, tuṛai: pāṇārruppaṭai, tūkku: centūkku, vaṇṇam: oḷuku vaṇṇam.

koṭumaṇam paṭṭa neṭumoli ~okkaloṭu  
pantar+ peyariya pēr icai mūt' ūr+  
kaṭaṇ aṛi marapiṇ kai val pāṇa  
teḷ kaṭal muttamoṭu nal kalam peṛukuvai  
kol paṭai teriya vel koṭi nuṭaṅka 5  
vayaṅku katir vayiroṭu valampuri ~ārppa+  
pal kaḷirṛ' iṇam nirai pulam peyarnt' iyal-vara  
amar+ kaṇ amainta ~avir niṇa+ parappiṇ  
kuḷū+ ciṛai ~eruvai kuruti ~āra+  
talai tumint' eṅciya ~āṇ mali yūpamoṭ' 10  
uruv' il pēymakaḷ kavalai kavaṛṛa  
nāṭ' uṭaṇ naṭuṅka+ pal ceru+ koṇru  
nār' iṇar+ koṇrai **vel pōl+ kaṇṇiyar**  
vāḷ mukam poṛitta māṇ vari yākkaiyar  
neri paṭu maruppiṇ irum kaṇ mūriyoṭu 15  
vaḷai talai māṭta tāḷ karum pācavar  
ekk' āṭ' ūṇam kaṭuppa mey citaintu  
cānt' eḷil maṛaitta cāṇṛōr perum makaṇ  
malarnta kāntaḷ māṛāt' ūtiya  
kaṭum paṛai+ tumpi cūr nacaitt' āay+ 20  
paṛai paṇ+ aḷiyum pāṭu cāl neṭum varai+  
kal+ uyar nēri+ porunaṇ  
celva+ kōmāṇ pāṭiṇai celiṇē.

67<sup>th</sup> song

### **The chaplets of the white Palmyra fronds**

O skilful minstrel (*pāṇan*) of the tradition which is [your] duty to know (3)  
from the famous ancient town called Pantar,<sup>677</sup> (2)  
together with [your] relatives [who have delivered] an encomium<sup>678</sup> [upon the king], which  
happened in Koṭumaṇam,<sup>679</sup> (1)  
you will receive good jewels<sup>680</sup> together with pearls from the clear ocean, (4)  
if you go as one who sings the wealthy king, (24)  
the fighter of the Nēri [Hill], which grows high with rocks (23)  
among the tall mountains which are worthy for singing, (21c–d)  
where the wings (*parai*)<sup>681</sup> of the fast-flying bees which inflated themselves [with  
pollen] without moving away from the blossoming *kāntal*-flowers,<sup>682</sup> failed to work,  
after [they] became desired<sup>683</sup> by the Cūr,<sup>684</sup> (19–21b)  
the great son of worthy people who hid [their scars with] the beauty of the sandal-paste, (18)  
after [their] bodies had become wounded, so that they resembled the meat<sup>685</sup> on which the  
blade of the low and cruel butcher<sup>686</sup> dances, (16c–17)  
[the butcher] with animals [which have] drooping heads (16a–b)  
along with oxen with big eyes and curving horns; (15)  
[the great son of] people with bodies [which have] glorious scars impressed by the edge of the  
swords, (14)  
people with **chaplets of the white Palmyra fronds** [which had been tied] with the  
fragrant clusters of *konrai*-flower,<sup>687</sup> (13)  
after they murdered in many battles, so that [all] the countries trembled together, (12)  
while demonesses without beauty caused painful anxiety (11)

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<sup>677</sup> Pantar was the name of a Cēra port of trade. For more, read: pp. 351–352.

<sup>678</sup> *neṭumoli*: ‘encomium’, ‘boast’, ‘vow’. *Tamil Lexicon*, 2340.

<sup>679</sup> Koṭumaṇam (probably identifiable with today’s Koṭumaṇal, Erode District, Tamil Nadu) was an ancient Cēra town which was famous for its craft.

<sup>680</sup> *kalam*: jewel, vessel, ship. *Tamil Lexicon*, 778.

<sup>681</sup> Cf. *Neṭunavātai*, 15.

<sup>682</sup> *kāntal*: Malabar glory lily (*Gloriosa superba*), a fiery colour flower of the high mountains. *Dravidian Etymological Dictionary*, 1451.

<sup>683</sup> Cf. *Kūṟuntokai* 52: 2.

<sup>684</sup> The term *cūr* is the proper name of a malevolent power that later evolves to the character of Cūrapatumaṇ, the demon slaughtered by Murukaṇ.

<sup>685</sup> Reconsidering footnote 204, *ūṇam* could perhaps also mean the anvil/scaffold on which the meat is hacked.

<sup>686</sup> See: footnote 205.

<sup>687</sup> Indian laburnum (*Cassia fistula*).



together with the torsos (*yūḥam*),<sup>688</sup> which abounded in valour<sup>689</sup> [and] remained [on the battlefield]<sup>690</sup> after [their] heads had been cut, (10)  
 when a crowd of winged *eruvai*-birds filled [themselves] full with blood (9)  
 from the expanse of shiny flesh that remained at the place of the battle, (8)  
 while the rows of the herds of elephant bulls started to advance<sup>691</sup> leaving the land [behind], (7)  
 while the *valampuri*-conch<sup>692</sup> along with bugles<sup>693</sup> with glittering rays was sounding, (6)  
 when the victorious flags swayed while people were selecting the murderous weapons! (5)

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<sup>688</sup> Although *yūḥam* (< Skt. *yūḥam*) means first ‘sacrificial post’, here we followed the additional meaning given by the *Pinkalam* 1083, where *yūḥam* is a synonym of *uṭarkurai*, “torso”.

<sup>689</sup> If we split sandhi in a different way, we may read “the torsos [which] abound [in] swords (*vāl*)”.

<sup>690</sup> Cf. *Tolkāppiyam Porulaṭikāram Puṟaiṇaiyiyal*, cū. 71.

<sup>691</sup> In *iyal-vara*, the infinitive *vara* is an auxiliary that denotes the starting of an action. Wilden 2018, 155.

<sup>692</sup> *valampuri*: conch whose spirals turn to the right. *Tamil Lexicon*, 3534.

<sup>693</sup> The word *vayir* could also mean ‘diamond’. When I chose to translate ‘bugle’ (*vayir*), I relied on a similar passage that can be found among the stray songs of the *Patirruppattu* (*Patirruppattu tiraṭṭu*, 2: 10).

**68.**

peyar: ēmavāḷkkai, tuṛai: centuṛaippāṭāṇpāṭṭu, tūkku: centūkku, vaṇṇam: oḷuku vaṇṇam.

kāl kaṭipp' āka+ kaṭal olitt'-āṅku	
vēru pulatt' iṛutta kaṭṭūr nāppaṇ	
kaṭum cilai kaṭavum taḷaṅku kural muracam	
akal irum vicumpiṇ-ākatt' atira	
ve+ vari nilaiya ~eyil eṛint' allat'	5
uṇṇāt' aṭukkiya poḷutu pala kaḷiya	
neṅcu pukal ūkkattar mey tayaṅk' uyakkatt'	
iṇṇār uṛaiyuḷ tām peṛiṇ allatu	
vēnt' ūr yāṇai veḷ kōṭu koṇṭu	
kaḷ koṭi nuṭaṅkum āvaṇam pukk' uṭaṇ	10
arum kaḷ noṭaimai tīrnta piṇ makiḷ ciṛantu	
nāmam aṛiyā ~ <b>ēmam vāḷkkai</b>	
vaṭa pulam vāḷnariṇ perit' amarnt' alkalum	
iṇ nakai mēya pal+ uṛai perupa-kol	
pāyal iṇmaiṇiṇ pāc' ilai ṇekiḷa	15
neṭum maṇ iṅci nīḷ nakar varaippiṇ	
ōv' uṛaḷ neṭum cuvar nāḷ pala ~eḷuti+	
ce+ viral civanta ~am vari+ kuṭaiccūḷ	
aṇaṅk' eḷil arivaiyar+ piṇikkum	
maṇam kamaḷ māṛpa niṇ tāḷ niḷalōrē.	20

68<sup>th</sup> song

### The delightful life

Unless [they] attack the persistent<sup>694</sup> forts with desirable lines,<sup>695</sup> (5)  
while the *muracam*-drum with rumbling sound echoes in the big vast sky, (3c–4)  
[which sound] had been urged [with drumsticks into] a fierce noise<sup>696</sup> (3a–b)  
in the middle of the military camp, which stationed in various lands, (2)  
[the *muracam*-drum] which sounded like the sea as if the wind became [its] drumsticks, (1)  
unless they themselves [who have] distress<sup>697</sup> that perplexes [their] bodies and who are ones  
with heart-declared effort achieve to conquer the residences of the disobedient, (7–8)  
while a lot of time<sup>698</sup> has passed, which was multiplied without eating,<sup>699</sup> (6)  
after their joy excelled once the price of the rare toddy<sup>700</sup> was paid out (11)  
as soon as they entered the market (*āvaṇam*),<sup>701</sup> [where] flags of the toddy[-selling places]  
swayed, (10)  
after they brought [there] the white tusks of the elephant that a king rode on, [to pay with] (9)  
will they obtain the desired long lifetime (*pallurai*)<sup>702</sup> attached to sweet-smiling[-women] (14)  
after they greatly desired [it] every day, [which life is] as of those who are living [in] the  
northern lands;<sup>703</sup> (13)  
[they with] **delightful**<sup>704</sup> **life** that does not know of fear (12)  
in the shadow of your feet, o man of the chest which is fragrant of scents, (20)  
[which] is bound to [your] women with bewitching (*aṇaṅku*) grace, (19)  
with beautiful striped anklets, whose red fingers are reddened (18)

<sup>694</sup> *nilaiiya* (perf. *pey.*): “which remained permanent”, “which stayed”. *Tamil Lexicon*, 2279.

<sup>695</sup> Another possible reading: “cruel lines”.

<sup>696</sup> Or: “fast sound/rhythm(?)”.

<sup>697</sup> This might refer to the ‘hunger’ described in Line 6.

<sup>698</sup> We may translate *polutu* as ‘day’ (*Tamil Ilakkīyaṭ Pērakarāṭi*, 1832), so that *uṇṇāt aṭukkiya polutu pala* would mean “the consecutive many days without eating”.

<sup>699</sup> This may indicate a solemn vow not to eat until they have conquered the fort. Another possibility is that there was a stalemate in the supply of food during the protracted campaign.

<sup>700</sup> The precious/rare toddy with a very high price could refer to the expensive Mediterranean wine that arrived to South India in amphorae during the centuries of Indo-Roman trade. Cf. *Patirruppattu*, 30: 9–12.

<sup>701</sup> *āvaṇam* (< Skt. *āpaṇa*): ‘market’. It is quite a rare word in the corpus, see: *Neṭunalvātai*, 44; *Akanānūru*, 77: 8; 122: 3; in oblique case: *Akanānūru*, 227: 21; *Pattinappālai*, 158.

<sup>702</sup> POC: *pallurai* – “living for many days” (*paḷanāḷuraital*).

<sup>703</sup> We have three ways to understand this. Either the northern people desired a long lifespan in the same manner as our subjects, or the northern ones, in fact, had longer lives according to some unknown local legends (*mahārsi-s?*). The third option is based on POC, which glosses *vaṭa pulam* as “the world to go” or “heaven” (*pōkaṇṇūmi*), so this would refer to the longer lifespan of the celestials.

<sup>704</sup> *ēmam vāḷkkai*: “protected life”, “delightful life”.

after they painted [lines] of the many days [counting] on the tall walls<sup>705</sup> which resembled a painting, (17)

[on the walls] of the enclosure of the vast palace with tall earthen ramparts, (16)

while [their] greenish gold jewels slipped down because of the lack of sleep?<sup>706</sup> (15)

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<sup>705</sup> To mark the days on the walls is an old topos, cf. *Kuruntokai*, 358: 2–3; *Akanānūru*, 61: 4.

<sup>706</sup> To lose bangles because of emotional distress (absence of the lover) is an old topos, cf. *Kuruntokai*, 11: 1; 31: 5; 50: 4; 125: 1; 365: 1; 371: 1; 377: 2; etc.

**69.**

peyar: maṅkeluñālam, tuṛai: vañcittuṛai pāṭānpāṭṭu, tūkku: centūkkum vañcittūkkum, vaṇṇam: oḷuku vaṇṇamum corcīrvaṇṇamum.

malai ~uṛaḷ yāṇai vāṇ tōy vel koṭi  
varai micai ~aruviyiṇ vayiṇ vayiṇ nuṭaṅka+  
kaṭal pōl tāṇai+ kaṭum kural muracam  
kāl uru kaṭaliṇ kaṭiya ~urara  
~eṛintu citainta vāl 5  
ilai terinta vēl  
pāynt' āynta mā  
~āyntu terinta pukal maṛavaroṭu  
paṭu piṇam piṛaṅka nūri+ pakaivar  
keṭu kuṭi payirriya korram vēntē 10  
niṇ pōl,  
acaiv' il koḷkaiyar ākaliṇ acaiyāt'  
āṇṭōr-maṇra ~i+ **maṅ kelu ñālam**  
nilam payam poliya+ cuṭar ciṇam taṇiya+  
payam kelu vellī ~āniya(m) niṛpa  
vicumpu mey+ akala+ peyal purav' etira 15  
nāl vēṛu naṇam talai ~ōrāṅku nanta  
~ilaṅku katir+ tikiri munticiṇōrē.

69<sup>th</sup> song

## The earthly world

O victorious king who caused the injured clans of the enemies to gain acquaintance [with you],<sup>707</sup> (9d–10)

after [you] destroyed<sup>708</sup> [their armies] with [your] desirable warriors who were chosen with scrutiny, (9c, 8)

with [your] horses exhausted in gallop,<sup>709</sup> (7)

with [your] spears [whose] leaves were [only] recognisable<sup>710</sup> [in blood], (6)

with swords that spoiled while attacking, (5)

so that the fallen corpses were piled up, (9a–b)

while [your] sea-like army's *muracam*-drum with fierce voice (3)

fiercely rumbled like the windy sea [rumbles], (4)

when, like the waterfalls on the summits of the mountains, sky-touching victorious flags swayed everywhere on the mountain-like elephants, (1–2)

[your] predecessors<sup>711</sup> [who had] the wheel with shining spokes<sup>712</sup> (17)

were indeed someones who ruled tirelessly [in] this **earthly world**, because they, as just you, became ones with principles of not being inactive, (11–12)

so that the four different vast regions<sup>713</sup> flourished as being one, (16)

while [people] received the protection of rain when the sky truly widened, (15)

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<sup>707</sup> *payirriya* (perf. *pey*): “who made to live” (*Index of Patirrupattu*, 89), “who caused to become acquainted” (*Tamil Ilakkiyaḥ Pērakarāṭi*, 1550). According to the POC: “Regarding *pakaiḥar ketu kuṭi payirriya*, it is a way of saying that [he] made [them] to become someones who live, after [he] caused the injured kinsmen of the enemies to become acquainted/related [to him] in their countries itself, right after [he] destroyed [those] enemies, so that [their] fallen corpses were piled up.” (*pakaiḥar ketu kuṭi payirriyavenratu paṭu piṇam piṇaṅkaḥakaiḥar nūriya piṇ appakaiḥarutaiya kettupḥōṇa kuṭimakkalai avar nāṭṭilē payirru vālvārakaḥ paṇṇiyavenravāru*). I think Agesthalingom's gloss is based on the POC, while the word *payirriya* meant a bit different in those times. The *Tamil Ilakkiyaḥ Pērakarāṭi* (p. 1550) claims that *payil-tal* also means ‘to live’ (*vāḷum*), but its *Tolkāḥpiyam* reference (*Tolkāḥpiyam Porulaṭikāram Maraḥpiyal*, 613: 2), where the phrase *maram payil kūkaiyai* can be found, is not convincing at all, since the owl indeed lives on trees, but also used to repeat a voice/pattern from the tree, which is one among the usual old meanings of *payil-tal* (I think in that case *payil* could mean ‘to hoot’).

<sup>708</sup> The POC has useful suggestions for syntactical construction. 1. *nūri* has *pakaiḥar* as its subject which is not present in the absolutive clause (... *paṭu piṇam piṇaṅkaḥakaiḥar nūriya piṇ appakaiḥarutaiya kettupḥōṇa kuṭimakkalai*...); 2. we have to conclude the first two infinitive clauses (*nuṭaṅka*, Line 2; *urara*, Line 4) with the absolutive *nūri* (“*nuṭaṅkavenavum uraravenavuninra vinaiyecaṅkalai nūriyennum vinaiyotu muṭikka*”).

<sup>709</sup> *pāyntu* (abs.): “having pranced”, “having jumped”.

<sup>710</sup> The form *terinta* is, in fact, a perfective *peyareccam* (“which is known/recognised”).

<sup>711</sup> *munticīṇōr*: “they who were before [in time]”. Cf. *muntu-tal* (*Tamil Lexicon*, 3268).

<sup>712</sup> Here it is perhaps another reference to *dhammacakra*, a royal symbol. Cf. *Patirrupattu*, 14: 18; 22: 4.

<sup>713</sup> I assume that here the four landscapes refer to the four basic *tiṇai* (“literary landscapes/settings”) so that the whole literary universe flourished under the Cēras. Not so the POC, which understood “all the four [great] directions” (*nālu ticaiyum*).

when the beneficial Venus (Velli) remained [visible at] daytime (*āniyam*),<sup>714</sup> (14)  
while the rage of the Sun was reduced and the yield of the lands overflowed. (13)

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<sup>714</sup> Cf. *Tamīl Ilakkīyaṭ Pēraḱarāṭi*, 236.

**70.**

peyar: paṛaikkural aruvi, tuṛai: centuṛai pāṭānpāṭṭu, tūkku: centūkkum vañcittūkkum, vaṇṇam: oḷuku vaṇṇam.

kalīru kaṭaiiya tāḷ	
mā ~uṭarriya vaṭimpu	
camam tatainta vēl	
kal+ alaitta tōḷ	
vil+ alaitta nal valattu	5
vaṇṭ' icai kaṭāvā+ taṇ paṇam pōntai+	
kuvi mukil ūci veḷ tōṭu koṇṭu	
tīm cuṇai nīr malar malaintu matam cerukki	
~uṭai nilai nal+ amar kaṭantu maṛam keṭuttu+	
kaṭum ciṇam vēntar cemmaḷ tolaitta	10
valam-paṭu vāṇ kaḷal vayavar peruma	
nakaiyiṇum poyyā vāymai+ pakaiavar	
puṛam col kēḷā+ purai tīr oṇmai+	
peṇmai cāṇru perum maṭam nilai+	
kaṇṭ' irai-koṇṭa kamaḷum cuṭar nutal	15
puraiyōḷ kaṇava pūṇ kiḷar māṛpa	
tolaiyā+ koḷkai curram curra	
vēḷviyiṇ kaṭavuḷ aruttiṇai kēḷvi	
~uyar nilai ~ulakatt' aiyar iṇp' uṛuttiṇai	
vaṇaṅkiya cāyal vaṇaṅkā ~āṇmai	20
~iḷam tuṇai+ putalvariṇ mutiyar+ pēṇi+	
tol kaṭaṇ iṛutta vel pōr aṇṇal	
māṭōr uṛaiyum ulakamum kēṭpa	
~iḷumeṇa ~iḷi-tarum <b>paṛai+ kural aruvi</b>	
muḷu mutal micaiya kōṭu torum tuvaṇrum	25
ayirai neṭum varai pōla+	
tolaiyāt' āka nī vāḷum nālē.	



70<sup>th</sup> song

### The waterfalls with the voice of the *parai*-drum

O great man of the strong ones with victorious divine *kalal*-anklet, (11)  
[who] destroyed the superiority of the kings (*vēntar*) with fierce anger, (10)  
after you demolished [their] valour, after you overcame in a good battle for the possessed<sup>715</sup>  
state, (9)  
after you were elated with strength,<sup>716</sup> after you wore flowers from the water of the sweet  
mountain pool, (8)  
taking the needle[-sharp] white fronds with heaped buds (7)  
of the cool palmyra-tree<sup>717</sup> without eliminating the buzz of bees,<sup>718</sup> (6)  
[great man of an army] with the fine right [hands]<sup>719</sup> which attacked with a bow, (5)  
with arms which attacked with<sup>720</sup> stones, (4)  
with spears which destroyed in battle, (3)  
with edges<sup>721</sup> [of feet] which infuriated the horses, (2)  
[and] with legs that urged forward the elephant bulls,— (1)  
o husband of [your] eminent woman<sup>722</sup> (16a–b)  
with fragrant, glowing forehead, in whom the fidelity took a seat, (15)  
after [her] great modesty became permanent after [her] feminine grace<sup>723</sup> became worthy [of  
praise, (14)  
[your woman] with flawless splendour, who does not listen to the gossip<sup>724</sup> (13)  
of [her] enemies, [your woman] with truthfulness which does not lie even if she smiles,—(12)  
o man of the chest which shines with ornaments, (16c–d)  
you fed the deities with sacrifice (*vēlvī*), (18a–c)

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<sup>715</sup> I analysed *uṭai* here a verbal root with an adjectival usage (“the possessed state”).

<sup>716</sup> Here Agesthialingom must be right in translating ‘strength’ (Agesthialingom 1979, 107) instead of ‘rut’. See also: *Tamil Ilakkīyaṭ Pēraḱarāṭi*, 1897.

<sup>717</sup> In *paṇam pōntai*, both the words have the same meaning (“Palmyra-tree”), which is, I think, nothing more but a poetic figure. It might be possible that *paṇam* means “largeness, thickness”, a meaning that can be found in the *Tamil Lexicon* (p. 2571). However, it is difficult to prove that this meaning can already be found in the Caṅkam corpus, and the *Tamil Lexicon* gives only a late reference from *Cūtāmaṇinikaṇṭu*.

<sup>718</sup> Here, my translation relied on the explanation of Turaicāmiṭṭipillai: *vaṇṭiṇam moyttuṭ pāṭutal illāta*. However, *kaṭāvā* is really weird here, cf. the meanings of *kaṭāvu-tal* v. 5. tr., *Tamil Lexicon*, 666.

<sup>719</sup> One may prefer to translate *valam* as ‘strength’.

<sup>720</sup> It is possible that *kal* is not an unmarked instrumental but the object (unmarked accusative) of the action (stone-built forts? hilly/rocky countries?).

<sup>721</sup> *vaṭṭimpu*: ‘edge’, ‘border’, ‘extremity’, ‘eaves’, etc. *Tamil Lexicon*, 3477.

<sup>722</sup> *puraiyōl*: “she who is great” (prob. from *purai-ttal* v. 11. intr. ‘to be great’, *Tamil Lexicon*, 2777).

<sup>723</sup> Here *peṇmai* was translated as “feminine grace”. *Tamil Lexicon*, 2860.

<sup>724</sup> I translated *puram col* (“the word(s) [from] outside”) as ‘gossip’.

while [your] retinue with unceasing maxims surrounded [you]! (17)

You caused the delight of the paragons (*aiyar*) in the world of higher state (19)

by [your] knowledge. (18d)

After you honoured the elders by sons [who are your] young retinue (21)

with manliness that does not humble itself, [and with] excellence which became humble,—

(20)

o majesty of the victorious war who performed the ancient duty, (22)

may your living days become eternal<sup>725</sup> (27)

like Ayirai,<sup>726</sup> the tall mountain, (26)

where every peak from the bottom to the top is entirely filled (25)

with **waterfalls** [which have] **the voice of the *parai***[-drum], which tumble while sweetly sounding,<sup>727</sup> (24)

so that even the world, where the deities (*māṭōr*)<sup>728</sup> live, [can] hear [it]! (23)

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<sup>725</sup> *tolaiyātu* (neg. abs.): “without dying”, “without being perished”, “without being terminated”.

<sup>726</sup> Ayirai was an established place of worship, probably a hill.

<sup>727</sup> *ilumēṇa*: onom. that denotes noise or sweetness. Wilden 2018, 54.

<sup>728</sup> The word *māṭōr* is a hapax legomenon in the Caṅkam corpus. Here I followed the commentaries of Turaicāmiṇṇai who glosses *tēvarkal*. Turaicāmiṇṇai 1973, 336.

## VII. patikam

maṭiyā ~uḷḷamoṭu mārrōr+ piṇitta  
neṭum nuṇ kēḷvi ~antuvaṅk' oru tantai  
~īnra maḱaḷ poraiyaṇ perum tēvi ~īnra maḱaṇ  
nāṭu paṭi paṭuttu naṇṇār oṭṭi  
veru-varu tāṇai koṭu ceru+ pala kaṭant' 5  
ēttal cānra ~iṭaṇ uṭai vēḷvi  
~ākkiya poluṭiṇ aṛam turai-pōki  
māya-vaṇṇaṇai maṇaṇ uṛa+ perravaṇ  
kōttiram nellīṇ okantūr ittu+  
purōcu mayakki 10  
mallal uḷḷamoṭu māc' aṛa viḷaṅkiya  
celvakkāṭuṅkō vāḷiyātaṇai+  
kaṭilar pāṭiṇār pattu+ pāṭṭu.

avaitām: pulāam pācaṛai, varai pōl iṅci, aruvi ~āmpal, urai cāl vēḷvi, nāḷ maḱiḷ irukkai,  
putal cūḷ paṛavai, vēḷ pōḷ+ kaṇṇi, ēmam vāḷkkai, maṇ keḷu ṇālam, paṛai+ kural aruvi. ivai  
pāṭiṇ patikam.

pāṭi+ perra paricil: ciṛu puram eṇa nūr' āyiram kāṇam koṭuttu naṇrā ~eṇṇum kuṇr' ēri  
niṇru taṇ kaṇṇiṇ kaṇṭa nāṭ' ellām kāṭṭi+ koṭuttāṇ a+ kō.

celvakkāṭuṅkō vāḷiyātaṇ iru patt' ai yāṇṭu vīrriruntāṇ.

## VII. Panegyric

These ten songs were sung by Kapilar<sup>729</sup> (13)  
on Celvakkatuṅkō Vāliyātaṅ (12)  
who flawlessly shone with [his] brilliant mind (11)  
after he confused [his] *purōcu* (*purohita*),<sup>730</sup> (10)  
who gave Okantūr [rich] in paddy to a *kōttiram* (*gotra*)<sup>731</sup> (9)  
[as being] the one who achieved to have the Dark Hued One<sup>732</sup> in [his] heart, (8)  
who accomplished the virtue (*aram*) at the time, when the sacrifice (*vēlvi*) which possessed a  
place worthy for praising, was arranged, (6–7)  
who overcame in many battles with<sup>733</sup> [his] frightening army, (5)  
who caused to run [his] enemies, who caused to fall the villages of [their] countries,<sup>734</sup> (4)  
[who was] the son whom the great queen, the only begotten daughter of Poraiyaṅ, [her]  
father,<sup>735</sup> gave birth to Antuvaṅ, [his father] with high, refined<sup>736</sup> knowledge, (2–3)  
[Antuvaṅ who] shackled the enemies with [his] diligent mind. (1)

These [ten songs] themselves [are]: The flesh-reeking military camp, The mountain-like  
ramparts, The cascade of *āmpals*, The sacrifices which are worthy of fame, The seat at the daily  
court, The bees which surround the bushes, The chaplets of the white Palmyra fronds, The

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<sup>729</sup> Kapilar is one of the best and most famous poets of the Caṅkam corpus, an intimate friend of Pāri, later Celvakkatuṅkō Vāliyātaṅ's court poet. For more biographical details, see: *Pre-Pallavan Tamil Index*, 219. Whether Kapilar himself was the author of these ten songs or the original author used his name only to promote the greatness of *Patiruppattu* is a question of debate. From the poems, however, it is clear that the author of the decade followed the literary program that associated the decade with Kapilar not only by name but also by the famous biographical event when Pāri died and Kapilar left his court. We may argue that these poems are less polished than the others of Kapilar, but we have no real argument against the guess that Kapilar was the original author of these songs.

<sup>730</sup> Just like his father, Antuvaṅ, who shackled the enemies by means of his mind (Line 1), this king confused his *purohita* by means of his mind.

<sup>731</sup> Okantūr was the name of a *brahmadeya*-village. What follows is not easy to understand, since *kōttiram* could mean a 'gotra'; 'a type of paddy' (See: *Pre-Pallavan Tamil Index*, 181), or more specifically 'a paddy fit to offer in *hotra*-oblation' (*kōttiram nel*). The king gave the village either to 1. the one who achieved to have the deity in the heart/mind (we can split the sandhi to read either *perravark'ōttiram*, or *perravaṅ kōttiram*), or 2. to the *kōttiram*, but then *perravaṅ* is an apposition of *vāliyātanai* (Line 12).

<sup>732</sup> According to the POC, Māyavaṅ is Tirumāl who could be already identical with Viṣṇu/Kṛṣṇa.

<sup>733</sup> Here, *koṭu* is an alternate form of *koṇṭu*, a frozen absolutive which serves as a postposition (from the *bhakti* times onwards) that means "with". Wilden 2018, 85.

<sup>734</sup> Or: 'a very big number' (*nāṭu*) of villages. *Tamil Lexicon*, 2211.

<sup>735</sup> The name of the queen (the mother of Celvakkatuṅkō) and her father (the maternal grandfather of Celvakkatuṅkō) is a tricky question. I believe that 1. we do not know the personal name of the queen, and *perum tēvi* means only "great queen"; 2. Poraiyaṅ is surely the name of the queen's father; 3. she is the daughter who was born (*īṇra makal*). The phrase *oru tantai*, however, is the real question. The *Pre-Pallavan Tamil Index* states that it is the name of the maternal grandfather (p. 182), which I do not find convincing. In contrast, I think that the following reading could be right: "the [only] one (*oru*) begotten (*īṇra*) daughter (*makal*) [of her] father (*tantai*)".

<sup>736</sup> Or: *neṭum nuṅ* could mean "long minute" that is long-lasting.

delightful life, The earthly world, The waterfalls with the voice of the *paṛai*-drum, [and this as] the panegyric of these ten.

Having sung, the [following] gifts [had been] obtained: having given hundred-thousand *kāṇam* as a little gift,<sup>737</sup> having climbed the hill [called] Naṇṛā,<sup>738</sup> having stood [there], having shown all the countries which were seen by his [own] eyes, that king gave [all of them to him].

Celvakkaṭuṅkō Vāliyātaṅ sat twenty-five years majestically [on the throne].

Thus ending the Seventh Decade.

ēlām pattu murriru.

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<sup>737</sup> No better idea than the Tamil Lexicon's *ciṅu-puṛam* entry, where it means 'little gift' (p. 1463), although it refers only to this poem.

<sup>738</sup> Naṇṛā: an unidentified hill of the Cēra country.

## The Eighth Decade

(*ettām pattu*)

The poet: Aricil-kiḷār

The king: Peruñcēral Irumpoṟai

### 71.

peyar: kuṟuntāl̄ ñāyil, tūkku: centūkku, tuṟai: centuṟai pāṭāṇpāṭṭu, vaṇṇam: oḷuku vaṇṇamum  
coṟcīrvaṇṇamum.

aṟāa yāṇar akaṇ kaṇ ceṟuviṇ  
aruvi ~āmpal neytaḷoṭ' arintu  
ceṟu viṇai makaḷir malinta vekkai+  
parūu+ pakaṭ' utirtta mel ce+ nellin  
ampaṇam ~aḷavai ~uṟai kuvitt'-āṅku+ 5  
kaṭum tēr' uṟu kiḷai mocintaṇa tuñcum  
celum kūṭu kiḷaitta ~iḷam tuṇai makāriṇ  
alantaṇar peruma niṇ uṭaṟṟiyōrē  
~ūr eri kavara ~urutt' eḷunt' uraii+  
pōr cuṭu kamal pukai mātiram maraiṇṇa 10  
matil(-)vāy+,  
tōṇṟal̄ iṟyātu tam paḷi ~ūkkunar  
kuṇṭu kaṇ akaḷiya **kuṟum tāḷ ñāyil**  
ār eyil tōṭṭi vauviṇai ~ēroṭu  
kaṇṟ' uṭai ~āyam tarū+ pukal ciṟantu  
pulavu vil+ iḷaiyar aṅkai viṭuppa 15  
mattu+ kayir' āṭā vaikal poḷutu niṇaiyūu  
~āṇ payam vāḷnar kaḷuvuḷ talai maṭaṅka+  
pati pāl̄ āka vēru pulam paṭarntu  
viruntin̄ vāḷkkaiyoṭu perum tiru ~arṟ'-eṇa  
arum camatt' arum nilai tāṅkiya pukar nutal 20  
perum kaḷirṟ' ~yāṇaiyoṭ' arum kalam tarāar  
mey paṇi kūrā aṇaṅk' eṇa+ parāvalin̄  
pali koṇṭu peyarum pācam pōla+  
tiṟai koṇṭu peyarti vāḷka niṇ ūḷi

~uravarum maṭavarum aṛivu terint' eṇṇi

25

~aṛintaṇai ~aruḷāy āyiṇ

yār ivaṇ neṭum-takai vāḷumōrē.

71<sup>st</sup> song

### The bastions with small stairs

Those people who made you angry, o great one, were suffering (8)  
like children, young companions who scooped up the rich hive (7)  
where the fiercely stinging colony [were] sleeping as being ones who crowded (6)  
[and] heaped like an *ampanam*[-measure] of tender red paddy in the receptacle, (4c–5)  
which had been threshed by the large buffalos (4a–b)  
on the threshing floor (*vekkai*)<sup>739</sup> which was crowded<sup>740</sup> with women working in the fields, (3)  
having cut a large number of *āmpal*-flower<sup>741</sup> together with *neytal*-flowers (2)  
on the fields with wide areas [which have] unceasing fertility. (1)  
You seized the defence [over] the difficult fort (13a–c)  
with **bastions** [which have] **small stairs**,<sup>742</sup> with moats in the depth,<sup>743</sup> (12)  
[fort of] those who committed their crimes, [you seized] without letting the  
gate<sup>744</sup> of the walls be visible<sup>745</sup> (11)  
when the fragrant smoke of the burning of war concealed the great directions, (10)  
after [the fire] spread, arose, [and] got enraged<sup>746</sup> so that the flames seized the villages. (9)  
You departed by taking the tributes (*tirai*) (24a–b)  
like the *pācam* (*piśāca*), which departs by taking the oblation (*palī*), (23)  
because [they,] with bodies full of shivering,<sup>747</sup> worshipped<sup>748</sup> [you] as the *ananku*,<sup>749</sup> (22)  
they who did not give [you] precious jewels<sup>750</sup> together with big elephant bulls (21)  
with spotted forehead which endured the difficult state of the difficult battle, (20)  
because [their] great wealth vanished<sup>751</sup> together with [their] feast-like lifestyle (19)

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<sup>739</sup> The word *vekkai* is a hapax legomenon. The POC understands it as *kaṭāvitukalam* (“threshing floor”). However, I am not sure whether its gloss is only an educated guess or points to a word that ever existed. As a seemingly possible etymology, is *vekkai* built up from ‘vai’ (“straw of paddy”, *Dravidian Etymological Dictionary*, 5553), in which the diphthong [ai] had phonetically simplified to [e] + ‘kai’, a suffix that forms a noun?

<sup>740</sup> *malinta* (perf. pey.): “which is abounded/abundant”.

<sup>741</sup> Another reading is “*āmpal* [from around] the waterfalls/streams (*aruvi*)”.

<sup>742</sup> POC: *tāl* – “stair/step/rung of ladder” (*paṭi*). *Tamil Lexicon*, 2436.

<sup>743</sup> Or: “moats (*akalī*) with deep (*kuṇṭu*) places (*kaṇ*)”. Cf. *Patirrupattu*, 45: 7.

<sup>744</sup> The meaning of *vāy* here is either a mere locative suffix or means the gate.

<sup>745</sup> According to the POC, *tonṛal iyātu* together means a negative absolutive (*tonṛātu*, *tonṛal iyāmal*).

<sup>746</sup> The POC makes it clear that the subject of these absolutives is the fire/flame (*uruttu eḷuntu urai ūr eri kavaravenak kuttuka*).

<sup>747</sup> The word *paṇi* is a root noun here.

<sup>748</sup> Here *parāvalin* (contracted v. n. + obl.) stands for a causal clause.

<sup>749</sup> *ananku*: ‘fear’, ‘torment’, ‘class of demon/spirit’. *Tamil Lexicon*, 61; *Dravidian Etymological Dictionary*, 112.

<sup>750</sup> Or: “difficult[-to-obtain] vessels”.

<sup>751</sup> Here *arena* is a causal absolutive.



after [you] set out to various lands, while the villages became ruins (*pāl*), (18)  
 so that Kaluvul,<sup>752</sup> [the chief] of those who live from the yield of cows, bowed [his] head, (17)  
 after [he] thought about the time of the dawn, when the rope of the churning-staff did not move,  
 (16)  
 when [your] young men with flesh-reeking bows joyfully left with [full-filled] palms,  
 after [he] gave [them] calf-possessing [cow] herds along with bulls. (14–15)  
 May your era (*ūl*)<sup>753</sup> last<sup>754</sup> long! (24c–d)  
 After [you] examined and considered the knowledge of both the learned and the ignorant ones, (25)  
 if you do not have pity [on them as being] someone who knew [them, then] (26)  
 who [will do that among] the greatly befitting ones who live here? (27)

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<sup>752</sup> Chief of Kāmūr. *Akanānūru*, 135: 13, 365: 12; *Patirrupattu*, 88:7.

<sup>753</sup> Another possible translation of *ūl* here is 'lifetime'. *Tamil Lexicon*, 502.

<sup>754</sup> *vālka* (opt.): "let [it] live!".

72.

peyar: urutt' elu vellam, turai: centurai pātānpāttu, tūkku: centūkku, vaṅṅam: oluku vaṅṅam.

ikal perumaiyiṅ paṭai kōl aṅcār  
cūlātu tuṅital allatu varit'-uṭaṅ  
kāval etirār kaṭuttōr nāṭu niṅ  
muṅ tiṅai mutalvarkk' ōmpiṅar uṛaintu  
maṅpatai kāppa ~arivu valiyuṛuttu 5  
naṅr' ari ~ullattu+ cāṅrōr aṅṅa niṅ  
paṅpu naṅk' ariyār maṭam perumaiyiṅ  
tuṅcal uṛūum pakal puku mālai  
nilam poṛai ~orāa nr ṅemara vant' iṅṭi  
~uravu+ tirai kaṭukiya ~**urutt' elu vellam** 10  
varaiyā mātiratt' iruḷ cērpu parantu  
ṅāyiru paṭṭa ~akaṅru varu kūṭatt'  
am cāṛu puraiyum niṅ tolil olittu+  
poṅku picir nuṭakkiya cem cuṭar nikalyiṅ  
maṭaṅkal tyiṅ aṅaiyai 15  
ciṅam kelu kurucil niṅ uṭarṛiciṅōrkkē.

72<sup>nd</sup> song

### The furiously rising flood

After [they] stayed as someones who were careful to the first men of the ancient family (4)  
of yours, in the country of enraged people, someones who do not happen to defend,<sup>755</sup> (3)  
not even a little, except [their] unconsidered determination (2)  
[as being] ones who do not fear to take up weapon because of the greatness of [their] enmity, (1)  
after [they] abandoned<sup>756</sup> the burden of [their] lands in the entering evening of the day of  
[their] demise<sup>757</sup> (8–9b)  
because of the greatness of [their] ignorance (*maṭam*) as being someones who do not know  
[your] nature well, (7)  
which is like of the worthy men (*cānrōr*) with a mind that knows the good, (6)  
who strengthened [their] knowledge to guard the humanity,<sup>758</sup> (5)  
after [you] surrounded [them] by coming so that the water (*nīr*)<sup>759</sup> had become swollen, (9)  
after [you] completed your mission, which resembled a beautiful festival (13)  
with crowds that increasingly come, [festival] when the Sun appeared (12)  
by spreading [and] uniting with the darkness of the                    limitless great directions, (11)  
[festival with] a **furiously rising flood** that billowed fast with strong waves, (10)  
o angry king (*kuruciḷ*), for them who made you enraged, (16)  
you are similar to the fire<sup>760</sup> of the God of Death (*maṭaṅkal*) (15)  
with the lustre of red flames that destroyed the foaming spray! (14)

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<sup>755</sup> POC: *kāval etirār* – “those who do not guard/protect [themselves]” (*kākkamāṭṭār*).

<sup>756</sup> The word *orāa* is a metrically lengthened negative *peyareccam* from *oruvu-tal* v. 5. tr. ‘to abandon’, ‘to renounce’ (*Tamil Lexicon*, 603).

<sup>757</sup> POC suggests *ellā uyirum irantu-ṭaṭtal* (“the dying of all lives”) for *tuñcal*, *ūli* (“era/aeon”) for *ṭakal*, and *ūlimuṭi* (“the end of the era/aeon”) for *mālai*. One may consider to understand *tuñcal* as “resting without work” (cf. *Akanānūru*, 141: 5) which leads to neglect of things to do (*nilam ṭorai orāa*).

<sup>758</sup> POC: *maṅṭai* – “multitude of people” (*makkatṭaṅmai*).

<sup>759</sup> One may translate *nīr* as ‘you’: “so that you spread [on the fields]”.

<sup>760</sup> This is perhaps a reference to the submarine fire at the end of a yuga (*pralayāgni*; Tam. *vaṭavaiṭṭi*). *Tamil Lexicon*, 3018.

73.

peyar: niṛantikāḷ pācīlai, tuṛai: centuṛai pāṭāṇpāṭṭu, tūkku: centūkku, vaṇṇam: oḷuku vaṇṇam.

uravōṛ eṇṇiṇum maṭavōṛ eṇṇiṇum

piṛarkku nī ~āyiṇ allatu niṇakku+

piṛar uvamam ākā ~oru perum vēntē

.....

.....

marutam cāṇṛa malar talai viḷai vayal

cey~-uḷ nārai ~oyyum makalir

5

iravum pakalum pāc' iḷai kaḷaiyār

kuṛum pal yāṇar+ kuravai ~ayarum

kāviri maṇṭiya cēy viri vaṇappiṇ

pukāar+ celva pūliyar meymmaṛai

kaḷai virint' eḷu-tarum maḷai tavaḷ neṭum kōṭṭu+

10

kolli+ poruna koṭi+ tēr+ poraiya niṇ

vaḷaṇum āṇmaiyyum kai vaṇmaiyyum

māntar aḷav' iṛantaṇa ~eṇa+ pal nāl

yāṇ cenr' uraiṇṇavum tērār piṛarum

cāṇṛōr uraiṇṇa+ teḷikuvar-kol+ eṇa

15

~āṅku mati maruḷa+ kāṅkuval

yāṅk' uraiṇṇē eṇa varuntuval yāṇē.

73<sup>rd</sup> song

**The golden jewels with shiny colour** <sup>761</sup>

O unique great king, other people cannot become<sup>762</sup> [the subject of] (3)  
comparison with you, unless you become [the subject of comparison] for others, (2)  
whether they are considered as knowledgeable or whether they are considered as ignorant! (1)

O the wealthy one of Pukār<sup>763</sup> (9a–b)  
with beauty that expands far away, [Pukār] where the Kāviri rushed, (8)  
[Pukār,] where many short *kuravai*-dances<sup>764</sup> are performed for the fertility (7)  
by the ones who do not remove [their] greenish[-golden] jewels neither day or night, (6)  
girls who chase away the *nārai*-bird on the wet lands<sup>765</sup> (5)  
at the productive fields of the vast regions which were worthy [to mention as] *marutam*<sup>766</sup> (4)

.....

.....<sup>767</sup>

O body shield of the Pūliyar! (9c–d)

O fighter of the Kolli[-hills] (11a–b)  
with tall peaks where clouds creep, and bamboos rise extensively! (10)  
O Poraiyaṅ with the chariot [which has] flags! (11c–d)  
After I wandered for many days saying that your wealth, valour, and generosity went beyond  
the limits of humans, (11d–14b)  
while I talked, they [did] not accept it as true. (14b–c)  
I see there that [their] minds are puzzled, while [I] said [to myself] (16)  
‘would they be enlightened if also other worthy men were to talk [to them]?’ (14d–15)  
I struggle; how shall I talk? (17)

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<sup>761</sup> The title (*niṅam tikaḷ pāc’ ilai*) of this poem was part of the missing lines which we can reconstruct from the mediaeval commentary.

<sup>762</sup> I understood *ākā* as a finite verb here and Line 1–3 as a separate sentence.

<sup>763</sup> Pukār was well-known as an important Cōḷa town, however, it seems to be a Cēra town at the time of this king.

<sup>764</sup> *kuravai*: dance in a circle prevalent among the women of sylvan or hill tracts. *Tamil Lexicon*, 1012.

<sup>765</sup> *cey*: wet field. *Tamil Lexicon*, 1599.

<sup>766</sup> Here the word *marutam* refers to the *tiṅai* or literary landscape/setting called *marutam*. This is perhaps part of a poetic fancy in which the ambiguous *ceyyuḷ* in Line 6 can be also understood as ‘poetry’ at least at the level of association.

<sup>767</sup> From the old commentary of the *Patirruppattu*, it is possible to reconstruct the missing lines somewhat (as the Rājam edition also did): “the worthy men with [good] hearts which served the dark deity [who possesses] women in [his] lofty abode, [women with] greenish[-gold] jewels which shine with its colour, [jewels] which were abundant [on their] bright foreheads with tresses” (*kūntal oḷ nūtal polinta niṅam tikaḷ pāc’ ilai ~uyar tiṅai maḷaḷ irum teyvam tariṅum neṅcatt’ ānrōr*). From these, *niṅam tikaḷ pāc’ ilai* happened to become the title (*peyar*) of the poem. The connection between Line 4 and the missing ones is not clear to me (*marutam* of the *ānrōr*?).

74.

peyar: nalamperu tirumaṇi, tuṛai: centuṛai pāṭāṇpāṭṭu, tūkku: centūkku, vaṇṇam: oḷuku vaṇṇam.

kēlvi kēṭṭu+ paṭivam oṭiyātu	
vēlvi vēṭṭanai ~uyarntōr uvappa+	
cāy aral kaṭukkum tāl irum kūntal	
vēru-paṭu tiruviṇ niṇ valī vāliyar	
koṭumaṇam paṭṭa viṇai māṇ arum kalam	5
pantar+ payanta palar pukal muttam	
varai ~akam naṇṇi+ kuṛum porai nāṭi+	
teriyunar koṇṭa cirar' uṭai+ paim porī+	
kavai maram kaṭukkum kavalaiya maruppiṇ	
pulli ~iralai+ tōl ūṇ utirttu+	10
tūtu kaḷaint' eṇciya tikaḷ viṭu pāṇṭil	
paruti pōkiya puṭai kiḷai kaṭṭi	
~ekk' uṭai ~irumpiṇ uḷ+ amaittu vallōṇ	
cūṭu nilai ~uṛru+ cuṭar viṭu tōṛram	
vicump' āṭu marapiṇ parunt' ūṛ' aḷappa	15
<b>nalam peru tiru maṇi</b> kūṭṭum nal tōl	
oṭuṅk' ir oṭi ~oḷ nutal karuvil	
eṇ+ iyal murri ~ir arivu purintu	
cālpum cemmaiyum uḷa+-paṭa+ piṛavum	
kāvaṛk' amainta ~aracu tuṛai-pōkiya	20
vīru cāl putalvaṇ perraṇai ~ivaṇarkk'	
arum kaṭaṇ irutta ceru+ pukal muṇpa	
~aṇṇavai maruṇṭaṇeṇ allēṇ niṇ-vayiṇ	
muḷut' uṇarnt' oḷukkum narai mūt' āḷaṇai	
vaṇmaiyum māṇpum vaḷaṇum eccamum	25
teyvamum yāvatum tavam uṭaiyōrkk' eṇa	
vēru-paṭu naṇam talai+ peyara+	
kūriṇai peruma niṇ paṭimaiyāṇē.	

74th song

### The beautiful, brilliant sapphires

You performed the sacrifice (*vēlvi*) without breaking [your] vow<sup>768</sup> by listening to the *kēlvi* (*śrutī*),<sup>769</sup> so that those who are exalted<sup>770</sup> rejoice. (1–2)

May your lineage<sup>771</sup> live [long], [lineage] with [your wife being] another Goddess (*tiru*)<sup>772</sup> (4) with descending dark tresses that resemble the tender silt!<sup>773</sup> (3)

O battle-desiring strong man who completed [your] difficult duty (22)

for the sake of these people here, you begot a son who abounds in superiority, (21)

[who] completed the kingship which [was] suitable to protect (20)

the excellence [and] the goodness and other things to be included, (19)

after you had desired the two [pieces of] knowledge<sup>774</sup> by ending the period countable in the womb (18)

of [your queen with] bright forehead, with hair restrained the moisture [of oil], (17)

with delicate shoulders on which **beautiful**, brilliant **sapphires** were attached, (16)

so that a brahminy kite, which was circling in the sky according to the tradition, measured to approach (15)

[her] glittering appearance, having accessed (*urru*) the state of being covered (*cūtu*) by a mighty man (*vallōn*), (13d–14)

after [that man] sought [for] a small hillock by reaching the inside of the mountains (7)

[which possess] Pantar-produced pearls praised by many (6)

[and] glorious, rare jewels which happened to be crafted in Koṭumaṇam,<sup>775</sup> (5)

after [he] had stripped off the flesh [from] the skin of the dotted *iralai*-antelope<sup>776</sup> (10)

with branching antlers that resemble the branching tree, (9)

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<sup>768</sup> POC: *paṭivam* – “The vows which are earlier conducted as an instruction for the sake of performing the *yāga/yākam*” (*yākam paṇṇutarku uṭalāka muṇṇu celuttum virataṅka*).

<sup>769</sup> POC: *kēlvi kēṭtal* – “listening the instructional method for the sake of performing the *yāga/yākam*” (*yākam paṇṇutarku uṭalāṇa vitikēṭtal*).

<sup>770</sup> POC: *uyartōr – tēvar*.

<sup>771</sup> The basic meanings of *vali* are ‘way’, ‘path’, ‘road’, etc. However, it also means *marapu* (Tamil Ilakkiyap Pērakarāṭi, 2155), which can be translated as ‘law’, ‘antiquity’, ‘custom’, or ‘ancestral line’. *Tamil Lexicon*, 3086.

<sup>772</sup> The POC claims that the suffix *iṅ* is, in fact, only a syllabic supplement (*acaiṇilai*).

<sup>773</sup> *aral*: black sand, silt (*karu maṇal*). *Tamil Ilakkiyap Pērakarāṭi*, 187.

<sup>774</sup> POC: *īr arivu* – “the knowledge of this life, the knowledge of next life” (*immaiyaṛivu maṛumaiyaṛivu*). *Tamil Lexicon*, 298; 3124.

<sup>775</sup> The two towns, Pantar and Koṭumaṇam appear together in *Paṭirruppattu*, 67: 1–2. These lines might refer to the Cēra mountains where these commodities were easily accessible to buy.

<sup>776</sup> In this reconstruction, I followed the POC. However, if we read *Puṛaṇānūru*, 166: 10–17, it might be also possible that either the king or his son wears the deer skin as a royal attribute instead of the queen.

with golden (*ḥaim*) spots which were scattered [on the skin], [antelope] which was taken by the ones who know [the customs], (8)  
 after [he] had tied the parts at the circling side (12)  
 of the lustre-emitting [leather-]round (*ḥāntil*) which remained after [its] defects were removed, (11)  
 after [he] had crafted<sup>777</sup> the inside [of the garment] with a pointed instrument. (13)  
 I am not puzzled by such things. After you understood the entireness in yourself (23–24a)  
 when [you] departed towards various vast areas, (27)  
 at [the time of] your penance, o great man, you said (28)  
 to [your] old man with grey hair<sup>778</sup> who helps [you] to rule (24b–d)  
 that the generosity, the glory, the wealth [of the spirit], the lack [of the material wealth,] (25)  
 and the deities (*teyvam*) are [available only] for the ascetics (*tavam utaiyōr*). (26)

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<sup>777</sup> The POC suggests changing *amaittu* (abs.) to *amaiḥḥa* (inf.). I consider this to be the most problematic part of the poem since it is unclear who does the actions in Lines 7–13. I accepted the idea of the POC, since it is more possible that the *vallōn*, an *able man* did the hunting/skinning rituals rather than the queen, the king, or their son.

<sup>778</sup> POC: *navai mūt' ālan – purōkitaṅ (purohita)*.



75.

peyar: tūmcērru yānar, turai: centurai pāṭānpāṭṭu, tūkku: centūkku, vaṇṇam: oḷuku vaṇṇam.

irum puli koṅru perum kaḷir' aṭūum  
arum porī vāya-māṅ aṅaiyai pal vēl  
polam tār yānai ~iyal tēr+ poraiya  
vēntarum vēḷirum piṇarum kīl+ paṇintu  
niṅ vaḷi-paṭāar āyiṅ nel mikk' 5  
aṇai ~uru karumpiṅ **tīm cērr'** -yānar  
varunar varaiyā vaḷam vīnk' irukkai  
val pulam talī mel pāl tōrum  
arum *parai* viṇaiṅnar pul+ ikal paṭuttu+  
kaḷ+ uṭai niyamatt' oḷ vilai koṭukkum 10  
veḷ varak' uḷuta koḷ+ uṭai+ karampai+  
cem nel valci ~aṇiyār tam tam  
pāṭal cāṅra vaippiṅ  
nāṭ'-uṭaṅ āṭal yāvaṇat' avarkkē.

75<sup>th</sup> song

### The fertility with sweet sap

O Poraiyaṅ<sup>779</sup> with advancing chariots, with elephants [which have] golden garlands, (3)  
[and] with many spears, you are the one who is similar to the strong animal with rare dots<sup>780</sup> (2)  
which killed the great elephant bull after [it] killed a dark tiger!<sup>781</sup> (1)  
If the kings, the chiefs, and others do not follow you by humbling themselves [before you], (4–5c)  
after [you] surrounded [their] strong lands (*vanpulam*)<sup>782</sup> (8a–b)  
with [your] seat<sup>783</sup> (*irukkai*) that increases [your] wealth, [throne which has] limitless visitors (7)  
[who brings] **fertility with sweet sap** of sugarcane that had been cut after the paddy  
became abundant (6)  
after [you] caused to happen a mean enmity with [your] workmen with precious *parai*-drum (9)  
in all the tender fields (*menpāl*),<sup>784</sup> (8c–d)  
where would be [place] for them to rule the regions which were worthy for singing along with  
the countries of all of them, of the people who do not know food with cooked red rice (12–14)  
of the hard soil (*karampai*) [which] possesses horse-gram,<sup>785</sup> [where] the white-millet (*vel varaku*)  
are ploughed, (11)  
[of the people] who pay a bright price in the markets (*niyamam*) which possess toddy? (10)

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<sup>779</sup> Poraiyaṅ (< Tam. *porai* ‘hillock’?) is a title which was specifically applicable to the Irumporai branch of the dynasty, but generally indicated the Cēras. *Pre-Pallavan Tamil Index*, 616–617.

<sup>780</sup> *vayamāṅ*: ‘tiger’, ‘horse’, ‘lion’, ‘āli’. *Tamil Ilakkīyap Pērakarāṭi*, 2118; *Tamil Lexicon*, 3496. I assume that here, it is a reference to a leopard.

<sup>781</sup> It is perhaps possible that the “dark tiger” was, in fact, a panther. For *irum puli*, see: *Kuruntokai*, 47: 2; 141: 5; 215: 6; 321: 6; 343: 3; *Akanānūru*, 88: 9; 92: 4; 107: 5.

<sup>782</sup> The term *vanpulam*, ‘hard soil’ refers to the *kuṛiñci* and *mullai* landscapes.

<sup>783</sup> This might refer to Karuvūr, the Cēra capital, which was very close to the Pāṇṭiya and Cōla capitals and territories and, therefore, threatened their rules.

<sup>784</sup> The term *menpāl*, ‘soft divisions’ refers to the *neytal* and *marutam* landscapes. The POC intends to limit its meaning to *marutam*.

<sup>785</sup> *koḷ*: horse-gram (*Dolichos uniflorus*). *Tamil Lexicon*, 1162.

76.

peyar: mācitar' irukkai, turai: centurai pātānpāṭṭu, tūkku: centūkku, vaṇṇam: oluku vaṇṇam.

kalir' uṭai+ perum camam tataiya ~ek̄k' uyartt'  
oliru vāḷ maṇṇar tutai nilai koṇru  
muracu kaṭipp' aṭaiya ~arum turai pōki+  
perum kaṭal nīntiya maram vali-uṟukkum  
paṇṇiya vilaiṇar pōla+ puṇ+ orī+ 5  
perum kai+ toḷutiyaṇ val tuyar kalippi  
~irantōr vāḷa nalki ~irappōrkk'  
ītal taṇṭā **mā citar' irukkai**  
kaṇṭaṇeṇ celku vantaṇeṇ kāl koṇṭu  
karuvi vāṇam taṇ tali corint'-eṇa+ 10  
pal vitai ~uḷaviṇ cil+ ēr āḷar  
paṇi+ turai+ pakaṇrai+ pāṅk' uṭai+ teriyal  
kaḷuv' uṟu kalīṅkam kaṭuppa+ cūṭi  
~ilaṅku katir+ tiru maṇi perūum  
akaṇ kaṇ vaippiṇ nāṭu kiḷavōyē. 15

76<sup>th</sup> song

### The seat which distributes horses

I have come as one who would go<sup>786</sup> after having seen (9a–c)  
**the** [royal] **seat** [of you] who **distributes**<sup>787</sup> **horses** (*mā*), who does not decrease in giving (8)  
to the ones who beg, after [you] bestowed [gifts to] the ones who begged so that they live [well], (7)  
after [you] dispelled the intense distress of the big-trunked herds [of elephants], (6)  
after [you] healed the wounds like the merchant of stores<sup>788</sup> (5)  
who strengthens the wood<sup>789</sup> that swam on the great sea, (4)  
by going to the difficult[-to-approach] haven,<sup>790</sup> while drumsticks were beating<sup>791</sup> the *muracu-*  
*drum*, (3)  
after [you] felled<sup>792</sup> the crowded stand of the kings (*mannar*) with shiny swords (2)  
by raising [your] blade while the great battlefield was crowded with elephant bulls, (1)  
o lord of the country with regions of vast area, (15)  
where the men with few ploughs,<sup>793</sup> who have many seeds to plough (11)  
because the big number of clouds which were taken by the wind showered cool drops, (10)  
obtain brilliant sapphires with shining rays, (14)  
after [they] adorned themselves with beautiful<sup>794</sup> garlands of *pakanrai*<sup>795</sup> from the cool ghat  
which resembled the washed *kalinkam*[-clothes]. (12–13)

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<sup>786</sup> *celku* (first person singular subjunctive/optative, Wilden 2018, 119): “let me go!”.

<sup>787</sup> *citaru-tal* v. 5. tr. ‘to disperse’, ‘to scatter’, ‘to give liberally’. *Tamil Lexicon*, 1418.

<sup>788</sup> *paṇṇiya-vilaṅgar*: dealers in stores and provisions. *Tamil Lexicon*, 2453. Here *paṇṇiyam* is most probably a Sanskrit loanword from *panya* ‘article of trade’, ‘ware’.

<sup>789</sup> POC suggests to understanding *kaṭal nṅtiya maram* as *marakkalam*. I would recommend translating literally since *marakkalam* usually meant a boat or larger ship in later texts. However, here *maram* might mean only a seafaring raft (an *ampi*?).

<sup>790</sup> One may prefer to understand here *turai* as ‘ghat’.

<sup>791</sup> *ataiya* (inf.): lit. ‘to join’, ‘to mingle’.

<sup>792</sup> *konru* (abs.): ‘having killed’, ‘having felled’. I understood here an elliptical *kaṭimaram* at the enemies’ stand, or a wooden plank of the fort, which had been felled by the king.

<sup>793</sup> Here, *cil ēr aḷar* means that those people who had more than one plough were definitely rich, not like the ones with only one plough (e.g. *Kuruntokai*, 131: 5).

<sup>794</sup> Or did they have the garlands on their sides (*pāṅk’ utai*)?

<sup>795</sup> *pakanrai*: Indian jalap (a purgative root). *Dravidian Etymological Dictionary*, 3807.

77.

peyar: venr' āṭu tuṇaṅkai, tuṇai: uliṅṅai aravam, tūkku: centūkkū, vaṇṇam: oḷuku vaṇṇam.

eṇai+ perum paṭaiyaṅō ciṇam+ pōr+ poraiyaṅ

eṇṇaṅir āyiṅ āru cel vampalir

maṅpatai peyara ~aracu kaḷatt' oḷiya+

koṅru tōḷ ōcciya **venr' āṭu tuṇaṅkai**

mī piṅatt' uruṅṅa tēyā ~āliyiṅ

5

paṅ+ amai tērum māvum mākaḷum

eṇṇaṅk' arumaiyiṅ eṇṇiṅrō ~ilaṅē

kantu kōḷ iyātu kāl pala murukki

~ukakkum paruntiyiṅ nilattu niḷal cāṭi+

cēṅ paral murampiṅ iṅm paṭai+ koṅkar

10

ā parant'-aṅṅa celaviṅ pal

yāṅai kāṅpal avaṅ tāṅaiyāṅē.

77<sup>th</sup> song

**The victoriously danced *tuṅṅkai***

O you strangers<sup>796</sup> going [on] the road, if you asked,<sup>797</sup> (2)  
how great a warlord is he, Poṛaiyan of furious war, (1)  
I do not consider<sup>798</sup> [it] because of the difficulty of counting (7)  
[his] people, [his] horses, [his] suitably crafted chariots (6)  
with never-tired wheels which rolled on the corpses at the elevation (5)  
of ***the victoriously danced tuṅṅkai*** when [his] shoulders were raised by killing<sup>799</sup> (4)  
a king so that [that king] was left behind on the field while [ordinary] humans departed. (3)  
In his army, I see elephants (12)  
a lot with marching by spreading like the cows (11)  
of the *koṅkar* with wet weapons<sup>800</sup> [and] distant gravel mounds, (10)  
after [those elephants] trampled on the shade of the ascending brahminy kite on the ground (9)  
by breaking many hard<sup>801</sup> [sticks] without accepting [being tied to] the posts. (8)

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<sup>796</sup> *vampalir*: “you who are new”; ‘newcomer’, ‘stranger’. *Tamil Lexicon*, 3492.

<sup>797</sup> *enṛanir*: lit. “you said”.

<sup>798</sup> The structure *enṇinṛō ilaṇē* (lit. “I am without counting”) is defined by Eva Wilden as a *negation of fact*. Wilden 2018, 151.

<sup>799</sup> Another way to construe is to understand *koṅru* as ‘having felled’ together with an unmarked subject (perhaps a *kaṭimaram* or the wooden plank of a fort?).

<sup>800</sup> The wet weapon (*ṛm paṭai*) might refer to the same story found in *Paṭiruppattu*, 22: 12–15, when the *koṅkar* people used their axes (*kaṇicci*) to wring water from a flint. This way we might connect *murampin* and *ṛm* (“weapon wet from the mounds”).

<sup>801</sup> *kāl*: hardness, core. *Dravidian Etymological Dictionary*, 1491.

78.

peyar: piraḷanōkkiyavar, turai: viraliyārruppaṭai, tūkkū: centūkkū, vaṇṇam: oluku vaṇṇam.

valam paṭu muraciṇ ilaṅkuvāṇa vilūum

a(m)+ veḷ+ aruvi ~u+varai ~atuvē

cil vaḷai virali celkuvai ~āyiṇ

vaḷ+ itaḷ+ tāmarai neytaloṭ' arintu

mel+ iyal makalir olkuvāṇar iyali+

5

kili kaṭi mēvalar puṇavu torum nuvala+

pal payam nilaiya kaṭar' uṭai vaippin

vel pōr āṭavar maṇam purintu kākkum

vil payil irumpin takaṭūr nūri

pēm maṇra **pirala nōkk' iyavar**

10

ōṭ' uru kaṭum muraṇ tumiya+ ceṇru

vem muṇai taputta kālai+ tam nāṭṭ'

yāṭu parant' aṇṇa māvin

ā parant' aṇṇa yāṇaiyōṇ kunrē.

78<sup>th</sup> song

**The watching musicians who were perplexed**<sup>802</sup>

If you go, o *virālis* with few bangles, (3)  
[then that is the hill] in the mountain with beautiful white waterfalls (2)  
which shine and fall [noisily] like the victorious *muracu*-drum, (1)  
the hill of the one with elephants spread like cows, (14)  
with horses spread like goats (13)  
in their country at the time when the severe frontier was destroyed, (12)  
after [he] marched [there], so that the fierce enmity, from which the **watching**<sup>803</sup>  
**musicians**<sup>804</sup> take to running, had been cut, (10c–11)  
while they became **perplexed**,<sup>805</sup> [the hill which is] certainly [a source of] fear, (10)  
after he destroyed Takaṭūr<sup>806</sup> [which was] like a thicket dense with bows, (9)  
[Takaṭūr,] which was guarded by warriors of victorious war by performing feats,<sup>807</sup> (8)  
[Takaṭūr] at the areas which possess difficult paths, where the many yields were permanent, (7)  
while girls with tender nature were chatting everywhere in the woodlands as being ones with  
the desire to scare away the parakeets by advancing as someones who are tired [of work], (5–6)  
after [they] cut lotuses with pointed petals together with *neytal*-flowers. (4)

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<sup>802</sup> It is unfortunate to choose a title (*peyar*) that contains an infinitive clause (*pirāla*), unless we have to understand *pirāla* as an absolute (*pirāntu*, see the commentaries of Turaicāmiṭṭai on Line 10) having an adverbial sense. This case the poem talks about “*iyavar* who watch in a perplexed manner”. Anyway, I translated it as an infinitive. Turaicāmiṭṭai 1973, 372.

<sup>803</sup> *nōkku-tal* v. 5. tr. ‘to see’, ‘to view’. *Tamil Lexicon*, 2371.

<sup>804</sup> *iyavar*: drummers (*Tamil Lexicon*, 302), lit. “the ones with musical instruments (*iyam*)”.

<sup>805</sup> According to the *Tamil Ilakkīyaḥ Pēraḱarāṭi* (p. 1664), in this passage *pirāla* means *acaiya* (inf.) ‘to move’, ‘to be perplexed’. Given the context, I accepted this, although I must point out that the old meaning of *pirāla-tal* would be slightly different (to flop, to leap, etc.).

<sup>806</sup> According to the *Pre-Pallavan Tamil Index*, Takaṭūr was the capital of Atikamāṇ Neṭumāṇ Añci, and it is Dharmapuri of modern times. *Pre-Pallavan Tamil Index*, 409.

<sup>807</sup> If *pirintu* is an adverbial absolute, then it might qualify the manner of protection (*kākkum*), then the warriors would belong to the enemies.



79.

peyar: niṛampaṭu kuruti, tuṛai: centuṛaippāṭāṇpāṭtu, tūkku: centūkku, vaṇṇam: oḷuku vaṇṇam.

uyir pōṛṛalaiyē ceruvattāṇē  
koṭai pōṛṛalaiyē ~iravalar naṭuvaṇ  
periyōr+ pēṇi+ ciṛiyōrai ~aḷitti  
niṇ vayiṇ pirinta nal+ icai kaṇaviṇum  
piṛar nacai ~aṛiyā vayan̄ku cem nāviṇ 5  
paṭiyōr+ tēytta ~āṇmai+ toṭiyōr  
tōḷ iṭai+ kuḷainta kōtai mārpa  
~aṇaiya ~aḷapp' aruṅkuraiyai ~ataṇāl  
niṇṇoṭu vārār tam nilatt' oḷintu  
kol kaḷiṛṛ' ~yāṇai ~eruttam pulleṇa 10  
vil kulai ~aṛuttu+ kōliṇ vārā  
vel pōr vēntar muracu kaṇ pōḷnt' avar  
arac' uvā ~aḷaiṇṇa+ kōṭ' aṛutt' iyarriya  
~aṇaṅk' uṭai marapiṇ kaṭṭil mēl iruntu  
tumpai cāṇra mey tayaṅk' uyakkattu 15  
**niṛam paṭu kuruti** puṛam paṭiṇ allatu  
maṭai ~etir-kollā ~aṅcu-varu marapiṇ  
kaṭavuḷ ayiraiyiṇ nilaii+  
kēṭ' ila ~āka peruma niṇ pukalē.

79<sup>th</sup> song

### The blood which flows from the vital spot

You do not protect [your] life on the battlefield. (1)

You are unguarded in giving among the supplicants. (2)

Having esteemed the great ones, you care about the little ones.<sup>808</sup> (3)

O you of the chest with a garland which was intimately close<sup>809</sup> to the shoulders<sup>810</sup> (7)

of the ones with bracelets [who have] courage which destroyed those who are not humble, (6)

[you] with a splendid, perfect tongue, [whose] fame,<sup>811</sup> which was separated from you, does not know to desire others, [not] even in dreams, (4–5)

you are difficult<sup>812</sup> to measure, therefore, (8)

after [you] stayed behind [the borders of] the lands of those who did not come with you,<sup>813</sup> (9)

after [you] cut the strings<sup>814</sup> of [their] bows, (11a–b)

while the necks of [their] murderous elephant bulls became empty,<sup>815</sup> (10)

after [you] split the eyes of the *muracu*-drums of the kings (*vēntar*) of victorious wars, (12a–d)

who did not come under [your] sceptre, (11c–d)

after [you] sat on the throne<sup>816</sup> according to the awful tradition, (14)

which was fashioned by cutting off the tusk of their royal elephant<sup>817</sup> while it cried out, (12d–13),

let your praises become immortal, o great man, (19)

after [you] had solidified like the Ayirai-hill of the deity<sup>818</sup> (18)

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<sup>808</sup> Cf. *Puṛaṇāṅgūru*, 192: 12–13. (*periyōrai viyattalum ilamē/ciriyōrai ikaltal ataiṇṇum ilamē*).

<sup>809</sup> *kulainta* (perf. *pey*): “which was intimately close”, “which became soft”, “which was melted”. *Tamil Lexicon*, 1035.

<sup>810</sup> It might be possible that the phrase *tōḷitai kulainta* means ‘making love’ with “the ones with bracelets/bangles” (*toḷiyōr*), the king’s lovers. However, I think that the consonant gemination in Line 6 after the word *āṇmai* is telling, since it connects *āṇmai* and *toḷiyōr*, “the mannish ones with bracelets”, which excludes the appearance of female lovers.

<sup>811</sup> We cannot connect *nallicai* and *kaṇaviṇum* because of the absence of consonant gemination. In this case, we might understand either ‘fame’ or ‘fame’ as a metonymy for the queen who did not desire others than the king when she was separated from the king during the war. I tend to accept the second reading. Anyway, it is very difficult to explain these lines.

<sup>812</sup> In the word *aruṅkuraiyai*, I analysed *kurai* (*Tolkāppiyam Collatikāram*, cū. 272) as either a syllabic supplement (*acaiṇilai*), or a metric complement (*icaiṇirai*), so that the translation is “you, the rare/difficult one”.

<sup>813</sup> It might refer to those who were not obedient, who did not join to the king.

<sup>814</sup> *kulai* (< *kutai*?): notch in a bow to keep the string in check; bowstring. *Dravidian Etymological Dictionary*, 1812.

<sup>815</sup> The word *pullēna* is usually an onomatopoeia with an adverbial usage. Here, however, I think that we have to translate it as an infinitive clause.

<sup>816</sup> *kaṭṭil*: ‘cot’, ‘bedstead’, ‘couch’, ‘sofa’, ‘throne’. *Dravidian Etymological Dictionary*, 1145.

<sup>817</sup> An important reference to *arac’uvā* as a ‘royal elephant’ (and not a ‘state elephant’, *Tamil Lexicon*, 119) can be found in the commentaries of Cēṇāvaraiyar on *Tolkāppiyam Collatikāram*, 37. I owe a special thank to Jean-Luc Chevillard who turned my attention to this.

<sup>818</sup> Ayirai is a hill which was an established place of worship. The POC seemed to know that the deity of the hill was the Goddess, Korravai and the hill was her abode.

with a frightening tradition, who does not accept food oblation (*maṭai*)<sup>819</sup> (17)

other than [the one which] gushes outside [being] the **blood which flows** [from] **the vital spot**  
(16)

amid the pain that perplexes the body, which was worthy of *tumpai*!<sup>820</sup> (15)

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<sup>819</sup> *maṭai*: ‘cooking’, ‘boiled rice’, ‘oblation of food to a deity’. *Tamil Lexicon*, 3025.

<sup>820</sup> Here the word *tumpai* might refer to the *tumpaitṭinai*, the “major theme of a king or warrior heroically fighting against his enemy”. *Tamil Lexicon*, 1972.

**80.**

peyar: puṇṇuṭai erulṭṭōl, tuṛai: vañcitturaippāṭānpāṭṭu, tūkku: centūkkum vañcittūkkum, vaṇṇam: oḷuku vaṇṇam.

vāl maruppiṇ kaḷiṛṛ' ~yāṇai  
 mā malaiyiṇ kaṇam koṇṭ' avar  
 eṭutt' eṛinta viṛal muracam  
 kār maḷaiyiṇ kaṭitu muḷaṅka+  
 cāntu pularnta viyal mārpiṇ 5  
 toṭi cuṭar-varum vali muṅkai+  
**puṇ+ uṭai ~erul+ tōl** puṭaiyal am kaḷal kāl  
 piṛakk' aṭi ~otuṅkā+ pūṭkai ~oḷ vāl  
 oṭiv' il tevvar etir-niṇṛ' uraii  
 ~iṭuka tiraiyē purav' etirntōrk'-eṇa 10  
 ~amp' uṭai valattar uyarntōr parava  
 ~aṇaiyai ~ākalmārē pakaiavar  
 kāl kiḷarnt'-aṇṇa kataḷ pari+ puravi+  
 kaṭum pari neṭum tēr mī micai nuṭaṅku koṭi  
 pulam varai+ tōṇṛal yāvatu ciṇam+ pōr 15  
 nilam varai niṛīya nal+ icai+  
 tolaiyā+ kaṛpa niṇ tev muṇaiyāṇē.

80<sup>th</sup> song

**The mighty shoulders that possess scars**

After [you] invaded (*etuttu*) (3a)  
them with<sup>821</sup> the herd of [your] white-tusked, big-mountain-like elephant bulls, (1–2)  
after [you] talked as opposing [those] unbroken enemies (9)  
with [your] bright sword, with the resolution of [your] feet not to step back, (8)  
with [your] legs [which have] beautiful anklets, with garland [of your] **mighty shoulders**  
**that possess scars**, (7)  
with strong forearm [on which] bracelets start to glitter, (6)  
with a broad chest on which the sandal paste has dried, (5)  
while the beaten, valorous *muracam*-drum (3b–d)  
was fiercely sounding like the clouds of the monsoon season,— (4)  
since you became such a one, (12a–c)  
so that [their] men with arrows on their right sides praised the high ones,<sup>822</sup>  
saying, “Let [us] put down tributes for the protector!”, (10)  
[even so,] o man of unceasing decision (*karpu*) (17a–b)  
[and] fame which consolidated the boundaries of the lands (16)  
of the enraged war, how about the appearance (15b–d)  
of [those] enemies (11d)  
in your hostile frontier (17c–d)  
at the boundary of [your] places [now], (15a)  
[enemies] with swaying flags on the top of the tall, fast-moving<sup>823</sup> chariots, (14)  
with horses [which have] hasty gait as if the wind had become visible? (13)

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<sup>821</sup> *koṅṭu* (abs.): ‘having taken’. I understood it as a frozen postposition (“with”), which appears slightly later in the early bhakti texts, and this might be one of its first attestations.

<sup>822</sup> *uyamṭōr*: the great, the learned, the exalted, as in piety, virtue, or austerities. *Tamil Lexicon*, 434.

<sup>823</sup> *kaṭum pari*: fierce/fast motion.

## VIII. patikam

poy+ il celvakkāṭuṅkōvukku

vēlāvi+ kōmāṅ patumaṅ tēvi ~iṅra makaṅ

kolli+ kūṛṛattu nīr kūṛ mī micai+

pal vēl tāṅai ~atikamāṅōṭ'

iru perum vēntaraiyumu ṭaṅṅ-nilai venṛu 5

muracumu kuṭaiyumu kalaṅumu koṭṭ'

urai cāl cirappiṅ aṭu kaḷam vēṭṭu+

tukaḷ tīr makaḷir irāṅka+ tupp' aṛuttu+

takaṭūr eṛintu nocci tant' eytiya

~arumu tīral oḷ+ icai+ peruṅcēral irumporaiyai 10

maṛu ~il vāy moḷi ~aricilkiḷār

pāṭiṅṅ pattu+ pāṭṭu.

avai tām: kuṛumu tāḷ ṅāyil, urutt' eḷu vellam, niṛam tikaḷ pāc' ilai, nalam peru tīru maṅi,  
tīm cēṛṛ' ~yāṅar, mā citar' irukkai, venṛ' āṭu tuṅṅkaḷ, piṛaḷa nōkk' iyavar, niṛam paṭu kuruti,  
puṅ+ ṭai ~eṛuḷ+ tōḷ. ivai pāṭiṅṅ patikam.

pāṭi+ perṛa paricil: tāṅumu kōyilāḷumu puṛam pōṅtu niṅṛu kōyil uḷḷa ~ellām koṅmiṅ eṅṛu  
kāṅam oṅṅpatu nūr' āyirattōṭu aracu kaṭṭil koṭṭuppa ~avar yāṅ irappa ~itanai ~āḷka ~eṅṛu  
~amaiccu+ pūṅṅār.

takaṭūr eṛinta peruṅcēral irumporai patiṅ eḷ' yāṅṭu vīṛṛiruntāṅ.

## VIII. Panegyric

He [was] the son, whom the queen [called] Patumaṅ,<sup>824</sup> [daughter of] Vēl Āvi Kōmāṅ gave birth  
(2)  
to [the father,] Celvakkatuṅkō with no falsity, (1)  
[the son, who] won over the allied state of the two great kings (*vēntar*) (5)  
together with Atikamāṅ<sup>825</sup> with an army with many spears, (4)  
[won on] the heights of the summits which abounded in water at the division<sup>826</sup> of the Kolli, (3)  
[who] seized jewels, parasols, and *muracu*-drums, (6)  
[who] performed sacrifice on the murderous battlefield according to [his] excellence<sup>827</sup> worthy of fame, (7)  
[who] cut off the strength [of the enemies], so that [their] faultless women wept, (8)  
the flawless and truthful Aricilkiḷār (11)  
sang these ten songs on Peruñcēral Irumporai with bright fame and rare strength (10)  
who approached Takaṭūr by attacking [and] giving protection [to it].<sup>828</sup> (9)

These [ten songs] are: The bastions with small stairs, The furiously rising flood, The golden jewels with shiny colour, The beautiful, brilliant sapphires, The fertility with sweet sap, The seat which distributes horses, The victoriously danced *tuṅṅkai*, The watching musicians who were perplexed, The blood which flows from the vital spot, The mighty shoulders that possess scars, [and this as] the panegyric of these ten.

Having sung, the [following] gifts [had been] obtained: after [the king] himself and the lady of the palace went out, after [they] stopped [there], after [they] said, “Take everything [from] inside the palace!”, he, [the poet] put on the ministry (*amaiccu*) saying, “Let you rule [again] this place, because I beg you!”, while nine-[times]-hundred-thousand *kāṇam* and the royal throne/bed were given [to him].

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<sup>824</sup> *patumaṅ* (p.n.) < Skt. *padma*: “lotus” (?). It is perhaps the name of the queen who belonged to the dynasty of Vēl Āvi Kōmāṅ. It is remarkable that the same name appears in the *Patirrupattu*, IV. 2.

<sup>825</sup> Atikamāṅ Neṭumāṅ Añci was one of the greatest chieftains of the Caṅkam literature, one of the greatest donors, lord of the Kutirai Hills and Takaṭūr, patron and friend of Auvaiyār. For his short biography, see: *Pre-Pallavan Tamil Index*, 32.

<sup>826</sup> *kūṇam*: ‘species’, ‘class’, ‘division of a country in ancient times’. *Tamil Lexicon*, 1080.

<sup>827</sup> One may connect *cirappin* and *aṭu kaḷam*.

<sup>828</sup> *nocci tantu*: “having given the defence of a fort”. *Tamil Lexicon*, 2364. In this case, it also refers to the *noccitturai*, a minor sub-genre in *puram* poetry.

Peruñcēral Irumporai, who conquered Takaṭūr, sat seventeen years majestically [on the throne].

Thus ending the Eighth Decade.

eṭṭām pattu murriru.



## The Ninth Decade

(*oṅpatām pattu*)

The poet: Peruṅkuṅṅūr-kilār

The king: Iḷaṅcēral Irumpoṅrai

### 81.

peyar: niḷalviṭu kaṭṭi, tuṅṅai: mullai, tūṅku: centūṅku, vaṅṅam: oḷukuvaṅṅam.

ulakam purakkum uru keḷu ciṅṅappiṅ  
vaṅṅam+ karuviya vaḷam keḷu kamaṅcūḷ  
akal irum vicumpiṅ atir ciṅṅam ciṅṅantu  
kaṭṅum cilai kaḷari vicump' aṅaiyū nivantu  
kālai ~icaikkum poḷutoṅu pulampu koḷa+ 5  
kaḷiru pāynt' iyala+ kaṭṅum mā tāṅka  
~oḷiru koṅi nuṅṅaṅka+ tēr tirintu koṅpa  
~aracu puṅṅatt' iruppiṅṅum atirv'-ilar tirintu  
vāyil kollā maintiṅṅar vayavar  
mā ~irum kaṅkulum viḷu+ toṅi cuṅṅar-vara+ 10  
tōḷ piṅi mī kaiyar pukal ciṅṅantu nāḷum  
muṅṅital vēṅṅkaiyar neṅṅiya moḷiyūu+  
keṅṅāa nal+ icai+ tam kuṅi nirumār  
iṅṅāa ~ēṅi viyal aṅṅai+ koṅpa  
nāṅ' aṅṅipṅṅattaliṅ kollai māṅṅi 15  
~aḷal viṅṅai ~amainta **niḷal viṭu kaṭṭi**  
kaṅṅṅalai valippa niṅṅ tāṅṅai ~utavi  
vēṅṅu pulatt' irutta vel pōr aṅṅṅal  
muḷaviṅṅ amainta perum paḷam icaintu  
cār' ayaṅṅt'-aṅṅṅa kār aṅṅi yāṅṅar 20  
tūṅṅp' akam paḷuṅṅiya tīm piḷi māṅṅti+  
kāṅṅṅaḷam kaṅṅṅi+ ceḷum kuṅṅi+ celvar  
kali makil mēvalar iravalarkk' iyum  
curump' ār cōlai+ perum peyal kolli+  
peruvāy-malaroṅu pacum piṅṅi makilṅṅtu 25  
miṅṅ+ umiḷṅṅt'-aṅṅṅa cuṅṅar iḷai ~āyattu+

taṅ niṛam karanta vaṅṭu paṭu katuppiṅ  
 oṭuṅk' ir ōti ~oḷ nutal aṅi koḷa+  
 koṭum kuḷaikk' amarṭta nōkkiṅ nayavara+  
 perum-takaikk' amarṭta mel col tiru mukattu 30  
 māṅ ilai ~arivai kāṅiya ~oru nāl  
 pūṅka-māḷa niṅ puravi neṭum tēr  
 muṅai kaiviṭṭu muṅ nilai+ cellātu  
 tū ~etirntu perāa+ tā ~il maḷḷaroṭu  
 tol maruṅk' aṛuttal aṅci ~araṅ koṅṭu 35  
 tuṅcā vēntarum tuṅcuka  
 viruntum āka niṅ perum tōṭkē.

81<sup>st</sup> song

### Lustre-emitting golden bars

[After] the wealthy pregnant [clouds] in a big number, [having] a colour (2)  
with frightening<sup>829</sup> excellence, [clouds] that protects the world, (1)  
excelled with trembling anger in the vast dark sky (3)  
after [the clouds] thundered with a fierce roar, arose by gathering in the sky, (4)  
after [your] people who do not tremble, [not] even when [another] king camps outside, (8)  
were roaming around, while chariots roamingly rolled, when bright flags swayed, (7)  
when swift horses carried [soldiers] when elephant bulls advanced by spreading, (6)  
while [the clouds] took away the laments at the time that announces the [rainy] season,<sup>830</sup> (5)  
after the desire [of your warriors] excelled [as being] ones with hands shackled on [their]  
shoulders,<sup>831</sup> (11a–c)  
while [their] excellent bracelets began to shine in the dark great nights, (10)  
[bracelets] of [your] warriors [who were] strong men [who] do not protect the entrance, (9)  
after [they] took an oath<sup>832</sup> [as being] ones with the desire [of] finishing [the war] each day, (11d–12)  
after [they] exchanged the plunder (*kollai*) because [they] made humble<sup>833</sup> the countries, (15)  
when vast military camps (*arai*), [which] did not put borders [around],<sup>834</sup> rolled (14)  
[against you] in order to establish their dynasties with unceasing fame, (13)  
after your army helped [you], while the **lustre-emitting** [golden] **bars**<sup>835</sup> which were  
completed by the work of flames became solid in the moulds, (16–17)  
o majesty of victorious war who stayed in various lands, (18)  
after [you] acquired the *mulavu*-drum-like, suitable, big fruit,<sup>836</sup> (19)  
after [you] consumed the sweet liquor (*pili*) matured inside the beautifully dark, fertile bamboo  
tubes as if a festival would be celebrated, (20–21)  
after [you] rejoiced [among] the green leaves<sup>837</sup> and *peruwāymalar*-flowers<sup>838</sup> (25)

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<sup>829</sup> One might translate *uru-keḷu* as beautiful. *Tamil Lexicon*, 443.

<sup>830</sup> POC: *kālai – kāṛ* (“monsoon season”).

<sup>831</sup> This passage might refer to the *tuṇankai*-dance. However, the POC’s suggestion is slightly different, since it assumes that the “coolness” (*kulirālē*) of the rainy season was the reason of this act.

<sup>832</sup> For *neṭumoli* as ‘oath’, see: *Tolkāppiyam Porulaṭikāram Purattiṇaiyiyal*, cū. 63: 13.

<sup>833</sup> *aṭṭipattalīn*: “because of making humble” (*Tamil Ilakkiyaṭ Pērakarāṭi*, 47); here, verbal noun + oblique stands for a causal clause.

<sup>834</sup> Here, the phrase *iṭāa ēṇi* perhaps means that the military camps were advancing without a stop, so there was no need to put up thorn fences.

<sup>835</sup> The cast gold bars have great economic historical significance.

<sup>836</sup> Perhaps a reference to jackfruit.

<sup>837</sup> POC: *pacum pīṭi – pacc’ ilai* (“green leaves”).

<sup>838</sup> POC: *peruwāymalar – iruwāṭci* (see: *Tamil Lexicon*, 333).

in the Kolli[-region] with great showers and with groves full of bees (24)  
 where the *kāntal*-wreathed lords of prosperous families give [liberally] to the supplicants, [to  
 the] ones who long for bustling joy;<sup>839</sup> (22–23)  
 let you harness<sup>840</sup> your horse [to] the tall chariot on [this] particular day to see [your] lady  
 with glorious jewels, (31–32)  
 with brilliant mouth of tender words which were desired by the paragons, (30)  
 while [her] desirous glances rivaled [her] curved earrings, (29)  
 while [her] bright forehead is exquisitely adorned, [your woman] with hair restrained by the  
 moisture [of oil], (28)  
 with coiffure which is swarmed by bees which hid its colour, (27)  
 [your lady] among [her] female retinue with jewels that glitter as if flashes were spitted! (26)  
 Let the sleepless kings (*vēntarum*) sleep, (36)  
 after [they] fortified (*araṅ koṇṭu*) [their stands] by fearing the demise of the old lineages (35)  
 and of their weakened<sup>841</sup> warriors who did not obtain [your] strength by opposing [you], (34)  
 not being able to stay in front [of you] after [they] forsook the frontier. (33)  
 [Having harnessed your horse,] let [her] become a feast<sup>842</sup> for your great shoulders! (37)

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<sup>839</sup> Or: “court” (*kalimakil*).

<sup>840</sup> In *pūṅkamāla*, I analysed a subjunctive from *pūṅ-tal* v. 7. tr. (*Tamil Lexicon*, 2830) to which an unexplained particle (*māla*, Wilden 2018, 57) contributes.

<sup>841</sup> Following the POC (*valiyillāta*), here I translated *tāvil* as ‘weak’ (lit. “to be without strength”) instead of ‘flawless’ which is, in fact, another option to interpret this passage.

<sup>842</sup> *viruntu*: ‘feast’, ‘guest’. *Tamil Lexicon*, 3704.

82.

peyar: viṇainavil yāṇai, turai: kāṭci vālttu, tūkku: centūkku, vaṇṇam: oḷukuvaṇṇam.

pakai perumaiyiṅ teyvam ceppa

~ār irai ~āñcā veruvaru kaṭṭūr+

pal koṭi nuṭaṅkum muṇpiṅ ceṛunar

cel camam tolaitta **viṇai navil yāṇai**

kaṭāam vārntu kaṭum ciṇam potti

5

vaṇṭu paṭu ceṇṇiya piṭi puṇarnt' iyala

maṛavar maṛala mā+ paṭai ~uruppa+

tēr koṭi nuṭaṅka+ tōl puṭai ~ārppa+

kāṭu kaikāyttiya nīṭu nāḷ irukkai

~iṇṇa vaikal pal nāḷ āka+

10

pāṭi+ kāṅku vantiṅ peruma

pāṭunar,

koḷa+ koḷa+ kuṛaiyā+ celvattu+ ceṛṛōr

kola+ kola+ kuṛaiyā+ tāṇai+ cāṇrōr

vaṇmaiyum cemmayum cālpum maṛaṇum

pukaṇru pukaḷnt' acaiṇā nal+ icai

15

nilam taru tiruviṅ neṭiyōy niṇṇē.

82<sup>nd</sup> song

### **Elephants which were trained for actions**

May there be many days of staying<sup>843</sup> like that (10)  
on [your] seat<sup>844</sup> with extended days that burnt the forests down, (9)  
when strokes on the shields sounded, when flags on the chariots swayed, (8)  
when horses were harnessed when warriors opposed, (7)  
while **elephant** [bulls] **trained for actions** (4c–d)  
with heads that were swarmed by bees advanced after [they] united with [their] cows, (6)  
after [their] fierce anger were stirred up, after [their] rut flowed, (5)  
[elephant bulls] which destroyed the ongoing battle (4)  
of the warriors in the front where many flags swayed, (3)  
[warriors from] the frightening military camp that is not afraid of the difficult stay,<sup>845</sup> (2)  
while [your foes] spoke to the deity (*teyvam*) because of the greatness of [your] enmity! (1)  
After [I] sang you, (11a)  
o lofty one with prosperity (*tiru*) given by the lands, (16)  
[the one] of unceasing fame, having desired [and] praised (15)  
the generosity, perfection, tender nature, and valour (14)  
of worthy people with armies that do not dwindle while killing (13)  
[and of] warriors with wealth that does not dwindle when singers<sup>846</sup> take [from it], (12)  
O great man, I came so I would see [you]! (11b–d)

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<sup>843</sup> The word *vaikal* is a contracted verbal noun from *vaiku-tal* v. 5. intr. 'to stay', 'to halt', 'to tarry', 'to reside', etc. *Tamil Lexicon*, 3850.

<sup>844</sup> If we follow the POC, then *irukkai* has to be connected with the second line and must be understood as "military camp" (*pācayai*). See POC on Lines 9–10.

<sup>845</sup> In my interpretation, *ār irai* refers to the fact that to stay in the enemies' land was, in fact, a dangerous and difficult task.

<sup>846</sup> The word *pāṭṭunar* is a hypermetrical foot or *kūṇ* ("hunch") that I separated by a comma and a line break in the Tamil text.

**83.**

peyar: pakrōl toluti, turai: tumpaiyaravam, tūkku: centūkku, vaṇṇam: olukuvaṇṇam.

kār maḷai muṇpiṇ kaiparint' eḷutarum  
vāl paṇai+ kurukiṇ neṭum vari porpa+  
kol kaḷiru miṭainta **pal tōl toluti**yoṭu  
neṭum tēr nuṭaṅku koṭi ~avirvara+ polintu  
celavu perit' iṇitu niṇ kāṇumōrkkē  
~iṇṇāt'-amma ~atu tāṇē pal mā(ṇ)  
nāṭu keṭa ~erukki nal kalam tarūum niṇ  
pōr arum kaṭum ciṇam etirntu  
māru koḷ vēntar pācaṇaiyōrkkē.

5

83<sup>rd</sup> song

### **The multitude of many shields**

The march (*celavu*) is very much sweet for those who are watching you,<sup>847</sup> (5)  
after [your] tall chariots flourished as the swaying flags started to shine (4)  
together with ***the multitude of many shields*** which were crowded [together with]  
murderous elephant bulls (3)  
so that [the march] resembled a long line<sup>848</sup> of *kuruku*-birds with white wings, (2)  
[while] the clouds of the rainy season arose by felling into disorder before [them], (1)  
[but,] alas, that [march] itself is unpleasant (6a–c)  
for the ones in the military camps of the hostile<sup>849</sup> kings, (9)  
after [they] opposed the fierce anger of the difficult war (8)  
of yours who give good vessels, after [you] destroyed (7b–d)  
so that the many proud<sup>850</sup> countries perished. (6d–7a)

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<sup>847</sup> Here *nin* has to be understood as an accusative (*ninṇai*).

<sup>848</sup> Here *vari* means the order in which the birds fly (*varicai*).

<sup>849</sup> *māru kol*: ‘enmity-taking’. *Tamil Lexicon*, 3185.

<sup>850</sup> We can split the sandhis in two different ways here so that one can read either ‘proud’ (*māṇ*) or ‘big’ (*mā*) countries.



**84.**

peyar: toḷilnavilyānai, tuṛai: vākai, tūkku: centūkku, vaṇṇam: oḷukuvaṇṇam.

eṭutt' ēṛ' ēya kaṭipp' uṭai ~atirum  
 pōrpp' uru muracam kaṇ+ atirnt'-āṅku+  
 kār maḷai muḷakkiṇum veḷil piṇi nīvi  
 nutal aṇant' eḷu-tarum **tolil navil yānai+**  
 pārval pācaṛai+ tarūum pal vēl 5  
 pūḷiyar kōvē polam tēr+ poraiya  
 maṇpatai cavaṭṭum kūṛram muṇpa  
 koṭi nuṭaṅk' āṛ eyil eṇṇu varamp' aṛiyā  
 pal mā paranta pulam oṇṛ' eṇṛ' eṇṇātu  
 valiyai ~ātal naṛk' aṛintaṇar āyiṇum 10  
 vār mukil muḷakkiṇ maḷa kaḷiṛu mikī+ taṇ  
 kāl muḷai mūṅkil kavaraṛ kiḷai pōla  
 ~uytal yāvatu niṇ uṭaṛṛiyōrē  
 vaṇaṅkal aṛiyār uṭaṇṛ' eḷunt' uraii+  
 pōrpp' uru taṇṇumai ~ārpp' eḷuntu nuvala 15  
 nōy+ toḷil malainta vēl iṇṭ' aḷuvattu  
 muṇai pukal pukalviṇ māṛā maintaroṭ'  
 urum eṛi varaiyiṇ kaḷiṛu nilam cēra+  
 kāṅci cāṇṛa ceru+ pala ceytu niṇ  
 kuvavu+ kurai ~irukkai ~iṇitu kaṇṭikumē 20  
 kālai māri peytu toḷil āṛri  
 viṇṭu muṇṇiya puyal neṭum kālai+  
 kal cēṛpu mā maḷai talaii+  
 pal kural puḷḷiṇ oli ~eḷunt'-āṅkē.

84<sup>th</sup> song

### Elephants trained for work

O king of the Pūliyar,<sup>851</sup> (6a–b)

[you] with spears who gives [elephants] in the military camp with custody (*pārval*), (5)

**elephants trained for** [their]**work**, which rise by lifting their foreheads, (4)

after [they] broke the shackle [at] the post, even if the cloud of the rainy season had [only] thundered, (3)

having roared like the eye of the covered *muracam*-drum (2)

sounding [by means of] the beating of drumsticks, so that [that] beating<sup>852</sup> commanded! (1)

O Poraiyaṅ with golden chariots! (6c–d)

O man with the strength of Kūrṅam, who masticates<sup>853</sup> humanity! (7)

Even if they are someones who knew you well as being the sturdy one, (10)

without considering [your] unique land where many horses spread,<sup>854</sup> (9)

who do not know the limit of counting the difficult[-to-obtain] forts with swaying flags, (8)

after [your] young elephant bull increased [his power] like the sound of the spreading clouds, (11a–d)

how the ones who made you angry would escape (13)

his feet, (11d–12a)

similarly to the branching sprouts of the growing bamboo? (12)

After the ones who do not know to bow down got enraged, rose, [and] plotted,<sup>855</sup> (14)

after [you] had done many battles which were worthy for *kāñci*,<sup>856</sup> (19a–d)

while thunder-attacked-mountain-like elephant bulls fell to the ground (18)

together with warriors who did not change [their determination, warriors] with the obsession to enter<sup>857</sup> the frontier (17)

of the thicket[-like] battlefield abounded [in] spears that resisted [with] painful effort,<sup>858</sup> (16)

while the sound of the covered *taṅṅumai*-drum risingly announced [the battle], (15)

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<sup>851</sup> *pūliyar*: the people living in Pūlināṭu which was part of the Cēra kingdom. *Pre-Pallavan Tamil Index*, 593.

<sup>852</sup> *eṭuttēru*: ‘beating, as of a drum (*eṭutterikai*)’. *Tamil Lexicon*, 516; *Tamil Ilakkiyaṭ Pērakarāṭi*, 466.

<sup>853</sup> *cavaṭṭum* (imp. pey.): ‘which masticates’. *Tamil Lexicon*, 1332.

<sup>854</sup> There are two different ways to understand *pal mā paranta pulam onru*, 1. ‘the many, great, extended lands as being one’, 2. ‘the unique land where many horses (*mā*) spread’.

<sup>855</sup> *urāi* (abs.): ‘having talked’.

<sup>856</sup> Here the word *kāñci* most probably refers to the *tiṅai* that proclaims either the instability of earthly things, or the warriors who defend themselves in the battle. *Tamil Lexicon*, 847.

<sup>857</sup> Here *pukalvu* means ‘desire’ and *pukal* means ‘entering’ as a contracted verbal noun.

<sup>858</sup> Or: ‘fought with painful acts’.

we sweetly saw your throne where crowds jubilated,<sup>859</sup> (19d–20)  
[whose sound] arose like the sound of the many songbirds,<sup>860</sup> (24)  
after the big clouds had showered rain which approached the mountains  
by joining to the rocks [for a] long time, (22–23)  
after the work had been accomplished by showering the seasonal rain.<sup>861</sup> (21)

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<sup>859</sup> Here the POC understands *kuvavu* as “the crowd of the army” (*paṭai-kuḷāam*), and *kuvaittal* as *āravāri-ttal* v. 11. intr. ‘to roar’, ‘to shout’. For a meaning as ‘to jubilate’, see *Tamil Lexicon*, 1020.

<sup>860</sup> Or: “the birds with many voices”.

<sup>861</sup> Here I see quite a few subject changing absolutes (*peytu*, *āri*, *cēpu*, *talai*).

85.

peyar: nāṭukāṅ neṭuvarai, turai: centurai pāṭāṅpāṭṭu, tūkku: centūkku, vaṅṅam: oḷukuvaṅṅam.

nal maram tuvaṅṅriya nāṭu pala tarii+  
pon+ avir puṅai ceyal ilaṅkum perum pūṅ  
oṅṅā+ pūṭkai+ ceṅṅiyar perumāṅ  
iṭṭa veḷ vēḷ muttai+ tam+ eṅa  
muṅ tiṅai mutalvar pōla niṅru 5  
tūm cuṅai nilaiiya tiru mā maruṅkiṅ  
kōṭu pala virinta **nāṭu kāṅ neṭum varai+**  
cūṭā naṅaviṅ nāḷ makil irukkai  
~arac'-avai paṅiya ~aṅam purintu vayaṅkiya  
maṅam puri koḷkai vayaṅku cem nāviṅ 10  
uvalai kūrā+ kavalai ~il neṅciṅ  
naṅaviṅ pāṭiya nal+ icai+  
kapilaṅ perra ūriṅum palavē.

85<sup>th</sup> song

**The tall mountains which are seen from the country**

After [you] gave [to the kingdom] many countries which were dense with good trees, (1)  
after [you] stood like the first men of [your] ancient<sup>862</sup> lineage, (5)  
saying, “Put<sup>863</sup> [down in] front [of me] the white spear that was put down (4)  
by Ceṇṇiyar Perumāṇ<sup>864</sup> whose resolution [was] not to agree [with me], (3)  
[and] the shining big jewels [which were] prettily fashioned [and] brilliant from gold!”, (2)  
after [you] desired virtues (*aram*), while the king’s council<sup>865</sup> became humble (9a–c)  
[around] the seat [in your] daily court in Naṛavu,<sup>866</sup> which cannot be put on [as flowers (*naṛavu*)], (8)  
among **the tall mountains which are seen from the country**, which were expanded  
with many of [its] summits, (7)  
[mountains] with brilliant big slopes [where] the sweet mountain springs became permanent; (6)  
[thus your songs of] fame are more numerous than the villages obtained by Kapilaṇ,<sup>867</sup> (12c–13)  
[which songs] were sung with truth, with a heart that [was] without anxiety (11c–12b)  
without being full of meanness, with a perfect tongue which shone (10c–11b)  
[from] the principle that was accomplished [by] the splendid valour. (9d–10b)

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<sup>862</sup> *muṇ*: ‘in front’, ‘previous’, ‘antiquity’, ‘eminence’, etc. *Tamil Lexicon*, 3302.

<sup>863</sup> The word *tam* seems to be a contracted form of *tārum*, a late imperative form from the type ‘verbal root + *um*’, which is rare in Caṅkam corpus and typical in post-Caṅkam texts. Cf. *Puṛaṇānūru*, 203: 4. POC glosses *tammin* (imperative, 2<sup>nd</sup> person plural).

<sup>864</sup> Ceṇṇiyar Perumāṇ means the Cōḷa king. *Pre-Pallavan Tamil Index*, 389.

<sup>865</sup> *arac’-avai*: ‘king’s council’. There are only two attestations of *arac’-avai* in Caṅkam texts: here and in *Porunarāruppatai*, 55.

<sup>866</sup> Another possible reading of *naṛaviṇ nāl makil* is “the daily joy [of/from] toddy”; however, we cannot be sure whether drunkenness during the royal audience can be attributed to virtuous behaviours. Here, a *velippatai* (POC: *matuṇṇu velippatai*) in the form of a *negative signifier* helps to distinguish the specific meaning of *naṛavu* as a city of the Cēraṇ from the *naṛavu* as a flower/fragrance (See: *naṛavu* and *naṛavam*, *Tamil Lexicon*, 2186).

<sup>867</sup> This passage refers to the same legend as the epilogue of the VII. patikam. This shows that 1. the chronological order is correct, 2. this poet was already familiar with the earlier poems written by Kapilar.

86.

peyar: vemtirāl taṭakkai, turai: centurāi pāṭānpāṭṭu, tūkku: centūkku, vaṇṇam: oḷukuvaṇṇam.

urāl uru kuruti+ cerukkaḷam pulava+

koṇṇi' amar+ kaṭanta **vem tirāl taṭam+ kai**

vel vēl poraiyaṇ enraliṇ veru-vara

vepp' uṭai ~āṭūu+ cettaṇeṇ-maṇ yāṇ

nal+ icai nilaiiya naṇam talai ~ulakatt'

5

illōr puṇkaṇ tīra nalkum

nāṭal cāṇra nayaṇ uṭai neñciṇ

pāṭunar puravalaṇ āṭu naṭai ~aṇṇal

kaḷai nilai perāa+ kuṭṭatt' āyiṇum

punaḷ pāy makaḷir āṭa ~oḷinta

10

poṇ cey pūm kuḷai mī micai+ tōṇrum

cāntu varu vāṇi niriṇum

tīm taṇ cāyalaṇ-maṇra+ tāṇē.

86<sup>th</sup> song

### The large hands with severe strength

I certainly<sup>868</sup> thought [that he is] a frighteningly severe man,<sup>869</sup> (3d–4)  
because [he is] called Poṛaiyaṅ with victorious spear (3a–c)  
[and] **large hands with severe strength** that overcame in battle by felling [the tree],<sup>870</sup> (2)  
so that the blood [which was intensely] perceived smelled on the battlefield. (1)  
O majesty with a dancing gait as being someone who protects the singers, (8)  
[who has] a loving heart worthy to be examined,<sup>871</sup> (7)  
who grants [gifts] to the destitute so that [their] distress vanishes (6)  
in the world with vast areas where [your] fame had become permanent! (5)  
He is certainly<sup>872</sup> a man of sweet and cool nature, (13)  
even more than the water of the Vāṇi[-river]<sup>873</sup> which comes with sandal-wood, (12)  
[in which,] even if it is deep for the bamboo[-pole]<sup>874</sup> to get a standing position, (9)  
the beautiful earrings made of gold are visible<sup>875</sup> [from] the very surface,<sup>876</sup> (11)  
[earrings] which had fallen when the girls who jump into the flood were bathing. (10)

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<sup>868</sup> Here *maṅ* is an assertive particle with shades of evaluation. Wilden 2018, 167.

<sup>869</sup> *āṭṭu*: ‘man’, ‘human’. *Tamil Lexicon*, 220. Cf. *Akanāṇṭṭu*, 301: 12.

<sup>870</sup> The word *konru* that occurs frequently can be translated as “having killed” (warriors?), or “having felled” (guraded tree, wooden plank?), however, in all the cases, the subject is missing,

<sup>871</sup> Cf. *Patirruppattu*, 59: 17; VI. 10.

<sup>872</sup> Here *maṅra* is an assertive particle. Wilden 2018, 57.

<sup>873</sup> POC: Vāṇi – “a river” (*ōr yāru*). It is perhaps the river Bhavānī (Pavāṇi). *Tamil Lexicon*, 3629.

<sup>874</sup> *kaḷai*: bamboo pole of the ferryman used for propelling boats/rafts. *Tamil Lexicon*, 806. See the same formulaic passage in *Akanāṇṭṭu*, 6: 6.

<sup>875</sup> *tōṇrum* (imp. pey.): lit. ‘appearing’.

<sup>876</sup> Or: “[from] the very top [of the boat/raft].”

87.

peyar: veṅtalaicceṃpuṅal, turai: viraliyārruppaṅai, tūkkū: centūkkū, vaṅṅam: olukuvaṅṅam.

ceṅmō pāṅiṅi nal kalam perukuvai  
cantam pūliloṅu poiṅku nurai cumantu  
teḷ kaṅal muṅṅiyaveḷ **talai+ cem puṅal**  
oyyūm nīr vaḷi+ karumpiṅum  
pal vēl poraiyaṅ vallaṅāl aḷiyē.

5



87<sup>th</sup> song

**The red flood with a white surface**

Please, go,<sup>877</sup> songstress (*pāṭini*) [and] you will obtain good jewels! (1)

Poraiyaṅ with many spears is certainly<sup>878</sup> more capable of taking care [of you],<sup>879</sup> (5)

than the sugarcane[-raft]<sup>880</sup> [on] the course of the water that is dragged along (4)

by **the red flood with a white surface** which approached the clear sea, (3)

after [it] carried along a rising foam together with sandal and eaglewoods.<sup>881</sup> (2)

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<sup>877</sup> Here *ceṇmō* is an imperative with a shade of politeness.

<sup>878</sup> Here *āl* is an assertive particle.

<sup>879</sup> POC: *aḷittal vallaṅ* – “the one who is capable to nourish/take care”.

<sup>880</sup> POC: *nīr valī oyyum karumpu* – “the sugarcane which is driven on the water” (*nīr iṭattu celuttum karumpu*). *karumpu* – “sugarcane-raft” (*karuppanṭeppam*). See: *Tamil Lexicon*, 759.

<sup>881</sup> *pūḷil*: eaglewood (POC: *akil*). *Tamil Lexicon*, 2853.

88.

peyar: kalkāl kavaṇai, turai: centuraippāṭāṇpāṭṭu, tūkkū: centūkkū, vaṇṇam: oḷukuvaṇṇam.

vaiyakam malarnta toḷil muṛai ~oḷiyātu	
kaṭavul peyariya kāṇamoṭu kal+ uyarntu	
teḷ kaṭal vaḷaiiya malar talai ~ulakattu+	
tam peyar pōkiya ~onṇār tēya+	
tulaṅk' irum kuṭṭam tolaiya vēḷ iṭṭ'	5
aṇaṅk' uṭai+ kaṭampiṇ muḷu mutal taṭintu	
poru muraṇ eytiya kaḷuvul puram perṛu	
nāmam maṇṇar tuṇiya nūri+	
kāl val puravi ~aṇṭar oṭṭi+	
cuṭar vī vākai naṇṇaṇ tēyttu+	10
kuruti vitirtta kuvavu+ cōṛru+ kuṇṛōṭ'	
uru keḷu marapiṇ ayirai paraii	
vēntarum vēḷirum piṇ vantu paṇiya+	
korṛam eytiya periyōr maruka	
viyal uḷai ~arimāṇ maṛam keḷu kurucil	15
viravu+ paṇai muḷaṅkum nirai tōl varaippin	
uravu+ kaḷiṛru vel koṭi nuṭaṅkum pācaṛai	
~ār eyil alaitta <b>kal kāl kavaṇai</b>	
nār ari naṛaviṇ koṅkar kōvē	
~uṭalunar+ taputta polam tēr+ kurucil	20
vaḷai kaṭal muḷaviṇ toṇṭiyōr poruna	
nī nīṭu vāliya peruma niṇ vayiṇ	
tuvaitta tumpai naṇav' urru viṇavum	
māṛr' arum teyvattu+ kūṭṭam muṇṇiya	
puṇal mali pēr' ~ār' ili-tant'-āṅku	25
varunar varaiyā+ ceḷum pal tāram	
koḷa+ koḷa+ kuraiyātu talai+ talai+ ciṛappa	
~ōvatt' aṇṇa ~uru keḷu neṭum nakar+	
pāvai ~aṇṇa makaḷir nāppaṇ	
pukaṇra māṇ porī+ polinta cāntamoṭu	30
taṇ kamaḷ kōtai cūṭi+ pūṇ cumantu	

tīru-vil kulaii+ tīru maṇi puraiyum  
uru kelu karuviya perum malai cērntu  
vēnkai virintu vicump' uru cēṇ cimai  
~aruvi ~arum varai ~anna mārpin 35  
cēṇ (n)āru nal+ icai+ cēy ilai kaṇava  
mākam cuṭara mā vicump' ukakkum  
ñāyiru pōla vilānkuti pal nāl  
inku+ kānku vantanen yānē  
uru kāl eṭutta ~ōnku varal puṇari 40  
nuṇ manal aṭai karai ~uṭai-tarum  
taṇ kaṭal paṭappai nāṭu kilavōyē.

88<sup>th</sup> song

### The stone-vomiting catapult

After [your ancestors] did not fail [their] regular duties which made the earth blossom, (1)  
after they planted [their] spears so that the swaying dark depth<sup>882</sup> had lost, (5)  
while the disobedient whose name had gone became weakened (4)  
in the world with flourishing places which was surrounded by the clear sea (3)  
by rising high with rocks and forests which were named [after] the deity,<sup>883</sup> (2)  
after they cut the entire foot of the awesome (*aṇank' uṭai*) *kaṭamṇu*-tree, (6)  
after they got Kaḷuvu!<sup>884</sup>, who approached martial enmity [to show his] back [in battle], (7)  
after they defeated the fearful kings, while [those kings] had been slaughtered, (8)  
after they drove back the herdsman (*aṇṭar*)<sup>885</sup> [who had] strong-legged horses, (9)  
after they destroyed Nannan of the *vākai*-tree with Sun[-like] flowers, (10)  
after they worshipped the Ayirai<sup>886</sup> according to the fearful tradition (12)  
with hills of heaped cooked rice [on which] blood was sprinkled, (11)  
o descendant of [these] great ones who obtained victory (14)  
while kings (*vēntar*) and chiefs (*vēḷir*) humbled by following [them], (13)  
o lion (*arimān*) with wide mane, o valourous chief, (15)  
o king of the *koṅkar* with fibre-filtered toddy, (19)  
[who has] a **stone-vomiting catapult**<sup>887</sup> which made the difficult[-to-siege] forts suffer, (18)  
[who has] a military camp where victorious flags sway on the strong elephant bulls,<sup>888</sup> (17)  
[which camp has] border of shields in rows, [where] the various *paṇai*-drums sound, (16)  
o chief with a golden chariot that destroyed those who made [you] enraged, (20)

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<sup>882</sup> In this context, *kuṭṭam*, the word that denotes 'depth' or 'pond' might mean 'ocean' (*Index of Patirrupattu*, 51; cf. *Patirrupattu*, 46: 11–12), however, I found it necessary to translate it literally leaving the interpretation open, since *kuṭṭam* could rather refer to the ponds of Kuṭṭa-nāṭu, one of the twelve *koṭṭu-tamiḷ-nāṭu*. *Tamil Lexicon*, 960.

<sup>883</sup> The POC suggests that the region mentioned here is equal to Vintāṭavi (< Skt. Vindhyāṭavi), "the forest region adjoining the Vindhya" (*Tamil Lexicon*, 3676), the deity would be the goddess "Korṟavai who dwells there" (*āṇṭu uraiyum korṟavai*).

<sup>884</sup> See: *Patirrupattu*, 71: 17.

<sup>885</sup> *aṇṭar*: shepherd. *Dravidian Etymological Dictionary*, 125.

<sup>886</sup> POC: "the [word] *ayirai* means [the goddess] Korṟavai who lives in the Ayiraimalai" (*ayirai enratu ayiraimalaiyuraiyum korṟavaiyinaḷ*).

<sup>887</sup> The basic meaning of the word *kavaṇai* (*kavaṇ*, *Tamil Lexicon*, 788) is 'sling', however, as an extended meaning it could mean a 'catapult'. The English word 'catapult' here helps us to keep the ambiguity. I would not think that the king attacked forts with a mere sling but of course it depends on the size of the questionable sling/fort. Cf. *Kūrunṭokai*, 388: 3; *Narṇinai*, 206: 5; *Akanāṇūru*, 292: 11.

<sup>888</sup> It is also possible to connect the elephants directly to the king who possessed them.

o fighter of the men in Toṇṭi where the surrounding<sup>889</sup> sea [is] like the *mulavu*-drum, (21)  
 o great man, may you live long! (22a–c)  
 After you wore the cool and fragrant garlands (31a–c)  
 together with the sandal paste that shone in desirable glorious lines (30)  
 among the goddess-like<sup>890</sup> women (29)  
 of [your] beautiful and tall/long painting-like mansion, (28)  
 while you made all the places excel without being the many rich goods diminished  
 [due] the limitless visitors while they take [from it], (26–27)  
 [visitors who] descend like the big river which abounds in water, (25)  
 which came [from] the mountain of the deity [whose will is] difficult to change, (24)  
 who was truly asked for the much-praised *tumpai*<sup>891</sup> on your behalf, (22d–23)  
 after you became heavy from the ornaments, (31c–d)  
 o husband of [the lady with] red jewels, with fame, [and with a perfume that] smells from  
 far,<sup>892</sup> (36)  
 [husband] of the chest which is like the difficult[-to-climb] mountain with waterfalls (35)  
 [and] distant summits that touch<sup>893</sup> the sky by blooming the *vēṅkai*-trees (34)  
 [and] by gathering the fearful masses of big clouds (33)  
 which resembled the brilliant sapphires, where the brilliant [rain]bow was bending,— (32)  
 may you shine for many days like the Sun (38)  
 ascending in the dark sky so that the firmament brightens! (37)  
 I came here so I would see you, (39)  
 the chief of the country with gardens at the cool sea, (42)  
 where the high-rising waves raised by the continuously blowing wind (40)  
 break against the shore where the fine sand [is] solid. (41)

<sup>889</sup> *Index of Patirrupattu* tends to understand *vaḷai* as ‘conch’. I would rather translate it as “the surrounding sea”, in which *vaḷai* is a verbal root (*vaḷai-ttal* v. 11. tr., *Tamil Lexicon*, 3555).

<sup>890</sup> Here *pāvai anṇa makalir* could mean either “doll-like women” (*Tamil Lexicon*, 2636) or “goddess-like women” (cf. *kollippāvai*; *Tamil Lexicon*, 1157).

<sup>891</sup> *tumpai*: white dead nettle (*Leucas aspera*). *Tamil Lexicon*, 1972. The occurrence of this plant recalls the “literary setting” (*tiṇai*) that focuses on the battle. *Tolkāppiyam Poruḷatikāram Puṟaṭṭiṇaiyiyal*, cū. 70. However, it is unclear why the goddess had been asked for the *tumpai*. The POC suggests that the deity was asked to give victory in the *tumpai* battle (*attumpaiṅ pōrai niṇakku vēṇṇitarutarku...*).

<sup>892</sup> Another split of the sandhi results the reading of “greatly famous red jewels from distant paths (*āru*)”.

<sup>893</sup> However, *uru* literally means ‘to have’.

**89.**

peyar: tuvarā kūntal, turai: kāvalmullai, tūkku: centūkku, vaṇṇam: oḷukuvaṇṇam.

vāṇam polutoṭu curappa+ kāṇam  
 tōṭ' uru maṭam māṇ ēru puṇarnt' iyala+  
 pullum miṇirum mā+ ciṇai ~ārppa+  
 paḷaṇum kiḷaṅkum micai ~arav' aṇiyātu  
 pal+ āṇ nal nirai pul+ arunt' ukala+ 5  
 payam kaṭai ~aṇiyā vaḷam keḷu ciṇappiṇ  
 perum pal yāṇar+ kūlam keḷuma  
 nal pal+ ūli naṭuvu niṇr' oḷuka+  
 pal vēl irumporai niṇ kōl cemmaiṇiṇ  
 nāḷiṇ nāḷiṇ nāṭu toḷut' ētta 10  
 ~uyar nilai ~ulakatt' uyarntōr parava  
 ~arac' iyal piḷaiyātu ceru mēmtōṇṇi  
 nōy ilai ~ākiyar nīyē niṇ-māṭṭ'  
 aṭaṅkiya neṅcam pukar paṭup' aṇiyātu  
 kaṇaviṇum piriya ~uraiyoḷoṭu taṇṇena+ 15  
 takaram nīviya **tuvarā+ kūntal**  
 vatuvai makaḷir nōkkiṇar peyarntu  
 vāḷ nāḷ aṇiyum vayaṅku cuṭar nōkkattu  
 miṇoṭu puraiyum karpiṇ  
 vāḷ nutal arivaiyoṭu kāṇ-vara+ polintē. 20

89<sup>th</sup> song

### Tresses that do not dry

When the sky gives [showers] liberally at the [proper] time, while in the forests (1)  
herds of innocent deers advanced by joining the stags (2),  
when birds and bees were sounding [around] the big branches, (3)  
when the good herds of the many cows were leaping after they ate the grass (5)  
without knowing cessation [from] fruits and edible roots on the highlands (*micaī*) (4)  
when the grains of the many great fertilities became abundant, (7)  
[fertilities] with prosperous superiority that does not know the end of yields, (6)  
while many good aeons passed in justice (*naṭuvu*),<sup>894</sup> (8)  
o Irumporai with many spears, while, because of the straightness of your staff (*kōl*),<sup>895</sup> (9)  
the country praised [you] by worshipping day by day, (10)  
after [you] became eminent in the battle without ruining [your] royal nature, (12)  
so that the lofty ones revered [you] in the world of higher state, (11)  
may you become the one who does not have pain, (13a–c)  
after you were visibly<sup>896</sup> flourishing together with your woman with shiny forehead, (20)  
with a fidelity which resembles the [Arundhati] star<sup>897</sup> (19)  
with glowing-flame[-like] glances, which knows the lifetimes (*vāl nāl*) (18)  
of [those] brides (*vatuwai makalīr*) who repeatedly looked [up on it], (17)  
[woman] with **not drying tresses** on which *takaram*-unguent<sup>898</sup> was coolingly smeared,<sup>899</sup>  
(16) [flourishing] along with [your] residence (*uraiyul*) [from where she] does not separate, not  
even in dreams, (15)  
[whose] controlled heart does not know undergoing blemishes in<sup>900</sup> you. (13d–14)

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<sup>894</sup> POC: *naṭuvu* – “equity/justice/uprightness” (*naṭuvunilaimai*). *Tamil Lexicon*, 2144–2145.

<sup>895</sup> The straightness of the royal staff symbolised a just reign; otherwise, when the king was unjust, the staff became bent or broken.

<sup>896</sup> *kāṇ-vara* (aux. inf.): “to start to be seen”.

<sup>897</sup> I am not able to explain the function of a sociative here. For Aruntati, cf. *Patirrupattu*, 31: 28.

<sup>898</sup> *takaram*: aromatic unguent for the hair (*Tamil Lexicon*, 1705). Cf. *Kurīncippāṭṭu*, 108.

<sup>899</sup> Here the infinitive of the quotative verb *ennu-tal* forms an adverb (*taṇṇena* ‘coolly’).

<sup>900</sup> Here *māṭṭu* is a locative.

90.

peyar: valikelu taçakkai, tuṛai: kāçivālttu, tūkku: centūkkum vañcittūkkum, vaṇṇam: oḷukuvaṇṇamum  
corçirvaṇṇamum

mīṇ vayiṇ niṛpa vāṇam vāyppa ~acc' arṛ' ēmam āki ~iruḷ tīrnt' iṇpam peruka+ tōṇri+ tam tuṇai+ tuṛaiyiṇ eñcāmai niṛaiya+ kaṛru+ kaḷintōr uṭarṛum kaṭum tū ~añcā	5
~oḷiṛu vāḷ vayam vēntar kaḷiṛoṭu kalam tantu tonṛu moḷintu toḷil kēṭpa ~akal vaiyattu+ pakal āṛri māyā+ pal pukaḷ viyal vicump' ūr-tara	10
vāḷ vali ~uṛuttu+ cemmai pūuṇṭ' araṇ vāḷtta narḱ' āṇṭa viṛal māntaraṇ viṛal maruka ~īram uṭaimaiyiṇ nīr ōr aṇaiyai ~aḷapp' arumaiyiṇ iru vicump' aṇaiyai	15
koḷa+ kuṛai paṭāmaiysiṇ munnīr aṇaiyai pal mīṇ nāppaṇ tiṅkaḷ pōla+ pūṭta curṛamoṭu polintu tōṇralai ~uru keḷu marapiṇ ayirai paraviyum kaṭal ikuppa vēl iṭṭum	20
uṭalunar miṭal cāyttum malayavum nilattavum aruppam vauvi+ perra perum peyar palar kai ~irīya korṛa+ tīruviṇ uravōr umpal kaṭṭi+ puḷukkiṇ koṅkar kōvē	25
maṭṭam+ pukāviṇ kuṭṭuvar ēṛē ~eḷāa+ tuṇai+ tōḷ pūḷiyar meymmaṛai ~iraṅku nīr+ parappiṇ marantaiyōr poruna veḷ pū vēḷaiyoṭu curai talai mayakkiya viravu moli+ kaṭṭūr vayavar vēntē	30



~uravu+ kaṭal aṇṇa tāṅk' arum tāṇaiyoṭu  
 māṇ viṇai+ cāpam mārp' ura vāṅki  
 ṅṅāṇ pora viḷaṅkiya **vali kelu taṭa+ kai**  
 vārntu puṇaint'-aṇṇa ~ēntu kuvavu moympin  
 mīṇ pūtt'-aṇṇa viḷaṅku maṇi+ pāṇṭil 35  
 āy mayir+ kavari+ pāy mā mēṛkoṇṭu  
 kāl eḷkam piṭitt' eṛintu  
 viḷumattiṇ pukalum peyarā ~āṇmai+  
 kāṅci cāṇra vayavar peruma  
 viṅku perum ciṛappiṇ ṍṅku pukaḷōyē 40  
 kaḷaṇi ~uḷavar taṇṇumai ~icaippiṇ  
 paḷaṇam maṅṅai maḷai cett' ālum  
 taṇ puṇal āṭunar āṛppoṭu mayaṅki  
 vem pōr maḷḷar teḷ kiṇai karaṅka+  
 kūl' uṭai nal+ il ērum āru cilaippa+ 45  
 celum pala ~irunta koḷum pal taṇ paṇai+  
 kāviri+ paṭappai nal nāṭ' aṇṇa  
 vaḷam kelu kuṭaiccūl aṭaṅkiya koḷkai  
 ~āriya karpiṇ tēriya nal+ icai  
 vaṇṭ' āṛ kūntal oḷ toṭi kaṇava 50  
 niṇ nāl,  
 tiṅkaḷ aṇaiya ~āka tiṅkaḷ  
 yāṇṭ' ōṛ aṇaiya ~āka yāṇṭē  
 ~ūli ~aṇaiya ~āka ~ūli  
 vellam varampiṇa ~āk(a) eṇa ~uḷli+  
 kāṇku vanticiṇ yāṇē ceru mikk' 55  
 urum eṇa muḷaṅkum muraciṇ  
 perum nal yāṇai ~irai kiḷavōyē.

90<sup>th</sup> song

### The strong large hands

O victorious descendant of the victorious Māntaraṅ<sup>901</sup> (13)  
who ruled well, who praised the virtue (*aran*), (12)  
after [you] became ornamented<sup>902</sup> with justice, after you made [your] sword strong, (11)  
so that [your] incessant many praises spread in the vast sky, (10)  
after you appeased the day of the vast world, (9)  
while [other kings] learned [about your] deeds by talking [about] the old [days], (8)  
after [you] gave vessels along with elephant bulls (7)  
[of] strong kings with splendid swords (6)  
that do not fear the fierce and enraged power (*tū*)<sup>903</sup> of strong men, (5)  
after [you] learned, while [your] companions' places <sup>904</sup> became full without rest,<sup>905</sup> (3d–4)  
after [your]<sup>906</sup> appeared, so that the delight was increased, (3)  
the darkness came to an end, joy has become, fear has ceased, (2)  
while the sky flourished and the stars stood at [their] places! (1)  
O you, the unique one who is similar to the water because of [your] affection! (14)  
O you who are similar to the two<sup>907</sup> skies, because of the difficulty of measuring [you]! (15)  
O you who are similar to the sea<sup>908</sup>, which does not happen to diminish by taking!<sup>909</sup> (16)  
O you whose appearance is like the Moon among the many stars having  
shone together with [your] flourishing<sup>910</sup> retinue! (17–18)

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<sup>901</sup> Māntaraṅ was a Cēra king of the Irumporai branch of the dynasty. He is probably the same as Yāṅaikkaṭcēy Māntarañcēral Irumporai. His name appears also in *Puṇānāṅṅuru*, 22: 34; *Cilappatikāram*, II. 23: 84. According to the tradition, the *Puṇānāṅṅuru*, 17, 20, 22, 53, and 229 had been composed for this particular king. *Pre-Pallavan Tamil Index*, 670–671.

<sup>902</sup> *pūṅṅtu* (aḷapeṭai abs. from *pūṅ-tal* v. 7. tr.): ‘having put on’, ‘having worn’, ‘having been ornamented’. *Tamil Lexicon*, 2829.

<sup>903</sup> I followed Agesthalingom in translating *tū* as ‘strength’. Agesthalingom 1979, 73; *Tamil Lexicon*, 2008.

<sup>904</sup> This part is quite obscure; not even the POC can help. One possible reading of the commentary is: *tantuṅaittuṅai* – “their standard (*aḷavāna*) books of the paths (*tuṅai*) [of virtues?], of the first men of the seers” (*pārppārmūtalāyīṅṅār tattamakku aḷavāna tuṅaiṅṅal*).

<sup>905</sup> *niraiya* (inf.): ‘to become full’, ‘to abound’, ‘to be satisfied’. *Tamil Lexicon*, 2287. Is this line a reference to the institutions of Vedic learning?

<sup>906</sup> To define the subject here is more than difficult. I connected the absolute to *kaḷintōr* in Line 5.

<sup>907</sup> Here, *iru vicumpu* had been translated as ‘vast sky’. However, I find the translation of ‘two skies’ (1. the visible sky, 2. the upper sphere/*uyar nilai ulakam*) also possible, so that it would be a play with the enumeration of *nīr ōr, iru vicumpu, munnīr*, “one man, two skies and three waters” in consecutive lines.

<sup>908</sup> *munṅīr*: “sea, as having the three qualities of forming, protecting and destroying the earth, or as consisting of three waters, viz., river water, spring water and rain water”. *Tamil Lexicon*, 3268.

<sup>909</sup> I understand this as how the ocean receives abundant water from rivers, clouds, and springs, the king receives abundant gifts from the guests who are coming like a torrent.

<sup>910</sup> Technically *pūṅṅtu* (‘blossomed’, ‘flourished’) is a perf. pey. here, which cannot be reflected in the English translation.

O [you,] the king of the *konkar* with cooked-grains [sweetened] with jaggery,<sup>911</sup> (25)  
the descendant of brilliant and victorious strong men, (24)  
[who] caused to be earned great things in<sup>912</sup> the hands of many, (23)  
after you seized forts (*aruppam*) of lands and mountains, (22)  
after you destroyed the strength of the enraged ones, (21)  
after you threw a spear so that the ocean was destroyed, (20)  
after you worshipped the Ayirai according to the fearful tradition! (19)  
O bull of the *kuttuwar*<sup>913</sup> [for whom] the toddy is the food!<sup>914</sup> (26)  
O body shield of the *pūliyar*, [who] do not raise [their] pairs of arms [against you]!<sup>915</sup> (27)  
O fighter of the people in Marantai<sup>916</sup> at the extension of the sounding water! (28)  
O king of the strong ones in [your] military camp with mixed languages, (30)  
where the *vēlai* with white flowers are mingled with the *curai* [all around] the area! (29)  
O great man of the ones who mean<sup>917</sup> transience (*kāñci*) [for your enemies], (39)  
[who has] unchangeable courage that desires affliction, (38)  
after you gripped the handle of the blade and attacked (37)  
by mounting galloping horses with fine-haired yak[-tail-plumes] (36)  
[in front of] the wheels [of chariots] with shiny sapphires that were as if stars were glittering,<sup>918</sup>  
(35)  
[attacked] by means of [your] rising round shoulders that were as if they were broadwise  
decorated, (34)  
[and of your] **strong** [and] **large hands** that were shining as they pulled out the bowstring,  
(33)  
after [you] drew [your] bow of glorious workmanship so that it touched [your] chest  
together with [your] difficult-to-endure army that was like the strong ocean! (31–32)  
O you of the lofty fame, whose great excellence has increased! (40)  
O husband [of your lady] with bright bracelets and tresses full of bees, (50)

<sup>911</sup> The word *kaṭṭi* denotes ‘jaggery’ (*Tamil Lexicon*, 648) which had been explained by U. Vē. Cā. as *carkkarai*.

<sup>912</sup> Here I understood *kai* as an unmarked locative and the word *peyar* as *poruḷ* following the POC.

<sup>913</sup> *kuttuwar*: the people of Kuṭṭa-nāṭu, one of the twelve *koṭun-tamil-nāṭu*.

<sup>914</sup> POC: *maṭṭappukā* – “the food that is toddy/honey” (*matuṅvākiya uṇavu*). *Tamil Lexicon*, 3059. U. Vē. Cāminātaiyar explains it as “the food that is toddy” (*kaḷḷākiya uṇavinutaiya ...*).

<sup>915</sup> U. Vē. Cāminātaiyar, however, understands “men of the Pūli-nāṭu with clasped (?) shoulders that do not rise [against] those who ran away after they showed their back in battle” (*pōril mutuku kaṭṭi oṭinār mēl cellāta inaiyāna tōḷkaiyutaiya pūlināṭṭarkku ...*).

<sup>916</sup> A town of the Cēras on the Malabar Coast, the same as Māntai in *Kuṟuntokai*, 34: 6; 166 : 3; *Akanāṇṇūru*, 127: 6; 376: 18. *Pre-Pallavan Tamil Index*, 647. Marr 1985 [1958], 322–323.

<sup>917</sup> Another reading would be: “the ones who were worthy for the *kāñci* songs”. Cf. *Patirrupattu*, 65: 4.

<sup>918</sup> *pūttu* (abs.): “having bloomed”, “having flourished”.

with fame accepted as true, with patient fidelity, (49)  
 with regulated principles, with anklets precious like  
 the good country at the gardens of Kāviri (47–48)  
 with many rich and cool paddy fields (*paṇai*) which had many rich [harvests] (46)  
 when the bulls were sounding at the sides of the good houses with cooked rice, (45)  
 while the clear *kiṇai*-drum<sup>919</sup> of the warriors of cruel wars sounded (44)  
 having confused with the sound of the bathing ones in the cool stream, (43)  
 where peacocks of the paddy fields danced, having thought that  
 the *taṇṇumai*-drum's music of the paddy fields' workmen was a raincloud! (41–42)

Having thought that (54d)

may your day become like a month (*tiṅkaḷ*), (51a–c)  
 may [that] month become like a year, (51d–52c)  
 may [that] year become like aeons (*ūḷi*), (52d–53c)  
 may [those] aeons have limits of *vellam*,<sup>920</sup> (53d–54c)  
 I came so I would see [you], (55a–c)  
 o eminent chief with big and good elephants (57)  
 and with the *muracu*[-drum] that is outstanding in battles and roaring like thunder! (55d–56)

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<sup>919</sup> The only place in the *Paṭirūppattu* that mentions the *kiṇai*-drum, the hour-glass shaped drum which was connected to the agricultural tract. *Tamil Lexicon*, 921.

<sup>920</sup> Both to understand *vellam* as a 'huge number', or as 'deluge' (since the deluges are connected to the ends of the aeons) seem to be fine.

## IX. patikam

kuṭṭuvaṅ irumporaiḱku maiyūr kiḷāṅ  
vēṅmāḷ antuvaṅ cellai ~īṅra maḱṅ  
veru-varu tāṅaiyoṭu veyt' ura+ ceytu cenr'  
iru perum vēntarum vicciyum vīḷa  
~arum miḷai+ kal+ akatt' aint' eyil eṅintu 5  
potti ~āṅṭa perumcōḷaṅaiyum  
vittai ~āṅṭa ~iḷam paḷaiyaṅ māraṅaiyum  
vaitta vaṅciṅam vāyppa veṅru  
vaṅci mūtūr+ tantu piṅrarkk' utavi  
mantiram marapiṅ teyvam pēṅi 10  
mey+ ūr ~amaicciyaṅ maiyūr kiḷāṅai  
purai ~aru kēḷvi+ purōcu mayakki  
~arum tiṅal marapiṅ perum catukk' amarnta  
vem tiṅal pūtarai+ tant' ivaṅ niṅi  
~āyṅta marapiṅ cāṅti vēṭṭu 15  
maṅ+ uyir kātta maṅu ~il cem kōḷ  
iṅ+ icai muraciṅ iḷaṅcēral irumporaiyai+  
pāṅiṅār pattu+ pāṅṭu.

avai tām: niḷal viṭu kaṅṭi, viṅai navil yāṅai, pal tōḷ toḷuti, toḷil navil yāṅai, nāṅu kāṅ  
neṅu varai, vem tiṅal taṅa+ kai, veḷ ṭalai+ cem puṅal, kal kāl kavaṅai, tuvarā+ kūntal,  
vali keḷu taṅa+ kai; ivai pāṅṭiṅ patikam.

pāṅi+ perṅa paricil: maruḷ illārḱku maruḷa+ koṭukka ~eṅru uvakaiyiṅ mu+ patt' ir āyiram  
kāṅam koṭuttu avar aṅiyāmai ~ūrum maṅaiyum vaḷam miḱa+ paṅaittu ~ērum iṅpamum iyal-  
vara+ parappi ~eṅṅaṅku ~ākā ~arum kalam veṅukkaiyoṭu pal nūr' āyiram pārpaṅa vakuttu  
kāppu maṅam tāṅ viṅṅāṅ a+ kō.

kuṅakkō iḷaṅcēral irumporai patiṅ āṅ' āṅṭu vīṅṅiruntāṅ.

## IX. Panegyric

He is the son, [whom] Maiyūr Kilāṇ Vēṇmāl Antuvan  
Cellai<sup>921</sup> gave birth to the father, Kuṭṭuvan Irumporai, (1–2)  
[who] marched with a frightening army and made [his enemies] to experience [his] severity, (3)  
[who] attacked five fortresses among the rocks with  
difficult[-to-cross] forests,<sup>922</sup> so that the two great kings and Vicci fell, (4–5)  
[who] won over the Great Cōḷaṇ,<sup>923</sup> who ruled in Potti<sup>924</sup> and over the  
young Paḷaiyaṇ Māraṇ<sup>925</sup> who ruled in Vittai,<sup>926</sup> so that the taken vow has excelled, (6–8)  
[who] brought [tributes to] the old town [called] Vañci,<sup>927</sup> [who] helped others, (9)  
[who] paid homage to the deity according to the *mantra*-tradition,<sup>928</sup> (10)  
[who] confused Maiyūr<sup>929</sup> Kilāṇ, the minister [in whom] the truth circulates  
[with his] *purōcu* (*purohita*) of flawless knowledge, (11–12)  
[who] brought the *pūtar* (*bhūtāḥ*)<sup>930</sup> of severe strength and difficult powerful  
tradition, which were living at the great crossroads, (13–14c)  
[who] established [their cult] here, (14d)  
[who] performed *cānti*[-ritual] (*śānti*)<sup>931</sup> according to the tradition that has been studied, (15)  
on Iḷaṅcēral Irumporai with sweetly melodious *muracu*-drum (17)  
and flawless, straight [royal-]staff which protected the living beings, (16)

<sup>921</sup> I insist that the name of the mother was Antuvan Cellai who was either the daughter of the *vēl* called Maiyūr Kilāṇ, or a woman of *vēḷir*-tribe (*vēṇmāl*: woman of *vēḷir*-tribe. *Tamil Lexicon*, 3825) connected to the chief called Maiyūr Kilāṇ.

<sup>922</sup> It is possible that here the word *miḷai* refers to *kaṭi miḷai*, the protective forest or grove (or thorny obstacles?) around a fort. Cf. *Patiruppattu*, 22: 24; *Puranānūru*, 21: 5.

<sup>923</sup> It is possible that the Great Cōḷaṇ here is identifiable with the famous Kōpperuñcōḷaṇ whose court poet called Pottiyār (or Potti elsewhere, *Puranānūru*, 212: 9) was his intimate friend. Pottiyār's name might reflect a place name, Potti, of the early Cōḷa kingdom from where the poet came. This would somehow explain the relationship between the Great Cōḷaṇ and Potti in this poem. See: Marr 1985 [1958]: 295.

<sup>924</sup> Potti: an ancient town in the early Cōḷa kingdom.

<sup>925</sup> Iḷampalāiyaṇ Māraṇ was either a feudatory of the Pāṇṭiya kings or a Pāṇṭiya king. Marr suggested that Paḷaiyaṇ Māraṇ here was the son of Paḷaiyaṇ Māraṇ whom Kōkkōtai Mārpaṇ destroyed at Kūṭal. Marr 1985 [1958]: 173–174; 296.

<sup>926</sup> Vittai: an ancient town in the early Pāṇṭiya kingdom; not mentioned elsewhere in the Caṅkam poems.

<sup>927</sup> Vañci was one of the royal seats of the ancient Cēras; still, no decade poem mentioned it. Its localisation is also very problematic. See: Marr 1985 [1958]: 296–298. Read: pp. 344–351.

<sup>928</sup> We may translate this passage either as “*mantra*-tradition” or as “*magical* tradition”. However, it might refer to some kind of Tantric practice in and around the court.

<sup>929</sup> Maiyūr: an ancient town in South India. The localisation of this place is impossible; however, it is important to mention that the chiefs of this village/town were strongly connected to the Irumporai branch of the Cēras both by marriage and service in public life. Marr 1985 [1958]: 299.

<sup>930</sup> *caṭukkappūtar*: “demons having their abode at the junction of four roads.” *Tamil Lexicon*, 1258. Cf. *Cilappatikāram*, III. 28: 147–148: *caṭukkappūtarai vañciyuḷ tantu*. Is that a cult similar to the *bhūtakōla*, which is still alive in northern Kerala and Karnataka?

<sup>931</sup> The *śānti* rite was quite a complex ritual performed to appease all transcendental beings.

Peruṅkuṅṅūr Kilār<sup>932</sup> sang [these] ten songs. (18)

These [ten songs] are: Lustre-emitting golden bars, Elephants which were trained for actions, The multitude of many shields, Elephants trained for work, The tall mountains which are seen from the country, The large hands with severe strength, The red flood with white surface, The stone-vomiting catapult, Tresses that do not dry, The strong large hands, [and this as] the panegyric of these ten.

Having sung, the [following] gifts [had been] obtained: that king himself sent him away [giving him] protective valour, [after that king] distributed [a lot], so that the wealth of many hundred thousand [articles?] and the precious jewels, [both] impossible to count, have been arranged well, [after that king] spread [the wealth], so that beauty and joy started to be proliferated, [after that king] created [for him] a village and a mansion without his knowing, so that [his] prosperity abounded; [after that king] gave thirty-two-thousand *kāṇam*-coins, because of [his] happiness, saying “Take it!”, so that those who did not have confusion had become confused.

Kuṭakkō Iḷaṅcēral Irumporai sat sixteen years majestically [on the throne].

### **Thus ending the Ninth Decade.**

oṅpatām pattu murrirru.

### **The Tenth Decade**

(*pattām pattu*)

lost (*kiṭaikkavillai*)

### **Thus ending the Patirruppattu.**

*patirruppattu murrirru.*

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<sup>932</sup> Peruṅkuṅṅūr Kilār was a well-known poet of the ancient South India. For the list of his poems, see: *Pre-Pallawan Tamil Index*, 597.

## Stray songs (*tirattu*) of the *Patirruppattu*

I.<sup>933</sup>

irum kaṇ yāṇaiyoṭ' arum kalam tuṟuttu+  
paṇintu vaḷi-moḷital allatu pakaivar  
vaṇaṅkār ātal yāvatō-marṟē  
urum uṭaṅru cilaittalīṇ vicump' atirnt'-āṅku+  
kaṇ+ atirpu muḷaṅkum kaṭum kural muracamoṭu 5  
kāl kiḷarnt'-aṇṇa ūrti+ kāl muḷai  
~eri nikaḷnt'-aṇṇa nirai ~arum cīrrattu  
naḷi ~irum parappiṇ mā+ kaṭal muṇṇi  
nīr tuṇaint'-aṇṇa celaviṇ  
nilam tiraipp'-aṇṇa tāṇaiyōy niṇakkē. 10

What if being enemies who do not bow down for you, (2d–3, 10d)

instead of humbly praising you (2a–c)

after [they] stacked precious rare jewels together with elephants with big eyes [in front of you]? (1)

You of the army that rolled like waves on the lands, (10a–c)

whose march [was] as if water was rushing, (9)

after you approached the great sea with a vast dark surface,<sup>934</sup> (8)

which [has] difficult[-to-stop] anger blazing like the fire (7)

which rises with the wind, [you of] the chariot that was rising like the wind (6)

together with the *muracam*-drum of a fierce tone that was sounding, having beaten [its] eye, (5)

trembling like the sky roaring angrily with thunder. (4)

<sup>933</sup> *Purattiraṭṭu*, *Poruṭ pāl*, 111: 1260. The first three lines of this poem were mentioned by Nacciṇārkkīṇiyar in his commentaries on *Tolkāppiyam Poruḷatikāram*, cū. 63 (*Purattinaiyiyal* 6), claiming that this was of the *Patirruppattu*. Pavāṇantam Piḷḷai 1916, 200. The opening phrase „*iruṅkaṇ yāṇai*” was quoted by Nacciṇārkkīṇiyar in his commentaries on *Cīvakacintāmani*, *Nāmakāḷilampakam*, 310.

<sup>934</sup> It is a line already found at *Patirruppattu*, 11: 3.



ilaṅku toṭi maruppiṅ kaṭāam vārntu  
 nilam puṭaiyū ~eḷu-tarum valam-paṭu kuñcaram  
 eri ~aviḷnt'-aṅṅa viri ~uḷai cūṭti+  
 kāl kiḷarnt'-aṅṅa kaṭum celal ivuḷi  
 kōṅ muṅai+ koṭi ~iṅam viravā val+ oṭ'  
 5  
 ūṅ viṅai kaṭukkum tōṅṅala perit' eḷunt'  
 aruviyṅ olikkum vari puṅai neṭum tēr  
 kaṅ vēṭṭaṅavē muracam kaṅ+ urru+  
 katitt' eḷum mātiram kalleṅa ~olippa+  
 karaṅk' icai vayiroṭu valampuri ~ārppa  
 10  
 neṭum maṭil nirai ṅāyil  
 kaṭi miḷai+ kuṅṭu kiṭaṅkin  
 mī+ puṭai ~ār araṅ kāpp' uṭai+ tēm  
 neṅcu pukal aḷintu nilai taḷarp' orī  
 ~ollā maṅṅar naṭuṅka  
 15  
 nalla-maṅṅa ~ivaṅ vīṅkiya celavē.

The eyes desired [to see] (8a–b)

[your] victorious elephants (*kuñcaram*)<sup>936</sup> which rise beating the lands, (2)

after the rut flowed on [their] tusks with shiny metal rings, (1)

[your] horses with a swift gallop, which resemble as if the wind become visible, (4)

having worn spreading mane extended like the fire, (3)

[horses] of an appearance that resemble statues (*viṅai*) [from] flesh, (6a–c)

which forcefully run, having entangled the battalions in the frontline of the king, (5)

[your] beautiful long/tall chariot with waterfall-like lines [banners], (7)

after it had greatly arisen. (6d)

After the desires of [their] hearts failed,<sup>937</sup> (14a–b)

in the protected country with difficult[-to-conquer] forts on the elevated places, (13)

<sup>935</sup> This poem was quoted by Naccīṅārkkīṅiyar without further references in his commentaries on *Tolkāppiyam Poruḷatikāram* cū. 67 (*Puṟattiṅaiyiyal* 12). Pavāṅantam Piḷḷai 1916, 213. That this was a poem of the *Paṭirruppattu*, we learn from the commentaries on *Tolkāppiyam Poruḷatikāram* cū. 80 (*Puṟattiṅaiyiyal* 25). Pavāṅantam Piḷḷai 1916, 297.

<sup>936</sup> The word *kuñcaram* (< Skt. *kuñjara*) is not attested in the decade poems, only once in the IV. *paṭikam*: 10.

<sup>937</sup> Here I analysed quite a few subject changing absolutes (*aḷintu*, *orī*, *taḷarpu*, *urru*).

[forts] with deep moats [and] protective enclosures, (12)  
with rows of ramparts [and] long/tall walls, (11)  
when the *valampuri*-conch was sounding together with the bugle's resonating sound, (10)  
while the hastily rising great directions growled excitedly, (9)  
                  after the eye of the *muracam*-drum was touched [by the drumsticks], (8c-d)  
after [their] state became infirm, after [they] renounced, (14)  
the kings who disagree [with you] tremble, (15)  
when here, the long march [of your army] is indeed good. (16)

pēṇu taku cirappiṇ peṇ+ iyalp' āyiṇum  
eṇṇoṭu puraiyunaḷ allaḷ  
taṇṇoṭu puraiyunar+ tāṇ aṛikunaḷē.

She knows those who resemble her, (3)

[but] she is not someone who resembles me, (2)

even if [she has] the nature of the excellent women who are fit to be honoured. (1)

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<sup>938</sup> This three-liner *ācīṇyappā* poem (or the last three lines of a longer one) was quoted by Nacciṇārkkīṇiyar in his commentaries on *Tolkāppiyam Poruḷatikāram* cū. 180 (*Karṇiyal* 39).

vantaṇeṇ peruma kaṇṭaṇeṇ celarkē  
 kaḷiru kali māṇ tēroṭu curantu  
 nal kalaṇ iyum nakai cāl irukkai  
 māri ~eṇṇāy paṇi ~eṇa maṭiyāy  
 pakai vemmaiṇ acaiṇā ~ūkkalai 5  
 vēru pulatt' irutta viral vem tāṇaiyoṭu  
 māṇā maintar māru nilai tēya  
 maintu mali ~ūkkatta kantu kāl kīntu  
 kaṭāa yāṇai muḷaṅkum  
 iṭāa ~ēṇi niṇ pācaraiyāṇē. 10

As being someone who have seen [you], I have come, o great man, for the sake of going (1)  
 to your military camp with impregnable boundaries, (10)  
 [where] rutting elephants are trumpeting, (9)  
 after [they] kicked by foot [their] mighty strong posts, (8)  
 while the hostile position of the not-retreating strong warriors was dwindling (7)  
 together with [their] victorious cruel armies which stayed in various lands, (6)  
 o you of the strength which cannot be agitated by hostile severity, (5)  
 who are someone who does not shrink [himself in the cold], who do not say [that is] rain, [but  
 only] dew, (4)  
 [you] with a throne that abounds in smiles, [throne] that gives good jewels, (3)  
 after elephant bulls [and] proud horses were given [as gifts] together with chariots. (2)

<sup>939</sup> *Purattirattu, Poruṭ pāl*, 113: 1275.

5.<sup>940</sup>

vicayam<sup>941</sup> tappiya

The victory that was failed. (1)

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<sup>940</sup> This phrase of a missing *Patirrupattu* song was quoted by Nacciṅārkiṅiyar in his commentaries on *Tolkāppiyam Poruḷatikāram* cū. 75. Pavāṇantam Pillai 1916, 251.

<sup>941</sup> The word *vicayam* (< Skt. *vijaya*) is a rare one in the Caṅkam corpus, see: *vicaya* in *Puranānūru*, 362: 5; *vicayam* in *Perumpānāruppatai*, 261; *Maturakkāñci*, 625; *Mullaippāṭṭu*, 91.



# The political geography of the early Cēra kingdom

## *The legitimate kingdom*

### **The political nature of the early Cēra state**

The primary task of this chapter is to determine whether the reign of the early Cēras can be defined as a monarchy or a tribal chieftdom. To decide this question is the most important key to the reconstruction of the early Cēra economy since a moderately strong chief, or a king in strong control of his vassals, treats the economy differently. Therefore, in the following pages, an attempt is made to introduce the state of the Cēras, one among the Tamil dynasties; however, a more comprehensive study including the Cōḷas and the Pāṇṭiyas also has to be done in the future.

Gurukkal outlined in many of his works that the ancient Tamil rulers were, in fact, tribal chieftains. The following crucial factors were identified by Gurukkal that would exclude the Tamil rulers from the circle of monarchs: (1.) the lack of government in a developed (North Indian) sense; (2.) the lack of the adequate stratified relations of the society; (3.) the lack of a proper territorial sense; (4.) the unsatisfying role of agriculture in the economy during the continuous predatory warfare; (5.) the lack of semblance of taxation; (6.) the lack of the significant role of trade in the economy, as chieftains mainly dealt with prestige goods; (7.) the lack of evidence that the chieftains had interest in the protection of trade and trade routes.<sup>942</sup>

If we examine *the early Cēra state* (1.) in the *longue durée* of the Indo-Roman trade when the *Patirruppattu* was possibly composed (around 1<sup>st</sup>–4<sup>th</sup> centuries AD), we can conclude that the Cēra state already seemed to show a hybrid nature which meant, on the one hand, Tamil literary life, culture, and identity, but on the other hand profound North Indian influences together with dominant political theories from the North. At this point, it is essential to emphasise that the Cēra ruler and his ancestors were familiar with the concept of the *wheel of virtues* (*aram teri tikiri*, Skt. *dharmacakra*), which was one of the most important attributes of a

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<sup>942</sup> I mainly followed the points collected by Subbarayalu from Gurukkal's works. Subbarayalu 2014, 53.

sovereign monarch in ancient India.<sup>943</sup> It is clear from the *Patirruppattu*'s encomia that early Cēra rulers used the *dharmacakra* as a royal symbol<sup>944</sup> and they established the *aṛam*/dharma(?) all over their country,<sup>945</sup> while following *śāstric* teachings to rule the country well.<sup>946</sup> It seems that the Goddess of Fortune, Tiru/Śrī, resided on the chest of the Cēra rulers.<sup>947</sup> In the North Indian (and later South Indian) traditions, it is well known that there were close relations between kingship/dominion (*kṣatra*) and welfare/fortune (*śrī*). Śrī, as a goddess, is not just believed to select a mighty king as her husband but is also described as one who resides in the monarch and on the king's chest.<sup>948</sup> It is believed that the Cēras gained superiority when they overcame seven kingdoms (*ēlu aracarai venru*) so that they also wore the seven crowns of those kings on their chests.<sup>949</sup> The Cēras also had a royal chaplain (*purōcu* < Skt. *purohita*) in the court, who conducted the main sacrifices for the king's favour and served as an intimate advisor, which shows another significant northern influence.<sup>950</sup> The appearance of *purohitas* is not surprising since the Cēras are well-known for sheltering seers (*pārppār*) and gracious men (*antaṇar*) in their country, who both were brāhmaṇical groups in the *Patirruppattu*.<sup>951</sup> The Cēras, or at least one of their kings, seem to have followed the ancient practice well-attested in North Indian texts when the old king goes to the forest together with his chaplain to resign from political duties; however, this story appears only in one of the probably later *patikams*.<sup>952</sup> In the Cēra country, we find established places of worship for Viṣṇu and other deities. The Cēras ordered/conducted Vedic rituals (*palī* < Skt. *bali*; *āvuti* < Skt. *āhuti*; *cānti* < Skt. *śānti*)<sup>953</sup> and regularly made pilgrimages to sacred places

<sup>943</sup> Gonda 1957, 144–149.

<sup>944</sup> *Patirruppattu*, 22: 1–4; 14: 18–20; 69: 17.

<sup>945</sup> *Patirruppattu*, 59 16; 85: 9.

<sup>946</sup> For example, see *Patirruppattu*, 21: 1–4; 22: 1–5. The enumeration in *Patirruppattu*, 21: 1, is fascinating. Here, we see a quasi-specula principum or Fürstenspiegel-like context, which teaches the king how to reign. It is possible to reconstruct one secular and another religious list. The secular one could be: (1.) speech, (2.) fame, (3.) inspection, (4.) audience, (5.) intelligence/valour/conscience. The religious one could be: (1.) praises (cf. *col-mālai*), (2.) names (cf. *sahasranāma*), (3.) sight (cf. *darśana*), (4.) *śruti/kēvi*, (5.) mind/heart/meditation (cf. *vijñāna*). We can draw up another list of *vedāṅgas* following the old commentary of *Patirruppattu*: (1.) treatise on words (phonology), (2.) treatise on meanings (morphology), (3.) astrology/astronomy, (4.) Vedas (5.) controlled the heart/mind. However, all of these seem to be inspired by the *śāstric rājadharmā*.

<sup>947</sup> *Patirruppattu*, 16: 17; 31: 7; 40: 13.

<sup>948</sup> Gonda 1956, 131.

<sup>949</sup> See the old commentary on *Patirruppattu*, 14: 11. The possession of seven crowns seems to be a formulaic pattern, cf. *Patirruppattu*, 40: 13; and a quasi-formulaic usage in 45: 6. Another hypothesis would be to understand those 'crowns' as the seven "treasures" (*ratnāni*) of the king (chariot, elephant, horse, a jewel, [best] wife, [best] minister and [best] adviser) as a northern Indian borrowing. Gonda 1956, 145.

<sup>950</sup> Their appearance is evident from the somewhat later *patikams*, the summarising panegyrics of the decade poems, but we find at least one another reference in the decade poems (*Patirruppattu*, 74: 24), where the "old man with grey hair who helps to conduct [how to rule]" (*olukkum narai mūt' ālan*) was no doubt a chaplain, which was anyway the suggestion of the old commentary glossing *purōkitan*.

<sup>951</sup> For *pārppār*, read *Patirruppattu*, VI. 4; 63: 1; for *antaṇar*, read *Patirruppattu*, 24: 8; 64: 5.

<sup>952</sup> *Patirruppattu*, III. 10. The ancient practice when a king resigned from politics around the end of his life and left for the forest to follow a reclusive lifestyle can be found, among others, in the *Mānavadharmāśāstra* VI. 2.

<sup>953</sup> *Patirruppattu*, 17: 6; 21: 7, 13; IX. 15.



of their country.<sup>954</sup> They also had fortified towns and courts with councils (*arac'-awai*) with learned people around,<sup>955</sup> where the king held daily courts (*nāl makil*) to meet his subjects.<sup>956</sup> Turning back to the question of regalia, we also see the royal drum, totemistic tree, flag, bow as a dynastic symbol, garland, royal staff, chariot, elephant, horse, crown/chaplet, and parasol, which insignia shows a complex system of symbols of royal power.<sup>957</sup> What is more, ancient Greek authors name the Cēra country a 'kingdom' (βασιλεία).<sup>958</sup> Thus, we find a well-established monarchy of the Cēras in the centuries of Indo-Roman trade. This monarchy was characterised by Tamil culture and the embeddedness in the brāhmanical/śāstric religio-political context.<sup>959</sup>

Regarding the question of the *stratified society* (2.) with the hierarchy of clan relations, we know three prominent groups, the *vēntan/aracan/kōn*, the *mannan*, and the *vēl* ruling over the different landscapes of Tamil countries (Tamilakam). From these ancient terms, *vēntan/aracan* meant to represent the highest level of political power (usually translated as 'king' or 'crowned king'). We know only three Tamil dynasties of the category *vēntar*, the Cēras, the Cōlas, and the Pāṇṭiyas. The term *mannan* is considered either as a synonym of *vēntan*, but also meant a 'chief', 'chieftain', or 'ruler' (cf. *kurunila-mannan*). The term *vēl* signified *de facto* a 'chieftain' ruling over a chiefdom, but also a 'brave chief' where the term *vēl* served as a mere heroic title. While the *vēntan* were traditionally the overlords of the Tamil South,<sup>960</sup> other chiefs were independent friends, disobedient rivals, or subjugated chiefs with a quasi-feudal dependence. Even the grammatical (*ilakkaṇam*) sister-tradition of ancient literature (*ilakkiyam*), the *Tolkāppiyam*, recorded differences between kings (*aracar*) and chiefs (*ēnōr*), one of which was the possession of elephants discussed later, if we accept the interpretation of Pērācīriyar, the mediaeval commentator of that work.<sup>961</sup>

We have literary evidence that the early Cēras had a *sense of borders* (3.) in their kingdom. Such pieces of evidence are the poems which refer to a punitive naval expedition against the

<sup>954</sup> *Patirrupattu*, III. 8. 88: 11, 90: 19.

<sup>955</sup> *Patirrupattu*, 85: 9.

<sup>956</sup> *Patirrupattu*, 38: 9; 65: 13; 85: 8.

<sup>957</sup> Cf. *Tolkāppiyam Poruḷatikāram Marappiyal*, 72. cū. 616.

<sup>958</sup> *Periplus Maris Erythraei*, 54–55; Plin. *Nat. Hist.* 6.104–105; Ptol., *Geogr.* VII. 1. 86, 89.

<sup>959</sup> Gurukkal recognised this (Gurukkal 2016: 275), though I do not think he attaches enough importance to it, while he confuses things that only the mediaeval commentator suggests but are not explicitly included in the ancient texts, e.g., "... the Cēras are praised as ... devotees of Korravai, the war goddess, and worshippers of Murukan (Karthikeya). However, unlike the case of the other two of the muventar, the poems equate the Cēras with the Vedic gods such as Sūrya, Agni, Marut, ...". Gurukkal 2016, 274.

<sup>960</sup> The three kings appear as *mūvar/mūvir* in *Puranānūru*, 35: 4–5 and 110: 1. Auvaiyār sang the 367<sup>th</sup> song for the Cēra, Cōla, and Pāṇṭiya kings. The *Patirrupattu's* VIII. 5. talks about the "allied state of the two great *vēntar*" (*iru perum vēntaraiyum uṭan-nilai*), cf. *Patirrupattu*, IX. 4.

<sup>961</sup> Vacek 2013, 331.

people of the totemistic *kaṭampu*-tree living in the islands north of the Malabar Coast, who were either pirates or privateers of another chief/king, which shows a decisive action against the violation of the territory and of the Cēra economic interests.<sup>962</sup> We can extract evidence from the direction of Cēra military campaigns, and from their titles in which the conquered lands/folks appear, together with other titles that refer to their homeland: “The king of the westerners”; “Bull of the *kuttuwar*”; “Fighter of the people in Marantai”; “King of the *konkar*”; “King of the *pūliyar*”, etc.<sup>963</sup>

About *agriculture* (4.), it should be emphasised that the early Cēra rulers were firmly committed to the growth and prosperity of their lands and also to re-create harmony and fertility in their enemies’ lands which had been destroyed to the dust by them. In the *Patirrupattu*, we see references to sluices and water tanks,<sup>964</sup> agricultural workers sowing on the lowlands;<sup>965</sup> reapers with bending sickles;<sup>966</sup> ploughmen, fertile fields and irrigated furrows,<sup>967</sup> etc. Thus, while the king, from time to time, marched against the land of the disobedient, the homeland of the Cēras appears to have been engaged in continuous agricultural production, including the need to feed the army. It is indeed fascinating how Muciṛi/Muziris, but also the Cēra kingdom, was able to make year by year thousands of tons of products, and, agreeing with De Romanis, this certainly would not have been possible without the existence of a “complex local economic system”.<sup>968</sup> During the centuries of the Indo-Roman trade, dozens of Roman merchant ships, which had cargo capacity between 75–500 tons, arrived to the shores of Southwestern India perhaps every single year,<sup>969</sup> which was not just a magnificent attraction for the locals, but a busy period when they only had a few months to fill the ships and carry out transactions. Undoubtedly, it could not have worked out without the active participation of the locals and their trading channels in any way.

*Taxation of the early Cēras* (5.) is a problematic issue. Because of the scarcity of primary sources, we are far from being able to reconstruct this early episode of economic history. From other texts of the Caṅkam corpus, we know that taxation (*vāri*, *īrai*) existed at least around the last centuries when Caṅkam works were written.<sup>970</sup> What we see during the reign of the Cēras

<sup>962</sup> *Akanāṇūru*, 127: 3–9; *Patirrupattu*, 12: 3; 17: 5; 20: 4; 88: 6; IV. 6

<sup>963</sup> For the enumerated titles, see: *Patirrupattu*, 55: 9; V. 2; 90: 26; 90: 28; 22: 15–16; 88: 19; 90: 25; 21: 23; 73: 9; 84: 6; 90: 27.

<sup>964</sup> *Patirrupattu*, 13: 8; 27: 9; 30: 17

<sup>965</sup> *Patirrupattu*, 58: 15.

<sup>966</sup> *Patirrupattu*, 19: 22.

<sup>967</sup> *Patirrupattu*, 43: 16; 58: 17; 76: 11.

<sup>968</sup> De Romanis 2020, 115–116.

<sup>969</sup> McLaughlin 2010, 36.

<sup>970</sup> On taxes, *Puranāṇūru*, 330: 5; 75: 4; on tax collectors, *Paṭṭinappālai*, 116–125. For an informative introduction of the topic, see Subrahmanian 1966, 198–203.

is that perhaps the army or a troop of soldiers had the duty to collect taxes (*vant' irai koṇṭanru tānai*).<sup>971</sup> The 'epilogue' of the V. *patikam*, which was composed possibly later by someone who edited the anthology, records the gifts given to the poet: "having sung, the [following] gifts had been obtained: that king gave Umparkāṭu with [its incoming] taxes (*vāri*) and [also] his [own] son Kuṭṭuvaṅ Cēral [as an intendant]." Although we have only a few uncertain references to taxation, the *Patirruppattu* contains several other passages where regular tributes (*tirai, koṇṭi*) are humbly given to the Cēra kings by other rulers.<sup>972</sup> The terms *tirai* and *koṇṭi*, however, are difficult to differentiate; according to the *Tamil Lexicon* both are a synonym of *kappam* 'tribute, as paid by an inferior prince to his suzerain'.<sup>973</sup> Therefore, we must conclude that even in the very formulaic Tamil heroic poetry, we can find an example of some level of organised taxation.

The last two questions to clarify are *the role of trade in the economy* (6.) and the *protection of trade* (7.). Among these, I will answer the first question only later in this chapter. Regarding trade protection, I have already mentioned that the Cēras ensured to maintain their economic interests by punishing those who committed territorial violations or robberies against their ports. This, together with the fact that the royal capitals, the bigger towns, and the multicultural ports were often fortified and protected by warriors, as we shall see in the case of the fortified Muciṛi/Muziris, means that the Cēras sought to protect the people of their kingdom and thus also the merchants from the potential dangers. However, traders killed on dangerous roads of the wasteland (*pālai*) was a popular *topos* in Caṅkam literature, and at some time in South Indian history, it was indeed a cruel reality of everyday life. In the *Patirruppattu*, the king appears more than twenty times as the protector of the kingdom, of living beings, of his friends, and of poets, which titles show that the Cēra kings intended to provide safety and maintain prosperity in those parts of the monarchy where peace had already become permanent. I agree with De Romanis when he talks about the importance of the large elephant contingents of the Cēras, which made them able to control the hinterland of ports and to harvest hundreds of kilograms of ivory tusk fragments; anyway, to possess an elephant contingent, as the *Arthaśāstra* (II. 2. 13) states, was an effective means of victory.<sup>974</sup> However, for similar reasons, horses, which were sometimes imported via sea routes (*Paṭṭinappālai* 185), also had a pivotal role in battles and also emphasised the authority of the kings/chieftains. Still, the possession of horses is perhaps less apt to distinguish a king from a tribal chief.

<sup>971</sup> I understand here *irai* (n.) as 'tax' derivable from *iru-ttal* 11. v. tr. 'to pay (as a tax, a debt)'. *Dravidian Etymological Dictionary*, 521. *Patirruppattu*, 40: 6.

<sup>972</sup> *Patirruppattu*, 17: 3; 57: 15; 59: 12; 63: 9; 80: 10.

<sup>973</sup> *koṇṭi*: *Tamil Lexicon*, 1143; *tirai*: *Tamil Lexicon*, 1931; *kappam*: 720.

<sup>974</sup> De Romanis 2020, 119; 221.

## The legitimate king and his dynasty

In the *Patirruppattu*, we can already prove a well-established order of succession of the Cēra rulers. In this system, which we can define as primogeniture, the most important roles go to the father, the old or already demised king, and the first or oldest son of the king, who inherits the throne.<sup>975</sup> Although some scholars tried to reconstruct a system of matrilineal succession in the case of the early Cēras, it cannot be proved from the sources, while the *Tolkāppiyam* makes it clear that the word *tāyam*, which is also used in the *Patirruppattu* to describe the royal lineage and the succession of the Cēras,<sup>976</sup> means “things that are inherited by sons as father’s property” according to Naccinārkkinīyar.<sup>977</sup> All the *patikams* of the *Patirruppattu* begin with the mention of the father and the mother of the particular king; however, while the fathers are referred to by their names, the mothers are mostly referred to by the names of their fathers or by some sort of strange, dynastic names which we cannot confidently identify as proper female names. On the other hand, it is possible that names like Nallinī, Maṇakilli, Patumaṇ, and Antuvaṇ Cellai were the real names of the queens. These queens are referred to as *tēvi* (Skt. < *devī*) or *peruntēvi* in the poems, which shows again a northern Indian influence in the life of the dynasty (and/or in the poet’s use of words). The question arises whether the kings were supposed to live in monogamy or polygamy. We have references throughout the *Patirruppattu*, which suggest that the king had more than one wife (*makaḷir*, *arivaiyar*).<sup>978</sup> However, each king certainly had a favourite wife who was immortalised in the poems as a unique and quasi-celestial consort whose beauty, nature, and fidelity outranked the deities.<sup>979</sup> While wives were expected to be faithful, the king often had fun in the company of courtesans, mostly in the military camp.<sup>980</sup> Turning back to the question of the connection between the dynasty and the royal consorts, we see that the kings forged ties through dynastic marriages. The dynastic names of the queens, such as Veḷiyaṇ Vēṇmāl, Vēḷāvi Kōmāṇ, Cōḷaṇ, Maiyūr Kilāaṇ Vēṇmāl, suggest that the kings married women who came from the tribe of Veḷiyaṇ, from the tribe of Āvi (living around Āvinaṅkuṭi, today’s Paḷaṇi, Tamil Nadu),<sup>981</sup> from the royal dynasty of the Cōḷas, and the tribe of Maiyūr Kilāaṇ. Although we cannot identify all the areas connected to these names, we may at least conclude

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<sup>975</sup> Subrahmanian 1966, 48.

<sup>976</sup> *Patirruppattu*, 44: 20.

<sup>977</sup> *Tolkāppiyam Porulatikāram Poruḷiyal*, cū. 25. Transl. by N. Subrahmanian. Subrahmanian 1966, 47.

<sup>978</sup> *Patirruppattu*, 12: 23; 57: 13; 68: 19; 88: 29.

<sup>979</sup> *Patirruppattu*, 14: 15; 19: 14; 21: 37; 31: 28; 38: 10; 42: 7; 52: 16–21; 55: 1; 61: 4; 70: 16; 81: 31; 88: 36; 89: 20; 90: 50.

<sup>980</sup> *Patirruppattu*, 16: 18; 50: 18.

<sup>981</sup> *Pre-Pallavan Tamil Index*, 94.

that the Cēras were interested in making alliances in central South India, which primarily harmed the interests of the Pāṇṭiyas and the Cōḷas; however, these relationships proved to be very fragile, as we have seen in the V. *patikam* of Paraṇar, in which nine heirs of the Cōḷa family fell at Vāyil against the Cēraṇ,<sup>982</sup> or the IX. *patikam* of Peruṅkuṇṇūr Kīlār, in which the Great Cōḷaṇ of Potti was defeated by the Cēraṇ.<sup>983</sup> Anyway, the king had friends with whom they could count on each other. One example is the chief called Aṛukai, the enemy of Mōkūr, to whom the Cēra king rushed to help when he was in trouble and defeated Mōkūr in revenge.<sup>984</sup> This might show that the Cēra kings tried to maintain the balance of power in and around their kingdom through their diplomatic, dynastic relationships, which makes it likely that the *rājamaṇḍala* (“circle of kingdoms”) theory could have existed in the Cēra political thinking.<sup>985</sup>

Where did the Cēras come from? V. Kanakasabhai derives the Cēras from a tribe called *vāṇavar* “celestials” who “were natives of a mountainous region in the north of Bengal”; what is more, according to him, “[t]he Chera Kings belonged to this tribe and called themselves Vanavar or Celestials”.<sup>986</sup> This far-fetched theory cannot be verified by ancient sources, but we can prove that the word *vāṇavar* in the Caṅkam sources connected to the Cēras meant either ‘deities’ (perhaps living in the Himalaya region) rather than a mountain tribe of Bengal, or, when it referred to the Cēras, ‘kings’ ruling over the ‘high land’ (Mēlnāṭu, Malaināṭu).<sup>987</sup> In fact, we do not have any evidence regarding the origin of the Cēra dynasty. Because of their self-designation as *villavar* ‘bowmen’ and ‘hunters’, we might think that they were strongly connected to archery, which is confirmed by their dynastic symbol, the bow. They were also known as Kuṭavar or Kuṭṭuvar, names which are connected to western South India and the region called Kuṭṭanāṭu, rich in lakes. They were also rulers of a mountainous country, therefore they are known as Poṛaiyar and Malaiyar.<sup>988</sup> We do not exactly know where the name Cēra/Cēral or the Sanskrit Kerala comes from. Some scholars thought that it has to be connected to an Egyptian etymology (*sr* means ‘a prince’),<sup>989</sup> while others think that “Chēralam means mountain range, and so is equivalent to Malabar”.<sup>990</sup> This meaning was mentioned by Balasubramanian too,<sup>991</sup> however, neither the *Tamil Lexicon* and the *Dravidian Etymological Dictionary* nor the *Tamil*

<sup>982</sup> *Patirrupattu*, V. 19–20.

<sup>983</sup> *Patirrupattu*, IX. 6, 8.

<sup>984</sup> *Patirrupattu*, 44: 10–16.

<sup>985</sup> Cf. *Mānavadharmasāstra*, VII. 156–157.

<sup>986</sup> Kanakasabhai 1904, 48.

<sup>987</sup> Subrahmanian 1966, 41.

<sup>988</sup> Subrahmanian 1966, 41.

<sup>989</sup> Subrahmanian 1966, 42.

<sup>990</sup> Subrahmanian 1966, 42.

<sup>991</sup> Balasubramanian 1980, 4.

*Ilakkīyaḥ Pēraḥarāṭi* lexicalised the word as ‘mountain’. Others like Dorai Rangaswamy mention that the Cēra name possibly derives from *cēṛppu* ‘seashore’.<sup>992</sup> The truth is that we do not know what the dynastic name Cēra refers to. Thiagarajah adds to this that “[s]ince the word Kerala is first mentioned in Aśoka inscriptions, Burrow is of the opinion that when the Āryans first came into contact with the three Tamil kingdoms, the name was still realised with an initial velar plosive and that the change to palatal Ceral [sic!] must have taken place between this period and the period represented in early Tamil literature”.<sup>993</sup> One may think that the name derives from the Old Malayalam word *kēram* ‘coconut palm’, but as Gundert states, that name came from the name of the Malabar (*kēra/cēra*)<sup>994</sup> which can undoubtedly be connected to the name of the Cēra dynasty, or another possibility that the word *kēram* is a short form of the Sanskrit *nālikera* ‘coconut tree’. Be that as it may, we find the dynasty first mentioned as Keralaputra (Skt. “son of Kerala”), which can be found on the II. Aśokan Rock Edict of Mānsehrā (3<sup>rd</sup> c. BC), but also on other Aśokan inscriptions as Ketalaputo (II. Rock Edict of Gīrnār), Kelalaputo (II. Rock Edict of Kālsī), or Keraḍaputro (II. Rock Edict of Shāhbāzgarhī).<sup>995</sup> After that, we meet with the names Cēral, Cēramāṇ and Cēra in the Caṅkam texts and colophons from around the 1<sup>st</sup> century AD onwards. It is possible that the Cēras reached the Malabar Coast through conquest, but the first decade of the *Patirruppattu*, which would probably serve as an answer to this, has been lost. Unfortunately, we do not have sources of convincing quantity and quality about the transition period when the Cēra state developed from a chiefdom into a kingdom, so for the time being, leaving the assumptions behind, I leave this question open.

In the Cēra texts, we find names of ten kings who are identifiable with the heroes of the *Patirruppattu* and ten names of Cēra kings who are or are not identical with them. The first group of kings consist of the following names:

1. Utiyañcēral (hero of the lost I. decade?)<sup>996</sup>  
 = Cēramāṇ Peruñcorr’ Utiyaṇ Cēralātan (*Puranānūru*, 2, colophon;<sup>997</sup> *Akanānūru*, 168; 233);

<sup>992</sup> Rangaswamy 1968, 110.

<sup>993</sup> Thiagarajah 1963, X.

<sup>994</sup> *A Malayalam and English Dictionary*, 294.

<sup>995</sup> Hultzsch 1925, 2–3; 28–29; 51–52; 72.

<sup>996</sup> Marr 1968, 19–24.

<sup>997</sup> I use the word *colophon* here in the sense that afterword-like notes were added to the poems that summarise the poem decades, containing details of questionable historical value regarding the origin of the poems and the poet’s person. I believe these can be regarded as editorial final remarks added subsequently at the end of the decade poems.

2. Imaiṽarampaṅ Neṽuñcēralāṽaṅ (hero of the II. decade)  
= Kuṽakkō Neṽuñcēralāṽaṅ (*Puranānūru*, 62, colophon; 63, colophon; 368, colophon) – son of Utiyañcēral, born from Nalliṅi, ruled for 58 years;
3. Palyāṅaiccelkelu Kuṽṽuvaṅ (hero of the III. decade)  
– son of Utiyañcēral, younger brother of Neṽuñcēralāṽaṅ, born from Nalliṅi, ruled for 25 years;
4. Kaḷaṅkāyccaṅṅi Nārmuṽi Cēral (hero of the IV. decade)  
– son of Neṽuñcēralāṽaṅ, born from Vēḷāvi Kōmāṅ Patumaṅ Tēvi, ruled for 25 years;
5. Ceṅkuṽṽuvaṅ (hero of the V. decade)  
= Kaṽalōṽṽiya Velkelu Kuṽṽuvaṅ (*Puranānūru*, 369, colophon) – son of Neṽuñcēralāṽaṅ, born from Cōḷaṅ Maṅakilli, ruled for 55 years [+ Kuṽṽuvaṅ Cēral (V. decade, patikam), intendant of Umparkāṽu – son of Ceṅkuṽṽuvaṅ];
6. Āṽukōṽpāṽṽu Cēralāṽaṅ (hero of the VI. decade)  
– son of Neṽuñcēralāṽaṅ, born from Vēḷ Āvi Kōmāṅ Tēvi, ruled for 38 years;
7. Antuvaṅ (hero of the lost VII. decade?)<sup>998</sup>  
= Antuvañcēral Irumpaṽai (*Puranānūru*, 13, colophon);
8. Celvackaṽuṅkō Vāḷiyāṽaṅ (hero of the VII. decade)  
= Celvackaṽuṅkō Vāḷiyāṽaṅ (*Puranānūru*, 14, colophon); = Kaṽuṅkō Vāḷiyāṽaṅ (*Puranānūru*, 8, colophon) = Cikkarpallittuñciya Celvackaṽuṅkō Vāḷiyāṽaṅ (*Puranānūru*, 387, colophon) – son of Antuvaṅ, born from a daughter of Poṽaiyaṅ, ruled for 25 years;
9. Peruñcēral Irumpaṽai (hero of the VIII. decade)  
= Kuṽṽuvaṅ Irumpaṽai (VIII. *patikam*) = Takaṽūr eṽinta Peruñcēral Irumpaṽai (*Puranānūru*, 50, colophon) = same as Kōkkōtai Mārpaṅ<sup>999</sup> – son of Celvackaṽuṅkō Vāḷiyāṽaṅ, born from Vēḷ Āvi Kōmāṅ Patumaṅ Tēvi, ruled for 17 years;
10. Iḷaṅcēral Irumpaṽai (hero of the IX. decade)  
= Kuṽakkōccēral Irumpaṽai (*Puranānūru*, 210, colophon; 211, colophon) – son of Peruñcēral Irumpaṽai, born from Antuvaṅ Ceḷḷai, ruled for 16 years.<sup>1000</sup>

Thus, we see that the royal dynasty was probably established by Utiyaṅ who was followed by his son, Neṽuñcēralāṽaṅ, then his younger brother was the next on the throne who was succeeded by three sons of Neṽuñcēralāṽaṅ. The reign of Āṽukōṽpāṽṽu Cēralāṽaṅ was followed by the rule of the dynastic branch of the Irumpaṽais established by Antuvaṅ which king was

<sup>998</sup> Marr 1968, 19–24.

<sup>999</sup> Marr 1985 [1958], 172–174.

<sup>1000</sup> For a family tree of the Cēras, see: Marr 1985 [1958]: 276.

followed by his descendants, Celvakkatuṅkō Vāliyaṭaṅ, Peruṅcēral Irumporai, and Iḷaṅcēral Irumporai. Sivaraja Pillai made an attempt to reconstruct the chronology of the early Tamils, thus the chronology of the early Cēras.<sup>1001</sup> As we have seen that our basic chronological milestones rather waver than stand firmly, we cannot consider his calculations correct, although he discovered serious synchronicities, and his ideas certainly overlaps with reality. What seems to be sure from the available evidence, that these kings were ruling over the Cēra kingdom from around the beginning of the 1<sup>st</sup> century AD to the first half of the 3<sup>rd</sup> century AD. If the reigning years of the *Patirruppattu*'s epilogues are real, then in the case of the very long ruling periods (e.g. see Neṭuṅcēralātaṅ and his sons), we have to take into account that the kingdom was divided, and the power was sometimes exercised by contemporary kings simultaneously. The other names found in the *Puranānūru*, which can be connected to the Cēras are:

- a. Oḷvāṭkōpperuṅcēral (*Puranānūru*, 5, colophon);
- b. Pālai pāṭiya Peruṅkaṭuṅkō (*Puranānūru*, 11, colophon);
- c. Yāṅaikkaṭcēy Māntaraṅcēral Irumporai (*Puranānūru*, 17, colophon; 20, colophon; 22; 53, colophon; 229, colophon);
- d. Kōkkōtai Mārpaṅ (48 + colophon; 49 + colophon);
- e. Kuṭṭuvaṅ Kōtai (*Puranānūru*, 54, colophon);
- f. Peruṅcēralātaṅ (*Puranānūru*, 65, colophon);
- g. Kaṅaikkāl Irumporai (*Puranānūru*, 74, colophon);
- h. Kōṭṭampalattuttuṅciya Mākkōtai (*Puranānūru*, 245, colophon);
- i. Mārivaṅkō/Māvaṅkō (*Puranānūru*, 367, colophon);
- j. Cēramāṅ Vaṅcaṅ (*Puranānūru*, 398, colophon).<sup>1002</sup>

We must consider that some of these kings might be identical with the ones found in the first list. I have previously concluded that the *Patirruppattu* as a Cēra anthology was most probably collected, supplemented and edited at the time of the last Irumporai ruler of the anthology, therefore it is possible that in this second list we see kings who preceded or succeeded the kings of the *Patirruppattu*. One day numismatic findings and inscriptions might help identify these rulers.

The first among the kings of the *Patirruppattu* is Utiyaṅ or Utiyaṅcēral who appears only in the II. *patikam* and in some poems of the *Puranānūru* and the *Akanānūru*.<sup>1003</sup> His kitchen became

<sup>1001</sup> Pillai 1932; for the Cēra genealogy, see.: Table III.

<sup>1002</sup> For a brief overview of these attestations, read: Marr 1985 [1958], 155–181.

<sup>1003</sup> *Puranānūru*, 2, colophon; *Akanānūru*, 168; 233.



symbolic as far as he is supposed to be the one who fed ritually his demised warriors and also the armies of the Pāṇḍavas and the Kauravas during the *Mahābhārata*'s battle.<sup>1004</sup> The latter appears only in the *Puranānūru* 2, which was perhaps the idea of the poet who tried to trace the ancient origins of the Cēra dynasty (as is the case with the Pāṇḍiya kings elsewhere!) back to the time of the *Mahābhārata* and with that connect the Cēras to the legendary kings of India, however, agreeing with Marr, we cannot take this hyperbole seriously.<sup>1005</sup> Anyway, some similarities found in the *Puranānūru* 2 suggests that either Kumaṭṭūr Kaṇṇaṇār was familiar with that poem, or, and I think it is rather possible, Murañciyūr Muṭinākaṇār was already familiar with the first decade of the *Patirrupattu*.

Let us have a look at the regalia of Cēra kings attested in the *Patirrupattu*. The *Tolkāppiyam Poruḷatikāram Marapiyal* contains a *cūttiram* from which we can form an image of what regalia the kings supposed to have. The kings with righteous royal-staffs (*ceṅkōl aracar*) possess: army/weapon (*paṭai*), flag (*koḷi*), umbrella (*kuṭai*), royal-drum (*muracu*), horse (*puravi*), elephant bull (*kaḷiru*), chariot (*tēr*), garland (*tār*), crown (*muṭi*). Iḷampūraṇar adds to this the chain (*āram*) and the anklet (*kaḷal*), while Pērāciriyaṇar mentions the additional yak-tail fan (*kavari*), throne (*ariyaṇai*), and fortification (*aran*).<sup>1006</sup> Analysing these items in the light of the *Patirrupattu*, we can conclude that, except the *kavari* and Iḷampūraṇar's *āram*, the Cēra king possessed all the above-mentioned insignia which are very much emphasized in the poems.

As Subrahmanian outlines, “the banner or the flag has been a universal feature in royal paraphernalia at all times”, and Cēra kings are no exception.<sup>1007</sup> We see their flags swaying in many of the *Patirrupattu* poems. We read about the banners of the old town near the market,<sup>1008</sup> the bright flags which sways like waterfalls,<sup>1009</sup> the flags on the chariots,<sup>1010</sup> the flags on the storied houses of the streets,<sup>1011</sup> flags on the top of the elephant bulls,<sup>1012</sup> flags swaying in the frontline,<sup>1013</sup> flags on the fortresses.<sup>1014</sup> The Cēra symbol, which appeared on the banners, was the bow (*viḷ*) which perhaps reflects that the Cēra kings were once hunter chiefs of mountainous

<sup>1004</sup> Marr 1985 [1958]: 158–159.

<sup>1005</sup> Marr 1985 [1958]: 158.

<sup>1006</sup> *Tolkāppiyam Poruḷatikāram Marapiyal*, cū. 616. Sundramathy–Manuel 2010, 585. Subrahmanian cites the *Cūṭamaṇi-nikaṇṭu*, which contains a list of 21 elements; however, we do not consider this a useful source for our historical reconstruction. Subrahmanian 1966, 75.

<sup>1007</sup> Subrahmanian 1966, 84.

<sup>1008</sup> *Patirrupattu*, 15: 19.

<sup>1009</sup> *Patirrupattu*, 25: 11.

<sup>1010</sup> *Patirrupattu*, 33: 1; 34: 5; 44: 2; 49: 5; 55: 9; 73: 11; 81: 7; 82: 8; 83: 4. On the enemies' chariots: *Patirrupattu*, 80: 14.

<sup>1011</sup> *Patirrupattu*, 47: 3–4.

<sup>1012</sup> *Patirrupattu*, 52: 1; 69: 1–2; 88: 17.

<sup>1013</sup> *Patirrupattu*, 82: 8.

<sup>1014</sup> *Patirrupattu*, 84: 8.

areas.<sup>1015</sup> We learn from Caṅkam poems that the Cēras went on a pilgrimage to the Himalaya (or to an unidentified northern mountain tall enough to be called ‘Himalaya’ in the legend), where the king imprinted their dynastic bow sign on the rocks.<sup>1016</sup> This act was meant for the protection of the dynasty, as we learn from the *Puranānūru* 39 in which one reads *ēmam viḷ*.<sup>1017</sup>

The royal parasol (*kuṭai*) is attested in a few poems of the *Patirruppattu*. As for the Cēra kings, we find one direct reference in *Patirruppattu* 17: 12 and a few indirect and uncertain ones in which the king is referred to as having a shade that covers him (*pōr nilal* “covering shade”).<sup>1018</sup> The translation of *pōr nilal* as “shadow of war/battle” seems to be more logical. However, it is a weird image hard to interpret unless the “shadow of war” is equal to the smoke of burning and the dust of marching. I found it rather possible that it refers to the shade of the parasol that covers the king so that the whole image can be interpreted as the retinue which rejoices in that shadow<sup>1019</sup> closely surrounded the king.

[...] o man of the chest with golden jewels, o king of songstresses, [your] white parasol, which touches the sky of greatly vast extent, where fierce wind whirls around after groups of clouds in a big number that glimmer with ambrosia, showered plentifully, [the parasol] whose flawless superiority is desired by the Sun, announces “Let [the young men] come [under] this shade in [this] fertile world of vast area, young men (*iyavar*) with armlets on [their] arms, who keep [their] drumsticks on the [drums’] eyes, who had [already] explored the great directions (*mātiram*) without seeing [any] refuge!”<sup>1020</sup>

The Cēras also have horses in their armies. It is, however, rather difficult to find references in which we see the unique horse of the monarch. In *Patirruppattu* 65: 1–2, we see the galloping good horse of the king with a spreading plume and red-stained hoofs that struck against the chopped corpses. In the 81<sup>st</sup> poem (Lines 31–32), the poet asks the king to harness his horse in order to visit his lady after the successful war. Other references to horses in the *Patirruppattu* seem to refer to horses in the army rather than to the king's horse.

<sup>1015</sup> Subrahmanian 1966, 84.

<sup>1016</sup> *Patirruppattu*, II. 4; *Akanānūru*, 127: 4–5. Cf. *Puranānūru*, 39: 15; *Akanānūru*, 396: 16–18. Marr 1985 [1958]: 281–282.

<sup>1017</sup> “[...] *onikiya varai/alantu ariyāp poṇpaṭu netuṅkottu/imaiyam cūṭṭiya ēma viḷ porī/mān vīnai netuntēr vānavaṅ tolaiya/vātā vañci vāṭṭum niṅ* [...]”. *Puranānūru*, 39: 13–17.

<sup>1018</sup> *Patirruppattu*, 39: 17; 40: 1.

<sup>1019</sup> *Patirruppattu*, 40: 1.

<sup>1020</sup> ‘*araṇam kāṇātu mātiram tuḷaiya/nanam talaiṅ paim ṅilam varuka i nilal eṅa/ṅāyiru pukanṅa tītu tīr ciṅappiṅ/pacum pūṅ māṅpa pāṭiṅ vēntē*’. *Patirruppattu*, 17: 8–14.

We also find references to the royal elephant. In *Patirrupattu* 42: 18, the king rode his elephant bull, which lifted him with its trunk to his neck. This elliptical passage might refer to a situation when the king was watching from his elephant's neck the oncoming attainment of gifts. In the *Patirrupattu* 33: 3, the king tied his elephant bull to the guarded tree (*kaṭimaram*), which I will explain later. The last reference to the royal elephant leads us to the next among the regalia.

In the *Patirrupattu* 79: 12–14, we find the Cēra king sitting on a throne (*kaṭṭil*), which was fashioned by cutting off the tusks of the enemies' royal elephant (*arac'uwā*). We do not know whether the same throne was carried during the campaigns from camp to camp, but we see a throne (*irukkai* 'seat') appearing in the military camps.<sup>1021</sup> It is also possible that the poems with the throne, which moves together with the army, are supposed to refer to the kingdom, while the throne was a metonymy signifying the expanding kingdom. In other poems, we see the Cēra throne, where crowds jubilate,<sup>1022</sup> the throne which increases the wealth of the king and has limitless visitors,<sup>1023</sup> the royal seat which distributes horses to the ones who beg,<sup>1024</sup> and the throne that gives good jewels and is therefore surrounded by smiling people.<sup>1025</sup> It is remarkable that in the epilogue of the VIII. *patikam*, the royal throne (*aracu kaṭṭil*) was gifted to Aricilkiḷār, the poet, which, even if it was not true, was still a legendary example of selfless donation.

The chariot of the king was also an important royal attribute, which appears in several poems of the *Patirrupattu*,<sup>1026</sup> however, we do not really know how it looked like. In the poems, it was firmly made, had flags swaying on the top, was perhaps fashioned with gold or metal plates,<sup>1027</sup> and was either long or tall (*neṭum*).

The sceptre or royal staff (*kōl*), which is supposed to be straight (*ceṅkōl*) when the king was just and bent (*koṭuṅkōl*) when the king was unjust, is attested only in the *patikams* and the last decade's penultimate poem.<sup>1028</sup> According to the IX. *patikam*, the *kōl* was a source of protection for living beings.

In the case of the crown, we instead see royal chaplets on the Cēra heads in the *Patirrupattu*, although, in the case of Nārmuṭi Cēral, we have a fascinating description of his

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<sup>1021</sup> *Patirrupattu*, 24: 13.

<sup>1022</sup> *Patirrupattu*, 84: 19–20.

<sup>1023</sup> *Patirrupattu*, 75: 7.

<sup>1024</sup> *Patirrupattu*, 76: 7–8.

<sup>1025</sup> *Patirrupattu-tirattu*, 4: 3.

<sup>1026</sup> *Patirrupattu*, 25: 13; 33: 1; 73: 11; 81: 32; 88: 20; *Patirrupattu-tirattu*, 1: 6; 2: 7.

<sup>1027</sup> *Patirrupattu*, 88: 20.

<sup>1028</sup> *Patirrupattu*, 89: 9; II. 6; III. 2; IX. 16.

famous crown.<sup>1029</sup> Interestingly, the crowns of enemy kings appear in the *Patirruppattu*,<sup>1030</sup> while the Cēra crowns did not deserve mention by the poets.

What is new, however, is the fact that the Cēra rulers and their ancestors were familiar with the concept of the “wheel of virtues” (*aram teri tikiri*, cf. Skt. *dharmacakra*) which was one of the most important attributes of a sovereign monarch in ancient India.<sup>1031</sup> The early Cēra rulers used the *dharmacakra* as a royal symbol,<sup>1032</sup> and they established the *aram* (*dharma*) all over their country,<sup>1033</sup> while following *sāstric* teachings in order to rule the country well.<sup>1034</sup> I argued in the previous chapter that the political nature of the Cēra state was monarchical. In this early kingdom, *brāhmaṇa* groups surrounding the king played a major role in politics and religion. They were not only people who influenced the religion of the court, but they must have had significant part in strengthening the dynastic legitimacy and its acceptance in the far reaches of the kingdom. Although we have no record of royal initiations or coronations (is the *Patirruppattu* 74 an example?), it is quite certain that the *brāhmaṇas* were the ones who ritually consecrated the kings, and they paved the way for the king with various Vedic sacrifices. This is confirmed by the appearance of the royal chaplains (*purōcu* < Skt. *purohita*) in the texts.<sup>1035</sup> We do not see that the Cēra kings depended on the whims of the gods, and apart from certain pilgrimages, it is more the case that the kingdom tried to keep secular matters under control and leave religious matters to the Vedic priests. Champakalakshmi states that “[p]erformance of Vedic sacrifice and patronage to brahmanas were not an intrinsic part of the legitimation process in this period”, but the *Patirruppattu* introduces the opposite as it marks the beginning of an era when Vedic sacrifices and patronage to *brāhmaṇas* became a pivotal question of the legitimation process.<sup>1036</sup>

The totemistic tree is unique among the regalia as far as it is not on the list of *Tolkāppiyam*, but it seems to be connected to an ancient Dravidian belief. I have written more about this topic in the chapter dealing with religion. Still, I also need to emphasise here that all the dynasties including kings, major and minor chieftains had particular totemistic trees or plants which they protected. It is possible that those plants were supposed to preserve the lineage, the power of the dynasty, etc., but unfortunately, we do not find poems which would underline that. It is,

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<sup>1029</sup> *Patirruppattu*, 39: 9–17.

<sup>1030</sup> *Patirruppattu*, 14: 11; 16: 17; 40: 13; 45: 6.

<sup>1031</sup> Gonda 1957, 144–149.

<sup>1032</sup> *Patirruppattu*, 22: 1–4; 14: 18–20; 69: 17.

<sup>1033</sup> *Patirruppattu*, 59 16; 85: 9.

<sup>1034</sup> For example, see *Patirruppattu*, 21: 1–4; 22: 1–5. The enumeration in *Patirruppattu* 21: 1 is very fascinating. Here, we see a quasi-specula principum or Fürstenspiegel-like context, which teaches the king how to reign.

<sup>1035</sup> For more about the *brāhmaṇas* in the Cēra kingdom, read: pp. 413–425.

<sup>1036</sup> Champakalakshmi 1996, 27.

however, quite sure that these trees had a severe yet unexplained connection with the continuity of the dynasty.<sup>1037</sup> Regarding the totemistic tree of the Cēras, it was most probably the *panai* or *pōntai*, the Palmyra tree.<sup>1038</sup> The same plant served as the main constituent of their royal garlands and chaplets.<sup>1039</sup> The Cēras often set the goal of cutting down the totemistic trees of their foes.<sup>1040</sup> We see in other poems that tying the royal elephants to the enemies' totemistic trees was an often practised custom in war.<sup>1041</sup> This act may refer to the humiliation of the enemies' totemistic tree (*kaṭimaram*) as the penultimate or final act of a total victory. Still, it could also refer to the descent of the enemies' king into vassal status. We learn that the Cēras sometimes cut down the totemistic tree of their foes and made a royal drum (*muracu*) from its wood. This act can be found in the *Patirruppattu* and the *Akanānūru*, but all these poems report on Cēra kings; thus, I assume that this rarely mentioned tradition could have been connected to the early Cēras, as far as its connection with other kings cannot be proved. The royal *muracu* drum, anyway, enjoyed cultic respect, which had been regularly and ceremonially washed, which had a unique bed on which it was laid,<sup>1042</sup> and to which bloody sacrifices were offered.<sup>1043</sup>

In the *Patirruppattu*, the king appears more than twenty times as the protector of the kingdom, of living beings, of his friends, and of poets, which titles show that the Cēra kings intended to provide safety and maintain prosperity in those parts of the monarchy where peace had already become permanent. This royal mission to be responsible for “mankind” made the Cēras stand out from the crowd of tribal chiefs and made them able to compete with the great dynasties of the Cōlas and the Pāṇṭiyas, who often fancied themselves, probably following a Sanskrit topos, as protectors of the world. The usual comparison of the royal generosity with the monsoon rains shows how difficult it is to create abundance in the kingdom from time to time; nevertheless, for the monarch, the well-being of his subjects also meant control over social processes, increased his wealth and stabilised his royal power.

The poets of the *Patirruppattu* often mention the heroes of the decades as offsprings of an ancient lineage.<sup>1044</sup> In the 59<sup>th</sup> poem (Line 16), the Cēra lineage “flows by establishing virtue (*aram*) without having obstacle on the way”. In the 14<sup>th</sup> poem (Lines 19–21), we see “the [Cēra]

<sup>1037</sup> For a fascinating yet exaggerated analysis, read: Hart 1975, 15–17.

<sup>1038</sup> Dubyanskiy 2013, 316–317.

<sup>1039</sup> *Puranānūru*, 42: 1; 57: 2.

<sup>1040</sup> See: *Patirruppattu*, 11: 12–13; 12: 3; 15: 3; 20: 3–4; 40: 14–15; IV. 6–10; 44: 14–15; 49: 8–16; V. 13–17; 88: 6; 10. Cf. *Akanānūru*, 127: 4; 199: 19–20.

<sup>1041</sup> *Puranānūru*, 57: 10–11; 109: 11–13; 162: 5–6; 336: 3–4; 345: 1; 347: 9–12.

<sup>1042</sup> *Puranānūru*, 50.

<sup>1043</sup> *Patirruppattu*, 19: 4–5; *Puranānūru*, 362: 3.

<sup>1044</sup> *Patirruppattu*, 85: 5.

ancestors (*mutalvar*) of the ancient family [...], which entirely ruled in this grove with boundaries inside the sea, [having] the wheel<sup>1045</sup> with golden ornaments set with shiny sapphires”. In the 63<sup>rd</sup> poem (Lines 14–16), the king, called the descendant of the Cēras, took up the burden of his family. In the 88<sup>th</sup> poem (Lines 13–14), the Cēra king is called “the descendant of great ones who obtained victory while kings (*vēntar*) and chiefs (*vēlir*) humbled by following [them]”. The 90<sup>th</sup> poem (Lines 23–24) calls the king “the descendant of brilliant and victorious strong men, [who] caused to be earned great things in<sup>1046</sup> the hands of many”. The 58<sup>th</sup> poem (Line 8) mentions the king as “the great son of strong men with<sup>1047</sup> chaplets”. We have, however, longer descriptions worth to be cited here:

[...] [your] predecessors<sup>1048</sup> [who had] the wheel with shining spokes<sup>1049</sup> were certainly someones who ruled tirelessly [in] this earthly world, because they, as just you, became ones with principles of not being inactive, so that the four different vast regions<sup>1050</sup> flourished as being one, while [people] received the protection of rain when the the sky truly widened [...]<sup>1051</sup>

One of the most interesting descriptions of the Cēra ancestors can be found in the 22<sup>nd</sup> poem:

O offspring of strong men who governed for aeons (*ūh*), while [their people] passed away without suffering with bodies that had become old, people who share [what they] ate, [who] did not separate from their beloved retinue, walking straight like the flawless, learned ones, without desiring other’s property, without causing

<sup>1045</sup> The ornamented wheel (*tikir*) of the dynasty can be identified as one among the regalia of the sovereign monarch. I consider the wheel of dynasty here as *cakra* or *dharmacakra* which probably reflects the brāhmanical tradition of coronation and/or the presence of brāhmanical traditions around the Cēra court. About the relations between the king and the wheel in Indo-Aryan sources, see: Gonda 1957: 144–149.

<sup>1046</sup> Here I understood *kai* as an unmarked locative and the word *peyar* as *poru* following the POC.

<sup>1047</sup> I understood *kaṇṇiya* as a perf. pey. which means ‘attached’, but in translation I gave back this meaning with a mere sociative. Another option is to understand *kaṇṇiya* as an adj. ‘having chaplet’, then the phrase ‘*kaṇṇi kaṇṇiya*’ is a difficult-to-translate figura etymologica. The third option is to understand *kaṇṇiya* as a Skt. loanword < *ganya* (*Tamil Lexicon*, 695), in this case, we read ‘strong men whose honour is in [their] chaplets’.

<sup>1048</sup> *munticinōr*: “they who were before [in time]”. Cf. *muntu-tal* (*Tamil Lexicon*, 3268).

<sup>1049</sup> Here it is perhaps another reference to *dharmacakra*, a royal symbol. Cf. *Patirruppattu*, 14: 18; 22: 4.

<sup>1050</sup> I assume that here the four landscapes refer to the four basic *tiṇai* (“literary landscapes/settings”), so that the whole literary universe flourished under the Cēras. Not so the POC which understood “all the four [great] directions” (*nālu ticaiyum*).

<sup>1051</sup> *Patirruppattu*, 69: 15–17.

affliction to others,<sup>1052</sup> while the many profits of the forests and the seas helped [them], staying away [from what is] evil, desiring much what is good [...] <sup>1053</sup>

We have poems in which a summary of the acts of previous Cēra kings can be found.<sup>1054</sup> What we see here is a tradition communicated by the Cēra court poets, which talks about an ancient lineage of Cēra kings who were powerful, just, heroic and omnipotent and did not fail in their regular duties. Therefore, they made the earth blossom.<sup>1055</sup> As I already mentioned, we cannot reconstruct the origin of the Cēra dynasty. As a powerful chiefdom, its history must go back to the time of the Aśoka inscriptions and before, but we do not have evidence that the Cēra chiefdom had evolved into a kingdom before the beginning of the 1<sup>st</sup> c. AD. We do not know what happened after the death of Palyānaiccelkeḷu Kuṭṭuvaṇ, the younger son of Neṭuñcēralātaṇ. Still, the poet, Kāppiyārṛu Kāppiyaṇār felt it important to emphasise that Kaḷaṅkāykkāṇṇi Nārmuṭi Cēral won triumphant victories that improved the perturbed family.<sup>1056</sup> We read in the 31<sup>st</sup> poem that “the *muracu*-drum was taken, setting right<sup>1057</sup> the excellent family (*tīṇai*) of a declining lineage (*kuṭi*)”, which famous act might mean that a king or chief threatened and regularly attacked the Cēra country, whom Nārmuṭi Cēral had to defeat and whose drum had to be taken in order to control the power. It is also possible that the story refers to the period when after Neṭuñcēralātaṇ his younger brother sat on the throne instead of the son of Neṭuñcēralātaṇ, whose agnatic seniority was the opposite of the primogeniture that we can see throughout the *Patirruppattu*, therefore, the ancient order of succession had to be restored. However, since we do not know the first decade of the *Patirruppattu* and the order of succession before Neṭuñcēralātaṇ, we are not aware of whether Nārmuṭi Cēral was the one who started to introduce the principle of inheritance according to primogeniture, or whether this was already the usual system before Palyānaiccelkeḷu Kuṭṭuvaṇ.

Thus, we have introduced the Cēra dynasty, its legitimate kings, and the regalia that symbolised their legitimate rules and incorporated their royal power. Now, it is time to examine the king and his country, first, the royal courts of the Cēras together with their political centres.

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<sup>1052</sup> One may interpret the selfless, non-violent, non-extremist, balance-promoting advices here and in Line 1–2 as Jaina or Buddhist teachings.

<sup>1053</sup> *Patirruppattu*, 22: 5–11.

<sup>1054</sup> *Patirruppattu*, 67: 13–18; 88: 1–14.

<sup>1055</sup> *Patirruppattu*, 88: 1.

<sup>1056</sup> *Patirruppattu*, 31: 13; 32: 7; 37: 7; IV. 12.

<sup>1057</sup> *tulaṅku kuṭi*: “swaying/perturbed/uprooted family”. The phrase *tulaṅku kuṭi* appears a few more times in the Fourth Decade (see 32: 7; 37: 7; IV. 12). We do not exactly know what happened to the dynasty, but this king seems to have restored the kingdom's old glory. Was he, as it is said in Sanskrit, a *kula-vardhaka*?

## Royal courts and political centres

We find several passages in the *Patirrupattu* that refer to the Cēra court, where people had a chance to meet the king in person to receive gifts. This place was referred to as *irukkai* (“seat”), which was either a ‘constantly moving court’ at the time of campaigns or a permanent court found in the royal residences. In the previous chapter, I have already mentioned the throne (*kattil*) as one of the most important symbols of royal power, around which crowds jubilated, where the beggars and gift-seekers received generous gifts, and where the bards and learned court poets sang songs to the king. As Dubiansky adds, “It was on these occasions that musicians, singers and dancers actually performed”.<sup>1058</sup> We have six poems in the *Patirrupattu* which were written following the theme (*turai*) called *viraliyārrupatai* “guidance to the *virali*-s”. It is clear from the texts, that the *virali* was a female performer who was most probably a dancer and a singer, and she might have been somewhat related to other performers or artistic groups, as we see in *Patirrupattu* 49, where we read about the *viralis* and their relatives whose livelihood was the ability of performing melodies.<sup>1059</sup> The common feature of these *viraliyārrupatais* is that all those poems talk to the *viralis* inviting them to the court of the Cēra, where the king bestows precious gifts. When they arrived at the court, they danced and sang to the king in order to entertain him and his retinue. One of these descriptions is the following:

After we sang<sup>1060</sup> the sweet melody of *taliñci* [in which] the voices united, [after] the bards (*pānar*) performed<sup>1061</sup> the *pālai*-melody<sup>1062</sup> on the big *yāl* which [was] in [their] hands, [on which their] fingers caught the expanding, tied strings.<sup>1063</sup>

The musicians who played were trained musicians of the age. As the 46<sup>th</sup> poem (Line 4–5) shows, the *viralis* might have also played on the harp or lute-like ancient instrument called *yāl*. The most mentioned melody type was the *pālai* ‘melody of the barren tract’, together with the *taliñci*, a secondary melody type of the same style. However, not only could the melodies of musicians have been heard in the royal courts, but the echoing sound of various drums also rumbled.<sup>1064</sup> Here are the musicological questions I have to leave open, as the complexity of the

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<sup>1058</sup> Dubianski 2000, 70.

<sup>1059</sup> *Patirrupattu*, 49: 2–3.

<sup>1060</sup> In my construction, *cellāmō* (finite verb), *kaṇṭanam* (*murreccam*), and *pāti* (abs.) form the sequence of events, and *paṇṇi* (abs.) is a subject-changing absolutive with *pānar* as its subjects.

<sup>1061</sup> I analysed *paṇṇi* as a subject-changing absolutive with *pānar* as its subject.

<sup>1062</sup> *pālai*: melody of the barren tract (*pālai nilaṭ perum paṇ*). *Tamil Icaip Pērakarāti*, 372.

<sup>1063</sup> *Patirrupattu*, 57, 7–9.

<sup>1064</sup> For example, read: *Patirrupattu*, 15: 20.



questions deserves an independent, in-depth study. The dance performed by the *virālis* can be seen in *Patiruppattu* 47:

The always murderous Kuṭṭuvan is never done with killing. Whenever he kills, the gift-seekers never end up obtaining elephants. His fame will never end within the boundaries of the ancient palace (*nakar*), where *virālis* with delicate forehead dance, while the flame burns after the light on the [lamp's] bowl became larger because the clear butter (*ney*), which seized the hollows to be poured, spread [and] overflowed, [dance] on the streets where brightening flags sway on the windy places at the storied houses (*māṭam*), [which flags looked] like the waterfall rushing from the top of the mountain.

Thus, the dance in the lamplight, which we have read about, was performed on the streets within the boundaries of the ancient mansion, where streets with storied houses could have been found. As a possible interpretation, in this poem, we might see a short description of a royal palace, which may have been the antecedent of the medieval Dravidian-style temple complexes since the waterfall-like storied houses/buildings could very well be imagined as *kōpurams*. However, it is possible that we have to connect *aruviyin* to the flags so that in the simile, the storied houses looked like mountains and the swaying flags looked like the waterfalls rushing from the top, which is much closer to the usual topoi. However, the royal mansion we see seems to have boundaries with streets within, which can be imagined as having a concentric layout with the well-protected palace in the centre surrounded by the market and the streets. Indeed, not just anyone could live within the boundaries, but the higher strata of society (ministers, rich merchants, wealthy ones, etc.) and the service staff could have lived here.

The bards, artists, dancers, singers, beggars and others met the king in the daily court called *nāl makil*,<sup>1065</sup> an important “institute” where the king anyway held his council (*arac'-avai*)<sup>1066</sup> with his *purohita*, the elders, the learned ones, and the influential members of the court. As far as the *Cilappatikāram* is a certainly later composition which was influenced by the Sanskrit literature as well as the historical settings of its time, I do not consider it possible to reconstruct the daily life of the Cēra king from that text.<sup>1067</sup> The king certainly had a strict schedule, pastime activities, official councils, participation in jurisdiction, legislative and executive duties, ritual

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<sup>1065</sup> *Patiruppattu*, 38: 9; 65: 13; 85: 8.

<sup>1066</sup> *Patiruppattu*, 85: 9.

<sup>1067</sup> Cf. Subrahmanian 1966, 58–59.

obligations, etc., but reconstruct these is impossible from the texts. Even if we know quite a bit about the king's life in the court, one thing is certain: the court was a place to organise feasts with roasted meats and unlimited toddy for the visitors and the victorious warriors who often got intoxicated during these events together with the king himself who enjoyed their company. In the *Patirruppattu*, we read about dancing, eating, prattling, drunken people who bustle around the king, jubilating his greatness.<sup>1068</sup> If the court was held in the military camp, we see the presence of lovers who cling to the king's chest and the bards who heard about the king's feats so that they arrived to see him.<sup>1069</sup>

We find a few references about the Cēra courts in the royal palaces, from which we can get a rough idea of how the poets imagined/saw the palaces. In many of these poems, the word *nakar* of Indo-Aryan origin refers to the 'palace'. However, sometimes I found it more accurate to translate it as 'mansion'. When the word denotes something more significant than a building, with enclosures, streets, and a market, I translated it as 'palace'.

In the 21<sup>st</sup> poem of the *Patirruppattu*, we find the Cēra palace (*nakar*), where seasoning was sizzling on the fatty pieces of pure meat roasted on fire. In the same poem, we see that *brāhmaṇas* performed Vedic sacrifices with clarified butter, so that, even if this double image was only the fantasy of the poet, the Cēra palace was a place where a sumptuous feast was prepared for the visitors and a place, where rituals were conducted.<sup>1070</sup> In the 68<sup>th</sup> poem (Lines 15–20), we read about the royal consorts who are waiting for the king's return to the palace:

[...] in the shade of your feet, o man of the chest which is fragrant of scents, [which] is bound to [your] women with bewitching (*aṇaṅku*) grace, with beautiful striped anklets, whose red fingers are reddened, after they painted [lines] of the many days [counting] on the tall walls<sup>1071</sup> which resembled a painting, [on the walls] of the enclosure of the vast palace with tall earthen ramparts, while [their] greenish gold jewels slipped down, because of the lack of sleeping?<sup>1072</sup>

Just as in *Patirruppattu* 64: 3–8, here we see again the tall walls that surround the palace with earthen ramparts. I must conclude that the palaces and some houses must have had paintings on the walls, to which this poem referred; however, here, instead of a painting, the painted lines

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<sup>1068</sup> *Patirruppattu*,

<sup>1069</sup> *Patirruppattu*,

<sup>1070</sup> *Patirruppattu*, 21: 6–15. For the sacrifices, read also: *Patirruppattu*, 64: 3–8.

<sup>1071</sup> To mark the days on the walls is an old topos, cf. *Kūrunṭokai*, 358: 2–3; *Akanānūru*, 61: 4.

<sup>1072</sup> To lose bangles because of emotional distress (absence of the lover) is an old topos, cf. *Kūrunṭokai*, 11: 1; 31: 5; 50: 4; 125: 1; 365: 1; 371: 1; 377: 2; etc.

of the waiting ladies served as an aesthetic experience. In the 88<sup>th</sup> poem, we see the palace again, but it is like a painting with or without the painted lines of the sorrowful consorts.<sup>1073</sup> We see markets near the royal mansions, which is a question I will discuss in detail in a later chapter on the economy. The royal palace, according to *Patirruppattu* 15, could have been found in the old town with festivals, where many goods entered from the oikumene.<sup>1074</sup> It is time to expand the circle: the palace was a ritual and political centre and an economic institution.

We find a few additional passages in the *patikams*. In the IV. *patikam*, the king, gave away forty times a hundred thousand gold from the share of his palace to the poet in exchange for his poems. Even if that amount is mere fiction, it clearly shows that the palace must have also been a *treasury* with a regular or irregular income. I think that in earlier texts such as the *Akanānūru* 127: 6–9, the poet, in fact, talks about the treasury of the Cēras, which was in that case established in Māntai/Marantai, and which passage led us in a later chapter to an attempt to reconstrue the existence of Cēra treasuries in the palaces. In the VIII. *patikam*, although the treasury cannot be proved, the rich palace appears, where the poet could have taken whatever he wanted for the king's order. The poet, however, was moderately humble, and after he put on the ministry, he was finally satisfied with nine times a hundred thousand *kāṇam* and the royal throne/bed. However, these later passages of the *patikams* are found in those epilogues whose language shows a certainly later stage than the decade poems. Still, we might be able to trust those poets or editors who composed these lines, insisting they had particular knowledge about the ancient Cēras.

We find political centres of the Cēras in various towns like Muciṛi an early, fortified capital close to the Arabian Sea, in Toṇṭi which was an important seashore town and a dynastical centre north of Muciṛi, in Naravu which centre protected the maritime trade relations and the northern gate of the kingdom at Tuḷunāṭu, in Māntai/Marantai, however, we know almost nothing about this town, and in Karuvūr of Koṅkunāṭu, where a powerful capital emerged in the middle of South India threatening the rival kings. Whether the Cēras divided their kingdom when the king and heirs ruled simultaneously, it is rather difficult to tell from the sources. If we accept the years of reign of the Cēras given by the *patikams*, it might mean that the Cēra kings divided their power to rule the country easily, but for the time being, it is impossible to answer this question. Even if the territories were divided, I assume we cannot talk about simultaneously ruling kings, only about one crowned king who gave sovereign rights to the princes, ministers, commanders, and others. However, we strayed into the swampy ground

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<sup>1073</sup> *Patirruppattu*, 88: 25.

<sup>1074</sup> *Patirruppattu*, 15: 16–20

of historical reconstruction. Finally, I think our passages on palaces and royal residences are less imaginary, and we read some schematic descriptions partly based on literary topoi that must have overlapped with historical reality. In the case of the Cēras, this leads us to the following conclusion: the Cēra political centres, together with the fortified palaces, were political, ritual, and economic centres; places which were rich in treasures and festive events, which were famous far and wide and desirable for people to visit.

### **Towns, villages and society**

Thus, we discussed the political centres of the early Cēras, the courts, among which we examined permanent ones (court in the palace) and moving ones (court moving with the military camp). We also concluded that the political centres where the king or royal “commissioners” were stationed were political, economic, and ritual centres. Although it is difficult to reconstruct from the texts, these centres must have been the institutions governing public administration. They were at the top of the settlement hierarchy. It is also difficult to examine the urbanisation, the settlement structure, and society of the early Cēra kingdom from the sources. However, some important conclusions can still be drawn from reading the texts.

The Tamil South can be divided into four geographic zones (*tiṇai*), which found their places in the universe of literary conventions recorded in the *Tolkāppiyam*. These divisions are the following: *neytal* ‘seashore and coastal settlements’, the *mullai* ‘forest zone’, the *marutam* ‘agricultural fields and villages’, and the *kuṛiñci* ‘mountains and hilly villages’. The fact that these have “solidified” into a well-definable literary/grammatical system does not mean that they did not fundamentally determine the geographical thinking of the Tamils. I think these divisions were essential factors in political thinking and warfare strategy.

Reading the Cēra panegyrics, we find towns, villages, and harbours in the Cēra kingdom. The main term used for village or town is *ūr*; however, in most cases, these were *de facto* villages. In those cases, when it refers to a town or regional centre, it is called a *mūt’ ūr* ‘old village/town’. In the *Patirruppattu*, we find Pantar<sup>1075</sup> as being a *mūt’ ūr* (67: 2), but also the unnamed Cēra capital and marketplace (15: 18–19; 53: 5), the unnamed old towns of the Cēras (II. 11), while all the other attestations refer to old towns of the enemies (26: 12; 30: 20). We find references to smaller villages (*ūr*, *pākkam*, *pati*, *vaiṅṅu*, *arampu*, *kuṭi*, *cīr’ ūr*) in greater numbers. We

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<sup>1075</sup> See: pp. 351–352.

know very little about these settlements. The villages had a village common called *manram* which was a place of bustle (13: 17), a place where sometimes the armed ones (*paṭaiñar*) gathered (25: 4), a place where demonesses were dancing in the blood after the battle (35: 7–9), but most importantly a place where streets met (23: 4–5; 43: 26). About the streets, we have not much valuable information, unless the fact that dancers, musicians, and bards were occasionally performing there when festivals were celebrated.<sup>1076</sup> The *manram* was also a place where the village elders and leaders were supposed to assemble from time to time. However, this function of the *manram* cannot be verified by texts written on the Cēra country. In other texts, the word *manram* is used not only for village common but for the royal court or frontyard of a building.<sup>1077</sup> The houses in these settlements were made either from palm leaves or adobe bricks, but from the remarkable absence of ancient buildings, we can conclude that most of the huts and houses in the villages could have been made of leaves. We can also think that the huge fires and smoke caused by the war, which can be found everywhere in the *Patirruppattu*, are also related to these types of houses since setting such a village of dried leaf cottages on fire was not only a simple task but the fire of destruction was considered as spectacular. We find one reference in the *Patirruppattu*, when the old commentator interprets *pul ilai vaippin pulam citai arampin* (15: 13) as *pulliya ilaikālālē vēya paṭṭu ūr*, on which the *Tamil Lexicon*'s explanation was based: “village of leafy huts”. The question is whether, in this case, we should trust in the much later mediaeval commentary or choose an old meaning of *vaippu* as “place” or “land”. Most of the villages were engaged in a form of production which was connected to the *tinai* where the settlement was located. In the *Patirruppattu*, we read mostly about those villages surrounded by agricultural fields. I assume that the village chiefs (tribal chiefs?) who governed the villages (tribal populations?) were chosen in a traditional way, however, they had to be loyal and to be connected to the royal chiefs ruling over the particular administrative unit or division of the kingdom, which were probably more traditional divisions than planned. In the *Patirruppattu*, only those people are visible in the villages who were engaged either in war or agriculture, which does not mean that others (artists, artisans, shopkeepers, priests, etc.) could not have lived there. It is indeed a blind spot of heroic poetry. Those who worked in agriculture, both men and women,<sup>1078</sup> used ploughs (*nāñcil*, *ēr*),<sup>1079</sup> sickles (*vāl* in the hands of *arainar*),<sup>1080</sup> they sowed the

<sup>1076</sup> *Puṛaṇāṇūru*, 65: 5; *Patirruppattu*, 23: 4–5; 29: 8–9; 47: 4.

<sup>1077</sup> *Tamil Lexicon*, 3127.

<sup>1078</sup> For female farmers, read: *Patirruppattu*, 71: 3.

<sup>1079</sup> *Patirruppattu*, 19: 17; 25: 1; 26: 2; 58: 17; 26: 1; 76: 11.

<sup>1080</sup> *Patirruppattu*, 19: 22.

lands,<sup>1081</sup> yoked the oxen for work,<sup>1082</sup> worked with large buffalos on the threshing floor (*vekkai*) where the paddy was threshed,<sup>1083</sup> collected the threshed products in receptacles,<sup>1084</sup> they built water tanks and sluices at the groves near the paddy fields,<sup>1085</sup> their cattle were grazed on the vast meadows,<sup>1086</sup> they drilled wells,<sup>1087</sup> cultivated and cut the sugar cane and used machine to squeeze it into their buckets,<sup>1088</sup> they used a churning staff for dairying,<sup>1089</sup> and they felled trees or cleft them by saw/rasp.<sup>1090</sup> People of the Cēra kingdom often left their homes to go on pilgrimages, visit festivals in towns, or enter the royal palace to receive gifts. Except for these mostly *marutam*-type settlements, which are emphasised in the *Patirrupattu*, there were also seashore settlements in the Cēra kingdom, which were either fishermen villages or well-protected ports of trade. We have dealt with these settlements in detail in a later chapter.<sup>1091</sup> Those who lived in the *mullai* or forest areas were engaged in pasturage, harvesting millets (*ēnal*), grinding and dividing the millet flour,<sup>1092</sup> hunting animals, gathering the goods of the forests, and selling them in the towns' markets.<sup>1093</sup> There is no information in the *Patirrupattu* about the mountain-dwelling folks, probably hunters, gatherers, mine-workers, archers and border guards. It is important to emphasise that, agreeing with Subrahmanian, the ancient Tamil societies were essentially tribal.<sup>1094</sup> In the case of the Cēras, it means that at the time about which the *Patirrupattu* sings, the Cēra kings were able to consolidate their power over the tribal organisations and to control them through their people asserting the will of a powerful kingdom. In the *Patirrupattu*, we see that the Cēras were the overlords of folks called *koṅkar*, *kuṭṭuvar*, *pūliyar*, *kuṭavar*, etc. However, we cannot decide whether these represent tribes in this period or were umbrella terms for those people who lived in those geographical areas. As in many cases in this study, we have to admit that we have no information about the tribal organisation at the bottom of the social hierarchy if it still existed.<sup>1095</sup> We see that the campaigns were directed against

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<sup>1081</sup> *Patirrupattu*, 58: 15.

<sup>1082</sup> *Patirrupattu*, 58: 16.

<sup>1083</sup> *Patirrupattu*, 71: 3–4.

<sup>1084</sup> *Patirrupattu*, 71: 5.

<sup>1085</sup> *Patirrupattu*, 23: 22; 27: 9.

<sup>1086</sup> *Patirrupattu*, 62: 13.

<sup>1087</sup> *Patirrupattu*, 51: 4.

<sup>1088</sup> *Patirrupattu*, 30: 14; 19: 23.

<sup>1089</sup> *Patirrupattu*, 26: 3.

<sup>1090</sup> *Patirrupattu*, 30: 16; 60: 5.

<sup>1091</sup> See: pp. 333–362.

<sup>1092</sup> *Patirrupattu*, 30: 23–24.

<sup>1093</sup> *Patirrupattu*, 30: 9–13; *Patirrupattu*, 30: 26–29.

<sup>1094</sup> Subrahmanian 1966, 259.

<sup>1095</sup> For the reconstruction of kinship system and clan society in these early centuries, read: Lemerencien 1979 and Gurukkal 2010, 242–254. As these social structures are invisible in our primary sources, our text-centred analysis does not take a position on these issues.

either kings or chieftains, while the text does not mention such characters within the Cēra kingdom, so I think that the subjugated chieftains became local chiefs and, more importantly, vassals with little power or at least they were treated as such. We learn from other Caṅkam texts that chieftains called *vēḷ* and village chiefs called *kilān* existed in the ancient times. In the *Patirruppattu*, whenever the word *vēḷ* is attested, it refers to chiefs together with kings (*vēntar*) who were disobedient, declared an oath against the Cēras, and therefore have to tremble with fear or humble themselves.<sup>1096</sup> In the *patikams*, the word *vēḷ* appears as a component of some of the queens' names, showing kinship there.<sup>1097</sup> In one case, it might refer to Murukaṅ.<sup>1098</sup> However, we see the total absence of the word in the sense of administrative chief over certain divisions. This does not mean that such chiefs did not exist. I believe this only means that heroic poetry did not fit in praising others besides the king. To keep the kingdom together, to the large-scale production (seen in the Muziris Papyrus) and to the establishment of the army all required loyal intermediaries who kept certain areas under their control. The fact that *vēḷir*, *vēntar*, and *mannar* existed outside the kingdom, who were disobedient but were also able to humble themselves, give tributes and join the Cēras, shows that there must have been certain chiefs who have already gone through this “procedure” and became vassals and/or friends of the Cēra court. Another thing worth mentioning among those missing from the text is the so-called “caste system”. Although we see a reference to the king, who following the stages of the *varṇāśramadharmā*, abandoned his kingdom and left for the forest (*vanavāsa*),<sup>1099</sup> we see no other traces of this type of social arrangement. Thus, I think that the *varṇāśramadharmā* might have existed as a ruler's ideal at the suggestion of the courtly *brāhmaṇas*, but not in the society.

We know from the *Periplus Maris Erythraei*'s author and Ptolemy that in these centuries, more Cēra settlements existed than attested in our Tamil texts. Settlements like Adarima, Aloē, Arembour, Bakarē, Balita/Bammala/Blinca, Berderis/Bideris, Bragmē/Brammē, Elangōn/Elangōros, Kalaikarias, Kereoura, Koreour/Koureur, Kottiarā, Kouba, Kourellour/Kourelloura, Nelkynda/Melkynda, Morounda, Naoura, Naroulla/Nalloura, Paloura, Pantipolis/Pantipoleis, Pasagē, Pounnata, Semnē are not attested in the Caṅkam works. However, we know from these ancient texts that they must have been existed in the Cēra kingdom and were important enough to be noticed by Mediterranean authors. Other settlements like Cellūr, Kaḷumalam, Karuvūr/Vaṅci, Koṭumaṇam, Māntai/Marantai, Muciṅi,

<sup>1096</sup> *Patirruppattu*, 30: 30; 49: 7; 75:4; 88: 13.

<sup>1097</sup> *Patirruppattu*, IV. 1; VI. 1; VIII. 2.

<sup>1098</sup> *Patirruppattu*, 11: 6. Cf. *Paripāṭal*, 5. 1–10.

<sup>1099</sup> *Patirruppattu*, III. 10; 74: 27–28.

Naravu, Pantar, Toṅṭi appear in the Caṅkam texts and some of them also in the Mediterranean sources, so that I did not include them in the first list. I do not mention a few other place names here, probably parts of the Cēra kingdom for a shorter or longer period.<sup>1100</sup> Thus, we are talking about around thirty Cēra settlements mentioned in the sources, together with a probably significant number of unknown villages which were invisible to the Mediterraneans and the Tamil bards.

The Cēra kingdom indeed consisted of different divisions that began to emerge and form during this period from the traditional/tribal/geographic territorial units. As in many cases of the early Cēra history, it must be emphasised that we have almost no information about this territorial evolution, so I do not want to make the mistake of those who project data from later periods onto the past. What is certain that we read about Kolli kūṛram in the VIII. *patikam* (Line 3) of the *Patirruppattu*. This would suggest that the territorial unit or division called *kūṛram* existed in ancient times; however, as we concluded elsewhere, the information of the *patikams* cannot be interpreted with complete certainty. We cannot rule out that the name *kūṛram* called smaller territorial units; however, this single reference is insufficient for the reconstruction.<sup>1101</sup> There are territorial units, however, which we already know from the *Patirruppattu*: the ones called *nāṭus*. In the decade poems, the *nāṭu* is often only a word for ‘country that one family, tribe, chief, or king governs’. Thus, the Cēra kingdom is also referred to as *nāṭu* in the text. However, we see many direct or indirect references to countries and territories which became divisions of the Cēra kingdom and mentioned in later traditions as traditional parts of the Cēra kingdom: the \*Koṅkunāṭu < *koṅkar nāṭu* (*Patirruppattu*, 22: 15); \*Kuṭanāṭu < *kuṭa nāṭu* (*Patirruppattu*, VI. 5); \*Kuṭṭanāṭu < *kuṭṭwar* (*Patirruppattu*, 90: 26); \*Pūlināṭu < *pūliyar* (*Patirruppattu*, 90: 27). Although we were able to reconstruct these names and we can certainly manage to identify them geographically, we do not know who governed them and how. Reading the texts, I assume that we find the king at the top of the hierarchy together with his influential friends around the court; we find the royal heirs, loyal commanders or worthy men over major territories in the second stage, who were given the right to supervise and judge certain areas (e.g. the son of Cenkuṭṭuvan in Umparkāṭu),<sup>1102</sup> the next stage was reserved for those over minor territories who were relegated to vassal status or voluntarily accepted it. In contrast, in the last stage we see village elders and tribal leaders dependent on the previous level. I think that the *brāhmaṇa* settlements,

<sup>1100</sup> See: Appendices, Index, pp. 446–455.

<sup>1101</sup> Cf. *Tamil Ilakkīyaḥ Pēraḱarāṭi*, 744–745.

<sup>1102</sup> *Patirruppattu*, V. epilogue.



which I have written in a later chapter,<sup>1103</sup> could have been self-governing communities with certain privileges, however, no information is available in this era of Cēra history to verify this statement. If we take the accounts of the *Patirruppattu* seriously, then the people of the kingdom lived in fragile peace under the protection of the Cēra parasol. At the same time, the Cēra dynasty tried to control their hegemony by means of a loyal network in every corner of their kingdom, but for this, they had to have knowledge about the borders and border areas of their kingdom.

### **Borders and border-areas**

As it was among the main criteria to define an early kingdom, it is essential now to discuss the borders and border areas of the Cēra kingdom in detail. It is necessary to state at the beginning that the only border of the Cēra kingdom that can be drawn is the western seacoast of the Arabian Sea. Between the Arabian Sea and the Western Ghats, the southern parts of the division called Kuṭṭanāṭu and northern Kuṭṭanāṭu could have been the original homeland of the Cēras. Since it is almost impossible to reconstruct political history from the Caṅkam poems, I put an emphasis on the main processes and tendencies emerging from the texts, which shaped the territory of the kingdom and its borders.

As we read in Pliny the Elder (*Naturalis Historia*, VI. 26. 105), the *Periplus Maris Erythraei* (ch. 55), and Ptolemy (*Geog.* VII. 1.9), the southern border of the Cēras must have been somewhere in Kuṭṭanāṭu in the middle of the 1<sup>st</sup> c. AD, since south of Muciṛi/Muziris, we see the Pāṅṭiyas and later the chieftain called Āy (Aioi) to rule around the city called Nelkynda which also belonged to Kottanarichē/Kuṭṭanāṭu. Even so, we see the siege of Muciṛi by the Pāṅṭiya king, which shows their proximity in that century.<sup>1104</sup> Later, the Cēras annexed areas of the *ṭaiyar*-tribe and of the chief called Āy in South Malabar. We do not have hard evidence to verify that the early Cēras ever reached the areas of today's Tiruvaṅantapuram,<sup>1105</sup> but they definitely conquered Kuṭṭanāṭu and some areas south of it. This is the first border region we can somewhat define: the southern border area, where political tension with the Pāṅṭiyas was probably continuous. This area was undoubtedly crucial for the Cēra dynasty because of the

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<sup>1103</sup> See: pp. 415–416.

<sup>1104</sup> *Akanānūru*, 57: 14–17; 149: 7–11.

<sup>1105</sup> Even if the old commentator suggests that in *Patirruppattu* 31, we read about the vaiṣṇava shrine at Āṭakamāṭam. Cāminātaiyar 1980, 74.

maritime trade; therefore, the Cēras here tried to push back the Pāṇṭiya interests and convert the resistant chieftains to vassals or friendly allies.

The royal epithets, the Greek and Latin sources, and the Caṅkam poems show that the eastern border of the Cēra kingdom was constantly changing. From the time of Palyāṇaiccelkeḷu Kuṭṭuvan (perhaps around the end of the first century AD), we see that he was already called the “fighter of the Ayirai” (Aivarmalai near Paḷaṇi, Tamil Nadu),<sup>1106</sup> and as “the one who annexed the country of the Koṅkar using his army”.<sup>1107</sup> It means that the Cēra kings made serious military efforts very early to control the Palghat Gap and its transit trade and reach the fertile areas and mines of interior South India. It shows the seriousness of their military enterprise that a new capital will soon arise in the heart of Koṅkunāṭu: Karuvūr, which Ptolemy also mentioned as the capital of the Cēra kingdom around 150 AD.<sup>1108</sup> Later, at the time of the Irumporais, the Cēra king is known as the “lord of Pukār”,<sup>1109</sup> and “the fighter of the Kolli”,<sup>1110</sup> which probably shows that the Cēras made a successful attempt to reach the eastern coast and, for a shorter period of history, entirely control the maritime trade including the main trade routes of South-India. Considering the remarkable silence of the Caṅkam literature about this military campaign, I would think that this military action quickly failed (nothing left but a sounding epithet), but the politically tense eastern border area of the Cēras remained stable around the Kolli Hills, north of Maturai of the Pāṇṭiyas and west of Uṛaiyūr of the Cōlas, including vast areas of Koṅkunāṭu with regions around today’s Paḷaṇi.

The northern border meant a continuous threat against the Cēra interests. Powerful chieftains called Naṅṅaṅ, Atikamāṅ Neṭumāṅ Añci, or tribes like the *kaṭampu*-tribe of the seas and the *kōcar*-tribe of the interior, lived here. The *kaṭampus* who lived in the archipelago west of the Konkan coast seem to have been wholly or partially identical to the pirates whom Pliny, Ptolemy, the *Periplus Maris Erythraei* and the *Tabula Peutingeriana* mentioned, and whose location can be pinpointed north of Naoura/Naravu, around Nitra/Nitrias, inland and in the archipelago near and north of today’s Maṅgaḷūru, Karnataka, which region was governed by either Naṅṅaṅ, the *kōcar*, or the independent or feudatory *kaṭampu*-tribe. The chief called Naṅṅaṅ was the ruler of a land called Puṅṅāṭu,<sup>1111</sup> Viyalūr and Pāli, Ēḷilkuṅṅam, Pāram,

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<sup>1106</sup> *Patirrupattu*, 21: 29.

<sup>1107</sup> 22: 15–16.

<sup>1108</sup> Ptol., *Geog.* VII. 1. 86.

<sup>1109</sup> *Patirrupattu*, 73: 9.

<sup>1110</sup> *Patirrupattu*, 73: 11.

<sup>1111</sup> Was it the same as the rich-in-beryl Pounnata of Ptolemy (Πουννάτα ἐν ἡ̄ Βήρυλλος) between the Pseudostomos/Periyār river and the Baris/Pampā river? In that case, it appears in some mistakenly mapped

Koṅkāṇam, Pūlināṭu, and Tuḷunāṭu. Later in the *Malaipaṭukaṭām*, Naṇṇaṇ seems to be a chief also seated in Toṇṭaimaṇṭalam.<sup>1112</sup> Naṇṇaṇ might be the same as Nandana, the early ruler of the *Mūṣikavaṃśa*, about which dynasty the poet Atula sang in the 11<sup>th</sup> century AD.<sup>1113</sup> What is more, the totemistic tree of Naṇṇaṇ was the *vākai*, which can be found in the name of that mediaeval dynasty, since *mūṣika* not only means a ‘rat’ but also the plant called *Albizia lebbek* or *Acacia sirissa*.<sup>1114</sup> The tribe called *kōcar* were most probably living in Pūlināṭu. Atikamāṇ Neṭumāṇ Añci was the ruler of Takaṭūr (today’s Dharmapuri, Tamil Nadu) and the regions around, north of Karuvūr, the Cēra capital in Koṅkunāṭu. Reading the Jampai inscription, his dynasty was probably the same as the Satiyaputo mentioned in the Aśoka inscriptions.<sup>1115</sup> Atikamāṇ Neṭumāṇ Añci was one of the ‘seven great donors’ (*ēlu vallalkaḷ*) of the Caṅkam ages. His dynasty indeed ruled some areas in Koṅkunāṭu before the Cēra conquests. East and southeast of Atikamāṇ’s territories, we find the crowned Cōḷa kings. Thinking about the Cēras’ political position, having these powerful neighbours in the north must have been frustrating. Therefore, as we see in the *Patirruppattu*, they defeated them one by one, first Naṇṇaṇ and the *kaṭampu*-tribe in Tuḷunāṭu, then the Atikamāṇs in battle and their capital, Takaṭūr,<sup>1116</sup> even if, as one might assume, the Cēra kings might have been strongly related to Atikamāṇ’s dynasty.<sup>1117</sup> The *Cilappatikāram*, when talking about the northern campaign of the Cēras, mentions the event when the Cēra army camped at the tall outskirts of the Nīlakiri (Nilgiri).<sup>1118</sup> According to these literary data and the historical events discussed in later chapters on trade,<sup>1119</sup> the northern border area of the Cēras might have started at the historical Ēḷilkuṇṇam, today’s Eḷimala but never extended to Tuḷunāṭu and the Koṅkāṇam (not counting some punitive or looting campaigns); it stretched along the southern outskirts of the Nilgiris, and it included Takaṭūr, today’s Dharmapuri after the Cēra conquest, as being an eastern end of the northern border area. In addition to local vassals, the border regions were secured by royal centres (the coastal Naṇṇaṇ in the north, Toṇṭi and Muciṇi in central Malabar, and Karuvūr in Koṅkunāṭu), fortifications, and the soldiers stationed there.

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“category” as Karuvūr, which can be found not on the Malabar Coast but in northwestern Koṅku Nāṭu. Or should we understand *punnāṭu* as ‘lowland’ (*pul nāṭu* as a synonym of *pul pulam*)? Cf. *Akanāṇūru*, 396: 2. Marr, anyway, takes it as a proper name and considers it possible to localise at modern Mysore. Marr 1985 [1958], 287.

<sup>1112</sup> <sup>1112</sup> *Pre-Pallavan Tamil Index*, 484–485.

<sup>1113</sup> Pillai 1977, 28–29.

<sup>1114</sup> Pillai 1977, 6–7.

<sup>1115</sup> Mahadevan 2003, 23.

<sup>1116</sup> *Patirruppattu*, 32: 10, 78: 9.

<sup>1117</sup> Rangaswamy 1968, 114–115.

<sup>1118</sup> *Cilappatikāram*, III. 26: 79–85.

<sup>1119</sup> See: pp. 359–362.



## *The expansive kingdom*

### **King and army**

The Cēra kings raised his dynasty to the ranks of the crowned kings of South India by relying on his soldiers, heroic warriors and companion-in-arms while calling on the knowledge of the local *brāhmaṇas*; they established a ritual system of succession (or the *brāhmaṇas* forced the establishment of the king-ideology?) that anyway helped their dynasty stay in power. As we have seen before, the Cēra kings often strengthened their system of relations through dynastic marriages with certain tribal or royal dynasties. In contrast, with “others”, they were forced into continuous conflicts. Reading the ancient songs written on the Cēras, it is not possible to decide whether the *rājamaṇḍala*-theory was part of their political thinking. What is certain is that the Cēras had enemies who made them angry and had friendly allies who helped them against their foes (e.g. Aṟukai against Mōkūr).<sup>1120</sup> We see in the poems that the Cēras became protection/shelter to their friends and increased their wealth,<sup>1121</sup> while their enemies had to become either obedient or, if not, had to be defeated. If we take a look at the words used for ‘enemies’ in the *Patirruppattu*, we might understand how ancient Tamils thought about them:

<i>alantaṇar</i> (h.)	“those who suffered”, 71: 8.
<i>aṭaṅkāṛ</i> (h.)	“those who do not yield”, 39: 7.
<i>ceṟunar</i> (h.)	“those who resist”, 82: 3.
<i>karuttōṛ</i> (h.)	“those who got enraged (lit. ‘blackened’)", 66: 9; 72: 3.
<i>mārrār</i> (h.)	“those who are in opposition/do not (ex)change”, 64: 13.
<i>mārrōṛ</i> (h.)	“those who are in opposition/do not (ex)change”, 20: 7; VII: 1.
<i>muraṇiyōṛ</i> (h.)	“those who oppose”, 20: 3.
<i>naṇṇār</i> (h.)	“those who are not close”, 20: 9; VII: 4.
<i>inṇār</i> (h.)	“those who are displeasing”, 68: 8.
<i>ollār</i> (h.)	“those who do not agree”, 54: 16.
<i>onṇār</i> (h.)	“those who do not agree”, 20: 10; 40: 9; 50: 15; 66: 4; 88: 4.
<i>pakaiṅvar</i> (h.)	“the hostile ones”, 14: 8; 15: 15; 17: 2; 28: 1; 31: 34; 32: 16; 37: 3; 43: 29; 59: 12; 62: 12; 69: 9; 70: 12; 80: 12.

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<sup>1120</sup> *Patirruppattu*, 44: 10–16.

<sup>1121</sup> *Patirruppattu*, 31: 34; 37:4; 41: 20; 43: 20; 59: 10; 63: 2–3.

<i>paṭiyōr</i> (h.)	“those who do not settle”, 20: 11; 79: 6.
<i>tevvar</i> (h.)	“the hostile ones”, 31: 32; 39: 4; 41: 20; 45: 15; 53: 10; 65: 3; 80: 9.
<i>uṭalunar</i> (h.)	“those who are enraged”, 88: 20; 90: 21.
<i>uṭanrōr</i> (h.)	“those who got enraged”, 25: 5.
<i>vilāṅkunar</i> (h.)	“those who obstruct”, 11: 7.

The central motif in the list above is that, in many cases, a hostile or bad reaction was enough to become the enemy of the Cēras. From this Cēra-centric point of view, it seems that these enemies did not agree with the Cēras, did not obey, were not humble, and therefore made them enraged, or became enraged for some reason. The reaction was natural from the Cēra’s perspective: these enemies had to be punished or defeated. On the other hand, it is also striking as if the Cēra kings had offered the possibility of choice to their enemies early on. Whether it was the case or if they tried to cover up the aggression and the bloody conquests using literature, we cannot tell. Be that as it may, the *Patirruppattu* speaks of the campaigns as if the immeasurable ravages were direct consequences of some past hostile acts of the enemies.

According to the poems, the king was closely related to his army. Army and king are inseparable in the *Patirruppattu*, the primary reason for which is the system of conventions of the heroic *puram*-poetry, but in the background of that, history emerges: the Cēra king conquered dominions while maintaining his power with the help of his army and his loyal men. In the 36<sup>th</sup> poem, we read that the king marched together with his warriors at the head.<sup>1122</sup> This, of course, could be mere literary fiction; however, it is a trivial fact that if a king fought in the battles, it increased the army’s efficiency and had a motivating effect. About the march of the army, we learn that the king and his warriors marched unitedly.<sup>1123</sup> As the most robust unit, the army had a powerful, fierce vanguard (*tār*) capable of quick and effective attacks and sieges.<sup>1124</sup> We also read about arrays and formations in which the army and/or the vanguard marched:

O hero of the great army with proud garlands, [army] with the military-array of [its] difficult[-to-defeat] vanguard that overran the difficult[-to-obtain] fortress, after the right [hands] of the commanding men were raised and held up with blades [which had] reeking flesh on the edges, which were pulled out of the tiger[-skin] scabbards [...]<sup>1125</sup>

<sup>1122</sup> *Patirruppattu*, 36: 4.

<sup>1123</sup> *Patirruppattu*, 41: 11.

<sup>1124</sup> *Patirruppattu*, 24: 4; 32: 4; 36: 6; 40: 16; 49: 6; 50: 11; 55: 17; 64: 7; 66: 10.

<sup>1125</sup> *Patirruppattu*, 24: 2–5. Cf. *Patirruppattu*, 29, 13; 66: 9–10.

In this passage, we see not only the garlands on the soldiers' necks but also the array of the vanguard that overran a fort while the commanders controlled the battle with their swords pulled out of the decorated scabbards.

The ancient Cēras had a fourfold army with infantry, cavalry, elephant corps, and chariots.<sup>1126</sup> The infantry, which we have also seen in the previous quotation, used various weapons such as swords, spears, and perhaps slings with stones,<sup>1127</sup> but one of the most important troops in the infantry was the unit of archers. All these soldiers had dark, massive shields in their hands made of leather against the strokes of the swords and spears and the shoots of the arrows.<sup>1128</sup> The word *meymmarai* is a unique Cēra word attested only in the *Patirrupattu*.<sup>1129</sup> Its meaning is literally “body-concealment”, while in the POC, the compound *meypukukaruvi* (“instrument inserted on the body”) is given as a meaning. According to the old commentary on *Puranānūru* 13: 2, the *meypukukaruvi* is an armour probably made from/with the leather of a tiger (*puliyin tōlār ceyyappaṭṭa meypukukaruvi*). Considering the context of these lines, I conclude that this was armour, a breastplate, or a body shield, which must also be part of some soldiers' clothing.

The cavalry was also an important corp of the Cēra army. Unfortunately, we do not know where the horses of the Cēras came from. In the *Pattinappālai*, we see the prancing, swift horses that arrived on water,<sup>1130</sup> so it is possible that Roman or West Asian traders brought the horses. However, it is also possible to think about an already existing Indian market for horses. We read in the texts that the horses of the Cēras were strong enough to carry soldiers, while they were famous for their speed.<sup>1131</sup> A sharp weapon usually trimmed the mane of the horses,<sup>1132</sup> their heads were adorned with shiny plumes,<sup>1133</sup> were harnessed before being mounted,<sup>1134</sup> and in the battles, they were urged by the edges of the soldiers' feet.<sup>1135</sup> We see a beautiful description of the Cēra horses in the *Patirrupattu tirattu* 2:

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<sup>1126</sup> Pillai 1970, 215.

<sup>1127</sup> *Patirrupattu*, 70: 4.

<sup>1128</sup> *Patirrupattu*, 62: 2.

<sup>1129</sup> *Patirrupattu*, 14:12; 21: 24; 55: 8; 58: 11; 59: 9; 65: 5; 73: 13; 90: 27.

<sup>1130</sup> *Pattinappālai*, 185.

<sup>1131</sup> *Patirrupattu*, 49: 4.

<sup>1132</sup> *Patirrupattu*, 64: 9.

<sup>1133</sup> *Patirrupattu*, 42: 15; 90: 36.

<sup>1134</sup> *Patirrupattu*, 81: 32; 82: 7.

<sup>1135</sup> *Patirrupattu*, 70: 2.

[...] [your] horses with a swift gallop, which resembles the wind becomes visible having worn a spreading mane extended like fire, [horses] of an appearance that resemble statues (*vinai*) [from] flesh, which forcefully run, having entangled the battalions in the frontline of the king [...]<sup>1136</sup>

All such descriptions suggest that either the *puram* poetry intended to present the king's army as much more glorious as it was or that these horses came by trade from areas where people knew how to breed good horses.

The cavalry and the elephant corps were the most important in terms of the outcome of the battles. From this point of view, we agree with De Romanis, who emphasises the great importance of having several hundred war elephants in the army of the Cēras.<sup>1137</sup> De Romanis mentions that the elephant contingent was the source of power that enabled the Cēras to control the hinterland of Muziris and to harvest hundreds of kilograms of ivory tusk fragments mentioned in the Muziris Papyrus.<sup>1138</sup> He must be right when he talks about the strong connection between having an incomparably huge elephant contingent, possessing most of the elephant habitats, and the power of the Cēra king, and it was undoubtedly one of the most critical engines behind the successful expansion of the Cēra kingdom. Regarding the number of elephants in the Cēra army, one of the poets once said: “In his army, I see marching elephants a lot, spreading like the cows”.<sup>1139</sup> We know that the army's elephants were trained for battle,<sup>1140</sup> they had ornamented frontlets,<sup>1141</sup> and rings on their tusks,<sup>1142</sup> and were led by their mahouts who instigated them by their goads.<sup>1143</sup> We see quite a dramatic scene in the 28<sup>th</sup> poem when the elephant contingent of the Cēraṅ killed the enemies' elephants:

[...] while [your] warriors (*maravar*) with ankleted feet and mortar-legged fierce animals ignored the hasty shooting, who attacked by forcefully driving [those animals] when the united line of the green-eyed elephants had been slaughtered, [elephants] of [your] greatly victorious enemies [...]<sup>1144</sup>

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<sup>1136</sup> *Patirruppattu tirattu* 2: 3–6.

<sup>1137</sup> De Romanis 2020, 119.

<sup>1138</sup> De Romanis 2020, 119.

<sup>1139</sup> *Patirruppattu*, 77: 11.

<sup>1140</sup> *Patirruppattu*, 82: 4; 84: 4.

<sup>1141</sup> *Patirruppattu*, 11: 17.

<sup>1142</sup> *Patirruppattu*, 38: 6.

<sup>1143</sup> *Patirruppattu*, 38: 5; 40: 27.

<sup>1144</sup> *Patirruppattu*, 28: 1–4.



Here, we probably see an elephant corps versus elephant corps battle. The enemy tried to stop the Cēra elephant charge by shooting arrows, but they disregarded the arrows and broke the enemy's lines while slaughtering their elephants.

The last unit of the army we must discuss is the charioteers. The king usually enters the battlefield on his chariot, horse, or elephant bull. Unfortunately, we do not know what those chariots looked like, as no archaeological findings have proven their South Indian existence yet. However, the texts indicate that they were equipped with long flags and bells. These were described as either long (*netum*) or tall (*netum*). In terms of maneuverability, height is less obstructive than length. The king himself possessed a royal chariot. We read in the 42<sup>nd</sup> poem that the world of the Cēras' relatives was filled with the chariots of the Cēras, which, in case it is not an empty topos, again shows their conquests and their system of political relations together with their allies and relatives in South India. The 77<sup>th</sup> poem talks about the “suitably crafted chariots with never-tired wheels which rolled over the corpses at the elevation”.<sup>1145</sup> Anyway, the chariot and its wheels both seem to be symbols of the royal *dharmacakra*, which topic we have discussed elsewhere. We find a very fascinating image in the 33<sup>rd</sup> poem, in which the Cēra army looked like a fortress:

[...] after [you] raised a thicket (*milai*) of spears, while swords became a wall, the kings who opposed [you] in war will surrender to you, if [they] think [about your] difficult fortress which is roaming on legs, [fortress] with the *muracam*-drum that resounds like the thunder that roars during the rainy season, [fortress] with moats surrounded by blades with red edges [and] thorn[-like] sharp arrows which were hastily spat by the bows.<sup>1146</sup>

Besides the simile, we see in this passage that not only soldiers were marching in the army but also those who played drums and other instruments. We know from a single reference found in the poems that after the victorious battle, the army was also responsible for collecting tributes/loot while the wounded were resting on the battlefield.<sup>1147</sup> Anyway, the warriors in the army followed the maxim not to retreat in battles,<sup>1148</sup> so that in case they happened to die, they could enter the upper sphere of the heroes this way.

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<sup>1145</sup> *Patiruppattu*, 77: 5–6.

<sup>1146</sup> *Patiruppattu*, 33: 7–12.

<sup>1147</sup> *Patiruppattu*, 40: 3–6.

<sup>1148</sup> *Patiruppattu*, 34: 2;

Thus, we have introduced the mighty army of the Cēras,<sup>1149</sup> so it is time to see them in action, therefore, I dedicate the next chapter to the Cēra campaigns, military camps, and sieges of the disobedient's strongholds.

## **Military campaigns**

When the Cēra kings became enraged by the disobedient for some reason, they gathered the warriors who could be called to war and went on a punitive campaign against them. This is, of course, the mere narrative of the poems since the campaigns could have had various *casus belli*: 1. a punitive campaign for violating the Cēra interests, 2. a booty campaign to strengthen the bonds of vassalage and fill the treasury, 3. gaining territory to suppress a neighbouring threat, 4. gaining territory to control trade routes, 5. acquisition of land to access fertile areas, mines, and river valleys, 5. to earn wealth, 6. to re-conquest of territories, etc.

In the poems, we read that the Cēra king and army went into battle together, and they camped at various stations along the long march. Whenever they stopped, a military camp was built in those places. Regarding the motivation behind the war, we learn from the *Patirruppattu* that the king stayed in his hostile military camp built on the desired land of his enemies in order to bring back jewels and wealth,<sup>1150</sup> while his “eyes, which were focussed on the mighty wealth, had been woken up by the curved, roaring drums”.<sup>1151</sup> The 88<sup>th</sup> poem talks about the boundaries of the military camp, which has a “border of shields in rows”,<sup>1152</sup> while we see the topos of the fierce, invincible king in the 24<sup>th</sup> poem, whose advancing camp's boundaries had not been set.<sup>1153</sup> The idea behind this passage could be that the army moved so fast that there was no need to camp for long or that the army was so strong that they could defend themselves without fences. In the *Puranānūru* 301, we read about another custom to build fences of thorn (*mul vēli*) around the military camp.<sup>1154</sup> The 24<sup>th</sup> poem tells more details about the military camp with a swinging, swaying throne so that it was, as I concluded before, *de facto* a “moving court”, which camp had strong bowmen who did not know how to dismount the bowstrings.<sup>1155</sup> In the 16<sup>th</sup> poem, we see the elephant bulls of the king's army felling trees. We also see in the same

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<sup>1149</sup> For more descriptions, read: *Patirruppattu*, 69: 1–10; 82: 1–10.

<sup>1150</sup> *Patirruppattu*, 53: 1–3.

<sup>1151</sup> *Patirruppattu*, 50: 23–26.

<sup>1152</sup> *Patirruppattu*, 88: 16.

<sup>1153</sup> *Patirruppattu*, 24: 14.

<sup>1154</sup> *Puranānūru*, 301: 3.

<sup>1155</sup> *Patirruppattu*, 24: 12–13.

poem the royal bed in the camp, where the king was sleepless, according to the *puram* topos, while that bed was sweet for sleeping for the kohl-painted eyes of his lovers.<sup>1156</sup> We see several poems in which the military camp was reeking of flesh and blood.<sup>1157</sup> What we find in the 30<sup>th</sup> line of the *Patirrupattu* 90 is very fascinating since it talks about the “military camp with mixed languages” (*viravu molik kaṭṭūr*). Whether this means that non-Dravidian soldiers, speakers of other Dravidian languages, or mercenaries from across the sea served in the Cēra army, we have no valuable information. Were they also *yavaṇas* as those “Greek” bodyguards whom we see in the *Mullaippāṭṭu*?<sup>1158</sup> It is possible that these words are mere allusions to *Akanānūru* 212: 14, where the same words (*viravu molik kaṭṭūr*) can be read. However, the *Mullaippāṭṭu* mentions a military camp, where in the middle of the camp, the particular room created for the king was surrounded by many *different* and great armies.<sup>1159</sup> I consider it plausible that the appearance of mercenaries speaking different languages is not just empty literary topos but again overlaps with reality.

The target of a military campaign was always to attack the fortifications that protected certain regions, whose sieges opened the way for conquering the areas behind them. Thus, it is time to briefly summarise what we know about the ancient fortifications in and around the Cēra country. Above all, it is necessary to emphasise that archaeologists have not yet excavated important fortifications from these early centuries or at least not the size and importance that the Caṅkam sources would suggest. The Caṅkam fort of Vaḷḷam, excavated near Tañcāvūr, was a small mud fort lesser in height than the fort later built on it.<sup>1160</sup> However, in the *Patirrupattu*, we find difficult-to-siege, massive forts of lands and mountains. The main characteristics found in our texts are that these fortresses had bowmen inside the walls, they possessed stable bastions with stairs, tall walls, deep moats, sometimes with crocodiles, and protected forests around. In the case of Akappā, the fort had rows of ramparts on the tall walls, and a bow machine called *aiyavi* fastened on the lofty gates. The gates had cylindrical crossbars (*elu*), a row of war machines,<sup>1161</sup> and swaying flags above on the walls. We see in the *Patirrupattu* that, although there were forts built among the rocks,<sup>1162</sup> for which stones were undoubtedly used as building material, most of the references mention earth fortifications of the lowlands, and in that sense, perhaps our most important passage is when we read about the royal palace

<sup>1156</sup> *Patirrupattu*, 16: 8–9; 17–18.

<sup>1157</sup> *Patirrupattu*, 57: 3; 61: 15.

<sup>1158</sup> *Mullaippāṭṭu*, 45–49, 59–63, 63–66.

<sup>1159</sup> *Mullaippāṭṭu*, 43–44.

<sup>1160</sup> Subbarayalu 1984, 1–98.

<sup>1161</sup> *Patirrupattu*, 20: 17–19; 22: 22–26; 45: 10; 53: 6–9; 71: 12;

<sup>1162</sup> *Patirrupattu*, IX. 5.

with tall walls and an enclosure with tall earthen ramparts.<sup>1163</sup> We also read that the enemies of the Cēras had forts on the seas and in the forests.<sup>1164</sup>

Sometimes the poems describe the end of the siege with the absolute *konru* ‘having felled’, which could mean either the act of cutting a totemistic tree or that the fortresses were made from wood which had been destroyed this way.<sup>1165</sup> During our conversations, K. Rajan shared with me his archaeological experiences on the topic; according to him, it can be confidently stated that stone or brick structures were rare in Caṅkam times because in subtropical zones, those structures were not needed. Even if a brick structure was made as a base of a building, it is possible that the superstructures were wooden. As Deloche summarises, until the 3<sup>rd</sup> century AD, “strongholds in the Indian subcontinent were usually built according to a geometrical plan (quadrilateral, trapezium, rectangle, square, circle or semicircle); they consisted of a high and thick earthen embankment, with stone facing, corresponding to a wide and deep ditch; curtain walls were always massive and, except some sites, flanked by solid quadrangular towers; gateways were relatively simple: a passage between rectangular structures forming either a projecting work outside or a curved opening inside; finally, according to iconographic sources, walls were crenellated with rectangular or serrated merlons.”<sup>1166</sup> Around the beginning of the first century AD, following the classification of ancient treatises, we see either *sthaladurgas*, “earthen forts” or *jaladurgas*, “water forts” (e.g. Karuvūr) in South India.<sup>1167</sup> This is exactly what we find in most of the cases in the *Patirruppattu*, where the forts are usually surrounded with deep moats, which forts anyway have to be understood either as earthen or water forts. The examples mentioned by Deloche consist of high and thick earthen bunds surrounded by deep ditches; around them, masonry works have been exposed; breaches through the embankments often correspond to gates; flanking towers are never seen except at Kōṭilingāla, Andhra Pradesh.<sup>1168</sup> Once again, it can only be said that the descriptions. However, they were certainly inspired by other literary works from the North (e.g. *Mahābhārata*?) and ancient treatises such as the *Mānavadharmasāstra* and the *Arthasāstra* (e.g. the crocodiles in the moats, cf. *Arthasāstra*, II. 3. 4), may still have overlapped with reality, since it is hard to imagine that Caṅkam literature would have been filled with poetic images that could not be decoded by a person living in that space and time. It can be said about the Caṅkam fortifications as a whole

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<sup>1163</sup> *Patirruppattu*, 68: 16–17.

<sup>1164</sup> *Patirruppattu*, 30: 31.

<sup>1165</sup> *Patirruppattu*, 11: 10; 16: 5; 76: 2.

<sup>1166</sup> Deloche 2007, 49.

<sup>1167</sup> Deloche 2007, 51.

<sup>1168</sup> Deloche 2007, 51.

that they could have been built of wood, earth, bricks, or in a few cases, stones, among them we could undoubtedly find less important stations and watch posts, durable fortifications representing more severe protection and strength, and fortified towns like Muciṛi or Karuvūr with streets and palace.

When the army left the military camp, they either continued their way to the enemies' land, met the enemies on the battlefield, or started to siege a fort. From these, I discuss here the sieges in detail. The primary goal was to force the enemy to surrender; sometimes, the march of the armed forces was sufficient for this, as we probably see in the 62<sup>nd</sup> song:

[...] after [you] surrounded the strong and difficult[-to-conquer] fort, in order to approach [it] with horses, [which have] trimmed mane cut by the weapon with a blade, with many big and dark shields which could be confused with clouds, [with] a rising multitude of many elephant bulls adorned with ornaments, if your enemies humbly give tributes, after [they] said “Tōṭṭi!”, [as being] ones with large, greeting<sup>1169</sup> hands at the mountain-like ramparts with moats in which the water dashes against [the edges], their country with vast areas is worthy of songs [...] <sup>1170</sup>

If the enemy decided to fight, then, according to the *Patirruppattu*, which never talks about the defeat of the Cēras, the destiny of the fort was to be captured and/or burnt down. The Cēra kings felled forts in the 11<sup>th</sup> song (Line 10), destroyed the insides of the forts and burned them down in the 20<sup>th</sup> song (Line 19–20), but sometimes they only let the forts be abandoned without a guard as we see in the 25<sup>th</sup> song (Line 5). We see the Cēra arrays go beyond the walls in the 29<sup>th</sup> song (Line 13), and the Cēra war elephants break the gate in the 38<sup>th</sup> song (Line 5). In the 50<sup>th</sup> poem (Lines 12–13), we see the Cēra kings overcome battles while the fortresses of the hill-tops, of the ocean and other places became subdued. In the 53<sup>rd</sup> song (Lines 16–22), we see the Cēra elephants who cannot endure to stop in front of the many storied gates of the forts. In the 58<sup>th</sup> song (Line 10), the Cēra army attacks a fort with archers. We learn from the poet of the last decade that the Cēra army at that time made the difficult-to-siege forts suffer.<sup>1171</sup> I have already mentioned specific machines that protected the gate of a fort, such as the famous *aiyavi*, which either caught arrows or shot arrows. Unfortunately, we do not know anything about these machines or why they were included in the texts, but some must have existed in these centuries.

<sup>1169</sup> We can split the sandhi either as *vaṇaṅk' uṭai* or *aṇaṅk' uṭai*. The first would confirm the idea of *tōṭṭi* as a greeting, the second would qualify the hands (“awful hands?”).

<sup>1170</sup> *Patirruppattu*, 62: 1–4, 10–12, 19.

<sup>1171</sup> *Patirruppattu*, 88: 18.

Regarding the siege, we see an exciting oath taken by the Cēra king as the commander of his warriors:

[After] he declared: “If we are ones who sweetly enjoyed this day in order to distribute their murderous weapons to the thunderbolt-like warriors [who are] people having bodies with glorious scars imprinted by the edges of swords, [and who are] people having bright flowers of *kuvalai* tied with white fronds, we will not eat food [from now], unless we conquer tomorrow the walls with ramparts made from earth!”<sup>1172</sup>

This rigorous fast to achieve victory seems unique in the old *puram* corpus. I think the idea was that the warriors would not have to wait so long since the Cēra king's army was more potent than any other armies, if not in reality, at least in these panegyrics. We see a similar example in the 68<sup>th</sup> poem of the *Patirrupattu*, in which we read the following:

Unless [the Cēra warriors] attack the persistent forts with desirable/cruel lines, while the *muracam*-drum with rumbling sound echoes in the big vast sky, [which sound] had been urged [with drumsticks into] a fierce/fast noise in the middle of the military camp which stationed in various lands, [the *muracam*-drum] which sounded like the sea as if the wind became [its] drumsticks; unless [they] themselves, [who have] distress that perplexes [their] bodies and who are ones with heart-declared effort, achieve to conquer the residences of the disobedient, while a lot of time has passed which was multiplied without eating, will they obtain the desired long lifetime [...]?”<sup>1173</sup>

This may indicate again a solemn vow not to eat until they have conquered the fort. Another possibility is a stalemate in the food supply during the protracted campaign. If we imagine such a siege in the tropical heat of South India, perhaps the vow could have been a magical concentration of power (cf. *tapas*) in which the hunger and the distress heat the wrathful efforts, even if it was merely the poet's imagination. I still infer from this that it was a popular idea among ancient Tamil people that fasting would sooner achieve a desirable goal by means of some supernatural intervention.

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<sup>1172</sup> *Patirrupattu*, 58: 2–7.

<sup>1173</sup> *Patirrupattu*, 68: 1–8; 14.

The destruction after the siege and the wasteland often appears in the poems:

You seized the defence [over] the difficult fort with bastions [which have] small stairs, with moats in the depth, [fort of] those who committed their crimes, [you seized] without letting the gate of the walls be visible when the fragrant smoke of the burning of the war concealed the great directions, after [the fire] spread, arose, [and] got enraged so that the flames seized the villages.<sup>1174</sup>

Thus, we see that seizing the defence over the fort was not the last stage of the siege. In some cases, the last act was when the Cēra king, at least in the poet's imagination, burned down the villages around, thus completing his mission. We find a longer description in poem 15, which gives a detailed account of the destruction caused by the war:

After [you] camped on the desired land [of your foes,] while a year had [already] passed, after [you] destroyed the tree of the ramparts, [where] clouds spread [and] showered [plentifully], by means of [your] rage difficult to approach while you caused to spread the fire on the battlefield; after [you] destroyed [everything], so that the beauty of the fire-seized [country-]sides perished, while the wind battered the particles [of ash in the] colourful smoke by letting out banners, when the hellish flood that flowed [with] elephant bulls in rows, cut the waists of the kings, [whose prediction] made with *kalanku*-beans [had become] ruined, after [we] had seen the countries of your enemies who opposed [your] strength by forgetting [about it] because of [their] ignorance, [the countries] with villages where the fields perished together with the grassy-leafy lands, where rascals, [who carry their] flesh-reeking bows as [their] ploughs, roam [among] the old houses destroyed by the vines of the reddened *kāntal* where in the waterless furrows which were creepingly spread with [the tendrils of] *pīr*, the green *curai* grew well together with the *vēlai* with white flower on the regions of vast areas whose ancient beauty has perished, [having seen all these] let us come [to your court]!<sup>1175</sup>

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<sup>1174</sup> *Patiruppattu*, 71: 9–13.

<sup>1175</sup> *Patiruppattu*, 15: 1–15.

The Cēra kings and his retinue indeed found descriptions like this impressive. The contrast between the sophisticated language of classical poetry and the minute details of the terrible destruction raised the cruelty of the kings to an aesthetically high degree. The audience must have listened to these poems with admiration mixed with horror. Whether these campaigns were real conquests or insignificant marches against some villages; they probably occurred far enough from the capital to be recorded by the royal propaganda as memorable and legendary events.

As far as we could, we have already sketched the primary campaigns in a previous chapter on Cēra border areas. The directions indicated by the Cēra military enterprises show the intention to gain control over the Malabar Coast and the Kāviri Valley and the most important trade routes of the age while trying to weaken, make dependent, or defeat their rivals. Thus, in my view, the Cēra expansions were not only schematic literary examples of predatory warfare in early South India, but they have historical value: the Cēras tried to control the inland trade of South India between the ports of the Malabar Coast and the Coromandel Coast, for which their capital in Karuvūr had a perfect strategic position. At the same time, the Cēras laid their hands on the mines of Koṅkunāṭu, rich in precious stones. This way, the Cēras at a particular time of their early history, probably around the second half of the 2<sup>nd</sup> century and the beginning of the 3<sup>rd</sup> century AD, were able to control most of the ports of the Malabar Coast, the trade routes via the Palghat Gap, the mines of Koṅkunāṭu, and through their favourable position, they had the opportunity to profit from the ancient inland trade in South India offering a market at Karuvūr for goods flowing from all directions.

### **The victory and the festive kingdom**

As the Caṅkam poems suggest, when the king and his armies were victorious, they could finally return to the capital or one of the regional political centres to celebrate the victory with splendid festivals. The triumphant festival consisted of different events, started with the (pre-festival) post-battle sacrifices, followed by the performances of musicians, dancers, and actors on the streets of the capital and in the palace, followed by the open court when the king graciously distributed his gifts. In contrast, the sumptuous feast was offered to the visitors and the worthy ones.



From these, the post-battle rituals will be discussed in a later chapter.<sup>1176</sup> Regarding them, we conclude that the post-battle sacrifices of the Cēras mentioned in the poems were complex offerings that fed the deity probably of Ayiraimalai, who might have been Korṛavai and/or Murukan, the forefathers, the evil spirits and other legendary beasts, and the earth to make the battlefield fertile and pacified. These *pali* descriptions may designate a Dravidian sacrifice and a brāhmaṇical sacrifice. However, we have to interpret it as an ancient Dravidian oblation for the victory, which began to intertwine with Vedic rituals at the time of the *Patirrupattu*. We do not know whether such rites were performed only on the battlefield or in the festive towns of the Cēras.

Talking about the post-battle sacrifices, we observe the tradition of the *tuṇaikai* dance. In the *Patirrupattu*, this dance was either a partner dance/festival dance in which the king had a chance to dance with other women than his (favourite) wife,<sup>1177</sup> or a victory dance performed on the battlefield by the king and his warriors.<sup>1178</sup> The *tuṇaikai* dance was sometimes performed by female demons (*pēy*).<sup>1179</sup> Anyway, *tuṇaikai* dance was also danced after the victory and in the festivals, but its religious context is debatable. Be that as it may, the celebration began when the sacrificial rites were performed.

In the *Patirrupattu*, we find several references to royal festivals. The 15<sup>th</sup> song talks about the old town (probably the capital) of the Cēras, where the festivals do not know an end,<sup>1180</sup> the same poem also talks about the excellent festivals of Neṭiyōṇ (perhaps Viṣṇu or another unidentified deity), which became the source of delight or protection,<sup>1181</sup> the 22<sup>nd</sup> song sings about the ample fertility of the country which was previously destroyed, and its festivals in noisy areas, which seem to be *tanpatam*-festivals celebrating ‘the oncoming of the freshet in a river’ (*Tamil Lexicon*, 1738),<sup>1182</sup> the 30<sup>th</sup> song talks about the festival of the ancient town mentioning the flood of the river and the elated crowd of people,<sup>1183</sup> the 48<sup>th</sup> song also mentions the festival of flood, in which water the people dance,<sup>1184</sup> the 56<sup>th</sup> song speaks of the festival in the court which was held with dignity and where people usually dance,<sup>1185</sup> the 61<sup>st</sup> song talks about the festival-like court in the flesh-reeking military camp, where drummers, and

<sup>1176</sup> See: pp. 396–400,

<sup>1177</sup> *Patirrupattu*, 52: 13–15. Cf. *Narrinai*, 50: 2; *Kalittokai*, 66: 18; 70: 14; 73: 16; *Kuruntokai*, 31: 2; 364: 6, etc.

<sup>1178</sup> *Patirrupattu*, 13: 5; 45: 12; 57: 4; 77: 4.

<sup>1179</sup> For example: *Tirumurukārruppatai*, 56.

<sup>1180</sup> *Patirrupattu*, 15: 18–19.

<sup>1181</sup> *Patirrupattu*, 15: 38–39.

<sup>1182</sup> *Patirrupattu*, 22: 28–31.

<sup>1183</sup> *Patirrupattu*, 30: 14–21.

<sup>1184</sup> *Patirrupattu*, 48: 13–17.

<sup>1185</sup> *Patirrupattu*, 56: 1–3.

songstresses with moonlight-like bright spears gather,<sup>1186</sup> while the 72<sup>nd</sup> song compares the king's warfare acts to the festival when people come to celebrate the rising flood.<sup>1187</sup> All these show that festivals were regularly celebrated in the Cēra kingdom. The most important festivals were organised after the victory, for welcoming the overflowing river and paying homage to specific deities. At the news of the victory, the bards, dancers, gift-seekers and others set out for the court, which “pilgrimage” in order to see the king and receive his gifts became a literary program in the *puṛam*-poetry.<sup>1188</sup>

When the court was opened to supplicants, people started to praise the king and sing the marvellous acts of the Cēras. In the 23<sup>rd</sup> song, we read the following:

O Kuṭṭuvaṇ with golden garland and army which is murderous in war, who liberally gives big vessels, even if just a little toddy remains [for himself], while those whose hearts are full of happiness cheerfully dance, after they ate, [and] they greatly rejoiced, when [their] beautiful, gold-made jewels jingle, while the fierce hunger left the *vayir*-people, who sings on the side of the streets, having come there, to the village common, as people who have bags with instruments that were tied up [and] carried; [they rejoice] even at the time when the fields perished as the moisture of the ground ceased, after the great drought intensified, while crickets, abiding on the forked branches of the *uṇṇam*-trees' distressed crown, were chirping [...]<sup>1189</sup>

In this crucial passage, we read about the generous gifts of the Cēraṇ, the feast and dance of those who visited the court, and the musicians who performed on the side of the streets. In the 29<sup>th</sup> song, we also see “the *vayiriya*-people/musicians sing on the side of the streets reaching the village-common, after they arose [from their places] after they performed melodies (*paṇ*) [playing] on the strings which had not been dismantled [during] the unceasing festival”.<sup>1190</sup> This musical performance was preceded by the post-battle sacrifices in the same poem, probably accompanied by drum rolls of drummers and blood sprinkling.<sup>1191</sup> Perhaps the scene found in the 47<sup>th</sup> song, when *viralis* are dancing in the streets of the ancient palace, also has to be connected to the festivals, although this could also have been ordinary entertainment for the

<sup>1186</sup> *Patirruppattu*, 61: 15–18.

<sup>1187</sup> *Patirruppattu*, 72: 10–13.

<sup>1188</sup> *Patirruppattu*, 11: 20; 15: 15; 23: 11; 49: 1, 17; 61: 14; 76: 9; etc.

<sup>1189</sup> *Patirruppattu*, 23: 1–10.

<sup>1190</sup> *Patirruppattu*, 29: 8–10.

<sup>1191</sup> *Patirruppattu*, 29: 11–14.

king. We see women with *yāl* in the 46<sup>th</sup> song, who performed *pālai*-melody, who, after the king gave them sweet toddy and jewels, changed the musical mode and sang *ulīñai*-songs according to their tradition.<sup>1192</sup> In the 41<sup>st</sup> song, we read about skilful young men who praised the deity (*kaṭavul*), who were men with bags of instruments gathered at the ghat, whose bags had been fastened to a pole (*kāvu*) by tying the melodious *mulavu*-drum, the *patalai*-drum, flutes (*tūmpu*) and other instruments into a bundle, and about other young men who picked up their good *yāl* in order to perform melodies.<sup>1193</sup> In the 57<sup>th</sup> song, we see the *virālis* who sang the sweet melody of *taliñci* after the bards (*pānar*) performed *pālai*-melody on the big *yāl* in their hands, on which their fingers caught the expanding, tied strings.<sup>1194</sup> In the 66<sup>th</sup> song, we read about a scene of musical performance, in which an old truth-saying beggar appears, who walks on the road while thinking of the Cēra king and performing *pālai*-melody on his big *yāl*.<sup>1195</sup> The examination of these specific details deserves separate research, which must be done in the future.

In the 54<sup>th</sup> song, we see that after the king donated an unending quantity of jewels day by day, the misery of the supplicants came to an end, while the *virālis* continuously sang the king's valour.<sup>1196</sup> Reading the first line of the 58<sup>th</sup> song from the imperatives, we conclude that not only the musicians and bards but also the gift-seekers sang spontaneously on these occasions. Anyway, if those visitors in the court sang the glory of the king, especially if they were learned musicians, they could expect a fabulous reward:

O skilful minstrel (*pānan*) of the tradition which is [your] duty to know from the famous ancient town called Pantar, together with [your] relatives [who have delivered] an encomium [upon the king], which happened in Koṭumaṇam, you will receive good jewels together with pearls from the clear ocean, if you go as one who sings the wealthy king [...].<sup>1197</sup>

The 86<sup>th</sup> poem also talks about the king protecting the singers.<sup>1198</sup> Thus, we have seen bards, dancers, musicians, and other gift-seekers to sing the glory of the king for which they received gifts in exchange. An excellent example of this gift-giving ceremony (as being part of the *panegyric ritual*, a term suggested by A. Dubiansky) can be found in the 43<sup>rd</sup> song:

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<sup>1192</sup> *Patiruppattu*, 46: 4–6.

<sup>1193</sup> *Patiruppattu*, 41: 1–6.

<sup>1194</sup> *Patiruppattu*, 57: 7–9.

<sup>1195</sup> *Patiruppattu*, 66: 1–3.

<sup>1196</sup> *Patiruppattu*, 54: 6–8.

<sup>1197</sup> *Patiruppattu*, 67: 1–4, 24.

<sup>1198</sup> *Patiruppattu*, 86: 8.

[...] as the raindrops drip from the crowded, clamorous sky, [you] showered good vessels, so that [your] friends became full, having consumed without saving, so that people who witnessed [it] became satisfied, let the singing *virālis* obtain many elephant cows, [*virālis*, whose] sweet voice, which excelled [the *kinnaram* with] fluttering wing, joined to the strings! Let the plundering (*koṇṭi*) strong men (*mallar*) obtain murderous elephant bulls, [men, who are] glorious, fearful, and longing [for] victory, [who have] the soft flower of the *vākai*-tree and the delicate creeper of *uliṅai*! Let the *akavalan*-bard obtain horses, [who] praised the battlefield taking [his] fine stick with joints (*kaṇṭi*) after he set out to the village common [and] entered the side of the street! (26)<sup>1199</sup>

Sometimes, they received much more valuable gifts, such as the expensive *kalinkam*-clothes in the 12<sup>th</sup> poem (Line 21), while the given food removed the long-lasting hunger of their relatives (Line 15). In this milieu of heroic literature, the most important quality distinguishing heroes from others was their capacity for limitless and generous giving. Thus, those who excelled in generosity were extolled as heroes in Tamil literature. The one-sidedness of the donation was important, i.e. the donor did not expect anything in return, but nothing obliged him to be generous. To show such generosity and compassion was the noblest of deeds.<sup>1200</sup> Selfless donation could be, in fact, a fundamental redistribution of goods, but in many cases, its purpose was only to create a bond between the donor and the recipient.<sup>1201</sup> In reality, the donor did not leave empty-handed: poets and artists delighted them with performances.

According to the *Patirruppattu*, the last event of a victorious festival (or festival day) was the fabulous feast, about which essential details are revealed in the poems. First of all, regarding the food served on the feasts, the Cēras offered a non-vegetarian menu to their guests with seasoned and roasted goat flesh and fat meat pieces together with various types of boiled rice<sup>1202</sup> and cooked grains,<sup>1203</sup> they prepared Indian kale in large earthen pots,<sup>1204</sup> meat curry in which meat was inseparable from the boiled rice,<sup>1205</sup> while in the western parts of the kingdom, people got the chance to taste white/cooked meat, lentils, white curry without red meat.<sup>1206</sup> Those who

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<sup>1199</sup> *Patirruppattu*, 43: 18–28.

<sup>1200</sup> Subbiah 1991, 133.

<sup>1201</sup> Subbiah 1991, 138–139. For a detailed discussion of the topic, read: Ferenczi 2018.

<sup>1202</sup> *Patirruppattu*, 12: 16–18; 21: 8–10; 24: 22.

<sup>1203</sup> *Patirruppattu*, 18: 2.

<sup>1204</sup> *Patirruppattu*, 24: 20–21.

<sup>1205</sup> *Patirruppattu*, 45: 13.

<sup>1206</sup> *Patirruppattu*, 55: 7–8.

prepared the food used blades, knives, chopping boards, pestles, pots, and ovens. A drink, which was nothing but toddy, was also served during the feast. We find references in the *Patirruppattu* to the fibre-filtered toddy (*naravu*),<sup>1207</sup> to the clarified sap (*tēral*) of the filtered toddy (*kaḷ*) produced with flower buds,<sup>1208</sup> to the slightly filtered toddy (*ariyal*),<sup>1209</sup> to the rare toddy sold in the marketplaces,<sup>1210</sup> to the sweet toddy (*makiḷ*),<sup>1211</sup> to the toddy called *pili* sold in the markets,<sup>1212</sup> to the toddy called *maṭṭam* popular among the *kuttuwar*, and the toddy called *maṭṭam* which had sapphire colour, was matured from a sweet juice, and was stored in vessels with sandal-paste smeared on the outside.<sup>1213</sup> Another fascinating passage can be found in the 43<sup>rd</sup> poem:

[...] we saw your state in your bustling court, o king with generous hands, [which court bustles,] because [your] unceasing toddy (*kaḷ*) had been drunk by the musicians (*vayiriyar*) from the pots which do not remain filled for a long, [pots from] the shelves (*ēṇi*) that cannot be climbed [as a ladder (*ēṇi*)], [shelves, which] know neither exhaustion nor fullness, [shelves in your court, where] the heat of the fire together with the smoke of the burning meat does not cease.<sup>1214</sup>

All these texts show that drinking the intoxicating toddy was a popular activity during the feasts. Hence, those interested in selling these liquors tried to produce a great variety of different sorts of toddy. Among the beverages available in South India, one could undoubtedly find Mediterranean wines (cf. the sapphire-coloured *maṭṭam*?); however, we do not have enough information to identify them in the texts. In one case, however, the Tamils referred to the Mediterranean wines when we read about “the fragrant, cool wine which was brought in the good vessels of the Greeks/*yavaṇar*” (*yavaṇar naṅkalam tanta taṅ kaṃaḷ tēral*).<sup>1215</sup>

Whenever the guests had eaten the dishes and drank the liquor, they suddenly felt like dancing in their joy. We also find a reference in the *Patirruppattu*, in which the bards got drunk so that they started to prattle: “... while the perfect strings of the people with instruments in bags and with tender words praised [you] with prattling tongues that changed [their] words after having drunk ...”.<sup>1216</sup> The king, of course, was always there among the celebrating folks, his retinue,

<sup>1207</sup> *Patirruppattu*, 11: 15.

<sup>1208</sup> *Patirruppattu*, 12: 18.

<sup>1209</sup> *Patirruppattu*, 40: 18.

<sup>1210</sup> *Patirruppattu*, 68: 10–11; 75: 10;

<sup>1211</sup> *Patirruppattu*, 30: 12; 42: 13; 46: 7.

<sup>1212</sup> *Patirruppattu*, 30: 12.

<sup>1213</sup> *Patirruppattu*, 42: 11–12.

<sup>1214</sup> *Patirruppattu*, 43: 31–36.

<sup>1215</sup> *Puranānūru*, 56: 18.

<sup>1216</sup> *Patirruppattu*, 15: 25–26.

the famous bards, and the valorous warriors, while others sweetly saw his throne where crowds  
jubilated, whose sound arose like the songs of birds.<sup>1217</sup>

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<sup>1217</sup> *Patiruppatti*, 84: 19–20, 24.

## *The interactive kingdom*

This chapter aims to introduce the Cēra Kingdom as an *interactive* monarchy; I shall examine the person and power of the king through his commercial, diplomatic, religious, and cultural interactions with the “others”. The king's power and strength rested mainly on a system of interactive relations, where the Cēraṅ could maintain order through the military elite, control political life through his purohita and the court council, protect his authority and power through the praising words of the learned poets, control and boost the economy through the merchants, protect ritual embeddedness of the dynasty through the *brāhmaṇas* around the court, and satisfy the needs of the society through the generous gifts regularly given by the palace. Therefore, the king was forced to interact continuously, and although his power may seem absolute, it depended a lot on the loyal actors who helped him stay in power.<sup>1218</sup> On the following pages, I attempt to make an analysis in two subchapters, the *King and Trade* and *King and Religion*, in which studies the Cēra king appears at the centre of interactions which made his country long-standing, strong and, in terms of its cultural identity, unique.

### **King and trade**

#### ***The circumnavigation of the Malabar Coast***

Due to the fortunate constellation around the end of the 1<sup>st</sup> century BC created by the legacy of the experiences of Ptolemaic and Mediterranean merchants, the improvement of technological innovations, the evolving needs of the solvent strata of multicultural societies in the Mediterranean, the organisation of infrastructural framework of trade together with the establishment of a trade defence system during the peaceful period of Pax Romana,<sup>1219</sup> led to the beginning of an organic, intense, predictable, and promising trade in the Indian Ocean and with it on the Malabar Coast. The Cēra kingdom had a unique role in the history of Indo-Roman trade because the northern and the middle areas of the Malabar Coast were the first among the South Indian shores that were reached by Roman traders, which geographical area

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<sup>1218</sup> To analyse the Cēra kingdom as an interactive one, the work of Angelos Chaniotis (Chaniotis 2005) served as a source of inspiration. The reason that the previous sub-chapter, *The Heroic King* as a topic fell out of the circle of analysis is that, as we have seen, there was no hard evidence to prove the dynastic/clan relations within the Cēra army, nor to prove that vassal commanders served in the Cēra army making the loyalty of the warriors labile, and the army dependent on personal interests of a military elite. No doubt, royal interactivity had to be present in the organisation of the army, but its extent and nature are difficult to determine from Tamil sources.

<sup>1219</sup> Rawlinson 1916, 101.

was ruled by the Cēra dynasty for a *longue durée* from around the 3<sup>rd</sup> century BC until around the 4<sup>th</sup> century AD.<sup>1220</sup> Within these centuries, the Cēras' state was gradually transformed from a tribal hegemony to an early kingdom with Old Tamil culture but strong *brāhmanical* influences around the court. Around the first century AD, the Cēra kingdom had already developed an economic system with a) traditional barter, b) monetised marketplaces operated by Jains, Buddhists, and perhaps loyal officials, and c) prestigious gifts as side-products of “international” relations, this system was able to exploit the potential of trade; however, it became dependent on Rome, the centre of the trading system. To begin our analysis, it is worth turning our attention to the Mediterranean, where, during the Roman trade with India, various authors discussed the Cēra kingdom together with its settlement network, providing an excellent background for the Early Old Tamil literary sources. Although, among the ancient Tamil rulers, the Pāṇṭiyas had been probably mentioned at the earliest by Megasthenes in the 4<sup>th</sup>–3<sup>rd</sup> c. BC,<sup>1221</sup> and the Pāṇṭiya embassy to Augustus by Strabo (1<sup>st</sup> c. BC),<sup>1222</sup> we find the first reference to the Cēra kingdom only in the *Naturalis Historia* of Pliny the Elder (23/24–79 AD).

Pliny learned (*Naturalis Historia*, VI. 26. 104) at the time when he was working on the *Naturalis Historia* that the king of Muziris (perhaps around today's Paṭṭaṇam/Koṭuṇṇallūr, Kerala),<sup>1223</sup> the first marketplace (*emporium*) of India, was Caelobothras. Although he did not have much knowledge about this kingdom, he believed that traders should not visit Muziris because it does not abound in commodities (*neque est abundans mercibus*); the cargoes have to be conveyed in boats for loading or discharging, taking into account the great distance between the coast and the riverside port (*praeterea longe a terra abest navium statio, lintribusque adferuntur onera et egeruntur*), and because of the neighbouring pirates of Nitrias<sup>1224</sup> (*vicinos piratas, qui optinent locum nomine Nitrias*), which made the Muziris' trade unpredictable. However, the presence of pirates

<sup>1220</sup> The chronology of the Cēras' reign stretches between the Aśoka inscriptions, which record them as Kelalapute/Keralaputo/Keraḍaputro, and the reconstructed, obscure chronology found in the Cēra panegyrics.

<sup>1221</sup> For the fragments of Megasthenes, see: Solin. 52. 5–17; Phlegon, *Mir.* 33.

<sup>1222</sup> Strabo, *Geogr.* XV. 5.

<sup>1223</sup> For the recent localisation of Muziris/Mucirī, see: Cherian (et al.) 2004 and Cherian–Selvakumar–Shajan 2007. Gurukkal–Whittaker 2001. De Romanis rightly assumes that Paṭṭaṇam may have been just a nearby settlement close to Muziris. Still, ancient Muziris could be located certainly in the zone of Paṭṭaṇam, Kerala. De Romanis 2020, 79, 115. In any case, the excavations confirm that there was an ancient settlement in the village of Paṭṭaṇam, which was involved in trade with the Romans.

<sup>1224</sup> The location of Nitrias/Nitra emporion (Νίτρα ἐμπόριον; Ptol., *Geog.* VII. 7) is a matter of debate. Pretzsch (Pretzsch 1889, 23), Warmington (Warmington 1974, 57), and Schoff (Schoff 1913, 203) suggest identifying it with today's Pigeon Island/Netrani Island, the Leukē nēsos (Λευκή νῆσος) of the *Periplus* (ch. 53), while Casson (Casson 1989, 217) mentions that “Ptolemy's Nitraiai, however, is no island but a port of trade right on the coast”. Following Ptolemy and the *Periplus*, we should, however, distinguish between Naoura (Νάουρα) and Nitrias/Nitra, since Nitra was north of Limyrikē (Λιμυρική) in Andrōn Peiratōn (Ἀνδρῶν Πειρατῶν; Ptol., *Geog.* VII. 7), the land of pirates, while Naoura was the first among the marketplaces on the Malabar Coast (*Periplus* ch. 53). Among them, Naoura was perhaps a town in the Cēra kingdom, which appears in the *Patirrupattu* as Naravu. *Patirrupattu*, 60: 12; 85: 8.



around the port of Caelobothras somewhat highlights its importance and the intensive maritime activities around it. Caelobothras is a name distorted from Keralaputra (Skt. “son of Kerala”), which can be found on II. Aśokan Rock Edict of Mānsehrā (3<sup>rd</sup> c. BC), but also on other Aśokan inscriptions as Ketalaputo (II. Rock Edict of Girnār), Kelalaputo (II. Rock Edict of Kālsī), or Keraḍaputro (II. Rock Edict of Shāhbāzgarhī).<sup>1225</sup> This name is, no doubt, the Indo-Aryan name of the Cēra/Cēral dynasty and of their kingdom itself, which name was used perhaps in diplomacy and external affairs. In the *Mahābhārata* and the few hundred years later *Matsyapurāṇa*, we find the same kingdom/inhabitants of the kingdom attested as *Kerala*.<sup>1226</sup> We have another reference to the ancient kingdom of the Cēras in the *Periplus Maris Erythraei*,<sup>1227</sup> a *periplus*-text from the middle of the 1<sup>st</sup> century AD, in which we read about the kingdom (βασιλεία) of Kēprobotos (Κηπροβότος) which was, as Casson pointed out following Frisk and McCrindle, a misspelt form from of \*Κηροβότρος, the Greek transcription of the above mentioned Keralaputras.<sup>1228</sup> Adding to this, Ptolemy also mentioned the “sons of Kerala” as Kērobothras (Κηροβόθρας) whose royal residence (Βασιλείον) was in Karoura (Κάρουρα)/Karuvūr, somewhere between the rivers called Pseudostomos (Ψευδόστομος; the Periyār river, Kerala) and Baris (Βάρις; might be the Pampā river, Kerala).<sup>1229</sup> Perhaps Florus (c. 74 –147 AD) is the last among the ancient authors who wrote about them; in that passage, which mentioned *seres* (a usual term for the “silk people”, i.e. folks of ancient China) among Indians, which is still a matter of debate, but considering the context, the *seres* in that particular case could have been identical with the Cēras of South India, but that would also mean that Florus had an informant who was aware of the Tamil name of the kingdom (*seres* < Cēra), which we could prove by the appearance of the 's' at the beginning of the word, instead of the names before derived from Kerala and Keralaputra.<sup>1230</sup> Regarding their dynastic name, Marr is right when he argues that the name ‘Cēra’ does not appear in the old texts. Still, instead of that we have Cēral and the honorific Cēralar, which seemed to be preserved also in the Sanskrit names with an initial velar plosive (\*Keral), and this way in the Latin/Greek forms.<sup>1231</sup> We see Cēraṅ/Cēramāṅ (masc. singular) to appear in the colophons of the *Puranānūru* (e.g. col. 53; 203), but the earliest actual attestation of ‘Cēraṅ’ (masc. singular) and ‘Cērar’ (honorific plural) can be found only in the

<sup>1225</sup> Hultzsch 1925, 2–3; 28–29; 51–52; 72.

<sup>1226</sup> *Mahābhārata*, I. 177. 15: 4; II. 28. 48: 1; VI. 10. 57: 1; VIII. 8. 15: 1; XIV. 83. 29: 2; *Matsyapurāṇa* XLVIII. 5. 1; CXIV. 46. 2.

<sup>1227</sup> *Periplus Maris Erythraei*, 55.

<sup>1228</sup> Casson 1989, 217.

<sup>1229</sup> Ptol., *Geog.* VII. 1. 86.

<sup>1230</sup> Florus, *Epitomae* IV. 12: 62. or II. 34.

<sup>1231</sup> Marr 1985 [1958], 263.

*Cilappatikāram* written in the early Middle Ages (ca. 5–6 centuries AD).<sup>1232</sup> Therefore, it is up to the researcher to join the tradition of applying a usual, although anachronistic, name used by early mediaeval authors, editors, commentators, and modern historians or adhere to the archaic version of the dynastic name. I think both are right in their own way; I use the dynastic name Cēra throughout my study except when I quote from Caṅkam texts.

Pliny’s ‘Muziris’, the name of the “first marketplace of India”, is known in the Caṅkam literary works as Muciṛi/Mucuṛi, a coastal town of the Cēras,<sup>1233</sup> and Muciṛi appears also in an early inscription at Muttuppatti (ca. 1st c. BC).<sup>1234</sup> Although the trade between the Cēra Kingdom and the Mediterranean might have begun somewhat earlier, we see in Pliny that in the 1st c. AD, an existing trade, can already be found on the Malabar Coast, which, in Pliny’s work, was just in a crisis because of the pirates from northern areas. Regarding the region of the Malabar Coast, it has its name in Ancient Greek: Limyrikē (Λιμυρική) in Ptolemy (*Geog.* VII. 1. 8) and Limyrichē (Λιμυριχή) in the *Periplus Maris Erythraei* (ch. 55). The name of Limyrikē/Limyrichē caused much ink to flow, since many scholars claimed (Schoff, Warmington, Wheeler, Mathew and others), that the name Limyrikē was a misspelt form when two letters, the Λ and the Δ were interchanged, and the reconstructed/original “Damirice” (Schoff even used the misleading “Damirica” in his translations!) must be derivable from the Old Tamil word ‘Tamiḷakam’, which means the “interior of the Tamil [countries]” or simply “Tamil land”.<sup>1235</sup> Leaving the question open, I think the only right thing to do is to turn back to the original Greek name and keep in mind two things: that this place name may have some obscure Dravidian origin, and it is undoubtedly the same as ‘Dymirice’ of the *Tabula Peutingeriana* but is different from the area which the *itinerarium* calls ‘Damirice’.<sup>1236</sup> Considering this, it is somewhat problematic to draw up a satisfying etymology of Limyrikē from Tamiḷakam. If this were the solution, more must have happened in the word's history than just a scribal error.

We should emphasise that we are already on the land called Dachinabadēs (Δαχίναβάδης; *Periplus Maris Erythraei*, ch. 50), which term is the same as Skt. *Dakṣiṇāpatha* (“the road to the south”), the historical region south of Āryāvarta, which can be generally divided into the Deccan Plateau and the Tamil South. However, the author of the *Periplus* had distinguished Dachinabadēs from Limyrikē, the Malabar Coast, which was perhaps based on a misinformation or misinterpretation, or simply meant that the practical information came from

<sup>1232</sup> *Cilappatikāram* III. 29. 28: 3; III. *kaṭṭ.* 3.

<sup>1233</sup> *Akanānūru* 57: 15; 149: 11; *Puṇanānūru* 343: 10.

<sup>1234</sup> Mahadevan 2003, 295. For the ancient and early mediaeval history of Muziris, see: Malekandathil 2016.

<sup>1235</sup> See: Casson 1989: 213–214.

<sup>1236</sup> *Tabula Peutingeriana* XI.

informants familiar with the areas, who who divided South India into these units from the point of view of west coast trade.

The *Periplus Maris Erythraei* (ch. 53) talks about Limyrikē as a region with several ports of trade. Among them, three names are of Cēra places: Naoura (Νάουρα),<sup>1237</sup> Tyndis (Τύνδις),<sup>1238</sup> and Mouziris (Μούζιρις). Two of these, Mouziris/Mucirī and Tyndis/Toṅṭi (perhaps around today's Ponnāni, Kerala)<sup>1239</sup> appear in Caṅkam literature, while Naoura is only suspected to be attested as Naṛavu.<sup>1240</sup> North of these, the *Periplus* lists a series of coastal places that lie on the Konkan Coast (VII. 1. 6–7), in connection with which the name of a tribal chief, Naṅṅaṅ<sup>1241</sup> and the *kaṭampu*-tribe will occur later in this chapter. The *Periplus* just mentions Naoura and does not have much to say about Tyndis, which happened to be a port of trade (ἐμπόριον; ch. 53) and an “important seashore village” (κώμη παραθαλάσσιος ἔνσημος. ch. 54). However; it tells much about Mouziris, which owes its wealth to two trading activities, the ships from Ariakē (Αριακή) and the vessels of the Greeks.<sup>1242</sup> According to Casson, Ariakē extended from around the Gulf of Kutch “south as far as Barygaza<sup>1243</sup> ... and east into the interior at least as far as Minnagara”,<sup>1244</sup> and its name perhaps has to be connected with the *āryas*, thus, Ariakē<sup>1245</sup> would be the Hellenised version of Āryaka, the land of the Āryas.<sup>1246</sup> The distance between Tyndis and Mouziris is 500 stadia plus 20 stadia, which has to be possibly counted from the river mouth.<sup>1247</sup> We find other ports of Limyrikē in Ptolemy together with the already known ones,<sup>1248</sup> such as the city (πόλις) called Tyndis (Τύνδις), Bramagara (Βραμάγαρα),<sup>1249</sup> the cape (ἄκρα)

<sup>1237</sup> Naoura was perhaps a town of the Cēra kingdom in North Malabar, which appears in the *Patirrupattu* as Naṛavu. *Patirrupattu*, 60: 12; 85: 8. Schoff identifies it (Schoff 1913, 204) with Kaṅṅūr (Kerala) and rejects the identification with Honnāvara (Karnataka), an age-old attempt of localization which can already be found at Pretzsch (Pretzsch 1889, 23). Casson (Casson 1989, 297) pinpoints it at Maṅgaḷūru (Karnataka), which became another usual identification of the place name. It was certainly located between Nitrias/Nitra and Tyndis/Toṅṭi.

<sup>1238</sup> Cf. Ptol., *Geog.* VII. 1. 8. Tyndis lay perhaps around today's Ponnāni, Kerala. The Greek name covers an important Cēra town, Toṅṭi, which appears twenty times in the Caṅkam texts. Lehmann–Malten 2007, 244. The *Aiṅkurunūru*, the erotic anthology of the Cēras, devoted an entire decade to Toṅṭi (*toṅṭipattu*). *Aiṅkurunūru* 171–180.

<sup>1239</sup> Casson 1989, 297.

<sup>1240</sup> See: *Patirrupattu*, 60: 12; 85: 8.

<sup>1241</sup> Naṅṅaṅ was perhaps the same as Nandana found in the *Mūṣikavaṃśamahākāvya* written by Atula (12<sup>th</sup> c. AD), which text would then suggest that Naṅṅaṅ was the supposed or real ancestor of the Mūṣika Dynasty of the Middle Ages. However, we have no ancient data to confirm this.

<sup>1242</sup> *Periplus Maris Erythraei*, ch. 54.

<sup>1243</sup> Barygaza (Βαρύγαζα) had to be the today's Bharūc (Gujarat), the historical Bharukaccha/Bhārukaccha (*Mahābhārata*, II. 28. 50: 1; II. 47. 8: 1; *Kathāsaritsāgara*, I. 6. 76: 2; *Matsyapurāṇa*, CXIV. 50: 2).

<sup>1244</sup> The metropolis called Minnagara (Μίνναγάρα; *Periplus Maris Erythraei*, ch. 41), also found at Ptol., *Geog.* VII. 1. 63. as Minagara (Μίνάγαρα), lay perhaps at today's Vaḍodarā (Gujarat). Casson 1989, 199.

<sup>1245</sup> Ariakē covered the hinterlands of Barygaza and some parts of the Konkan Coast.

<sup>1246</sup> Casson 1989, 197.

<sup>1247</sup> *Periplus Maris Erythraei*, ch. 55.

<sup>1248</sup> Ptol., *Geog.* VII. 1. 8.

<sup>1249</sup> Bramagara (Βραμάγαρα): an unidentified settlement on the Malabar Coast; might be Brahmakuḷaṃ, Kerala. Kanakasabhai 1904, 18.

called Kalaikarias (Καλαικαρίας),<sup>1250</sup> the port of trade (ἐμπόριον) called Mouziris (Μουζιρίς), then comes the mouth of the river Pseudostomos/Periyār (Ψευδοστόμου ποταμοῦ ἐκβολαί), after that another port called Podoperoura (Ποδοπέρουρα < Tam. *putuḥpērūr* ‘new great town’?), Semnē (Σέμνη),<sup>1251</sup> Kereoura (Κερεούρα),<sup>1252</sup> Bakarē (Βακάρη),<sup>1253</sup> and the mouth of the river Baris/Pampā (Βάριος ποταμοῦ ἐκβολαί). The informant of the *Tabula Peutingeriana* already seems to have thought much less to map, thus, we see on the Malabar Coast the following places: Tundis, Muziris with a surrounding lake and the mysterious *templi Augusti* around, Blinca,<sup>1254</sup> Cotiara (Selvakumar reads Comara),<sup>1255</sup> and Patinae.<sup>1256</sup>

Considering the presence of the pirates and the difficulties of loading and discharging at Muziris, Pliny the Elder recorded (*Naturalis Historia*, VI. 26. 105) a more convenient port, Becare which can be found south of Muziris, in the areas of the Neacyndus-people, which port used to be governed (*regnabat*) by Pandion, another king who had his residence far from the port in the interior, in Modura. Here, using the word *regnabat* in praeteritum imperfectum seems to suggest that it was already in the hand of another chief, perhaps the ones called Āy. In this passage, we can safely identify the Pāṇṭiya kingdom together with Maturai, the historical capital of the Pāṇṭiyas,<sup>1257</sup> but Becare is a matter of debate. We find its name in the *Periplus Maris Erythraei* (ch. 56) as a village (κώμη) called Bacharē (Βαχαρή), which was also named as a port of trade (ἐμπόριον) in the same chapter. We learn from the *Periplus* that Bacharē was located at the mouth of a river, “to which vessels drop downriver from Nelkynda for the outbound voyage, they anchor in the open roads to take on their cargoes because the river has sandbanks and channels that are shoal”.<sup>1258</sup> Leaving the question of traded goods for later, we must note that this Pāṇṭiya (and later tribal) settlement was undoubtedly one of those towns in the region, from which the enemies threatened the Cēra territories on a regular basis. Ptolemy also mentioned Becare as Bakarē (*Geog.* VII. ch. 1).

<sup>1250</sup> Kalaikarias (Καλαικαρίας): perhaps Cālakkuṭi, Kerala. Kanakasabhai 1904, 17–18.

<sup>1251</sup> Semnē (Σέμνη): an unidentified settlement on the Malabar Coast. Ptol., *Geog.* VII. 1. 8. *Barrington Atlas*, 65.

<sup>1252</sup> Kereoura (Κερεούρα) was perhaps the today’s Guruvāyūr. *Barrington Atlas*, 65.

<sup>1253</sup> Bakarē (Βακάρη) lay perhaps at today’s “Pirakkād”/Pūṛakkāt, Kerala. Casson 1989, 297; *Barrington Atlas*, 61.

<sup>1254</sup> Blinca is an unidentified settlement found on the *Tabula Peutingeriana* XI. It might be the same as Βαλίτα of the *Periplus* (ch. 58) and Bammala (Βαμμάλα)/Bambala (Βαμβάλα) of Ptolemy (*Geog.* VII. 1. 9). Kumar (et al.) 2013, 196; 200. If so, it might also be the same as today’s Viliññam, Kerala. *Barrington Atlas*, 61.

<sup>1255</sup> Selvakumar 2017, 274. n. on fig. 11. 2.

<sup>1256</sup> It is almost impossible to localise Patinae, since its name seems to reflect the Tamil word for ‘maritime town’ (*paṭṭaṇam/paṭṭiṇam*; *Tamil Lexicon*, 2420; 2426), which word has been regularly added to the names of ports.

<sup>1257</sup> It is today’s Maturai (Tamil Nadu), the ancient Kūṭal and Maturai.

<sup>1258</sup> Casson 1989, 85.

Turning back to Pliny the Elder, he even adds that Cottonara, a region (*regio*), was the place from which pepper used to be transported in dugouts (*monoxylus linter*) to Becare.<sup>1259</sup> The Cottonara region is also attested in the *Periplus Maris Erythraei* (ch. 56), in which Kottanarichē (Κοτταναριχή) is a ‘place’ (τόπος) which was famous for its export of pepper and was connected to the northern harbours, as Casson highlighted, of Mouziris and Nelkynda mentioned in the previous chapter of the *Periplus* (ch. 55), which ports were the “active ones” (αἱ νῦν πρᾶσσοῦσαι) those times.<sup>1260</sup> Cottonara/Kottanarichē must have been very near to the ‘capital city’ (μητρόπολις) called Kottiarā (Κοττιάρᾱ) in Ptolemy (*Geog.* VII. ch. 1), and Cotiara in the *Tabula Peutingeriana* (XI). Among the many possible identifications of Kottiarā/Cotiara, Caldwell<sup>1261</sup> mentioned a few potential locations from North Malabar (the Koḷatta-nāḍu-theory of Burnell) to South Malabar (the Kaḍatta-nāḍu-theory of Buchanan), which had been supplemented with other doubtful theories by Schoff, however; their notes did not bring us closer to a convincing solution.<sup>1262</sup> Casson, on the other hand, found consensus in the scientific works on Old Tamil literature,<sup>1263</sup> so the historical region called Kuṭṭanāṭu,<sup>1264</sup> “the country of the lakes” (modern days’ Ālappuḷa, Kottayam and Pattanamtiṭṭa Districts of Kerala) became the usual identification of Kottiarā/Cotiara, where the valley of the Pampā river can be found, which is still famous for its pepper production.<sup>1265</sup> The depiction of a lake above Muziris on the *Tabula Peutingeriana* may support this.<sup>1266</sup> Adding to this, the word *kuṭṭuwan* was a traditional title among the Cēra rulers, which probably has to be connected to the geographical region of Kuṭṭanāṭu, which was surrounded by historical divisions of the Tamil South, such as Vēñāṭu in the southwest, Kuṭanāṭu in the northwest, Koṅkunāṭu and Pūlināṭu in the west over the Western Ghats,<sup>1267</sup> which were all divisions of the early Cēra kingdom at certain times in history. We also know that Kottiarā/Cotiara laid south of Ptolemy’s Melkynda (Μελκύνδα)/Melkyda (Μελκύδα), the port of the Neacyndus-people, also mentioned as Nelkynda, a port of trade (ἐμπόριον) in the *Periplus Maris Erythraei* (ch. 56), and Nincildae on the *Tabula Peutingeriana* (XI). Nelkynda has an Indian name. Casson mentions the nowadays-popular identification that

<sup>1259</sup> It is remarkable that Solinus seems to have compiled this part of his work (*Coll. rerum mirab.* 54. 7) from Pliny the Elder (cf. *Naturalis Historia*, VI. 26. 104–105), which could mean that Solinus did not have much to say about India, or that these facts were still valid for India.

<sup>1260</sup> Casson 1989, 219; De Romanis 2020, 88.

<sup>1261</sup> Caldwell 1875, 97.

<sup>1262</sup> Schoff 1912, 221.

<sup>1263</sup> Iyengar 1926, 458.

<sup>1264</sup> Tamil *Lexicon*, 960. For the *koṭun-tamiḷ-nāṭus*, one of which is *Kuṭṭanāṭu*, see: Chevillard 2008.

<sup>1265</sup> Casson 1989, 221.

<sup>1266</sup> *Tabula Peutingeriana* XI.

<sup>1267</sup> Chevillard 2008, 19; map 3.

originates from Iyengar,<sup>1268</sup> with “Niranom”/Niraṇam, Kerala (which corresponds to the distance of 500 *stadia* from Muziris and the riverside location mentioned by the ancient sources), and the possibility of the existence of a South Indian town called “Nilgunda”.<sup>1269</sup> Another attempt of identification is to connect it with Nākkiṭa, Kerala, at the confluence of Maṇimalayār, Pampā, and Accankōvilār rivers.<sup>1270</sup> The name of this port is still problematic among scholars since we have it attested neither in Old Tamil literary works nor in inscriptions.<sup>1271</sup> The Neacyndus-port or Nelkynda together with Becare/Bacharē/Bakarē at the “pepper country”, were governed sometimes by the Pāṇṭiya king according to Pliny (*Naturalis Historia*, VI. 26. 105) and the *Periplus* (ch. 55), which geographical position could have been very frustrating for the early Cēras and certainly made the economically flourishing Malabar Coast a politically tense region. Pliny adds that because none of the nations, ports, and cities are to be found in previous authors, it is clear that they have changed their places (*status*). Whether the location of these nations and settlements did change in those times is difficult to say. Still, since, for example, Pliny also lists Modura/Maturai and Muziris/Muciṛi, two settlements with quite a stable location in different ages, his statement is likely to be refuted. I believe that before Pliny the Elder, the Mediterranean scholars were simply not so interested in South India’s geography, which is why their knowledge was lacking or inaccurate.

However, in Ptolemy (*Geog.* VII. 1. 9) we find that places such as Melkynda/Melkyda, Elangōn emporion (Ἐλαγκῶν ἐμπόριον)/Elangōros (Ἐλανκῶρος),<sup>1272</sup> Kottiarā metropolis, Bammala/Bambala,<sup>1273</sup> and Komaria (Κομαρία ἄκρον καὶ πόλις)<sup>1274</sup> were already located in the territories of the people called Aioi (Ἄιοι), and one more, Morounda (Μοροῦνδα)<sup>1275</sup> in their

<sup>1268</sup> “Nelcynda is the present day Nirnom, on the south coast of Aleppey; it is called Niganda and Nilarnam in the Malayalam work, *Keralolpatti*.” Iyengar 1926, 458.

<sup>1269</sup> Casson 1989, 298.

<sup>1270</sup> Gurukkal 2016, 168–169.

<sup>1271</sup> On a theoretical basis, if we agree that the Greeks properly transliterated the original placename, then we must reject interpretations in which ‘ω’ and ‘ϝ’ meet, since it would change into stop, e.g. \**nil kunram* > *nirkunram* (“Rice Hill”). It is, however, possible to think of *nil-kunram* (“Long hill”), *nil-kunṭam* (“Long Lake”) in which cases the alveolar ‘ḥ’ occurred, but I think rather anachronistic to talk about ‘Nilkantha’, ‘Nilgunda’ (e.g. on the plates of Vikramāditya VI; *Epigraphia Indica* 12, 142, 148), and such, since the deletion of *schwa* at word endings is a later phenomenon and it does not occur in the ancient Indo-Aryan languages. Chaudhary–Basu–Sarkar 2004, 4.

<sup>1272</sup> According to Kanakasabhai (Kanakasabhai 1904, 20), Elangōn emporion (Ἐλαγκῶν ἐμπόριον)/Elangōros (Ἐλανκῶρος) is perhaps identical with Viḷayāṅkōṭ, Kerala, however; Chattopadhyaya (Chattopadhyaya 1980, 91) identifies it with Kollam, Kerala.

<sup>1273</sup> Bammala/Bambala might be the same as Balita (Βαλίτα) of the *Periplus* (ch. 58) and Blinca of the *Tabula Peutingeriana* XI. Kumar (et al.) 2013, 196; 200. If so, it might also be the same as today’s Viliñṇam, Kerala. *Barrington Atlas*, 61.

<sup>1274</sup> Komaria (Κομαρία) is certainly identical with Komar (Κομάρ) (*Periplus Maris Erythraei*, ch. 58), today’s Kaṇṇiyākumari or Cape Comorin, the southernmost tip of the Indian peninsula. It is interesting, although less surprising, that it was already known as a cape (ἄκρον), and also a city (πόλις).

<sup>1275</sup> Morounda (Μοροῦνδα) is, according to Marr (Marr 1985 [1958], 322–323), perhaps identical with Marantai of the Cēras (*Patirrupattu*, 90: 28) *Geog.* VII. 1. 87. However, its location is still a question of debate.

interior (Ἄιων μεσόγειος). The Aioi people were the Āy chieftains and/or the inhabitants of their chiefdom.<sup>1276</sup>

Ptolemy not only reports on the interior of the Aioi/Āy territories but mentions more than a dozen inland towns in southwestern India, including territories of Koṅkunāṭu. Thus, we see settlements 1. west of the Pseudostomos/Periyār river in the inlands of Limyrikē (Λιμυρικῆς μεσόγειοι; Ἄπο μὲν δύσεως τοῦ Ψευδοστόμου πόλεις αἴδε; *Geog.* VII. 1. 85) such as Naroulla (Νάρουλλα)/Nalloura (Νάλλουρα),<sup>1277</sup> Kouba (Κοῦβα),<sup>1278</sup> Paloura (Παλοῦρα);<sup>1279</sup> 2. between the Pseudostomos/Periyār river and the Baris/Pampā river (Μεταξὺ δὲ τοῦ Ψευδοστόμου πόλεις αἴδε; *Geog.* VII. 1. 86) settlements such as Pasagē (Πασάγη),<sup>1280</sup> Mastanour (Μαστάνουρ)/Mentanour (Μεντάνουρ),<sup>1281</sup> Kourellour (Κουρελλοῦρ)/Kourelloura (Κουρελλοῦρα),<sup>1282</sup> the rich-in-beryl Pounnata (Πουννάτα ἐν ἧ̃ Βήρυλλος),<sup>1283</sup> Aloē (Ἄλόη),<sup>1284</sup> Karoura, the royal residence of the Cēras (Κάρουρα Βασίλειον Κηροβόθρου),<sup>1285</sup> Arembour (Ἄρεμβούρ),<sup>1286</sup> Berderis (Βερδερῖς)/Bideris (Βιδερῖς),<sup>1287</sup> Pantipolis (Παντίπολις)/Pantipoleis (Παντίπολεις),<sup>1288</sup> Adarima (Ἀδάριμα),<sup>1289</sup> Koreour (Κορεοῦρ)/Koureur (Κουρεοῦρ).<sup>1290</sup> Caldwell has already noted that “it is remarkable how many of places in Southern India mentioned by Ptolemy end in ουρ or ουρα, ‘town’ [...] twenty-three such places in all”.<sup>1291</sup> It is indeed remarkable that most of the place names preserved by the above-mentioned Greek and Latin sources have clear Tamil etymology. In this respect, these Mediterranean collections of South Indian place names easily supplement the details found in Old Tamil literature. Even if

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<sup>1276</sup> *Pre-Pallavan Tamil Index*, 85–86.

<sup>1277</sup> Naroulla (Νάρουλλα)/Nalloura (Νάλλουρα): an unidentified settlement on the Malabar Coast. Perhaps the second reading is the right one, which means ‘good town’ (*nal ūr*) in Tamil.

<sup>1278</sup> Kouba (Κοῦβα): an unidentified settlement on the Malabar Coast.

<sup>1279</sup> Paloura (Παλοῦρα): an unidentified settlement on the Malabar Coast. Due to location and name similarity, it might be the same as Pallānūr, Kerala. *Barrington Atlas*, 68. Kanakasabhai, however, identifies it with Pālayūr, Kerala. Kanakasabhai 1904, 18.

<sup>1280</sup> Pasagē (Πασάγη): settlement in the Bēttigō oros (Βηπτιγῶ ὄρος)/Western Ghats. *Barrington Atlas*, 73.

<sup>1281</sup> Mastanour (Μαστάνουρ)/Mentanour (Μεντάνουρ): according to the *Barrington Atlas* (p. 73), it was a settlement in South Mysore.

<sup>1282</sup> Kourellour (Κουρελλοῦρ)/Kourelloura (Κουρελλοῦρα): an unidentified settlement on the Malabar Coast. Due to location and name similarity, it might be the same as Kaṭavallūr, Kerala. *Barrington Atlas*, 65.

<sup>1283</sup> Pounnata en hē Bēryllos (Πουννάτα ἐν ἧ̃ Βήρυλλος) can be perhaps identified with Pūññār, Kerala. Kanakasabhai 1904, 20; Turner 1989, 74.

<sup>1284</sup> Aloē (Ἄλόη) was perhaps a city around today’s Āluva, Kerala. Kanakasabhai 1904, 20.

<sup>1285</sup> Karoura (Κάρουρα) was the city called Karuvūr mentioned in the Caṅkam poems, the capital (or one of the capitals) of the early Cēra kingdom. On the problematic issue of the Cēra capitals, see: Aiyangar 1940; Marr 1985 [1958], 159–163; Rajan 1994, 100.

<sup>1286</sup> Arembour (Ἄρεμβούρ): an unidentified settlement in today’s Kerala.

<sup>1287</sup> Berderis (Βερδερῖς)/Bideris (Βιδερῖς): an unidentified settlement in today’s Kerala.

<sup>1288</sup> Pantipolis (Παντίπολις)/Pantipoleis (Παντίπολεις): an unidentified settlement in today’s Kerala.

<sup>1289</sup> Adarima (Ἀδάριμα): an unidentified settlement in today’s Kerala.

<sup>1290</sup> Koreour (Κορεοῦρ)/Koureur (Κουρεοῦρ): an unidentified settlement, perhaps south of Mysore. *Barrington Atlas*, 72.

<sup>1291</sup> Caldwell 1875, 102.

it is not possible to reliably locate all the enumerated places, and although most of them would be sought in vain in the Caṅkam literature, we see that the Cēra kingdom and its surroundings were a well-urbanised region. Therefore, dealing with these data in detail will be necessary later. Ptolemy even mentions the mountain ranges of southwestern India: north of the Cēra kingdom, on the Konkan Coast, we see the mountain called Adisathron oros (Ἀδισάθρον ὄρος; Sahyādri Hills at the Konkan Coast) where the Chabēros (Χάβηρος)/Kāviri river originated,<sup>1292</sup> while for the southern ranges of the Western Ghats he uses the name the Bētīgō (Βητιγῶ ὄρος),<sup>1293</sup> the mountain where the Pseudostomos/Periyār river, the Baris/Pampā river, and the Sōlēn (Σωλήν)/Tāmraparṇī river originated.<sup>1294</sup> According to Ptolemy, south of Bētīgō mountain to the region of the Batoi (Βατοί) people lay an area where *brāhmaṇas* were living, who were also magi (βραχμάναι μάγοι),<sup>1295</sup> which information has to be considered in the chapter on religion. The only settlement that was mentioned there is Bragmē/Brammē (Βράγμα/Βράμμη), an unidentified settlement of *brāhmaṇas* in the Cēra interior.

According to the *Periplus*, towards the southernmost end of the Malabar Coast, we find the “Dark Red Mountain” (λεγόμενον Πυρρόν ὄρος) after Bacharē,<sup>1296</sup> then the “seaboard” called Paralia (Παραλία),<sup>1297</sup> and finally Komar (Κομάρα) (Kaṇṇiyākumari or Cape Comorin, the southernmost tip of the Indian peninsula), “where there is a little settlement and a port; in it men who wish to lead a holy life for the rest of their days remain there celibate; they come there and they perform ablutions.”<sup>1298</sup> It is also believed that the goddess remained in Komar and performed ablutions, therefore women also perform the same rituals there.<sup>1299</sup> Fynes wrote a thought-provoking article on the possible parallels between the cult of Isis Paralia and Pattinī, but beyond a few seemingly haunting similarities, his article is not convincing in all respects.<sup>1300</sup> The virginity is a motif that appears by both in the stories of Isis and Pattinī,<sup>1301</sup> but this is not enough to identify the cult at Kumari with the cult of Isis or Pattinī, even so that the name *pattinī* means ‘chaste wife’ (cf. Skt. *patni*), while *kumari* means a ‘maid’, a ‘virgin’. I find it rather possible

<sup>1292</sup> Ptol., *Geog.* VII. 1. 35.

<sup>1293</sup> The name of the mountain Bētīgō is often connected to Tam. Potiyil/Potikai (today’s Agastyamala or Potiyam, Kerala). Although the two designate most probably the same, it is also possible that the Greek name reflects rather the Old Kannada *beṭṭa*, a word for ‘firmness’, ‘mountain’. *Kittel’s Kannada-English Dictionary*, 1205.

<sup>1294</sup> Ptol., *Geog.* VII. 1. 33; 34.

<sup>1295</sup> Ptol., *Geog.* VII. 1. 74.

<sup>1296</sup> Legomenon Pyrron oros (λεγόμενον Πυρρόν ὄρος): probably the unique peak with red colour near Varkkala, Kerala. Casson 1989, 297; *Barrington Atlas*, 69.

<sup>1297</sup> Paralia (Παραλία): the coastline of the historical Tiruvāṅkūr/Travancore region of Kerala. *Barrington Atlas*, 68.

<sup>1298</sup> *Periplus Maris Erythraei*, 58. Transl. by Casson (Casson 1989, 87).

<sup>1299</sup> *Periplus Maris Erythraei*, 58.

<sup>1300</sup> Fynes 1993.

<sup>1301</sup> Fynes 1993, 383–384.



that we find the cult of the goddess Korravai at Kanniyākumari, whose one name of many was Kumari.<sup>1302</sup>

Thus, we have seen the main regions and settlements preserved in Greek and Latin sources. This has to be supplemented with five other cities that were mentioned by Cosmas Indicopleustes (Κοσμάς Ἰνδικοπλεύστης) who lived in the 6<sup>th</sup> c. AD. He reported (*Cosm. Indic.* XI. 16) on a new pepper region called Male (Μαλέ), where we find five marketplaces that export (or literally ‘pour’) pepper (πέντε ἐμπόρια ἔχουσα βάλλοντα τὸ πέπερι): Parti (Πάρτι),<sup>1303</sup> Mangarouth (Μαγγαροῦθ),<sup>1304</sup> Salopatana (Σαλοπάτανα),<sup>1305</sup> Nalopatana (Ναλοπάτανα),<sup>1306</sup> Poudapatana (Πουδαπάτανα).<sup>1307</sup> According to De Romanis, Cosmas Indicopleustes proves that the direct sea routes of the 1<sup>st</sup> century AD became multi-stage routes by the 6<sup>th</sup> century AD, and the main pepper emporia were moved 200–400 kilometres north of the Kottanarichē/Κυττανᾶτῦ region to the region called Male.<sup>1308</sup> In a later stage of our analysis the description of Cosmas will support us to map places around the northern borders of the early Cēra kingdom.

What is still to come, and perhaps the most interesting to us, is the presence of an intensive commercial system on the Malabar Coast, recorded most notably in the text of *Periplus*. We learn from it that ships sailing by from the Malabar Coast (Limyrikē) accidentally dropped off on the island of Dioskouridēs (Διοσκουριδής; today’s Suqutṛā),<sup>1309</sup> or passed the winter at Moscha limēn (Μόσχα λιμὴν; perhaps today’s Khūr Rūri, Oman, see: Schoff 1912, 140–143),<sup>1310</sup> which shows some kind of seafaring activity that starts off the Malabar Coast, either of the Roman or the local traders. The 51<sup>st</sup> chapter talks about the sea voyage of the western traders to the Malabar Coast, and it states that most of the western ships continued to travel until Aigialos (Αἰγιαλός), the Strand (today’s Palk Strait). The 56<sup>th</sup> chapter talks about the precious stones caught around the islands at the Malabar Coast (possibly the Lakṣadvīp Islands), and the 57<sup>th</sup> chapter mentions the ships arriving from the western countries. The 60<sup>th</sup> chapter talks about the strait called Αἰγιαλός and perhaps about the ports of trade, Kamara

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<sup>1302</sup> *Cilappatikāram*, II. 12. 67.

<sup>1303</sup> Parti (Πάρτι): a settlement on the Konkan Coast; perhaps the Bārahakanyāpura/Barakanur/Fāknūr of the Arab geographers, or very close to it. De Romanis 2020, 96.

<sup>1304</sup> Mangarouth (Μαγγαροῦθ): perhaps today’s Maṅgaḷūru (Karnataka). De Romanis 2020, 96.

<sup>1305</sup> Salopatana (Σαλοπάτανα): an unidentified settlement on the Malabar Coast that bears a Tamil name of a port town (*paṭṭinam/paṭṭanam*).

<sup>1306</sup> Nalopatana (Ναλοπάτανα): an unidentified settlement on the Malabar Coast that bears a Tamil name of a port town (*paṭṭinam/paṭṭanam*).

<sup>1307</sup> Poudapatana (Πουδαπάτανα) was perhaps the same as “Budfattan” of Abraham Ben Jiyū, today’s Vaḷapaṭṭanam, Kerala. De Romanis 2020, 96.

<sup>1308</sup> De Romanis 2020, 34.

<sup>1309</sup> *Periplus Maris Erythraei*, 31.

<sup>1310</sup> *Periplus Maris Erythraei*, 32.

(Καμάρα),<sup>1311</sup> Podoukē (Ποδούκη),<sup>1312</sup> and Sōpatma (Σωπάτμα),<sup>1313</sup> located already on the Coromandel (< Tam. *cōlamanṭala*) Coast, where ships from the Bay of Bengal and the Malabar Coast (Limyrikē) arrive. Here local ships anchor, namely the *sangara* (σάνγαρα; perhaps < Skt. *saṃghāṭa*)<sup>1314</sup>, which are huge dugout canoes, and the *kolandiophōnta* (κολανδίοφωντα; perhaps derivable from the Chinese ship-name, *k'un-lun po*)<sup>1315</sup> which are enormous vessels and sail to Chrysē (Χρυσή)<sup>1316</sup> and the Ganges region on the north. The same chapter records that these ports have “a market [...] for all the [Western] trade goods imported by Limyrikê, and [...] there come to them all year round both the cash originating from Egypt and most kinds of all the goods originating from Limyrikê and supplied along this coast”.<sup>1317</sup> The 64<sup>th</sup> chapter informs us about China, Thina (Θίνα) in Greek, “from which silk floss, yarn and cloth are shipped by via Bactria to Barygaza and via Ganges River back to Limyrikê”.<sup>1318</sup> The *Periplus* discusses the commodities that changed hands on the Malabar Coast during its time, and gives us an exhaustive catalogue of products: the western ships imported a great amount of money, clothing, textiles, sulphide of antimony, coral, raw glass, copper, tin, lead, a limited quantity of wine, realgar, orpiment, grain (only for the seafaring merchants); while they exported pepper, malabathron, pearls, ivory, Chinese cloth (most probably silk), Gangetic nard, gems, diamonds, and tortoise shell. The *Muziris Papyrus* (P. Vindob. G 40822), a Greek papyrus from the 2<sup>nd</sup> c. AD, which records a contract between a merchant and a financier and also the cargo of the ship called Hermapollon (Ἑρμαπόλλων), confirms but does not add more items to this list.<sup>1319</sup>

We recently mentioned some of the ancient ports of the Coromandel Coast, which gives us an opportunity to provide further details about other settlements of the Cōla and Pāṇṭiya kingdoms in order to get a more or less complete picture of the Mediterranean scholarship on the ancient South Indian countries. Thus we call Ptolemy’s work again for help. Leaving Komaria, the last station of the Aioi people, we arrive at the Kolchikos Gulf (κόλπος

<sup>1311</sup> Kamara (Καμάρα): perhaps the same as Chabēris emporion (Χαβηρίς ἐμπόριον) of Ptolemy (*Geog.* VII. 1. 13), identical with Kāvērippaṭṭaṇam or Pukār on the Coromandel Coast.

<sup>1312</sup> Podoukē (Ποδούκη): It is tempting to identify this place with Putuccēri/Pondichéry, however; *putu* only means ‘new’ in Tamil, and *cēri* means ‘town’, which name rather reflects the establishment of modern Pondichéry in 1674 by the French East India Company (Compagnie française pour le commerce des Indes orientales). The ancient Podoukē has to be located somewhere close to modern Putuccēri, although this is not due to name similarity but due to the excavations at Arikkamētu that proved the antiquity of the site.

<sup>1313</sup> Sōpatma’s (Σωπάτμα) identification is unsure; it could have been somewhere around modern days’ Cennai. Casson 1989, 229.

<sup>1314</sup> Casson 1989, 229.

<sup>1315</sup> Casson 1989, 230; Christie 1957, 351.

<sup>1316</sup> Chrysē (Χρυσή) was either Burma, the Malay peninsula, or Sumatra. Casson 1989, 235–236.

<sup>1317</sup> *Periplus Maris Erythraei*, 58. Transl. by Casson (Casson 1989, 89).

<sup>1318</sup> *Periplus Maris Erythraei*, 60. Transl. by Casson (Casson 1989, 89).

<sup>1319</sup> De Romanis 2020, 14–23.

Κολχικός)<sup>1320</sup> of the people called Kareoi (Κάρεοι),<sup>1321</sup> where that time pearl fishing (κολύμβησις πινικοῦ) was in fashion, then we see places such as Sōsikourei/Mōsikouri (Σωσίκουρει/Μωσίκουρι),<sup>1322</sup> Kolchoi emporion (Κόλχοι ἐμπόριον),<sup>1323</sup> and the river mouth of the Sōlēn (Σωλήνης ποταμοῦ ἐκβολαί).<sup>1324</sup> The inland towns of this region<sup>1325</sup> were Mendēla (Μένδηλα),<sup>1326</sup> Sēlour/Lēlour (Σηλοῦρ/Ληλοῦρ),<sup>1327</sup> Tittoua (Τιττούα),<sup>1328</sup> and Mantittour/Mantitour (Μαντιττούρ/Μαντιτούρ).<sup>1329</sup> If we go further on the seashore, we come to the land of the Pāñiyas (Πανδίωνος χώρα) in the Argarikos Gulf (κόλπος Ἀργαρικός)<sup>1330</sup> where the cape called Kory or Kalligikon (Κῶρυ ἄκρον τὸ καὶ Καλλιγικόν)<sup>1331</sup> was located; here Argarou polis (Ἀργάρου πόλις)<sup>1332</sup> and Salour/Sēlour emporion (Σαλοῦρ/Σηλοῦρ ἐμπόριον)<sup>1333</sup> were the two settlements.<sup>1334</sup> The inland towns of this region<sup>1335</sup> were Tainour (Ταινούρ),<sup>1336</sup> Perinkari (Περίνκαρι),<sup>1337</sup> Korindiour (Κορινδιούρ),<sup>1338</sup> Tangala (Τάνγαλα),<sup>1339</sup> and the famous royal residence of the Pāñiyas at Maturai/Modoura (Μόδουρα βασιλείον Πανδίωνος). After that, we see the land of the people called Batoi (Βατοί)<sup>1340</sup> on the Coromandel Coast where three settlements, the capital called Nigama/Nisamma (Νίγαμα/Νίσαμμα μητρόπολις),<sup>1341</sup> Thelcheir (Θελχείρ)/Thellyr (Θέλλυρ),<sup>1342</sup> and the city called Kouroula (Κούρουλα πόλις)<sup>1343</sup>

<sup>1320</sup> Kolchikos Gulf (κόλπος Κολχικός) is, no doubt, the Gulf of Mannar (Vogel 1952, 230) which is still famous for its pearl oysters.

<sup>1321</sup> Kareoi (Κάρεοι): fishing people on Gulf of Mannar, might be equal to the ones called *paratavar* (*Tamil Lexicon*, 2496). Kanakasabhai adds to this that the Tamil *\*karaiyar* (seashore-they, hon. pl.) must be the word behind the Greek 'Kareoi'. Kanakasabhai 1904, 22.

<sup>1322</sup> Sōsikourei/Mōsikouri (Σωσίκουρει/Μωσίκουρι): unidentified place name at the Gulf of Mannar; it might contain the Tamil word *karai* 'seashore'.

<sup>1323</sup> Kolchoi emporion (Κόλχοι ἐμπόριον): today's Korikai, Tamil Nadu. Cf. *Periplus Maris Erythraei*, 59.

<sup>1324</sup> Ptol., *Geog.* VII. 1. 10.

<sup>1325</sup> Ptol., *Geog.* VII. 1. 88.

<sup>1326</sup> Mendēla (Μένδηλα): unidentified inland settlement in Tamil Nadu. *Barrington Atlas*, 72.

<sup>1327</sup> Sēlour/Lēlour (Σηλοῦρ/Ληλοῦρ): unidentified inland settlement in Tamil Nadu. *Barrington Atlas*, 73.

<sup>1328</sup> Tittoua (Τιττούα): unidentified inland settlement in Tamil Nadu. *Barrington Atlas*, 74.

<sup>1329</sup> Mantittour/Mantitour (Μαντιττούρ/Μαντιτούρ): inland settlement in Tamil Nadu; South Madurai (?). *Barrington Atlas*, 72.

<sup>1330</sup> Argarikos Gulf (κόλπος Ἀργαρικός): Palk Strait. *A historical atlas of South Asia*, 24a; 359.

<sup>1331</sup> The cape called Kory or Kalligikon (Κῶρυ ἄκρον τὸ καὶ Καλλιγικόν): perhaps Point Callimere (Καλλιμέτη) with Kōṭiyakkarai, Tamil Nadu. Caldwell 1875, 100; *Barrington Atlas*, 62.

<sup>1332</sup> Argarou polis (Ἀργάρου πόλις): inland city in the Pāñiya kingdom. *Barrington Atlas*, 61. Cf. *Periplus Maris Erythraei*, 59.

<sup>1333</sup> Salour/Sēlour emporion (Σαλοῦρ/Σηλοῦρ ἐμπόριον): perhaps Cevalūr, Tamil Nadu. Kanakasabhai 1904, 22–23.

<sup>1334</sup> Ptol., *Geog.* VII. 1. 11.

<sup>1335</sup> Ptol., *Geog.* VII. 1. 89.

<sup>1336</sup> Tainour (Ταινούρ): Tēñūr, Tamil Nadu. Kanakasabhai 1904, 22–23.

<sup>1337</sup> Perinkari (Περίνκαρι): unidentified inland settlement in Tamil Nadu. „Perungari”? *Barrington Atlas*, 68.

<sup>1338</sup> Korindiour (Κορινδιούρ): unidentified inland settlement in Tamil Nadu. *Barrington Atlas*, 72.

<sup>1339</sup> Tangala (Τάνγαλα): perhaps today's Tañkaḷaccēri, Tamil Nadu. *Barrington Atlas*, 70.

<sup>1340</sup> According to Kanakasabhai, the land of the Vēṭṭuvar in Paññināṭu. Kanakasabhai 1904, 24.

<sup>1341</sup> Nigama/Nisamma (Νίγαμα/Νίσαμμα μητρόπολις): usually identified with Nāgapattinam, although it might reflect the Skt. word *nigama* for 'marketplace'.

<sup>1342</sup> Thelcheir/Thellyr (Θελχείρ/Θέλλυρ): unidentified settlement on the Coromandel Coast.

<sup>1343</sup> Kouroula (Κούρουλα πόλις): unidentified, might be Kāraikāl (?), Tamil Nadu. *Barrington Atlas*, 65.

could have been found.<sup>1344</sup> The inland towns of this region<sup>1345</sup> were Kalindoia (Καλίνδοια),<sup>1346</sup> Bata (Βάτα),<sup>1347</sup> and Tallara (Τάλλαρα).<sup>1348</sup> The next region on the Coromandel Coast was Paralia Sōringōn (Παραλία Σωριγγών), the “Seabord of the Cōlas”, with Chabēris emporion (Χαβηρίς ἐμπόριον),<sup>1349</sup> the river mouth of the Chabēris (Χαβήρου ποταμοῦ ἐκβολαί),<sup>1350</sup> and Soboura/Souboura emporion (Σόβουρα/Σουβούρα ἐμπόριον)<sup>1351</sup> as its settlements.<sup>1352</sup> In the interior of Paralia Sōringōn,<sup>1353</sup> we find the following towns: Kaliour (Καλίουρ),<sup>1354</sup> Tennagora (Τενναγόρα),<sup>1355</sup> Eikour (Εἰκούρ),<sup>1356</sup> the royal residence of the Cōlas at Orthoura (Ὀρθουρα βασιλειον Σωρνάτος),<sup>1357</sup> Berē (Βέρη),<sup>1358</sup> Abour (Ἄβουρ),<sup>1359</sup> Karmara (Κάρμαρα),<sup>1360</sup> and Magour (Μαγούρ).<sup>1361</sup> The last region on the Coromandel Coast was the land of the people called Arouarnoi (Ἀρουάρνοι),<sup>1362</sup> where Pōdoukē/Podoukē emporion (Πωδούκη/Ποδούκη ἐμπόριον),<sup>1363</sup> Melangē emporion (Μελαγγή ἐμπόριον),<sup>1364</sup> the river mouth of the Tynas/Tynnas (Τύνα/Τύννα ποταμοῦ ἐκβολαί),<sup>1365</sup> Kottis (Κόττις),<sup>1366</sup> and Maliarpha emporion (Μαλιάρφα ἐμπόριον)<sup>1367</sup> were the settlements mentioned by Ptolemy.<sup>1368</sup>

The settlements in this chapter show a specific hierarchy. We have seen settlements which were villages (κώμη; 2 in number), ports of trade (ἐμπόριον; 13 in number), cities (πόλις; 4 in number), capital cities (μητρόπολις; 2 in number), and royal residences (βασιλειον; 4 in

<sup>1344</sup> Ptol., *Geog.* VII. 1. 12.

<sup>1345</sup> Ptol., *Geog.* VII. 1. 90.

<sup>1346</sup> Kalindoia (Καλίνδοια): Periyakalantai, Tamil Nadu. *Barrington Atlas*, 64.

<sup>1347</sup> Bata (Βάτα): Putukkōṭṭai (?), Tamil Nadu. *Barrington Atlas*, 62.

<sup>1348</sup> Tallara (Τάλλαρα): unidentified inland settlement in Tamil Nadu. *Barrington Atlas*, 74.

<sup>1349</sup> Chabēris emporion (Χαβηρίς ἐμπόριον): perhaps the same as Kamara (Καμάρα; *Periplus Maris Erythraei*, 60); identical with Kāvērippaṭṭanam or Pukār on the Coromandel Coast.

<sup>1350</sup> The river mouth of the Chabēris (Χαβήρου ποταμοῦ ἐκβολαί):

<sup>1351</sup> Soboura/Souboura emporion (Σόβουρα/Σουβούρα ἐμπόριον)

<sup>1352</sup> Ptol., *Geog.* VII. 1. 13.

<sup>1353</sup> Ptol., *Geog.* VII. 1. 91.

<sup>1354</sup> Kaliour (Καλίουρ): might be the same as Uṛaiyūr (?), Tiruccirāppalli, Tamil Nadu. *Barrington Atlas*, 64.

<sup>1355</sup> Tennagora (Τενναγόρα): perhaps today’s Tiruccenkōṭu, Tamil Nadu. *Barrington Atlas*, 70.

<sup>1356</sup> Eikour (Εἰκούρ): unidentified settlement in Tamil Nadu. *Barrington Atlas*, 71.

<sup>1357</sup> The royal residence of the Cōlas at Orthoura (Ὀρθουρα βασιλειον Σωρνάτος) was certainly the capital in today’s Uṛaiyūr, Tiruccirāppalli, Tamil Nadu. Arkatos (Ἄρκατοῦ βασιλειον Σώρα; Ptol., *Geog.* VII. 1. 68; perhaps today’s Ārkāṭu, Tamil Nadu), between the Bēttigō and the Adisathron mountains, might have been another royal residence of the same dynasty, although the Greek text mentions *nomads* called Sōrai (Σῶραι νομάδες) in the region.

<sup>1358</sup> Berē (Βέρη): unidentified settlement in Tamil Nadu. *Barrington Atlas*, 71.

<sup>1359</sup> Abour (Ἄβουρ): either Valuvūr or Āmpūr, Tamil Nadu. *Barrington Atlas*, 60.

<sup>1360</sup> Karmara (Κάρμαρα), according to Kanakasabhai, was perhaps today’s Tiruvārūr. *Barrington Atlas*, 65.

<sup>1361</sup> Magour (Μαγούρ): unidentified settlement in Tamil Nadu.

<sup>1362</sup> Arouarnoi (Ἀρουάρνοι): people on Coromandel Coast. Perhaps it covers the Aruvānāṭu region of Tamilakam. *Tamil Lexicon*, 135.

<sup>1363</sup> Pōdoukē/Podoukē emporion (Πωδούκη/Ποδούκη ἐμπόριον).

<sup>1364</sup> Melangē emporion (Μελαγγή ἐμπόριον): identified as “Krishnapattinam” by Moti Chandra; is that the same as Kṛṣṇapaṭṭanam, Andhra Pradesh? Chandra 1977, 122.

<sup>1365</sup> Tynas/Tynnas (Τύνα/Τύννα ποταμοῦ ἐκβολαί): perhaps today’s Peṇṇār river.

<sup>1366</sup> Kottis (Κόττις): Kōṭṭaippaṭṭinam (?), Tamil Nadu. Berthelot 1930, 333.

<sup>1367</sup> Maliarpha emporion (Μαλιάρφα ἐμπόριον): unidentified settlement in Tamil Nadu. *Barrington Atlas*, 72.

<sup>1368</sup> Ptol., *Geog.* VII. 1. 14.

number). The rest of them were ‘uncategorised’ by the sources. We have also seen that both of the villages (Tyndis and Bacharē) were at the same time ports of trade; Tyndis, however, was instead a *polis*, according to Ptolemy. Determining what a South Asian *polis* could be is not an easy task. The word *polis* has four primary senses in classical antiquity: 1. stronghold or citadel, 2. nucleated settlement, 3. country or territory, and 4. political community.<sup>1369</sup> I believe that in all those cases when the Mediterranean authors reported on South Indian *poleis*, they certainly meant ‘nucleated settlements’. At the same time, it is unlikely that they were writing about actual political communities. Had it been so, they would have somehow reported on the peculiarities of the political organisations found in the Tamil kingdoms. It is also questionable whether we can talk about strongholds or fortified settlements in the case of South Indian *poleis*. We discussed the Tamil literary references to forts and fortified places elsewhere, and we will soon be analysing the few fortified ports of trade that were different from the ones called *poleis*. Thus, it is only necessary to emphasise at this point that even if we see fortified places among the above-mentioned *poleis*, it is not possible to prove that in such cases, the *fortification* would have been relevant for the authors in choosing their Greek definition. Another interesting fact is that “almost all attested *emporion* of the Classical period were, in fact, *poleis* that possessed an *emporion*”,<sup>1370</sup> which might also be the case in South India, as we will see e.g. in the case of Muziris, which was merely a port of trade for the Mediterranean authors. Still, it was also a fortified city of the Cēra king for the Tamil authors. Regarding the *metropoleis*, we see rather provincial centres, while in the cases of *basileia*, we find royal capitals already known from the Caṅkam literary corpus. The thirteen emporia in South India showed a heightened interest in Indian commodities and increasing trade volume.

It is necessary to mention the Sanskrit texts that refer to Cēra territories and particularly the Western Ghats in the early centuries: the *Mahābhārata*, the various earlier or later *Purāṇas*, and Kālidāsa’s works. In these texts Malaya appears as one of the seven principal mountains (*kulaparvata*), from the top of which the sea could be seen.<sup>1371</sup> Malaya can be identified with the ranges of the Western Ghats from the Nīlgiris hills (Durdura) to Kaṅṅiyākumari. The southern parts were known as the western side of Malaya. We must emphasise that in sources such as the *Mahābhārata*, Malaya was associated with the Pāṅṅiya kings (cf. the term *malayēsvara*) at the Tāmraparṅi river.<sup>1372</sup> This could show the situation on the southeastern sides of the mountain and the regions at Nelkynda, which were, as we have seen, at certain times in Pāṅṅiya hands.

<sup>1369</sup> Hansen–Nielsen 2004, 39.

<sup>1370</sup> Hansen–Nielsen 2004, 41.

<sup>1371</sup> *Kūrmapurāṇa* I. 47. 23. mentioned by *Geographical Dictionary*, 213.

<sup>1372</sup> *Geographical Dictionary*, 213.

The *Raghuvaṃśa* of Kālidāsa records that it was on the Kāverī, where cardamom, sandalwood, and pepper shrubs grew.<sup>1373</sup> Other names of the mountain were Śrīkhaṇḍādrī and Candanādrī. Száler mentions that in the *Kāvyaṃmāṃsā*, four distinct places of Malaya are described: 1. Malaya, which is the same as Kālidāsa's, 2. Malaya is the seat of Agastya and the source of Tāmaparṇī (Akattiyamalai), 3. Malaya, perhaps the same as the Sahya Mountain, and 4. Malaya, which is situated in Laṅkā.<sup>1374</sup> These North Indian sources, taken as a whole, do not betray much local knowledge, but they know local commodities, which is remarkable in economic history. They also confirm that we have to reckon with the threatening presence of the Pāṇṭiyas somewhere around and in the Western Ghats. However, as far as these sources do not seem to know much about South Indian proper names, they cannot help to refine our data.

In the previous pages, I have examined the Greek and Latin sources to introduce the Mediterranean scholarship on the Malabar Coast and somewhat represent its hinterlands and trading system during the first centuries AD. The extraordinary knowledge of the Mediterranean authors on South India is astonishing. Still, it should be emphasised that they could only collect such a large amount of data due to the high volume of Indo-Mediterranean trade. We must conclude that these data are the individual merits of scholars and the challenging work experience of many centuries of geographers, travellers, and merchants. The data of these authors could provide us with a “skeleton” of the (economic) geography and the urbanised network of the Cēra kingdom. However, it must still be “vivified” by contemporary Indian sources, first of all, the Caṅkam literary works. Thus, the forthcoming analysis in this chapter will be conducted to examine the interactive Cēra kingdom in the middle of a network of contacts, to see the Cēra contribution to seafaring and maritime trade, to discover harbours and emporia which appeared in both the Mediterranean and the Tamil sources, to map the most important trade routes of the Cēra kingdom, and finally to analyse and evaluate the Indo-Roman trade from a Cēra point of view together with the need to protect trade.

### ***Shipping and seafaring***

When Strabo travelled to Egypt (26–24 BC), he learned that when Caius Aelius Gallus was the *praefectus Aegypti*, 120 ships sailed yearly to India from Myos Hormos on the Red Sea.<sup>1375</sup> In another passage, he also reported on huge maritime fleets travelling between Africa, India

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<sup>1373</sup> *Raghuvaṃśa*, IV. 45–51.

<sup>1374</sup> Száler 2019, 49.

<sup>1375</sup> Strabo, *Geogr.* II. 5. 12.

and the Red Sea ports.<sup>1376</sup> Seeing the number of ships arrive year by year to the shores of southern India, which number indeed increased in the centuries after Strabo, I feel necessary to examine how Old Tamil literature reflected on the ships of foreigners and the ships of ancient Tamils, and to what extent did the Tamils participate in the operation of the Indian Ocean trade?

Tamil history has been connected to the ocean from the beginning. Let's talk about the Cēra kingdom on the Malabar Coast. We feel the statements of Malekandathil valid, who says that the “process of tapping the resources of the sea, a typical professional culture linked with fishing, salt-panning or a sea-borne trade, a food culture with rich ingredients of sea species, a religious culture where the sea becomes the central component of devotional practices and rituals, a social networking, where bonds established by collective sea-faring evolved over the years, were made to become the basic features of the coastal societies of India [...]”.<sup>1377</sup> The ocean connected worlds and became a space for cultural and commercial interactions. Because of the geographical location of southern India, where the maritime trade routes met, it soon became a strategic hub for the eastern trade of Rome due to its busy ports and the demand for locally produced goods and the available Southeast Asian commodities, which position contributed to the economic development of the Tamil kingdoms.

We read in the *Akanānūru* that gloriously crafted, *yavaṇar*-driven (*tanta*) good vessels came with gold (*pon*) and returned with pepper (*kar*).<sup>1378</sup> At the same time, the *Puranānūru* talks about the good vessels of the *yavaṇar*, which bring cool and fragrant “wine” (*taṇ kamal tēral*), which were consumed by the Tamil elite.<sup>1379</sup> Western ships arriving in southern India were of great interest in the Tamil countries, and this may have been the inspiration for the Alakankulam graffiti, on which, according to Casson, a three-master Roman sailing ship can be seen from the Imperial Roman period (1–3 c. AD), portrayed by an “unknown Tamil artist”.<sup>1380</sup> The *Perumpāṇāruppaṭai* talks about the Greek (*yavaṇar*) “goose lamps” (*ōtima viḷakku*) of the ships in the harbour of Nīrpeyaṛru, which most probably referred to the ornamental stern called *aplustre* (Gr. ἄφλαστον), the highest curved part of the poop, which often looked like a gooseneck, and was also named after it (χηνίσκος). The “Greeks” (*yavaṇar*) vessels with rare price (*aruwilai nankalam*)

<sup>1376</sup> Strabo, *Geogr.* XVII. 1. 13.

<sup>1377</sup> Malekandathil 2010, xii.

<sup>1378</sup> ‘... cēralar/culliyam pēriyāṛru veṇ nurai kalaṅka/yavaṇar tanta viṇai māṇ nankalam/ponṇoṭu vantu kariyoṭu peyarum/vaḷam kelu muciri āṛpp’ ela vaḷai’. *Akanānūru*, 149: 7–11.

<sup>1379</sup> ‘yavaṇar nankalam tanta taṇ kamal tēral/pon cey puṇai kalattu ēnti nāḷum/ol toṭi makaḷir maṭuppa makil ciraṇtu/āṅku iṇitu oḷukumati oṅku vāḷ māra’. *Puranānūru*, 56: 18–21.

<sup>1380</sup> Mahadevan 2003, 155–156.

appear in the II. *patikam* of the *Patirruppattu*, although in that case, we have to keep in mind that the usage of the Tamil word *kalam* is in this sense, precisely the same as that of the English word ‘vessel’, with an ambiguous meaning that could mean either a ‘ship’ or a ‘hollow utensil’, but also means ‘ornament’ in many cases.<sup>1381</sup> The Roman ships involved in South Indian trade were minimum of 75 tons, but most of them must have been freighters of 500 tons because huge spaces were needed for the ship’s crew (ναυκλήριον) to whom food was also delivered.<sup>1382</sup> McLaughlin adds in his notes<sup>1383</sup> that the wreckage of the 33-meter-long Quseir shipwreck suggests a type of 300 tons, which, according to *Periplus* (ch. 57), was a smaller type during that period. There were undoubtedly wooden cabins and compartments on the ships for the crew, who, using the power of the monsoon winds, arrived at and departed from India amid extreme weather conditions.<sup>1384</sup> Pliny the Elder (*Naturalis Historia*, VI. 26. 101) learned about archers on the deck of ships, while Philostratos (*Vita Apollonii* 3. 35) reports on detachments of armed men on the merchant ships in order to help the ships go through the regions that pirates threatened. The ships involved in the eastern trade of Rome had enlarged mainsails to make good use of the power of the monsoon winds,<sup>1385</sup> on which perhaps Greco-Roman mythological images had been painted if the Torlonia relief’s<sup>1386</sup> depiction is accurate and if its artist did not just want to fill the space available. However, Lucian (*Ploion ē Erychai*, 5) also mentioned the ornaments of the ships, including paintings and painted topsail. After all, what can be said is that large merchant ships were used in South Indian trade, with a large number of “Greek” (mostly Egyptian Greek and Syrian) merchants and armed guards arriving in the territories of South India every year. The size of the ships may have been a marvel to the Indians, and the arrival of the merchant fleet may have been a monumental attraction to the Tamil population. According to Pliny the Elder (*Naturalis Historia*, VI. 26. 104; 106), the sea voyage from the Red Sea to the Cēra kingdom took 70 days; the merchant ships sailed out around July from the Red Sea ports and returned from India around December or the beginning of January, so that year by year, several thousand people stayed at least for a few months as being the guests of the South Indian rulers.

Thus, we have learned about the ships of the Roman Empire, but we have not mentioned the Tamil ships yet. Interestingly, the Old Tamil sources are rather laconic on this subject. The earliest anthologies usually refer to more minor types of vessels, such as *pakri*, *ōtam*,

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<sup>1381</sup> *Tamil Lexicon*, 778.

<sup>1382</sup> McLaughlin 2010, 36.

<sup>1383</sup> McLaughlin 2010, 188. footnote 107.

<sup>1384</sup> McLaughlin 2010, 37.

<sup>1385</sup> McLaughlin 2010, 39.

<sup>1386</sup> McLaughlin 2010,



*timil*, *paṭaku*, *puṇai*, and *ampi*, coracle-, raft-, catamaran-, and boat-like vessels. The Tamil word *marakkalam* which denotes larger ships appears only in later texts;<sup>1387</sup> however, the word *kalam* (“vessel”) is used in the ancient Caṅkam poems, and it certainly meant seafaring vessels in several attestations.<sup>1388</sup> This term, as one of the main words for ‘seagoing vessel’, was used, as we have seen before, in the cases of the *yavaṇa* ships. Another word, *nāvāy*, is attested eleven times in the Caṅkam poems.<sup>1389</sup> It is of Indo-European origin (prob. < Skt. *nau* or Pers. *nāv*), and it might refer either to Tamil ships which had an Indo-European name,<sup>1390</sup> non-Tamil (Indian or Persian) ships sailing from the northern coasts, or a ship type which probably reflects “northern” knowledge in both its name and technology. However, since both the Greek (*ναῦς*) and Latin (*navis*) words are also etymologically very close to *nāvāy*, it cannot be entirely excluded that these passages referred to “Greek” ships. The third word, which was used to denote larger ships in the Caṅkam literature, is *vaṅkam*, attested 8 times in the texts plus once in the oblique case (*vaṅkattu*).<sup>1391</sup> The Tamil Lexicon gives a possible etymology of *vaṅkam* as Skt. *vahya* ‘vehicle’, which is more than doubtful.<sup>1392</sup> Gurukkal is of the opinion that the ships called *vaṅkam* seem to be the vessels of Vaṅga (Bengal), probably the ones called *kolandiophōnta* in the *Periplus Maris Erythraei*.<sup>1393</sup> Since we do not know the word’s etymology, whether Indo-Aryan, Austro-Asiatic, or Dravidian, these possibilities must be rejected. Even if Gurukkal was right concerning the etymology, the mere fact that a ship’s name is derived from the word ‘Vaṅga’ does not mean that it is used in the Bay of Bengal, just as the catamaran (< Tam. *kaṭṭa maram* “tied wood”) is not used exclusively by Tamils. The 189<sup>th</sup> poem of the *Narriṇai* could also support Gurukkal’s opinion, in which we read about a *kaṅkai vaṅkam* “ship of the Gaṅgā/Ganges” in Line 5; however, the poet instead used these words because of the poetic figure. In any case, it is clear from the sources that *vaṅkams* were sailing on the Coromandel Coast (e.g. *Maturaikkāñci*, 536), but that does not mean that they were not in use elsewhere, as it is attested in the *Patirruppattu*, the Cēra anthology, which has a geographical horizon that covers primarily the Malabar Coast and Koṅkunāṭu. We know from other attestations that *vaṅkam* was a huge seagoing vessel in ancient

<sup>1387</sup> *Tamil Ilakkiyaṭ Pēraḱarāṭi*, 1909.

<sup>1388</sup> It is not an easy task to distinguish the passages where *kalam* had been used as ‘jewel/ornament’, ‘pot’ from the ones that meant ‘ships’, as in most cases, they could mean both. Lehmann–Malten 2007, 140. Although *kalam* means most frequently ‘jewel/ornament’, the meaning as ‘ship’ is clearly attested in passages such as *Kuṛuntokai* 240: 6.

<sup>1389</sup> *Akaṇāṇūru*, 110: 18; *Narriṇai*, 295: 6; *Paṭṭinappālai*, 174; *Paripāṭal*, 10: 39; *Puraṇāṇūru*, 13: 5; 66:1; 126: 15; *Perumpāṇāruppāṭai*, 321; *Maturaikkāñci*, 83; 321; 379.

<sup>1390</sup> See, e.g.

<sup>1391</sup> *Akaṇāṇūru*, 255: 1; *Kalittokai*, 92: 47; *Narriṇai*, 189: 5; 258: 9 (obl. *vaṅkattu*); *Patirruppattu*, 52: 4; *Paripāṭal*, 20: 16; *Puraṇāṇūru*, 368: 9; 400: 20; *Maturaikkāñci*, 536.

<sup>1392</sup> *Tamil Lexicon*, 3452.

<sup>1393</sup> Gurukkal 2016, 197.

South India with sail (*itai*) and mast (*kūmpu*). Different meanings of *vaṅkam*, such as ‘tin’, ‘cotton’, ‘eggplant’, ‘Bengal’ and so forth,<sup>1394</sup> occur only in later texts dated after the Caṅkam literature. The last word that sometimes denoted ‘ship’ is *maram*, the Tamil word for ‘wood’, although in those cases the poets might talk about sea-going rafts and catamarans rather than sailing vessels.

1395

The question arises as to whether ancient Tamils sailed the high seas. Suppose we mean that they sailed with their ships and their crew in the open waters of the Indian Ocean to South Arabia, Egypt, or Africa. In that case, the answer is, agreeing with Gurukkal and De Romanis,<sup>1396</sup> probably no. However, we have a few pieces of evidence from Tamil sources suggesting that some Tamil rulers could cope with the waves. Cōlaṅ Karikāl Peruvaḷattāṅ, for example, was “the descendent of strong men who ruled [by means of] the action of the wind, after [they] had driven ships of the vast dark ocean”.<sup>1397</sup> Gurukkal is right that this does not necessarily mean the capability of utilising the seasonal winds and overseas voyages.<sup>1398</sup> However, it might mean that some Tamil rulers were engaged in coastal shipping. Gurukkal discusses another passage of the *Puraṅāṅūru*, in which we read the following sentence: “... we are similar to [those] other vessels that do not go past that route, where the gold-bringing ships of the western sea [which belongs to] Vāṅavaṅ with enraged army, were driven.”<sup>1399</sup> In conclusion, again, Gurukkal is right,<sup>1400</sup> because here what we see is the Cēra king, to whom the western sea (*kuṭa kaṭal*) belongs, where there are gold-bringing ships (probably not of the Cēras). However, this poet interestingly records a ban suffered by some ships that could not enter the waters under the sovereignty of the Cēra kings. Nevertheless, the following excerpt seemed to have escaped the attention of Gurukkal, who, although he mentioned it in a footnote,<sup>1401</sup> did not appreciate its significance:

The lover (*kāṭalar*) is separated [because of his] manly duty/work, while the captain (*nīkāṅ*) departs, having known the side with bright flames of the storied [light]houses (*māṭam*), [towards] the vast port (*turai*) with firm sand that towers [like] peaks, while

<sup>1394</sup> *Tamil Lexicon*, 3452.

<sup>1395</sup> For example, see: *Patirruppattu*, 76: 4; *Narriṅai*, 30: 8.

<sup>1396</sup> Gurukkal 2016, ; De Romanis 2020, 115

<sup>1397</sup> ‘*naḷi irum munnīr nāvāy oṭṭi/vali tolil āṅṭa uravōṅ maruka*’. *Puraṅāṅūru* 66: 1–2. The interpretation of Gurukkal seems to be a bit far from the exact meaning of the words. Gurukkal 2016, 86.

<sup>1398</sup> Gurukkal 2016, 86.

<sup>1399</sup> ‘*ciṅam miku tāṅai vāṅavaṅ kuṭa kaṭal/polan taru nāvāy oṭṭiya avvali pīra kalam celkalāṅaiyēm ...*’ *Puraṅāṅūru* 126: 14–16. Here *celkalāṅaiyēm* can be analysed as a negative peyareccam with a special sandhi in which the final ‘a’ retains (*Index of Puraṅāṅūru*, 452) + pronominal noun in denominative function (*anaiyēm*).

<sup>1400</sup> Gurukkal 2016, 87.

<sup>1401</sup> Gurukkal 2016, 55. footnote 75.

the wind with the nature of moving fast (*vaṅkūl*) drives [his ship] without getting lazy (*acaiv' inru*) either day or night and the ship (*vaṅkam*) which is fearful as when the earth rises,<sup>1402</sup> cuts through the open waters (*nīr itai*) of the huge sea with flesh-reeking waves.<sup>1403</sup>

It possibly shows an actual or fictitious story of a South Indian man who decides to leave his lover for a shorter or longer period for maritime trade or other business on the other shores of the sea. Of course, a port full of sand can be imagined anywhere on the map, but it is also possible, considering the long day and night travel, that we are dealing with a brief schematic description of South Arabian or Red Sea ports.<sup>1404</sup> We thus see the maritime trade from a closer perspective: the tiresome travel on the open seas, the Tamils who managed to get on the deck, and the actual lighthouses, which mean a surprisingly modern infrastructure at the early Tamil harbours.

In another poem of the *Narriṇai*, we see the many kinds of goods (*paṇṇiyam* < Skt. *panya*) “that had come, when the wind brought [them] from many different lands”<sup>1405</sup>. Another poem talks about a shipwreck when we see “a plank grabbed by many, since they fell, agitated because [their] wooden [ship] had been turned upside down in the sea.”<sup>1406</sup> In the *Kalittokai*, we see again “those whose manly work had been destroyed by the wind seizing the ships on the extensive dark ocean”.<sup>1407</sup> The *Akanānūru*'s 152<sup>nd</sup> poem also talks about the wealth-bringing (*taṇam* < Skt. *dhanam*) good vessels (*naṅkalam*) of the big harbour with seashore groves at the extension of the sounding water (*iraṅku nīr paṇṇin kāṇal am perunturai*), which were broken (*citaiya*).<sup>1408</sup> In the later *Paripāṭal*, we see again a “captain who knows the directions, who repairs [his] scattered ship (*vaṅkam*) with glue”.<sup>1409</sup> In all these passages, we can see maritime activities with their unfortunate twists at the South Indian shores, in which Tamils must have been involved (or they

<sup>1402</sup> Eva Wilden's comment is on that, what she kindly shared with me from her upcoming edition: “[p]erhaps this is a reference to a creation myth, such as Varāha taking the earth out of the water, and most likely this has to be read as a metaphor for size, which would make this an allusion to overseas trade.”

<sup>1403</sup> ‘*Uḷaku kiḷamtaṇṇa urukelu vaṅkam/pulavuttiraiṇ peruṅkaṭal nīr itaiṇ pōla/iravum ellaiyum acaivīnru āki/virai celal iyarkai vaṅkūl āttak/kōṭ' uyar tiṇi maṇal akan turai nīkāṇ/mātam oḷ eri maruṅk' arint' oyya/āḷ vīnaiṇ pirinta kātalar ...*’. *Akanānūru*, 255: 1–7.

<sup>1404</sup> It is also possible to read this passage as an implied simile behind the infinitive clause, as if the departure of the ship was compared to the parting of the lover without connecting the hero's person to the departing ship. So the hero is not on the deck but as just the ship, his return carries hope for certain people in his village. This time thanks to Eva Wilden for discussing this with me and highlighting the possibility of seeing the simile behind the lines as well.

<sup>1405</sup> ‘*vēru pal nāttin kāl tara vanta/pala uru paṇṇiyam ...*’. *Narriṇai*, 31: 8–9. (Transl. by Eva Wilden)

<sup>1406</sup> ‘*kaṭal maram kavīnt'ēna kalaṅki uṭaṇ vīḷpu/palar kol palakai ...*’. *Narriṇai*, 30: 8–9. (Transl. by Eva Wilden)

<sup>1407</sup> ‘*nīl irum munnīr vaḷi kalaṇ vaḷvaḷiṇ/āḷ vīṇaikk'āḷintōr ...*’. *Kalittokai* 5: 6–7.

<sup>1408</sup> *Akanānūru*, 152: 6–7.

<sup>1409</sup> ‘*citaiyum kalattai payiṇāṇ tiruttum ticai ari nīkāṇum ...*’. *Paripāṭal*, 10: 54–55.

organised it themselves). If there had always been foreign merchants in these cases, the poets would probably have emphasised their outsider status as usual. Regarding the question of Tamil shipping, we could mention other passages that refer to strong coracles,<sup>1410</sup> to the great number of goods showering as monsoon rain that comes from the sea to the land and then flows from the land to the sea,<sup>1411</sup> to the elephant-like swinging movement of ships in the harbour,<sup>1412</sup> etc. Still, from these texts, we can rarely reconstruct whether these poets talked about coastal shipping, sea voyages, or Tamil or non-Tamil merchants.

In South India, archaeologists have not yet found much to suggest Tamil shipping, whether by sea or river. The most important of these findings was the wooden dugout canoe of Paṭṭaṇam with a wharf excavated in 2007 by the Kerala Council for Historical Research (KCHR). It was undoubtedly the same type of watercraft as the *monoxyllus linter* of Pliny the Elder, or the *tōni* of the backwaters in the *Puraṇānūru* 343: 6. On the other hand, we can also point to the South Indian maritime trade by examining the evidence of Tamil trade outside South India. Thus, we will also find traces of South Indian traders in the Roman Empire. The ambassadors of the Tamil Pāṇṭiya kings, after, according to the tradition, an adventurous four-year journey, finally reached the borders of the Roman Empire by land. Strabo also became aware of the Pāṇṭiya embassy, as he mentions the king of Pandion, who sent various precious gifts to Augustus Caesar to honour him.<sup>1413</sup> Florus mentions the arrival of Indian ambassadors and those whom he calls Seres. Because of the context given, it is conceivable that they were ambassadors of the Cēra kings (although the same term is used to refer to the Chinese).<sup>1414</sup> Perhaps the kings of the Cōḷas also sent their envoys to Rome, so it is also possible that the tigers presented by Augustus in 11 AD were gifts from the Cōḷa kings who used the tiger as a dynastic symbol.<sup>1415</sup> Having arrived in Rome, the South Indian ambassadors laid the foundations for trade cooperation or strengthened existing relations.<sup>1416</sup> The presence of Indian traders in Egypt is confirmed by a papyrus text found at Oxyrhynchus (P. Oxy. 413). According to Salomon, in the text called “Charition mime”, which could be dated to the 2<sup>nd</sup> c. AD, which imitates Euripides’ drama called *Iphigenia in Tauris*, perhaps Old Kannada words had been preserved in Greek transcription in the gibberish-like speeches of the Indian heroes.<sup>1417</sup> However, it seems

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<sup>1410</sup> *Paṭṭinappālai*, 30.

<sup>1411</sup> *Paṭṭinappālai*, 126–132.

<sup>1412</sup> *Paṭṭinappālai*, 172–175.

<sup>1413</sup> Strabo, *Geogr.* XV. 1. 5.

<sup>1414</sup> Florus, *Epitome*. II. 34. 62.

<sup>1415</sup> Cassius Dio, *Historiae*, LIV.

<sup>1416</sup> For more, see: Jairazhboy 1963, 110–113.

<sup>1417</sup> Hall 2012, 132–134; Salomon 1991, 731–735.

to be somewhat possible that the Indian language in this text was Tuḷu, another Dravidian language of ancient Tuḷunāṭu.<sup>1418</sup> In Kanâyis or Wâdi Miâh, during an excavation at the temple of Seti I, an inscription was found which had been offered to Pan by an Indian merchant in gratitude for his fortunate journey, whose name, Sophôn Indos, according to Salomon, could have been the Hellenised form of Subhānu.<sup>1419</sup> In Berenice and around the ancient Red Sea ports, numerous excavated findings suggest an Indian presence in the early centuries AD, 46 and we also have evidence of the South Arabian presence.<sup>1420</sup> There are also Brāhmī inscriptions in the Cave Hoq of Suqṭrā by Indians.<sup>1421</sup> The *Periplus Maris Erythraei* in Chapter 30 writes about Indian merchants at Suqṭrā (Dioskuridēs), while the 31<sup>st</sup> chapter reports about sailors of Limyrikē, who accidentally moored there. This may be true as there are no traces of Tamils in the area. Although based on Tomber (2008: 155), Strauch talks about the “South Indian dominance” in trade activities with Egypt, most evident in the archaeological finds and the goods transported; however, it does not necessarily follow that there was a maritime dominance controlled by South Indians.<sup>1422</sup> Nonetheless, at Myos Hormos in the Red Sea (now Quseir-al-Qadim), archaeologists have found fragments of amphorae written in Tamil Brāhmī, one of which the text *pānai ori* can be read, which means, according to Mahadevan, “pot [suspended in] a rope net”.<sup>1423</sup> A reference to this custom can be found in *Kalittokai (urit tānta karakamum)*.<sup>1424</sup> We see two personal names (Kaṇaṇ and Cātan) on other ostraca that have been found at Myros Hormos and another name (Korrapūman) that has been found on a potsherd in Berenice. Another Tamil Brāhmī inscription was found at Khor Rori, Oman, which, according to K. Rajan, is an excerpt from the name of an older, highly respected merchant (*nantai kīraṇ*). Beyond India, a Brāhmī inscription in Prākṛt, which included Tamil Brāhmī characters, was found in Thailand. The gold plates of Band Kluay from the 2<sup>nd</sup>–3<sup>rd</sup> c. AD bears a short inscription about a ship captain (*nāvika*), namely Brahaspati Sarma/Bṛhaspati Śarma (*brahaspati nāvikasa sarmasa*).<sup>1425</sup> It is interesting because his name suggests a *brāhmaṇa* origin (Śarma), which would not have allowed him to be involved in seafaring activities.<sup>1426</sup> However,

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<sup>1418</sup> Rai 1985.

<sup>1419</sup> Salomon, 1991, 735,

<sup>1420</sup> Strauch 2012, 373.

<sup>1421</sup> Strauch 2012, 286–360.

<sup>1422</sup> Strauch 2012, 371.

<sup>1423</sup> Tamil Brahmi Script in Egypt. *The Hindu*. November 21, 2007. <http://www.thehindu.com/todays-paper/tamil-brahmi-script-in-egypt/article1952611.ece> (downloaded: 2<sup>nd</sup> May 2022)

<sup>1424</sup> *Kalittokai*, 9: 2.

<sup>1425</sup> Thailand artefacts show links to S India. *Times of India*. August 24, 2010. <https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/city/chennai/thailand-artefacts-show-links-to-s-india/articleshow/6423797.cms> (downloaded: 2<sup>nd</sup> May 2022)

<sup>1426</sup> *Mānavadharmasāstra* III. 158.

there are stories in which *brāhmaṇa* sea captains appear.<sup>1427</sup> In Khlong Thom, Thailand, a rectangular touchstone (3<sup>rd</sup>–4th c. AD) of a Tamil goldsmith called Perum Patan̄, whose name might have meant the “great goldsmith” (< Tam. *ponpattan̄*),<sup>1428</sup> was found, on which the following inscription can be read: *perumpatan̄ kal*, “the [touch]stone [of] Perum Patan̄”.<sup>1429</sup> Excavated fragments with Tamil Brāhmī inscriptions have also been unearthed in the excavations of Tissamahārāma, Sri Lanka, which reveal the complexity of trade relations.

Turning to our main topic, the Cēras had a slightly different relationship with the ocean. Sesha Aiyar states that although “[s]hip-building industry does not appear to be mentioned in Śāngam works; but the people of the Cēra country were familiar with navigation of the high seas and from early times they had trade relations with foreign nations.”<sup>1430</sup> Even if we cannot substantiate Sesha Aiyar’s suggestions for the earliest (direct) sea trade relations, he is right when he talks about the navigation of the Cēras. The Caṅkam works are again quite laconic for some reason, but we have specific references that must concern the seafaring of the Cēras. I must emphasise that I considered it necessary to write a more extended introduction in the previous pages to see the context in which the enigmatic passages relating to the “sea travels” of Cēra kings could be inserted.

Neṭuñcēralātan̄ seems to be the first among the Cēras, who was known for his seafaring activities. During his reign, he led several campaigns, camped and fought together with his army, and thus he earned the honourable royal title *Imaya-varampan̄*, an epithet that means 1. “he whose limit (*varampu*) is the *Imaiyam/Himālaya*”; 2. “he who is beloved (*ampan̄*) by the celestials (*imaiyavar*), cf. Pā. *devānāṃṣīya*, an epithet used by ancient kings, e.g. Aśoka Maurya. This title brought the king closer to northern traditions. In the II. *patikam* of the *Patirruppattu*, we see Neṭuñcēralātan̄,

...[who] established [the rule of] his [royal-]staff (*kōl*), so that *Tamiḷakam*<sup>1431</sup> with fences of the rumbling sea was shining, [who] made the *āriyar*<sup>1432</sup> of greatly reputable tradition humble with [his] eminent glory, [who] shackled the worthless *yavaṇas* of harsh speech, poured oil on [their] head, pinioned [their] hands behind [their] back,

<sup>1427</sup> For example, the father of the Tibetan *siddha* Padampa Sangye (Pha Dam pa sangs rgyas) who was probably born in South India, was a *brāhmaṇa* sea-captain. Martin 2015, 339.

<sup>1428</sup> The *Tamiḷ Lexicon* even refers to the caste title of the goldsmiths as *pattar*. *Tamiḷ Lexicon*, 2461.

<sup>1429</sup> Ray 2019, 242.

<sup>1430</sup> Sesha Aiyar 1937, 142.

<sup>1431</sup> *Tamiḷakam*: the Tamil country. *Puṛaṇānūru*, 168: 18; *Tamiḷ Lexicon*, 1757. It means perhaps those lands where Tamil was spoken, so it seems to be not a political, but a cultural region.

<sup>1432</sup> *āriyar* < Skt. *ārya*. As an umbrella-term, *āriyar* denotes non-Tamil people of India.

and took [their] good vessels of rare value together with [their] gems (*vayiram*) and gave [them all] to greatly valorous, old villages...<sup>1433</sup>

In this probably later poem, which was perhaps composed once the whole text was written down, the words *aruvilai nankalam* connected to the “Greeks” (*yavanar*) make different interpretations possible. In my translation, I agreed with Zvelebil who translates ‘vessels’, though in this way I elegantly avoid the problem because the word ‘vessel’ is just as ambiguous as the Tamil word *kalam*. Anyway, Zvelebil translates “precious beautiful vessels” and suggests *amphorae* with question mark in brackets, which would be indeed a logical interpretation, but cannot be verified. Pierre Meile offers “des bons bijoux de grand prix”,<sup>1434</sup> which is closer to the original text and excludes the possibility of interpreting the word *kalam* as a ‘seafaring’ vessel. Aruḷampalavaṇār<sup>1435</sup> glosses *aṇikalam* as ‘jewel’, ‘ornament’, while McLaughlin<sup>1436</sup> and De Romanis<sup>1437</sup> also understand *kalam* as ‘jewel’. We should keep in mind the slight possibility that here *kalam* meant ship, but I think Romila Thapar went a little too far when she interpreted this story as a defeat of a “Yavana fleet”.<sup>1438</sup> However, Marr<sup>1439</sup> claims that the *yavanar* are not even mentioned in the old text but added by modern writers following the old commentary. In fact, Marr is correct since the oldest manuscript that contains the *patikams*, the UVSL 98a [10. r. 6] does not have *yavanar* attested but *vaṇcol [i]yavar* (“base men with harsh words?”),<sup>1440</sup> nor do the other paper manuscripts. In UVSL 559 (p. 30) and UVSL 439 (p. 106), we see emendations of *yavar* to *yavanar* made by someone, perhaps U. Vē. Cāminātaiyar himself. The source of emendation was the old commentator who reads and understands ‘*itaṇ patikatt’ (i)yavanar piṇitt’ enrātu ...*’ [10. r. 2], while the cause of emendation was, as Eva Wilden highlighted during our consultations,<sup>1441</sup> that the transmitted text is hypometrical. I think it is possible to agree with the old commentator (supported by the later data from *Cilappatikāram*) while putting an emphasis on

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<sup>1433</sup> ‘*imil kaṭal vēlit tamilakam viḷaṅka/taṇ kōl niṟūt takai cāl ciraṇpoṭu/pēr icai maraṇiṇ āriyar vaṇakki/nayan il val col yavanarṇ piṇittu/ney talaiṇ peytu kai piṇ koḷi/aruṇ vilai nal kalam vayiramōṭu koṇṭu/perum viṇal mūt’ ūrt tantu...*’. *Patirruppattu*, II. 5–11.

<sup>1434</sup> Meile 1941, 118.

<sup>1435</sup> Aruḷampalavaṇār 1960, 116.

<sup>1436</sup> McLaughlin 2010, 135.

<sup>1437</sup> De Romanis 1997, 143; footnote 108.

<sup>1438</sup> Thapar 2002, 233.

<sup>1439</sup> Marr 1985 [1958], 282.

<sup>1440</sup> The questionable word can be also read as *[ma]yavar* (< *mayam?* *Tamil Lexicon*, 3073), but because of the sandhi, that would rather appear as *conmayavar*, however; *col* is clearly legible.

<sup>1441</sup> Hereby, I thank Eva Wilden for her precious help in providing me an insight to the manuscripts which were not available to me and shared her ideas about the question.

the hypometrical obscurity of the line (which supports the emendation) and on the fact that the word *yavaṇar* is de facto not attested in the *Patirruppattu* (which is against the emendation).

The *yavaṇar* are mentioned in the old commentary of *Patirruppattu*, so it seems the mediaeval commentator did not doubt the identification, which was supported by those passages of the *Cilappatikāram*, which mention “the ‘Greeks’ with harsh words/barbarous tongue” (*vaṅcol yavaṇar*).<sup>1442</sup> However, what we can certainly say about this passage is that 1. the *yavaṇar* had precious articles (rather jewels than ships) and harsh speech, 2. they were treated as prisoners. We cannot deduce from the text whether the Cēra king met the “Greeks” on land or at sea. Of course, it is conceivable that we see privateers here, Indo-Greek merchants or soldiers, who helped other kings at sea and were punished. They might have been traders from the Persian Gulf, Greeks from Dhenukākaṭaka,<sup>1443</sup> or *yavana* mariners employed by Naṅṅaṅ, the *kaṭampu*-tribe, the Sātavāhanas, the Kuṣāṅs, or the Śakas. Is that the same event that has been commemorated in the *Cilappatikāram*?<sup>1444</sup> Even if this passage did not necessarily introduce the seafaring of the Cēras, it offered an excellent opportunity to partially refute the interpretive experiments that developed around it. However, we also have more apparent evidence:

If someone asks, “Who is your king?”, our king is Neṭuñcēralātaṅ who has the strength of [his] fierce rage, who chopped down the foot of the *kaṭampu*-tree,<sup>1445</sup> after [he] went to the land of the resisting ones, [which land was] inside an island of the dark sea, may his chaplet live long!<sup>1446</sup>

Thus, we see direct evidence that Neṭuñcēralātaṅ sailed the “dark sea” and attacked his enemies on an island (*turutti*), which island must have been somewhere among the Lakṣadvīp islands, or around the southern Konkan, where anyway pirates were mentioned by Ptolemy and the *Periplus Maris Erythraei*. We will return to the question in a later chapter. The same episode can be found in the 17<sup>th</sup> poem of the *Patirruppattu*, in which we see Neṭuñcēralātaṅ who “liberated the great sea [that] possessed shiny spray [and] scattered precious offerings (*arum paḷi*) [once he] returned and arrived [together with his] warriors [carrying] the victorious wide *paṇai*-drum

<sup>1442</sup> *Cilappatikāram*, III. 28: 141, III. 29: *ūcalvari*, 3.

<sup>1443</sup> Chandra 1977, 103–104.

<sup>1444</sup> *Cilappatikāram*, III. 28: 141–142.

<sup>1445</sup> Here the *kaṭampu* refers to the totemistic tree of the *kaṭampu* tribe that has been destroyed. See: *Patirruppattu*, 12: 3; 17: 5; 20: 4; 88: 6; *Patirruppattu*, IV. patikam: 6.

<sup>1446</sup> ‘*num kō yār eṇa viṇaviṇ em kō/iruḷ munnīrt turutti uḷ/muraṇiyōrt talaic cenru/kaṭampu mutal taṭinta kaṭum ciṇam munṇiṇ/neṭuñcēralātaṅ vālka avaṅ kaṇṇi*’. *Patirruppattu*, 20: 1–5.



which was fashioned having chopped the *kaṭampu*-tree”.<sup>1447</sup> We find the defeat of the *kaṭampu*-tribe in other poems as well without the maritime context.<sup>1448</sup> In the 127<sup>th</sup> poem of the *Akanānūru*, which mentions some of the heroic exploits of Cēralātaṅ, we read that he, “having navigated (*ōṭṭi*) [on] the ocean, destroyed the *kaṭampu*”, or “having driven back (*ōṭṭi*) the ocean, destroyed the *kaṭampu*.” Once he defeated the *kaṭampu*-tribe, he collected the humble tributes at the great mansion of Māntai/Marantai.<sup>1449</sup> In the 41<sup>st</sup> poem of the *Patirruppattu*, we see the son of Neṭuñcēralātaṅ, Kaṭal Piṛakkōṭṭiya Ceṅkuṭṭuvaṅ (“Ceṅkuṭṭuvaṅ who drove back the sea”), whose “legs conquered the cool sea with sounding waves” (*paṭum tirait paṅik kaṭal ulanta tāḷē*).<sup>1450</sup> Anyway, his royal epithet Kaṭal Piṛakkōṭṭiya was mentioned initially in the V. *patikam* by the poet called Paraṅar. Although we cannot see the maritime activities of Ceṅkuṭṭuvaṅ in the Caṅkam poems, we read about it in the early mediaeval *Cilappatikāram*, in which we read about Ceṅkuṭṭuvaṅ as someone who “overthrew the *kaṭampu*[-tribe] with fences of the vast/dark water” (*mānār vēlik kaṭamp’ erintu*; III. 25. 1), or someone with cruel war “who overthrew the *kaṭampu* of the sea” (*kaṭal kaṭamp’ erinta*; III. 25. 187). In the 90<sup>th</sup> poem (Line 20) Iḷaṅcēral Irumporai, another Cēra king is mentioned as being one who “threw a spear so that the ocean was destroyed” (*kaṭal ikuppa vēl iṭṭum*). All these texts show that the Cēra kings de facto sailed the seas, but we have only evidence that they did so for military purposes, while their assumed sea trade activities cannot be substantiated. However, we have seen before that the Tamils knew how to sail along the coast. I think it is not unfounded to assume that the Cēra kings utilised the Mediterranean knowledge in shipping and shipbuilding. Therefore, they may have been able to build a powerful fleet that was useful in naval battles. However, it is rather possible that the vessels of the Cēras were used to transport warriors and only when they landed did the fighting begin. Be that as it may, Mediterranean sailors and warriors appeared on the Malabar Coast governed by the Cēras perhaps every year for centuries and have certainly helped them in their maritime activities, although perhaps not for free. We can assume that the very costly punitive campaign in the northern areas,<sup>1451</sup> in which neither new territory nor new vassals were acquired, was to stabilise trade relations and Cēra interests on the Malabar Coast.

<sup>1447</sup> ‘*tulaṅku picir utaiya māḱ kaṭal nākkik/kaṭamp’ arutt’ iyariya valam-paṭu viyaṅ paṅai/āṭunar peyamtu vant’ arum paḷi tūy’*. *Patirruppattu*, 17: 4–6.

<sup>1448</sup> *Patirruppattu*, 11: 11–14; 12: 2;

<sup>1449</sup> *Akanānūru*, 127: 4–8.

<sup>1450</sup> *Patirruppattu*, 41: 27.

<sup>1451</sup> *Cilappatikāram*, III. 25: 185.

### ***Harbours, emporia and trade routes***

In order to understand the relation between the Cēra kings and trade, the next step is to discuss the Cēra harbours, emporia, and trade routes in their kingdom. Therefore, the following three topics have to be examined in the light of Caṅkam literature, Tamil epigraphy, and South Indian archaeological findings: 1. Naṛavu/Naoura, Toṇṭi/Tyndis, Muciṛi/Muziris, Vañci/Karuvūr, and Pantar located in the division called Kuṭanāṭu in North- and Middle Malabar, then 2. Bakarē, Nelkynda and Māntai/Marantai/Morounda situated in the division called Kuṭṭanāṭu/Kottanarichē in South Malabar, and finally 3. the trade routes that connect the different divisions of the kingdom.

Naṛavu/Naoura

Regarding the division called Kuṭanāṭu, which literally means the “western country”, the northernmost Cēra settlement of it was Naṛavu. From the thirty attestations of the word *naṛavu* in the old corpus,<sup>1452</sup> it is quite certain that when the poet asks: “O songstresses, why shall we not go in order to see [him], the one with a brilliant company in Naṛavu that could not be consumed (*tuṅvā*)?”<sup>1453</sup> then he refers to a village/town of the Cēras.<sup>1454</sup> Behind this weird passage, an old poetic tool can be seen, which I call a negative signifier (trad. *velippatai*) which distinguishes the “not-eaten” (*tuṅvā*) *naṛavu* as a town from the *naṛavu* as the toddy, honey, or flower. Even the old commentator of the *Patirruppattu* glosses *naṛavu* as “a village/town” (*ōr ūr*). If we prefer not to believe in the commentary and the existence of Naṛavu as a town, we may translate *tuṅvā naṛavu* as ‘inexhaustible toddy’. However, if we read the poem, it clearly talks about a place:

[...] where the warriors (*maravar*) shiver in the cold wind of the coming sea, after the waves with foamy sprays together with the clouds became bewildered, [warriors] who possess bows whose laziness of the strings had been removed, [Naṛavu] of unceasing fertility and of unchangeable yield, where the ripened, egg-shaped fruit [given] to the people who are going [on] the road impedes the tired propensity [to advance, fruit which] became abundant in fine juice, the sweet fruit which fell from

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<sup>1452</sup> Lehmann–Malten 2007, 258.

<sup>1453</sup> *Patirruppattu*, 60: 3; 12.

<sup>1454</sup> *Pre-Pallavan Tamil Index*, 483.

the tree [which] was never cleft by rasp, where bees swarmed around without turning away from its honey-taste.<sup>1455</sup>

What is more, from the 85<sup>th</sup> poem of the *Patirrupattu* we learn that:

[...] the king's council (*arac' avai*) became humble [around] the seat [in] the daily court in Naṛavu,<sup>1456</sup> which cannot be put on [as flowers (*naṛavu*)], among the tall mountains which are seen from the [entire] country, which were expanded with many of [its] summits, which [have] brilliant, big slopes [where] the sweet mountain springs became permanent [...]<sup>1457</sup>

If this town was the same as the emporium called Naoura mentioned by the *Periplus Maris Erythraei*, then it must have been located somewhere north of Toṇṭi/Tyndis, in the northern part of Kuṭanāṭu. Malekandathil suggests that the Naoura and Tyndis were the feeding ports of Muziris, the commercial capital of Karuvūr, the political capital of the early Cēras.<sup>1458</sup> Schoff identifies Naoura with Kaṇṇūr (Kerala) and rejects the identification with Honnāvāra (Karnataka),<sup>1459</sup> an attempt of localisation which can already be found in Pretzsch.<sup>1460</sup> Casson pinpoints it at Maṅgaḷūru (Karnataka), which became another usual identification of the place name.<sup>1461</sup> Anyway, it was undoubtedly located between Nitrias/Nitra and Tyndis/Toṇṭi, in a circle that includes Kaṇṇūr and Maṅgaḷūru. If we consider the data extracted from the 85<sup>th</sup> poem of the *Patirrupattu*, and we expect mountains that visibly surround the town, then the region of Eḷimala (ancient Eḷil neṭuvarai/kuṇṇam) with its rocky slopes seems to be the best candidate for localisation, since the distance between the Kaṇṇūr seashore and the nearest range of the Western Ghats is about seventy-eighty kilometres, while Maṅgaḷūru seems to be a bit far, and although it is located in a hilly area, “tall mountains which are seen from the [entire] country” can be found again in ca. seventy-eighty kilometres distance. However, one must

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<sup>1455</sup> ‘... miṇṇiru puṛam mūcavum tīm cūvai tiriyāt’/aram pōḷkallā maram paṭu tīm kaṇi/am cēr’ amainta muṇṭai vīlai paḷam/āru cel mākkat’ oṅy takai taṭukkum/(m)arāa vīlaiyul arāa yānart/total maṭi kaḷainta cilai uṭai maṛavar/ponku picirṇ puṇari maṅkuloṭu mayāṅki/varum kaṭal ūtaiyiṇ paṇikkum ...’. *Patirrupattu*, 60: 4–11.

<sup>1456</sup> Another possible reading of *naṛaviṇ nāl makil* is “the daily joy [of/from] toddy”, however, we cannot be sure that the drunkenness during the royal audience can be attributed to virtuous behaviours. Here a *velippaṭai* (POC: *matuwiṅku velippaṭai*) in a form of a *negative signifier* helps to distinguish the specific meaning of *naṛavu* as a city of the Cēraṇ from the *naṛavu* as a flower/fragrance (See: *naṛavu* and *naṛavam*, *Tamil Lexicon*, 2186).

<sup>1457</sup> ‘... tīm cūvai nilaiya tiru mā maruikīṇ/kōṭu paḷa vīrinta nāṭu kāṇ neṭum varaic/cūtā naṛaviṇ nāl makil irukkai/arac’-avai paṇiya ...’. *Patirrupattu*, 85: 6–9.

<sup>1458</sup> Malekandathil 2017, 345.

<sup>1459</sup> Schoff 1913, 204.

<sup>1460</sup> Pretzsch 1889, 23.

<sup>1461</sup> Casson 1989, 297. For another attempts of localization, read: Selvakumar 2017, 271–272.

consider that the Western Ghats, with an average altitude of 1200 metres, can still be seen, even if not the whole, from ca. 124 kilometres,<sup>1462</sup> so the question again is how seriously we take the description of the Tamil poem. It is rather possible that the town was located initially in Tuḷunāṭu<sup>1463</sup> as Thirunavukkarusu states, perhaps later conquered by the early Cēras. Anyway, Naṛavu was a town protected by warriors who were most probably hired by the rulers, “which reveals that the chiefs of the towns invariably used warriors to protect their interest from the invading enemy chiefs, and these ports became centres of political activities, perhaps, due to the wealth brought by the trade”.<sup>1464</sup> Selvakumar even adds to this that the word *miñṅiru* for ‘bees’ (*Patirruppattu*, 60: 4) “has the typical nasal sound of Malayalam”. Even if the word reflects a dialectal term used in western Tamiḷakam, it is rather impossible to connect it to the Malabar regions in this way, since the geographical spectrum of the poems in which *miñṅiru* was attested<sup>1465</sup> covers a vast space from the Cēra territories via Maturai to Toṇṭaināṭu. So, using the word *miñṅiru* may or may not refer to the local language spoken in Naṛavu.

#### Toṇṭi/Tyndis

From north to south, the next significant town of the Cēras on the Malabar Coast was Tyndis or Toṇṭi, as we find it in the Caṅkam anthologies. The etymology of the Cēra place name is not clear from the attestations; we can assume that its name was connected to the Malabar glory-lily, to the tree called *Sterculia guttata*, to the red cedar of the Nilgiris, or to the word *tuntti* which meant either ‘beak’ or ‘backwater’ (*kali*).<sup>1466</sup> However, neither of these attestations could verify the etymology of the Cēra towns since the texts come a few hundred years later than the earliest attestations in which Toṇṭi refers to either the Cēra port itself or the Cōḷa port on the eastern coast that bore the same name, but nothing else.

The *Periplus Maris Erythraei* mentioned Tyndis/Toṇṭi as a port of trade (ἐμπόριον; ch. 53) first, then as an “important seashore village” (κώμη παραθαλάσσιος ἔνσημος, ch. 54), while

<sup>1462</sup> “This calculation should be taken as a guide only as it assumes the earth is a perfect ball 6378137 metres radius. It also assumes the horizon you are looking at is at sea level. A triangle is formed with the centre of the earth (C) as one point, the horizon point (H) is a right angle and the observer (O) the third corner. Using Pythagoras's theorem we can calculate the distance from the observer to the horizon (OH) knowing CH is the earth's radius (r) and CO is the earth's radius (r) plus observer's height (v) above sea level.” <http://www.ringbell.co.uk/info/hdist.htm> (downloaded: 20<sup>th</sup> March 2022).

<sup>1463</sup> Thirunavukkarusu, 1994, 48.

<sup>1464</sup> Selvakumar 2017, 273.

<sup>1465</sup> Lehmann–Malten 2007, 363.

<sup>1466</sup> *Tamil Lexicon*, 2091; *Tamiḷ Ilakkīyaḥ Pēraḱarāṭi*, 1220.

Ptolemy called it a ‘city’ (πόλις),<sup>1467</sup> which meant, as I have discussed earlier, a “nucleated settlement” with or without fortification, and with or without an *emporion*. From the Mediterranean references, it seems to be the case that Tyndis/Toṇṭi was perhaps a political centre of the Cēras with a village-like *emporion* on its seashores. The town also appears as Tundis on the *Tabula Peutingeriana*. Toṇṭi can be localised perhaps around today’s Kozhikode (Kōḷikkōṭ) District, Kerala, and it can be possibly identified either with Ponnāni, Kaṭaluṇṭi, or Kōyilāṇṭi.<sup>1468</sup> The location of Toṇṭi had a strategic importance as it was about a hundred kilometres from the entrance of the Pālakkāṭ (Palakkad) Gap, the only low mountain pass and, therefore, a vital transport corridor in the Western Ghats. We can be sure that ancient towns such as Naṛavu, Toṇṭi, Karuvūr, and Muciṛi were connected to the Pālakkāṭ corridor by trade routes, which corridor connects the Malabar region to Koṅkunāṭu.

I need to emphasise that Toṇṭi is the most often mentioned town of the Cēras, and even if the descriptions of the Caṅkam poems are often schematic, we can still acquire new data from them. The poets of the *Akanāṇūru* in the 10<sup>th</sup>, 60<sup>th</sup>, and 290<sup>th</sup> poems talk about a town called Toṇṭi, and the tradition attributes the 169<sup>th</sup> poem to a poet called Toṇṭi Āmūr Cāṭṭaṇār who came from Toṇṭi, although hard to say whether from the Cēra or the Cōḷa one. The 10<sup>th</sup> poem talks about the “wealthy Toṇṭi, where the fishermen with new nets, who had gone in [their] old boats through dunes, where waves, with swells in groups, approach with the east wind, distribute the pillage of sword-fish on the shore set with high sand by the villages fragrant with scent.”<sup>1469</sup> The 60<sup>th</sup> poem talks about “Toṇṭi of Poṛaiyaṇ with a sturdy chariot, where the little daughter gives, along with the flesh of fat fish, tooth-white cooked rice from paddy, for which the price had been salt, pouring forth nice curry stirred with Ayilai fish, to [her] father who had been kept back by [his] tasks in the long boat with pretty nets [and] straight staffs drawn from the winding backwaters while the red prawns were shivering in the expanse of the great area [of water].”<sup>1470</sup> The 290<sup>th</sup> poem sings about “the big and cool *neytal*-flower which has blossomed so that bees drank [its nectar], at Toṇṭi, the ancient port (*munrurai*)<sup>1471</sup> at the expanse of the clear waves, [Toṇṭi] of Kuttuvaṇ with wars that are victorious [because of his] elephants with white

<sup>1467</sup> Ptol., *Geog.* VII. 1. 8.

<sup>1468</sup> Selvakumar 2017, 274.

<sup>1469</sup> ‘*koṇṭ’ ānikup peyartal vēṇṭum koṇṭaloṭu/kulūuk kilaiṭ puṇari aṭaitarum ekkart/palam timil cenra putu valaiṭ paratavar/mōṭṭu maṇal aṭai karaik kōṭṭu mīṇ koṇṭi/maṇam kamaḷ pākattup pakukkum/valai-keḷu toṇṭi ...*’. *Akanāṇūru*, 10: 8–13. (Transl. by Eva Wilden)

<sup>1470</sup> ‘*perum kaṇ parappiṇ cēy irā naṭuṅkak/koṭum toḷil mukanta cem kōḷ av valai/neṭum timil toḷiloṭu vaiḷiya tantaiḷ’/uppu noṭai nellin mūral veḷ cōr’/[a]yilai tulaṅta am pulic corintu/koḷu mīṇ taṭiyoṭu kuṛu makaḷ koṭukkum/tiṅ tēṛṭ poṛaiyaṇ toṇṭi ...*’. *Akanāṇūru*, 60: 1–7. Transl. by Eva Wilden.

<sup>1471</sup> Agreeing with Eva Wilden’s notes on *Kūṛuntokai* 128, it is also possible to translate *mun-turai* as a compound that means ‘front ghat/harbour’ or as ‘the ghat/harbour in front of Toṇṭi’.

tusks”.<sup>1472</sup> To summarise, a few pieces of information have to be highlighted: 1. Toṇṭi was the town of Poṛaiyaṅ, which means the Cēra king and his dynasty, most likely the Irumpoṛai branch; 2. Toṇṭi was a wealthy town where hard-working fishermen communities (*paratavar*) existed, among which the *timil*-type of watercraft (boat? catamaran? *Tamil Lexicon*, 1880) was in fashion; 3. Toṇṭi was an ancient port (*munṛurai*) of Kuṭṭuvaṅ, which was a dynastic title of the Cēra kings; this refers to the fact that the Cēras were once the overlords of the *kuṭṭuvar* in Kuṭṭanāṭu. The 128<sup>th</sup> poem of the *Kuṛuntokai*<sup>1473</sup> mentions again Toṇṭi, the ancient port where the ruler is Poṛaiyaṅ of a firm chariot. Thus, it seems that the phrase *tiṅ tēr poṛaiyaṅ toṇṭi munṛurai* had a formulaic usage, which phrase had been borrowed by Kuṭavāyil Kīrattanār from Paraṇar, or maybe the other way round. Because of the formulaic use, I do not think these two verses verify each other. The 210<sup>th</sup> poem<sup>1474</sup> refers to Toṇṭi as the place of Nalli, the well-known chief of the Tōṭṭi Hill.<sup>1475</sup> Interestingly, Nalli also had a ‘firm chariot’ (*tiṅ tēr*), which could have been a traditional title of the lord of Toṇṭi that was inherited or only an expression of poetic playfulness. It is also remarkable that we see the cooked food with rice in this poem and the 60<sup>th</sup> *akam*, which could mean that Toṇṭi was famous for its cuisine or that the poets knew and reflected on each other’s poems. In the 238<sup>th</sup> poem, we read about “[...] Toṇṭi, where women with bright bracelets are engaged in play, having laid down on a ridge by the border of the rice field with choice ears the black, hard pestles which pounded green rice [...]”.<sup>1476</sup> Here again, we read about the rice of Toṇṭi and the great fertility which allows women to rest without work. Until now, what we have seen in the Tamil texts is that Toṇṭi had a militant chief with chariots and elephants, Toṇṭi had a port with fishermen, and Toṇṭi had rice fields which also entailed gastronomy celebrated in literature based on rice and fish. The fact that Toṇṭi seemed to have agricultural tracts and a sea harbour might suggest that the Greeks were right when they indirectly talked about a *polis-cum-emporion* kind of settlement. If we open the *Narṇinai*, we find other details about the town. The 8<sup>th</sup> poem, for example, mentions Toṇṭi, the town of Poṛaiyaṅ with firm chariot, where we see waterlilies, muddy paddy fields, and workers around,<sup>1477</sup> which description underlines the statements of the previous songs. The 18<sup>th</sup> poem talks about the gate (*katavu*) of Toṇṭi with seashore groves, on which Poṛaiyaṅ had impressed Mūvaṅ,<sup>1478</sup> his enemy’s

<sup>1472</sup> ‘*veṅ kōṭṭi*’ (*i*)yāṇai *viṛal pōrk kuṭṭuvaṅ/ten tiraiṅ parappiṅ toṇṭi muntūrai/curump*’ *uṅa malarṁta perun taṅ neytaḷ*. *Akanānūru*, 290: 12–14.

<sup>1473</sup> *Kuṛuntokai*, 128: 2.

<sup>1474</sup> *Kuṛuntokai*, 210: 1–2.

<sup>1475</sup> *Pre-Pallavan Tamil Index*, 482.

<sup>1476</sup> *Kuṛuntokai*, 238: 1–4. (Transl. by Eva Wilden)

<sup>1477</sup> *Narṇinai*, 8: 5–9.

<sup>1478</sup> *Pre-Pallavan Tamil Index*, 706.

sharp, thorn-like teeth.<sup>1479</sup> Since Mūvaṅ is a hapax legomenon and the dental description is quite odd, one might consider that here *mūvaṅ* might be a mythological name of perhaps a demon or a name of a legendary animal. Still, I have not come any closer to a solution. This poem is important because it highlights the closeness of the sea, and if we decide to translate *katavu* as ‘gate’ (instead of ‘anger’ as a second possibility; *Tamil Lexicon*, 711), then probably the poem refers to a fortified mansion of the Cēra king in Toṅṭi. The Cēra king, anyway, appears as a ‘fighter’ (*porunan*) here, with an army with anger that is difficult to chill down and victorious spears. Of course, these are only regular and formulaic attributes, but in doing so, the poet somewhat emphasises the powerful presence of the triumphant king in the town. In the 195<sup>th</sup> song of the *Narriṅai*, the poet talks about Toṅṭi as a coastal place with seashore groves and waterlilies, where otters feed on fish in the backwaters, but also sharp blades of those who harvest rice glitter.<sup>1480</sup> In the *Puraṅānūru*’s 17<sup>th</sup> poem, we read about the Cēra king as “the murderous fighter of the people in cool Toṅṭi with flame[-like] flowers [floating] on the top of clear backwaters, with vast seashore groves where sand [is like] the moonshine, with mountain-fences at the widening paddy fields, with clustered coconut trees whose bunches hang low”.<sup>1481</sup> The 48<sup>th</sup> poem’s author, Poykaiyār sang the following lines to Kōtai or the king, Cēramāṅ Kōkkōtai Mārpaṅ: “Toṅṭi with seashore groves that are fragrant from toddy (*kaḷ*), from the blossoming *neytal*-flowers at the big/dark backwaters, from the garlands of those who united<sup>1482</sup> with Kōtai, from the garland on the chest of Kōtai; that [is] our town, he [is] our superior man”.<sup>1483</sup> From the last poems we have seen again that Toṅṭi was close to the sea, to the backwaters, to the paddy fields which were surrounded by fence-like mountains, and we have also seen that the king was present in the town together with his wife (in this case *puṅarntōr* is an honorific singular), wives, lovers, or favourite courtesans. The Cēra erotic anthology, the *Aṅkuraṅūru*<sup>1484</sup> has a whole decade of songs on Toṅṭi (*Toṅṭippattu*; *Aṅkuraṅūru*, 171–180)<sup>1485</sup> written by Ammūvaṅār. It is remarkable that his name Ammūvaṅār seems to be the same name as the shorter Mūvaṅ,<sup>1486</sup> so we can only hope that the Cēra king was satisfied with these songs

<sup>1479</sup> *Narriṅai*, 18: 2–5.

<sup>1480</sup> *Narriṅai*, 195: 1–8.

<sup>1481</sup> ‘*kulai iraiṅciya kōḷ tālai/akal vayal malai vēli/nilavu maṅal viyaṅ kāṅal/teṅ kaḷi micaic cuṭarṭ pūviṅ/taṅ toṅṭiyōr aṭu poruna*’. *Puraṅānūru*, 17: 9–13.

<sup>1482</sup> Here, as V. I. Subramoniam (*Index of Puranaanuru*, 460) suggests, one might translate *kōtaiyaip puṅarntōr* as “those who made love with Kōtai”.

<sup>1483</sup> ‘*kōtai mārpīṅ kōtaiyaṅum/kōtaiyaip puṅarntōr kōtaiyaṅum/mākkali malarnta neyālāṅum/kaḷ nārumṅē kāṅalam toṅṭi/akṭu em ūrē avaṅ em iravaṅ*’. *Puraṅānūru*, 48: 1–5.

<sup>1484</sup> Wilden 2014, 12.

<sup>1485</sup> The translation of this decade can be found at Marr 1985 [1958], 357–360.

<sup>1486</sup> *Pre-Pallavan Tamil Index*, 706.

and he was not the one whose teeth had been impressed on the wooden gate of Toṇṭi.<sup>1487</sup> In these ten love poems, Ammūvaṇār speaks about Toṇṭi, where the sweet music of *mulavu*-drums sounds everywhere mingling with the sweetly sounding music of the waves,<sup>1488</sup> about the cool harbour of Toṇṭi where bees are humming,<sup>1489</sup> about the *neytal*-flowers of Toṇṭi,<sup>1490</sup> about the awful (*aṇaṅk' uṭai*), foggy/cool harbour of Toṇṭi,<sup>1491</sup> about the cool, fragrant and fresh flowers of Toṇṭi,<sup>1492</sup> about the harbour of Toṇṭi which is fragrant from the *muntakam*-flowers with long stems, where the sand heaps were created by the billowing waves,<sup>1493</sup> about Toṇṭi of Kuṭṭuvaṇ with straight staff,<sup>1494</sup> about waders around Toṇṭi and food with fat fishes given by the fishermen (*valainar*, lit. ‘the ones with nets’) of the great water (*perunīr*).<sup>1495</sup> These poems also reflect the stereotypical ideas about Toṇṭi we have seen before. Selvakumar understands *aṇaṅku* as goddess<sup>1496</sup> while Marr as Kāma,<sup>1497</sup> but without further explanation or parallels, this interpretation is impossible. We have also seen the music and drumming in Toṇṭi, which shows festivities perhaps connected to the panegyric ritual. Interestingly, the Toṇṭi poems form not only a decade but a kind of *antāti*-poem. Both attributes are specific only to Cēra anthologies, the *Aiṅkurunūru* and the *Patirruppattu* (for *antāti*-structure, see the Fourth Decade). The *Patirruppattu*, however, is very laconic about Toṇṭi. The 88<sup>th</sup> poem mentions Ilaṅcēral Irumporai as being “the fighter of the people in Toṇṭi where the surrounding<sup>1498</sup> sea [is] like the *mulavu*-drum”. Besides that, the VI. *patikam* tells a bit more about Toṇṭi as it was the place where the king Āṭukōṭṭpāṭṭu Cēralātaṇ “brought mountain-sheeps (*varuṭai*), which had been taken in Taṇṭāraṇiyam,<sup>1499</sup> into Toṇṭi [and] ordered to distribute<sup>1500</sup> [them]”.<sup>1501</sup> Selvakumar suggests that “the chief gave *varudai* (mountain) goats from the Deccan region (?) to the Brahmanas”,<sup>1502</sup> however his postpositional dative (*pārṭarkku*) has rather to be connected to the act of village-

<sup>1487</sup> *Narriṇai*, 18: 2–5.

<sup>1488</sup> *Aiṅkurunūru*, 171: 1–3.

<sup>1489</sup> *Aiṅkurunūru*, 172: 2.

<sup>1490</sup> *Aiṅkurunūru*, 173: 2–3.

<sup>1491</sup> *Aiṅkurunūru*, 174: 1.

<sup>1492</sup> *Aiṅkurunūru*, 176: 1–2.

<sup>1493</sup> *Aiṅkurunūru*, 177: 2–4.

<sup>1494</sup> *Aiṅkurunūru*, 178: 2–3.

<sup>1495</sup> *Aiṅkurunūru*, 180: 1–4.

<sup>1496</sup> Selvakumar 2017, 278.

<sup>1497</sup> Marr 1985 [1958], 358.

<sup>1498</sup> *Index of Patirruppattu* tends to understand *valai* as ‘conch’. I would instead translate it as “the surrounding sea”, where *valai* is a verbal root (*valai-ttal* v. 11. tr., *Tamil Lexicon*, 3555).

<sup>1499</sup> Taṇṭāraṇiyam (p.n.): an ārya country (*ōr ārya nāṭu*). *Tamil Ilakkīyaṭ Pēraṅkāṭi*, 966. It is perhaps the same as the legendary Daṇḍakāraṇya in the Deccan, between the Narmadā and the Godāvarī. *Pre-Pallavan Tamil Index*, 411; *Geographical Dictionary*, 114.

<sup>1500</sup> *koṭṭupṭṭu* (caus. abs.): “having made to give”.

<sup>1501</sup> *Patirruppattu*, VI. 3–4.

<sup>1502</sup> Selvakumar 2017, 275.



donation: “[he] gave to the seers (*pārppār*)<sup>1503</sup> a village in the western country (*kuṭanātu*) together with tawny cows (*kapilai*)” (*pārppārkuk kapilaiyoṭu kuṭa nātt’ ōr ūr ittu*).<sup>1504</sup>

After reading all these passages, it seems to be clear that Toṇṭi was a nucleated settlement with a harbour (not established for long-distance trade), with backwaters, and with widening agricultural tracts surrounded by the slopes of the Western Ghats, where fishermen communities lived and prospered, where waterlilies bloomed characterising the landscape called *neytal-tiṇai*, where the militant and triumphant Cēra king used to reside in his fortified mansion, where festivals were held. Toṇṭi was the town of Poṛaiyaṇ and Kuṭṭuvaṇ, both names suggesting the Cēra lineage. Still, it is not possible to decide whether these names reflect particular kings or the dynasty in general, and also whether Toṇṭi was a centre of the Irumpoṛai branch of the dynasty or was already used by the branch that originated from Utiyañcēral and Neṭuñcēralāṭaṇ. However, the names suggest that the Irumpoṛai clan primarily used Toṇṭi.

#### Muciṛi/Muziris

Muciṛi, or as the Mediterranean authors called it, Muziris/Mouziris, was the first emporium of India that the sailing ships reached travelling from the west. Muciṛi laid at the mouth of the river called Pseudostomos or Culli (today’s Periyār) so that the cargoes had to be conveyed in boats for loading or discharging, considering the great distance between the coast and the riverside port. The Greek name seems surprisingly far from the earliest and later names of the river. However, Malayalam-speaking scholars figured out that the word *alimukhaṁ*, which means ‘estuary’ in Malayalam, can be translated as ‘false mouth’ (cf. Pseudostomos).<sup>1505</sup> The problem is that *alimukhaṁ* is a straightforward derivation from Old Tamil *kalimukam*, ‘the mouth of the backwaters’, ‘estuary’, and neither *kali* in Old Tamil,<sup>1506</sup> nor *ali* in Malayalam<sup>1507</sup> means ‘falsity’.

Muciṛi certainly had a strategic importance, for if merchants encamped here and did not travel further but made their purchases in and around the *emporion*, it promised a special profit to the kingdom. That is why Muciṛi had been attacked by pirates and enemy armies from time to time. Be that as it may, Muciṛi was desirable, inevitable, and probably prospered for a long time. In the previous chapters, I discussed most aspects of the Muziris question, which could be reconstructed from Greek and Latin sources. However, I have not yet introduced the Tamil

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<sup>1503</sup> *pārppār*: seers (< *pār-ttal* v. 11. tr. ‘to see’), *brāhmaṇas*.

<sup>1504</sup> *Paṭirruppattu*, VI. 4–5.

<sup>1505</sup> Kanakasabhai 1904, 19.

<sup>1506</sup> *Tamil Lexicon*, 170.

<sup>1507</sup> *A Malayalam and English Dictionary*, 69.

sources. Although it seems to be a nuance, even its transmitted name is variable since in all three poems that mention the town, we find variant readings of Mucurī or Mucirī in the manuscripts. Because of the various Mediterranean sources, for the time being, we can somewhat verify the reading of Mucirī, which is, anyway, not so far in pronunciation from Mucurī. Regarding its name, several theories have been suggested, such as “hare-lip” or “three-lips”,<sup>1508</sup> or it might have been named after the Egyptian lunar month called Mesore (Μεσορή), as Malekandathil suggests: “it seems that this port must have got the name Machiripattanam because of its intimate connection with the Egyptian month of Machiris, when ships were to sail back from Kerala to Egypt taking advantageous use of the monsoon wind for navigation”.<sup>1509</sup>

In the *Akanānūru* 57, we read the following about the town:

[...] when she suffers like those who have difficult wounds from the noisy battle when Celīyaṅ with a bannered chariot, [having] horses with trimmed manes, besieged Mucirī at the front ghat with ancient water [and] harassed it so that elephant bulls fell[?]<sup>1510</sup>

In this poem, we find an important reference to the attack of the Pāṅṭiyas and the siege of Mucirī, which battle was certainly bloody and noisy, as the poet said, and Celīyaṅ, the Pāṅṭiya king used chariots and elephants to overcome. The 149<sup>th</sup> poem talks even more about this event:

Celīyaṅ with a tall and good elephant murderous in war seized statues (*paṭimam*) after he had overcome in a difficult battle after he had surrounded [the town] so that clamour arose [in] the prosperous Mucirī [where] gloriously crafted, *yavaṅar*-driven (*tanta*) good vessels came with gold (*pon*) and returned with pepper (*karī*), while they stirred up the white foam of Cullī, the big river (*pēriyāru*) of the Cēralar.<sup>1511</sup>

Thus, we see the *yavaṅa* traders who sail to Mucirī, an important episode of the Caṅkam literature, which I will discuss in detail in the next subchapter. What is important here is that we see Mucirī as a wealthy town whose prosperity made the Pāṅṭiya king besiege it. Even if the Pāṅṭiya king attacked Mucirī, robbed its treasury and won the difficult battle, it is quite certain that they could not establish their rule there for long. The same can be said about the Cēra

<sup>1508</sup> Whittaker–Gurukkal 2001, 343.

<sup>1509</sup> Malekandathil 2017, 340.

<sup>1510</sup> ‘*koy cūval puravik koṭi tērc celīyaṅ/mutu nīr muṅ turai mucirī murrik/kaḷiru paṭa erukkiya kallen nāṭṭin/aruṅ puṅ urunarīṅ varuntīnaḷ*’. *Akanānūru*, 57: 14–17. (Transl. by Eva Wilden)

<sup>1511</sup> ‘... *cēralar/culliyam pēriyāru veṅ nurai kalaṅka/yavaṅar tanta viṅai māṅ naṅkalam/ponnoṭu vantu kariyoṭu peyarum/vaḷam kelu mucirī āṛṅṅ’ ela vaḷai*’. *Akanānūru*, 149: 7–11.

expedition of Peruñcēral Irumporai and his victory in Pukār.<sup>1512</sup> The *Puranānūru*'s 343<sup>rd</sup> poem will also be subject to thorough analysis in the next chapter. In that poem, we read about the exchange of paddy for fish, the huge boats on which paddy had been heaped, the bundles of black pepper in the storehouses, the dugouts arriving from the backwaters with golden articles, the sound of drums in Muciri, and the liberal Kuṭṭuvaṇ with gold garland and abundant toddy, who showers the articles of mountains and seas to those who come and gathered together.<sup>1513</sup> In the second part of the poem, we see the fortified Muciri, which has particular importance for us. We read about Muciri as being a “good and big town with difficult paths mingled with weapons [around] the fortification where birds of prey (*paruntu*) dwell and sleep/sigh (*uyirttu*) in the central walls”.<sup>1514</sup> We can conclude that according to the Tamil literature, Muciri was not just a port of trade, a regional centre where the king met with his trade partners and subjects, but also a fortified town with surrounding walls. Even the early mediaeval, although some say it is from the Caṅkam times, *Muttollāyiram* mentions the Cēra king as being “the king of the people in Muciri” (*muciriyār kōmāṇ*).<sup>1515</sup>

Given the geographical context in the Mediterranean authors and the Caṅkam sources, researchers began searching for the lost Muciri.<sup>1516</sup> Finally, they discovered remains of an ancient settlement at Paṭṭaṇam, Kerala, which might be identical with or very close to Muciri. The unearthed artefacts of Paṭṭaṇam provide an extraordinary insight into the Indian Ocean trade, among which a fantastic amount of evidence for international trade has been found. Therefore, I assume that to identify Muciri with Paṭṭaṇam is a reasonable choice. However, I agree with Selvakumar, who states that “Pattanam is an important archaeological site and it could be one of the major ports in the Muchiri region”.<sup>1517</sup> In the Early Historic Period (300 BC–500 AD), Paṭṭaṇam had brick constructions, its people used iron tools, the harbour received amphorae for *garum*, grains, oil, and wine from Kos, Rhodes, Campania, Cilicia, Hispania Tarraconensis, Hispania Baetica, Gallia and Aegyptus; terra sigillata objects from the Mediterranean; Roman luxury tableware, painted glass, mosaic glass, board game counters, gems, cameos, stone inlays, and intaglii; torpedo jars and turquoise glazed pottery from Mesopotamia, but also local artefacts such as Cēra coins from copper and lead, golden rings,

<sup>1512</sup> *Patirruppattu*, 73: 9.

<sup>1513</sup> ‘*mīṇ noṭuttu nel kuvaṭṭi/micai amṇiyiṇ maṇai maṇukkuntu/maṇaik kuvaṭṭi kari mūṭaiyāl/kalic cummaiya karai kalakkuruntu/kalam tanta poṇ paricam/kaliṭ tōṇiyāl karai cērkuntu/malaiṭ taramum kaṭal taramum/talaiṭ peytu varunarkku iṇyū/punal am kaḷḷiṇ polan tārk kuṭṭuvaṇ/mulaṇiku katal mulaviṇ muciri aṇṇa ...*’. *Puranānūru*, 343: 1–10.

<sup>1514</sup> ‘*paruntu uyirtt’ iṭai matil cēkkum puricai paṭai mayāṇku aṇṇai neṭu nal ūrē*’. *Puranānūru*, 343: 15–17.

<sup>1515</sup> *Muttollāyiram* 9.

<sup>1516</sup> The important research has to be highlighted: Whittaker–Gurukkal 2001, 334–350, and Cherian (et al.) 2004, 312–320.

<sup>1517</sup> Selvakumar 2017, 285.

bracelets and even a little axe, a wharf together with a dugout canoe, local potteries, etc.<sup>1518</sup> Considering these findings, Paṭṭaṇam was no doubt a market in a sense of “a meeting place of merchants from overseas and the local traders”.<sup>1519</sup> Archaeologists excavated baked brick structures with roof tiles for residential and commercial purposes since the conventional thatched roof structures did not prove to be sufficient.<sup>1520</sup> Anyway, the town seems to be planned with streets.<sup>1521</sup> From the archaeological evidence, I agree with Gurukkal that Paṭṭaṇam was “a bazaar where transmarine and overland merchants converged for exchange”.<sup>1522</sup>

However, Muciṛi (and therefore Paṭṭaṇam) must have been much more significant in both size and importance if we consider the data on the fortification and if we interpret Muziris as a semi-important royal residence. I share De Romanis’s opinion, who says that “[a]part from the glamorous findings of Roman amphorae, sigillata, turquoise-glazed pottery, and torpedo jars, the overwhelming majority of the pottery excavated at Pattanam has been local, and the local coins found there suggest the strong presence of local people with a monetised economy of their own.”<sup>1523</sup>

The *Tabula Peutingeriana* also depicts Muziris in between Tundis and Blinca. What is more, we see an Augustan temple (*templ[um] Augusti*) close to the town, together with a lake (*lacus Muziris*). The most honest answer is that researchers still do not know what this temple meant, since until now no Augustan temple had been discovered in Kerala. One might consider what McLaughlin writes on the questionable *temple*:

The *Peutinger Map* records the presence of a Roman temple in the Indian city with the label ‘*Templum Augusti*’ (Augustan Temple). Similar buildings existed in the Parthian Empire where wealthy Roman merchants established Augustan temples in the Persian cities connected with their commercial interests. The imperial cult was strong in Alexandria and Philo describes the city’s Augustan temple as a large building positioned opposite the harbour. He boasted that it was superior to other Imperial temples built in rival cities and was ‘full of offerings, pictures, statues and decorations in silver and gold’. It was said to be ‘a hope and beacon of safety to all who set sail or come into harbour at Alexandria’. The Augustan temple at Muziris

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<sup>1518</sup> For a catalogue of the most important findings, see: Cherian–Menon 2014; Gurukkal 2016, 30–31.

<sup>1519</sup> Selvakumar 2017, 286.

<sup>1520</sup> Selvakumar 2017, 287.

<sup>1521</sup> Selvakumar 2017, 287.

<sup>1522</sup> Gurukkal 2016, 179.

<sup>1523</sup> De Romanis 2020, 115.

probably formed a similar function for Alexandrian merchants making the voyage to India.<sup>1524</sup>

As another solution, Cobb reminds us that it might have been a local landmark for navigators, such as a temple for a local deity, e.g. the temple of Agastya at Kaṇṇiyākumari.<sup>1525</sup> The lake above Muziris could have been the labyrinth-like system of backwaters,<sup>1526</sup> or a depiction of Kuṭṭanāṭu rich in lakes. Last but not least, we should overview the earliest epigraphic remains on which Muciṛi's name appears. We find an exciting dedication on the Muttuppaṭṭi inscription (1<sup>st</sup> c. BC): *nākapērūr atai-y mucīri kōṭaṅ ḷamakaṅ*. Here we read about a senior person (*antai*) of Nākapērūr and Kōṭaṅ ḷamakaṅ (“young man”?) from Muciṛi.<sup>1527</sup> Another inscription is the Jewish Cochin Plates of Bhāskara Ravi (prob. 10<sup>th</sup> c. AD), which mentions Muciṛi as Muiyirikkōṭu.<sup>1528</sup> Narayanan analyses the name Muiyirikkōṭu as ‘the fort/settlement of Muiyiri’, giving the etymology as *kōtu < kōttu/kōṭṭai*.<sup>1529</sup> Anyhow, the mediaeval name of Koṭuṅṅallūr (or of its port?) on these plates reflects the ancient name of Muciṛi, nevertheless, it cannot entirely verify the ancient location of Muciṛi.

Thus, we have seen Muciṛi as an ancient Cēra port of call on the Periyār River, which was a fortified political centre with brick structures and streets and a market with encampments of foreign traders.

#### A Cēra capital in Kuṭṭanāṭu

To deal with the question of whether the early Cēras had a capital in the western division of their kingdom (Kuṭṭanāṭu) called Vañci and/or Karuvūr is a difficult task. In Ptolemy, we find Karoura between the Pseudostomos/Periyār River and the Baris/Pampā River, which was, no doubt, the town called Karuvūr, the capital (*basileion*) of the Cēra dynasty as Ptolemy states. However, we learn about one another town called Koreour, probably south of Mysore in Koṅkunāṭu, whose name is quite similar. Do we have to deal with one or two Karuvūr? According to Ptolemy's coordinates, Karoura, an inland town, was perhaps the inland capital of the Cēras not far from Muciṛi. But did the capital of the Cēras exist in the Malabar region,

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<sup>1524</sup> McLaughlin 2014, 174.

<sup>1525</sup> Cobb 2018, 157.

<sup>1526</sup> Whittaker–Gurukkal 2001, 337.

<sup>1527</sup> Mahadevan 2001, 395.

<sup>1528</sup> Mahadevan 2001, 586; Narayanan 2018, 88; 102; Index no. A. 34. L4.

<sup>1529</sup> *Tamil Lexicon*, 1175; 1180; George 1986, 147–149.

or was that only a cartographic mistake that Ptolemy committed or an anachronistic theory of the Middle Ages that confused the mediaeval capital of Cēras with the ancient?

Karuvūr, the name of the town in question, is a hapax legomenon in the Caṅkam corpus, although in the early mediaeval colophons, many of the famous Caṅkam poets bear the name of the city.<sup>1530</sup> In the 93<sup>rd</sup> poem of the *Akanānūru*, we read the following:

[...] many more than the [grains of] sand in the cool-watered Poruṇai that are heaped on the high shore with clear water in the front harbour of Karuvūr with the brilliant, beautiful, wide mansions of Kōtai with long chariots and fierce, high elephants with awesome broad trunks that do not fail in killing men [...]<sup>1531</sup>

Thus, we see Karuvūr, a town with expansive mansions of Kōtai, the Cēra king, and with a sandy river ghat/harbour. Karuvūr was located at the river called Poruṇai/Porunai, which will be discussed soon. Before that, let us talk about Vañci, which is supposed to be the same town as Karuvūr, as we read in the 10<sup>th</sup>-century lexicon called *Piṅkaḷam* 465. (*karuvūrin peyar vañci*). The 263<sup>rd</sup> poem of the *Akanānūru* mentions, “Vañci is carefully protected by Kōtai with a bright spear” (*oḷiru vēl kōtai oṃpik kākkum vañci*; Line 11–12), which refers to the Cēra control over Vañci. The 396<sup>th</sup> poem sings about “Vañci of the one who shackled the kings (*vēntar*) of severe wrath, after he imprinted the bending bow[’s symbol] in the famous and very ancient northern mountain, who struck the *āriyar* so that they screamed”.<sup>1532</sup> According to the colophon, the 32<sup>nd</sup> poem of the *Puranānūru* speaks about Cōḷaṅ Nalaṅkilli as a liberal donor being “the one who gives even Vañci which is not the flower with long creepers” (*netuṅkoṭiṭ pūvā vañciyum taruwaṅ*; Lines 1–2). This shows that the city was once under the power of the Cōḷas, so we may assume that it must have been closer to the Cōḷa dominions. It also shows that people easily mixed up the city’s name with the name of the tree/creeper/flower, which was most probably the totemistic plant or *kaṭimaram*, after which the capital was named. The 39<sup>th</sup> poem, however, tells us that before the Cōḷas sieged Vañci, it was already a Cēra town: “You made the unwithering Vañci wither, while Vānavaṅ with gloriously crafted tall chariots and with the imprint of the protective bow that was worn by the Imaiyaṅ, the towering mountain with tall peaks where the

<sup>1530</sup> *Pre-Pallavan Tamil Index*, 228–229.

<sup>1531</sup> ‘*āl kōḷ pīlaiyā aṅcu-varu taṭak kaik/kaṭum pakatt’ yāṅai neṭum tērk kōtai/tiru amar viyal nakark karuvūr muṅ tuṅai/teḷ nīr uyar karaik kuvaiya/taṅ āḷ poruṇai maṅalinum palavē*’. □ *Akanānūru*, 93: 19–23. (Transl. by Eva Wilden)

<sup>1532</sup> ‘*āriyar alarat tākkip pēr icait/tonru mutir vata varai vaṅaṅku vil porittu/vem ciṅa vēntaraiṭ piṅittōṅ vañci* [...]’. *Akanānūru*, 396: 16–19.

gold knows no measure, died”.<sup>1533</sup> The *Cirupāṇāruppatai* Lines 49–50. speaks about Vañci again as the town of Kuṭṭuvan, which had a gate (sluice?) at the coming stream (*varupunal vāyil Vañci*), or which town was a gate in front of the flood-like elliptical enemy.

Regarding the river called Porunai, the famous *Tolkāppiyam* commentary of Nacciṅarkkiṇiyār (14<sup>th</sup> c. AD) causes much confusion as he mentioned four famous rivers in ancient times: Kāviri, Taṅporunai, Āṅporunai, and Vaiyai.<sup>1534</sup> However, as we shall see, it cannot be confidently proved that these two Porunai rivers were different. I think Eva Wilden correctly translated cool-watered Porunai, as far as the sandhi split of *taṅṅān porunai* allows to read only *taṅ āl porunai* ‘Porunai with cool water’, rather than *taṅ nāl*, *taṅ mān*, *taṅ ān*, etc., the attempts of others. But if the river de facto had the name Āṅporunai and still we detach *āl* as ‘water’, then maybe we should try to understand the whole name: “[the stream] that fights (*porunai*) with water (*āl*)” (?). The 11<sup>th</sup> song of the *Puranānūru* tells the following about the river called Porunai:

[...] the victorious king (*vēntaṅ*) who was worthy for the songs of the victorious Vañci [town] with fame that competes (*poru*) the sky/heaven (*viṅ*), where the stream of the cool Porunai flows [...] <sup>1535</sup>

In this poem, we see direct evidence of the existence of the Cēra town Vañci at the river called Porunai, but I think here *vañciṅpāṭal* can also be translated differently as reading ‘songs composed in *vañcittiṅai*’:

[...] the victorious king (*vēntaṅ*) who was worthy for victorious *vañci*-songs [to him], whose fame competed (*poru*) [the ones in] the sky/heaven (*viṅ*) [from where] the stream of the cool Porunai descends [...]

So there is a little chance that the poet intended to speak about a type of victorious song rather than Vañci, or directly articulated ambiguously. The poem in which we read about Vañci and the river Porunai is the 387<sup>th</sup> of the *Puranānūru* written for Cēramān Cikkaṅpallittuñciya Celvakkāṭuṅkō Vāliyātaṅ (the hero of the 7<sup>th</sup> decade of the *Patirrupattu*), in which the following

<sup>1533</sup> ‘[...] *onkiya varai/alantu ariyāp poṅpaṭu netuṅkottu/imaiyam cūttiya ēma vil porī/mān vīnai netuntēr vānavaṅ tolaiya/vātā vañci vāṭṭum niṅ* [...]’. *Puranānūru*, 39: 13–17.

<sup>1534</sup> ‘*yārum kuḷaṅṅum kāvum āṭi kāviriyum taṅporunaiyum māṅporunaiyum vaiyaiyum pōlum yāyirilum mirukāmattiṅai yēripōlum kuḷaṅkaḷilum tirumarutta tuṅaikkāvēpōlum kākkaḷiṅum vīnaiyāṭi* [...]’. *Tolkāppiyam Poruḷatikāram Kāṅṅiyal* 191; Nacciṅarkkiṇiyār’s comm.

<sup>1535</sup> ‘*taṅ porunaiṅ pūnal pāyūm/viṅ poru pukaḷ vīral vañciṅ/pāṭal cāṅra vīral vēntaṅummē*’. *Puranānūru*, 11: 5–7.

passage can be found: “[...] even [more] than the sand of the rumbling Porunai river which hits the outer walls of Vañci with no leaves [...]”.<sup>1536</sup> Behind this, perhaps an old poetic tool can be observed, which I call a ‘negative signifier’ (trad. *velippatai*) which distinguishes Vañci, the tree (which could have been *\*pal ilai* ‘with many leaves’), from Vañci, the town with ‘no leaves’ (*pul ilai*). It is also possible that here the poet referred to ‘Vañci with leafy huts’ as we see in the *Patirruppattu* (15: 13), when the old commentator glosses *pul ilai vaiṭṭu* as *pulliya ilaikālālē vēya paṭṭu ūr*. In the 36<sup>th</sup> song of the *Puranānūru*, we read about the Cōḷa king who “scattered the white sand of the cool-watered Porunai”.<sup>1537</sup>

These are all our references to the river(s) called Porunai in the Caṅkam poems. From these very ambiguous passages, I suppose that there was at least one Cēra town called Vañci, which appears in later epics as the capital of the Cēras, and at most two rivers called Porunai. However, the mediaeval tradition distinguishing between Taṅporunai and Āṅporunai cannot be verified by the ancient sources. If we open the *Cilappatikāram*, we find an interesting passage that could help us to locate Vañci:

[...] having departed from Vañci like Vāṇavan (Indra), then, the King of the World has moved forward together with the commanders of [his] army and with [his] supreme advanced guards, while they spread like the waves (*puṇariyiṅ*) which had a white surface, to the shores, while they caused the backs of the mountains to bend, and they covered the countries standing [in their way] with dust, then, having stayed at the tall outskirts of the Nilakiri together with [his] army with ornamented chariots and prancing horses [...].<sup>1538</sup>

If we analyse *puṇariyiṅ* as a genitive, then it refers to the army that ‘marches as if to spread to the shores with waves’; however, if we analyse it as a comparative oblique case, then the army ‘marches as if to spread to the shores *like* the waves’. According to Krishnaswamy Aiyangar,<sup>1539</sup> it is possible to understand that the Cēra army began to march from Vañci on the Malabar Coast, climbed the slopes of the Western Ghats and arrived to the Nilgiri/Nilakiri region. However, I think it is better to understand the above-mentioned phrase as a comparative clause and a very common sea-simile of the army. Aiyangar also cites other passages of the

<sup>1536</sup> *‘pul ilai vañciṭṭi puṇa matil alaikkum/kallen porunai āṅkaṇ’*. *Puranānūru*, 387: 33–34.

<sup>1537</sup> *‘taṅ āḷ porunai veṇmaṇal citaiya’*. *Puranānūru*, 36: 5.

<sup>1538</sup> *‘vāṇavan pōla vañci nīṅkit/taṅṭat talaivarum talaṭ tārc cēṇaiyum /veṅṭalaiṭ puṇariyiṅ viḷimpu cūḷ pōta/malai mutuku neliya nilai nāṭ’ atar-paṭa/ulaka māṇavan onuik’ utān cenr’ āṅku/āḷum puṇavi aṅṭ tērt tāṇaiyoṭu/nīla kiriyiṅ neṭum puṇatt’ irutt’ āṅku’*. *Cilappatikāram*, III. 26: 79–85.

<sup>1539</sup> Aiyangar 1940: 18–20.



*Cilappatikāram*, in which the Cēra country, at least at the time of Ceṅkuṭṭuvan, has to be imagined across the Western Ghats on the Malabar Coast,<sup>1540</sup> but none of his evidence is considered irrefutable. We find it strange, however, that no descriptions of Vañci and Karuvūr include the attributes characteristic of the *neytal tinaṭi*. This is something that Tamil poets would not have missed if Vañci had been close to the sea or the backwaters of the Malabar Coast. Regarding the river Porunai, in the *Piṅkaḷam*, we find that Porunai was known as Porunai or Taṅporuntam (*Piṅkaḷam*, 564), while Āṅporunai was known as Āṅi, Vāṅi, Āṅporunai, and Āṅporuntam (*Piṅkaḷam*, 566), today's Amarāvati river. Even though I do not systematise the Caṅkam sources because of their ambiguous information and I insist on literal translation, we can conclude that the two Porunai rivers were already distinguished in the Middle Ages, which rivers cannot be really separated in the Caṅkam poems, and no matter how we look at it, we see no more than one river.

If we believe in Ptolemy's accounts, it is possible that a town called Karoura/Karuvūr existed on the Malabar Coast, which had to be a riverside capital close to the *emporium* called Mouziris/Muciṛi. If Karuvūr was the same as Vañci, then it could be perhaps pinpointed around Tiruvañcikkūḷam/Tiruvañcaikkaḷam, which most probably preserved the name of an ancient site, which place is now famous for its Śiva temple.<sup>1541</sup> Champakalakshmi is, however, very sceptic about this identification, saying that “attempts made to locate Vañci in Tiruvañcaikkaḷam near Muciṛi, the Cēra port, have been unsuccessful, as no significant archaeological remains have been found at this site prior to the eighth century AD”.<sup>1542</sup> Interestingly, Pliny the Elder, when talking about Muziris (*Naturalis Historia*, VI. 26. 104), mentions that the Cēra rulers used to reign there around the middle of the 1<sup>st</sup> century AD. As I discussed previously, in the case of Becare and the Pāṅṭiya kings, Pliny used the phrase *ibi regnabat* (*Naturalis Historia*, VI. 26. 105), which syntactically referred not only to Becare and its hinterland but to the capital called Modura/Maturai as well. Just in the previous caput on Caelobothras/Cēras, Pliny used the same phrase *regnabat ibi*, which refers to Muziris as well as to the Cēra capital; however, he did not mention any other centre than Muziris. Therefore, Muziris was perhaps entirely or partly identical to a place where the Cēras reigned in the 1<sup>st</sup> century. As we have seen in the 343<sup>rd</sup> poem of the *Puranānūru*, the king was present in Muciṛi to welcome his guests, which would confirm the assumption that an important political centre could have been found at Muciṛi. If we agree with Ptolemy, the Cēras perhaps had an inland

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<sup>1540</sup> Aiyangar 1940: 14–15.

<sup>1541</sup> See: Rajarajan 2012, 127–158.

<sup>1542</sup> Champakalakshmi 1996, 118.

capital in a town called Karuvūr on the Malabar Coast. In this case, the idea of pinpointing Karuvūr at around today's Karūr, Kerala, about 25 kilometres from Koṭṭunṇallūr seems convincing.<sup>1543</sup> Nevertheless, I think there is no way to prove from the Caṅkam sources that Vañci or Karuvūr existed near Muciṛi. On the other hand we can easily imagine an ancient emporion-cum-polis type of nucleated centre at Muciṛi (just as Tyndis/Toṇṇi) with the sea and the river Periyār in its proximity, which was surrounded by fertile lands and mountains; a complex royal centre that had a trading town with markets and quarters for merchants at Muziris/Muciṛi, a royal residence nearby to deal with maritime affairs, an inland centre at Ptolemy's Karoura with perhaps a royal palace to deal with interstate affairs, and at least a few fortified zones in the port and around the region. The royal presence at Muciṛi was necessary in order to control market activities, while in the political centre of Karoura, the king and the dynasty were better protected and were not exposed to the potential dangers of a famous seaport town, e.g. piratical attacks, usurpers of the throne, etc. M. G. S. Narayanan found it likely that the Caṅkam Cēras had a system called “*kūrṇwālkai* (sic!) or joint rule”. However, the word *kūrṇwālkai* does not occur in any of the later Malayalam inscriptions, nor the earlier Old Tamil inscriptions. In the late 14<sup>th</sup> century *Līlātilakam*, a Malayalam work on grammar and poetics, we find *kūrāyulla vālkai* that, according to N. Gopinathan Nair, rather means “living together affectionately” than a type of rule.<sup>1544</sup> Therefore, I find the term *kūrṇwālkai* misleading and anachronistic, though Narayanan might be right to assume a system of *divisio regni*, when “the senior most must have ruled Karūr, the junior being sent according to rank to Toṇṇi, Muciri, etc.”.<sup>1545</sup> This would explain the various dynastic titles of the Cēras that refer to different divisions of their kingdom, and this might be the idea behind the Lines 26–31 of the 52<sup>nd</sup> poem of the *Patirrupattu*.

If all is true, once the fertile region of Koṅkunāṭu had been occupied by Palyāṇaiccelkelu Kuṭṭuvan (see: *Patirrupattu* 22: 15), the Cēra kings established their capital in Karuvūr, perhaps the Koreour of Ptolemy. If Karoura in the Malabar region existed, then they used the same place name of Karuvūr as a “twin settlement”, of which Vañci became a synonym with time, as we have also seen in the *Piṅkaḷam*. Later herostones from Karūr in Koṅkunāṭu, datable to the eighth century AD, testify that the two places, Vañci and Karuvūr, were the same.<sup>1546</sup> Following this theory, Koreour or probably the second Karuvūr of the Cēra history, was perhaps an

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<sup>1543</sup> Marr 1985 [1958], 298.

<sup>1544</sup> I am immensely grateful to Prof. N. Gopinathan Nair (Calicut University) for sharing these precious thoughts on the possible origin of the term.

<sup>1545</sup> Narayanan 2018, 104; footnote 22.

<sup>1546</sup> Nagaswamy 1974, 396.

outpost at the beginning, which had been established to protect the military position in Koṅkunāṭu, the country which had essential trade routes and mines rich in minerals. Koreour/Karuvūr became the primary capital of the kingdom at the time of the Irumporai Cēras due to their strengthening economic and political power. If we think of having an ancient and a newly established Karuvūr in Cēra history, then we can distinguish Taṅporunai and Āṅporunai as Naccinarkkiṇiyār suggested, as the former Karuvūr on the Malabar Coast could be found at the Culli/Periyār (or Taṅporunai?) river; while the other Karuvūr in Koṅkunāṭu could be found at the Porunai or Āṅporunai river, which name covered most probably the Amarāvati river. The Cēra kings thus founded the new “twin capital” under the same name as the previous one, at a river which bore the same name as the river near Muciṛi, which foundation could have a threatening message for the Cōlas and the Pāṅṭiyas, since this way the Cēra king drove the wheel of his kingdom forward to their borders and enlisted in the hegemonic role of South India. Even if we reconstruct an early capital called Karuvūr near Muciṛi, we must keep in mind that this idea is based on Ptolemy’s account, the early importance of Muciṛi, which must have been near it, and the similarity of place names that exist today in Kerala. However, we must consider the possibility that Ptolemy made a mistake in locating Karoura at the Malabar Coast instead of Koṅkunāṭu. In that case, we have Naravu, Toṅṭi, and Muciṛi as royal towns or capitals near the seashore. At the same time, it would also mean that the existence of Karuvūr in Koṅkunāṭu would be dated back somewhat earlier than 150 AD, the date when Ptolemy finished his work. In the 373<sup>rd</sup> song of the *Puranānūru*, we see the Cōlan as “the victorious king who made Koṅku surrender” (*koṅku puṛam perra korra vēntē*; Line 8), which poem most probably talks about the siege of the Cēra capital, as we read that “the courtyard (*murram*) of Vañci became a victorious (*vayam*) land (*kaḷan*)” (*vañci murram vayak kaḷan āka*; Line 24). This would again underline the fact that the Cēra capital, called Vañci, was in Koṅkunāṭu. The existence of the Cēra inland capital in the Koṅku region is supported now by Cēra inscriptions, which mention three generations of Cēra kings, from probably the 2<sup>nd</sup> century AD, found at Pukaḷūr (Ārunāṭṭārmalai), near Karūr, Tamil Nadu.<sup>1547</sup>

Since we see the Cēra capital, called Karoura/Karuvūr, existed in the middle of the 2<sup>nd</sup> century in Ptolemy, and inscriptions from the same century were found near modern-day Karūr that mention not only the Cēras but also the town called Karuūr, I suggest that Ptolemy mistakenly located Karoura on the Malabar Coast, and royal capital of the Cēras must have already existed in Koṅkunāṭu in the first half of the 2<sup>nd</sup> century AD. This does not mean that

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<sup>1547</sup> Mahadevan 2001, 20; 117.

Muciṛi on the Malabar Coast could not have been a quasi-seaside capital of the Cēras; probably it was; this only means that we do not know other centres of the Cēras on the Malabar Coast like Muciṛi, Toṇṭi, and Naṛavu.

According to the V. *patikam* of the *Patirruppattu*, the Cēra king Ceṅkuṭṭuvaṅ was born to a Cōḷa princess Maṇakilli, wife of Neṭuñcēralātaṅ, so it seems that at the time of Ceṅkuṭṭuvaṅ, the Cōḷa and the Cēra dynasties had forged ties through dynastic marriages. This also indicates the geographical proximity of the Cōḷa kingdom. Perhaps when Ceṅkuṭṭuvaṅ stabilised the Cēra power in the western divisions of the kingdom, he felt that it was time to intervene in the succession of the Cōḷa throne, which led him to strengthen the political presence in Koṅkunāṭu and to lead campaigns against towns like Iṭumpil, Viyalūr, Koṭukūr, and Vāyil, which marches caused the fall of nine Cōḷa heirs.<sup>1548</sup> The next king Āṭukōṭpāṭṭu Cēralātaṅ moved again to the western part of the kingdom (*Patirruppattu* 51: 3) which was, according to the mediaeval commentator of the *Patirruppattu*, west of his capital (*taṅ nakarikku mēlpāl*), so his comment might already refer to Koṅkunāṭu and the capital at today's Karūr, Tamil Nadu. In the IX. *patikam* of the *Patirruppattu*, we find the only reference to Vañci as an ancient town of Iḷaṅcēral Irumpoṛai, which at that time was undoubtedly the same as Karuvūr in Koṅkunāṭu and remained the capital until the fall of the early Cēras. We must also consider that we might thank this attestation of the name Vañci to the poetic fancy that resulted in a five-*cīr*-long alliteration in which *vañcinam* and *vañci* purposely rhyme: *vaitta vañcinam vāyppa venru vañci* (Lines 8–9).

## Pantar

Pantar was the name of a scarcely mentioned Cēra port of trade, which was supposed to be famous for its pearl production. In the 2<sup>nd</sup> line of the 67<sup>th</sup> song of the *Patirruppattu*, we read about “the famous ancient town which had the name Pantar” (*pantarṭ peyariya pēr icai mūt' ūr*). In the 6<sup>th</sup> line of the 74<sup>th</sup> poem of the *Patirruppattu*, we read about “the Pantar-produced pearls praised by many” (*pantarṭ payanta palar pukal muttam*). This is, however, all that we know about this town. Although the word *pantar* means either an ‘harbour’ (*Patirruppattu*, 51: 16) or the proper name of this particular Cēra town/port, it seems that the word itself also meant ‘storehouse’ (*paṅṅacālai*) at least at the time when the old commentary of the *Patirruppattu* was composed. Selvakumar mentions that Pantar might have had a name of Persian origin (< Per. *bandar* ‘harbour’, ‘port of trade’).<sup>1549</sup> However, according to the *Encyclopaedia Iranica*, the word is not yet

<sup>1548</sup> *Patirruppattu*, V. 1–22.

<sup>1549</sup> Selvakumar 2008, 26

attested in the Old and Middle Persian sources.<sup>1550</sup> Regarding the Arabic texts, Al-Khalīl (d. 786) is the first who glosses the word *bandar* as ‘metal merchant’, and in the *Lisān-al ‘Arab* of Ibn Manzūr (12<sup>th</sup>–13<sup>th</sup> c. AD) it still meant only a ‘rich person’ or ‘metal merchant’. However, the first lexicographer who recorded *bandar* as a “port of trade” was Ṣaġānī (1181–1252), so we can roughly guess the time when the word ‘emporium’ or ‘port of trade’ appears in Arabic.<sup>1551</sup> But the Persian origin of the word still seems anachronistic and cannot even be proved, nor can the attestation of the word *bandar* as a ‘port of trade’ be proved earlier than the second millennium AD. The question arises of whether the word *pantar* had an Indo-Aryan origin. In fact, we already see the words *bhāṇḍhāra* and *bhāṇḍāgāra* attested in the *Mahābhārata*, which meant ‘treasury’ or ‘storehouse’.<sup>1552</sup> This word found its place in the Old Tamil language as *paṇṭāram* ‘treasury’ (*Paripāṭal*, 11: 123). The old commentator of the *Patirruppattu*, as I mentioned before, once glossed the word *pantar* with a word meaning “storehouses” (*paṇṭacālaikal*). In this case, I think the mediaeval commentator certainly thought of *bhāṇḍasālā* (“hall with boxes/commodities”, “storehouse”) while glossing *pantar*, so one might wonder where the retroflex consonants disappeared. The word *pantar* appears as of Dravidian origin in the *Dravidian Etymological Dictionary*, which means ‘shed of leaves’, ‘arbour’, or ‘pavilion’ in the Dravidian languages, but means ‘storehouse’ only in Tamil.<sup>1553</sup> This might instead reflect the misunderstanding of the *Patirruppattu*’s commentator inspired by his intellect and the similarities between these words. At the same time, he thought it made more sense to translate it as ‘storehouse’ rather than ‘arbour’. I must conclude that there is no way to prove that *pantar* meant anything other than ‘arbour’ or ‘pavilion’ in Early Old Tamil. In this case, the following passage: “O fighter of the good country [with] gardens [at] the cool sea [around] the big harbour which have fragrant *tālai*-groves [at] the *storehouses* (*pantar*) [in which] the wealth of the good vessels sleeps [at] the ocean [with] resounding, sweetly melodious waves!”, has to be somewhat understood as: “O fighter of the good country with gardens at the cool sea around the big harbour with fragrant *tālai*-groves at the sleeping/calm *arbour* (*pantar*), and with a wealth of the good vessels of the ocean which has resounding, sweetly melodious waves!”<sup>1554</sup>

In conclusion, I have to say that we, unfortunately, do not know anything sure about the ancient Cēra town called Pantar except its name, which has either an obscure origin or it

<sup>1550</sup> *Encyclopaedia Iranica*. III, 7, 685.

<sup>1551</sup> I am grateful to my colleagues in the Oriental Collection of the LHAS, with whom I consulted, especially Kinga Dévényi, who introduced the Arabic texts.

<sup>1552</sup> *A Sanskrit–English Dictionary*, 752.

<sup>1553</sup> *Dravidian Etymological Dictionary*, 3922.

<sup>1554</sup> ‘*in icaiṇ puṇari iraṅkum pawattu/nal kalam verukkai tuṅcum pantar/kamaḷum tālaik kāṇalam perum tuṇai/taṇ kaṭal paṭappai nal nāṭṭup poruna*’. *Patirruppattu*, 55: 3–6.

referred to the royal harbour erected by the king, which act we can see in the 51<sup>st</sup> poem of the *Patirruppattu*. Because of its pearl production, the town can be imagined somewhere on the Malabar Coast. Avvai Turaicāmiṭṭai claims that Pantar is the same as today's Panlūr (sic!) of Ponnani District, Kerala.<sup>1555</sup> He probably thought of Pantalūr, which town has, in fact, a similar name.

#### Kuṭṭanāṭu/Kottanarichē

Three from the towns of Kuṭṭanāṭu, Bakarē, Kottiarā, and Nelkynda were discussed earlier in detail. Given that these towns cannot be found by name in classical Indian sources, we must be content with what the Mediterranean authors record. In brief, Bakarē, Nelkynda, Kottiarā, and Marantai/Morounda were located in a region called Kottanarichē or Kuṭṭanāṭu, “the country of the lakes” (modern-day Ālappuḷā, Koṭṭayam and Pattanamṭiṭṭa Districts of Kerala), a place rich in lakes and backwaters, which was famous for its pepper production and where dugout canoes were in use in order to transport pepper from the fields to the markets. Agreeing with De Romanis, it was the southern pepper-producing land, a sub-region of Limyrikē, and a hinterland with exceptional pepper productivity, which certainly caused “the commercial pre-eminence” of Muziris and Nelkynda over other coastal settlements on the Malabar Coast.<sup>1556</sup> Some of these places used to be governed some time by the Pāṇṭiyas, who seemed to lose their political power in Kuṭṭanāṭu before the middle of the second century AD, since in those years Ptolemy (*Geog.* VII. 1. 9) already recorded that Melkynda/Melkyda, Elangōn emporion, Kottiarā mētropolis, Bammala/Bambala, Komaria, and Morounda in the interior were already located in the territories of the people called Aioi. The Aioi people referred to the Āy chieftains and their lands.

If we consider the information given by Pliny, the *Periplus*, and Ptolemy reliable, then it can be said that the Āy conquest over the western Pāṇṭiya lands must have happened after the middle of the 1<sup>st</sup> century and before the middle of the 2<sup>nd</sup> century AD. Even if Ptolemy mentioned these territories as belonging to Āy chieftains, Palyāṇaiccelkelu Kuṭṭuvan, who, according to the *Patirruppattu*'s epilogues, reigned more than fifty years earlier than Ceṅkuṭṭuvan, had already conquered some of the Koṅkunāṭu and Kuṭṭanāṭu regions. Suppose we accept the Gajabāhu synchronism as an anchor of Cēra chronology. In that case, we must

<sup>1555</sup> Turaicāmiṭṭai 2002, 246.

<sup>1556</sup> De Romanis 2020, 84–88.

conclude that at the time of Ptolemy, the Cēras and the Āy chieftains were both present in the former Pāṇṭiya territories south of Muziris. We cannot rule out the possibility that the Āy chiefs were friendly allies or vassals of the Cēra kings with whom they pushed the Pāṇṭiyas back together and with whom the relationship would only deteriorate later, at the time of the Irumporais. Thus, Bakarē was most probably a seaside village at the mouth of the Pampā River, Nelkynda was its riverside emporium, and Kottiarā was either the name of Kottanarichē in Ptolemy downgraded to a toponym,<sup>1557</sup> or an actual *metropolis* as Ptolemy states (the Barrington Atlas identifies it with Koṭṭārakkara, Kerala).<sup>1558</sup>

Moroundā, however, is somewhat unique in our list since it seems to be attested in the Caṅkam literature as Marantai or Māntai. As Eva Wilden correctly pointed out, the two names of this town, Marantai and Māntai, are graphically indistinguishable in the manuscripts. At the same time, T.V. Gopal Iyer claimed that Māntai is the correct one because of the *veṇṇpā* metre in the 95<sup>th</sup> verse of the *Muttollāyiram*.<sup>1559</sup> Considering the attestation of Moroundā in Ptolemy which has to be imagined around the southern end of the Āy territory in South Malabar, Marr thinks that it must be the same as Marantai of the Tamil sources and in that case, to read Marantai is also correct.<sup>1560</sup> Let us read the following passage of the 127<sup>th</sup> poem of the *Akanānūru*:

[...] having heaped in one place the *āmpal* measure rows of diamonds (*vayiram*), female statues (*pāvai*) made from gold, and good vessels worthy of praise, which had been given as humble tributes by the disobedient, at the court of Māntai/Marantai, the good town [of Cēralātaṅ] [...] <sup>1561</sup>

This poem proves that Māntai/Marantai was an important town of Cēralātaṅ. Other parts of the same poem that mention the defeat of the *kaṭampu*-tribe would suggest that here Cēralātaṅ must be the same as Neṭuñcēralātaṅ, the king who, for the first time, defeated the *kaṭampus*. However, not only Neṭuñcēralātaṅ fought against the *kaṭampus*, but also Kaḷaṅkāykaṅṅi Nārmuṭi Cēral and, according to the *Cilappatikāram*, Kaṭal Piṛakkōṭṭiya Ceṅkuṭṭuvaṅ too. All these rulers certainly bore the dynastic Cēralātaṅ title. The only king who had been mentioned

<sup>1557</sup> De Romanis 2020, 154.

<sup>1558</sup> Barrington Atlas, 65.

<sup>1559</sup> Wilden 2010, 146; footnote 149.

<sup>1560</sup> Marr 1985 [1958], 322–323.

<sup>1561</sup> ‘*nal nakar māntai murratt’ onnār paṇi tirai tanta pāṭu cāl nal kalam poṇi ceṅ pāvai vayiramoṭu āmpal onruwāy nūraiyaḱ kwaii*’. *Akanānūru* 127: 6–9.

as the “fighter of the people in Marantai” (*marantaiyōr poruna*)<sup>1562</sup> was Iḷaṅcēral Irumpoṛai who was in that sense the overlord of the lands of Āy.

Even so, the previous king, Peruṅcēral Irumpoṛai, was the one who fought and defeated Kaḷuvuḷ of Kāmūr, the chief of the “cowherds” (*ṭaiyar*) in South Malabar. One might accept the theory that the name of the tribe Āy means a ‘tribe of cowherds’ (< Tam. *ā* ‘cow’)<sup>1563</sup> and it is identical to the tribe called *ṭaiyar* of the Malabar Coast, but it is also possible that these tribes are not related at all. Be that as it may, we should conclude that if Marantai was the same as Morounda and the town of Āy, then it could not be a Cēra town before the Irumpoṛai kings who conquered the region of South Malabar for the first time in the Cēra history. One might think that the 127<sup>th</sup> poem of the *Akanānūru* of Māmūlaṅār mixes clichés of different ages of Cēra history, and Marantai was not a Cēra town at the time of Neṭuṅcēralātaṅ.

We have a problem with interpreting Marantai as an inland town of Āy, which seemed to escape Marr’s attention. He argues that Marantai in the *Patirrupattu* is not a seaside town since in the phrase *iraṅku nīrṭ parappiṅ marantaiyōr poruna* we find only ‘water’ (*nīr*) which does not necessarily means ‘sea’, but also ‘river’, ‘lake’, etc.<sup>1564</sup> Even if he is right in this matter, in other poems on Marantai it is clear that the sea was close to the town: in *Kuruntokai* 34: 4. we read about ‘seashore groves’ (*kānal*) at Marantai; the *Kuruntokai* 166: 1–3. clearly refers to Marantai as a seashore village with ‘rolling waves of the cool sea’ (*taṅ kaṭal paṭu tirai*); in *Narriṅai* 35: 1–7. we see ‘foaming waves’ (*poṅku tirai*) and ‘crabs’ (*alavan*) at the ‘harbour/ghat’ (*turai*) of Marantai, while in *Narriṅai* 395: 9. we find the name of the town as ‘seaside Marantai’ (*kaṭal kelu marantai*).

Three possible interpretations remained at the end of the analysis: 1.) Māntai/Marantai is the same as the Greek Morounda; in that case, Ptolemy must have been wrong in calling it an inland town of South Malabar rather than a coastal one, and this would also mean that the town had been conquered/established by the Cēras at the time of the Irumpoṛais; 2.) Māntai/Marantai is *not* the same as the Greek Morounda; in that case, the reading of Māntai is adequate, and we must confess that we know nothing about the location and antiquity of the place, so the data given by Māmūlaṅār is not surely fictitious; 3.) we had two towns (Māntai and Marantai), or one town with two names. We can certainly determine that there was a Cēra town called Māntai and/or Marantai on the Malabar Coast, where (at least) one of the Cēra kings accumulated the incoming wealth in his treasury.

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<sup>1562</sup> *Patirrupattu*, 90: 28.

<sup>1563</sup> *Tamil Lexicon*, 236.

<sup>1564</sup> Marr 1985 [1958], 322.



We do not have direct literary evidence for busy trade routes across the Cēra country. However, we have different sources for reconstructing trade corridors: Roman and local coins, archaeological evidence, and the dynastic titles of the Cēras, together with their settlement network.

More than six thousand Roman silver and gold coins have been found in the Indian peninsula, from which the largest quantity derive from the Tamil South. The chronological distribution of the silver *denarii* found in India shows a dominance of coinage from the times of Augustus (31 BC–14 AD) and Tiberius (14–37 AD), while we have almost no findings after the currency reform introduced by Nero (54–68 AD) in 64 AD, debasing the silver with about 7% copper alloy. Regarding the gold *aurei*, the majority of the findings are from the reign of Tiberius, Claudius (41–54 AD) and Nero (54–68 AD), while *aurei*, after the reform of Nero, which reduced the weight while preserving the purity, are rare. Later, from the 2<sup>nd</sup> century AD, we have only coins from the times of Antoninus Pius (138–161 AD) and Septimius Severus (193–211 AD), but less in quantity than from the first century AD. 3<sup>rd</sup> century Roman coins seem to be absent in India. In contrast, we have gold *solidi* coins from the 4<sup>th</sup> century AD found in India and Sri Lanka. Large quantities of Roman copper from the 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> centuries AD were found in India and Sri Lanka, while the last gold coins came from the age of Heraclius' reign (610–641 AD).<sup>1565</sup> Talking about the silver *denarii*, since the older coins found in Indian hoards are usually much worn than the later ones but still have a high silver purity, this most probably means that the coins, after they had circulated for some time in the Roman Empire,<sup>1566</sup> were carefully selected for export to India, which happened long time after they had been issued, probably around the end of the 1<sup>st</sup> century AD.<sup>1567</sup> Analysing the findings, Meyer arrived at the conclusion that Indian traders had a good knowledge of the silver purity and the Roman coinage, and they preferred to receive coins from the time before the reform of Nero.<sup>1568</sup> What made this summary necessary is the fact that most of the places where Roman hoards have been found in South India lie in Koṅkunāṭu with Karuvūr, the Cēra capital as their centre, where more than a thousand Roman coins have been discovered.<sup>1569</sup> The unearthed coins of Koṅkunāṭu constitute ca. 70% silver coins and 90% coins from the 1<sup>st</sup> century AD.<sup>1570</sup> We

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<sup>1565</sup> This summary was based on Meyer 2007, 59.

<sup>1566</sup> Meyer 2007, 60.

<sup>1567</sup> Seland 2010, 65.

<sup>1568</sup> Meyer 2007, 60.

<sup>1569</sup> Nagaswamy 1974, 397.

<sup>1570</sup> Meyer 2007, 61.

should also emphasise that most of the coins were found in hoards, e.g. the Pūtinattam (Budinathan) hoard near Uṭumalpēṭ, Koṅkunāṭu contained 1398 silver coins.<sup>1571</sup> A coin die bearing a Roman device has been found at Karūr, which discovery suggests that Roman coins were also manufactured here.<sup>1572</sup> What is more, over five thousand late Roman coins in copper or bronze have been found at Karūr, and Roman coins did not stop arriving at Karūr until the 5<sup>th</sup> century AD.<sup>1573</sup> However, not just these, but local coins were already minted at Karūr. As Mahadevan says, enormous quantities of Cēra coins have been found in the Amarāvati riverbed; among them, hundreds of square-shaped copper coins with the Cēra insignia of the bow and the arrow.<sup>1574</sup> The earliest Cēra coins without inscriptions have to be dated back to the 2<sup>nd</sup> century BC, whilst the inscribed silver ones with portraits of the Cēras are most probably from the 3<sup>rd</sup> century AD.<sup>1575</sup> Majumdar adds to this that the Koṅku region came within the Cēra political orbit around the middle of the 2<sup>nd</sup> century BC, which question of chronology I discussed elsewhere.<sup>1576</sup> No doubt, the numismatic evidence points in this direction. However, the early silver punch-marked coins of the Cēras, according to Majumdar, imitate the Series IV coins of the Mauryans, and they were probably Mauryan coins and the reverse symbol of the Cēras (bow) was added later as a checking mark or a mark of appropriation.<sup>1577</sup> Majumdar mentions that it is also possible that the coins were mere imitations to mint their coinage, or these coins were minted with the permission of the Mauryan state if the rules of minting recorded in the *Arthaśāstra* (II. 22. 25) were still valid around this region,<sup>1578</sup> under which a significant penalty (25 *paṇa*) had to be paid for those who manufactured coins elsewhere than the Mauryan Empire. Does that show the tribal period of the Cēra history, when the homeland was Koṅkunāṭu, which was lost during their expansion to the west and reconquered after Neṭuñcēralātaṅ? Focusing on the inscribed coins of the Cēras from the ca. 3<sup>rd</sup> century AD, we find legends like *mākkōtai* ‘The Great Kōtai’, *kuttuva-kōtai* ‘Kuṭṭuvaṅ Kōtai’, *kol-i-p-purai* ‘Porai of Kolli’, and *kol-irumpurai-y* ‘Irumporai of Kolli’, which already shows the importance of Karūr region in the Irumporai period of Cēra history. Regarding Kolli or Kollikuṭavarai, it was an important mountain range in the Cēra kingdom (supported by dozens of Caṅkam poems, but even the later 9<sup>th</sup>-century *Tivākaram* mentions the Cēraṅ as Kolliccilampan). The Kolli Hills

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<sup>1571</sup> Meyer 2007, 62.

<sup>1572</sup> Majumdar 2008, 405.

<sup>1573</sup> Majumdar 2008, 413.

<sup>1574</sup> Mahadevan 2001, 153.

<sup>1575</sup> Mahadevan 2001, 153.

<sup>1576</sup> Majumdar 2008, 404.

<sup>1577</sup> Majumdar 2008, 404.

<sup>1578</sup> Majumdar 2008, 404–405.

were once ruled by the chief called Ōri, and they were perhaps an important place of worship where the goddess Kollippāvai found her abode.<sup>1579</sup> The Kolli Hills still bear the same name in Tamil Nadu north of Karūr. I assume that the variant that calls it Kuṭavarai (“The Western Mountain”) comes from those who lived in the eastern parts of South India or weirdly referred to the Cēras (*kuṭamalai*=\**kuṭavar-malai*?). Even if numismatics cannot answer all our questions as these coins do not necessarily appear where they were used, e.g. the case of hoards, while other coins have disappeared without a trace due to melting down or during the international trade of antiquities, it still points out the presence of the Cēras in Karūr. What epigraphy can tell us is not less important: the Pukaḷūr inscription nr. 9 mentions a gold merchant from Karuūr (*karuūr poṇvāṇikan*), nr. 10 talks about an oil merchant called Venṇi Ātaṇ (*eṇṇai vāṇṇikan veni ātaṇ*), others like nr. 1–2 mention a Jaina monk namely Mutā Amaṇṇaṇ Yārūr Ceṅkāyapaṇ and Cēra rulers such as Iṅkaṭuṅkō, Peruṅkaṭuṅkō, and Ātaṇ Cellirumpoṛai.<sup>1580</sup>

Thus, we have seen the antiquity of the town Karūr and the evidence which proved that an important capital of the Cēras existed there. Another vital town that should be mentioned is Koṭumaṇam, the early historic habitation-cum-burial site at Koṭumaṇal, Tamil Nadu, on the north bank of the Noyyal river, ca. 80 km of Karūr. The town was mentioned only in the *Patirrupattu* without giving much attention to it.

O skilful minstrel (*pāṇaṇ*) of the tradition which is [your] duty to know, from the famous ancient town called Pantar, together with [your] relatives [who have delivered] an encomium (*neṭumolī*) [upon the king], which happened in Koṭumaṇam, you will receive good jewels together with pearls from the clear ocean!<sup>1581</sup>

This poem was sung to Celvakaṭuṅkō Vāliyātaṇ, an Irumpoṛai Cēra king who ruled over the territories of the Koṅku country together with Karuvūr which was, no doubt, already his capital. The other reference on Koṭumaṇam mentions “the gloriously crafted rare jewels/vessels which turned up [in] Koṭumaṇam” (*koṭumaṇam paṭṭa viṇai māṇ arum kalam*).<sup>1582</sup> Archaeologists found evidence that the ancient people of Koṭumaṇam produced iron, steel, and copper objects,<sup>1583</sup>

<sup>1579</sup> *Pre-Pallavan Tamil Index*, 327.

<sup>1580</sup> Mahadevan 2001, 405–421.

<sup>1581</sup> ‘*koṭumaṇam paṭṭa neṭumolī okkalotu/pantarṭ peyariya pēr icai mūt’ ūrk/kaṭaṇ ari maraṭiṅ kai val pāṇa/teḷ kaṭal muttamotu nal kalam perukuṭai*. *Patirrupattu*, 67: 1–4.

<sup>1582</sup> *Patirrupattu*, 74: 5.

<sup>1583</sup> Rajan 2015, 7–8.

but Koṭumaṇam was also famous for its gemstone-, and conch-shell industry.<sup>1584</sup> In fact, Koṭumaṇam was surrounded by the rich-in-beryl Padiyur, the rich-in-sapphire Sivanmalai and Perumalmai, which all lie about 15 km from today's Koṭumaṇal. The quartz-bearing Venkamēṭu and Arasampalayam lie 5 km north and south of Koṭumaṇal. Still, as K. Rajan mentions, another quartz-bearing mound has also been discovered a kilometre north of the habitation mound. In Koṭumaṇam, beads of sapphire, beryl, agate, carnelian, amethyst, lapis-lazuli, jasper, garnet, soapstone, and quartz have been unearthed from the habitation site, while a significant quantity of etched carnelian beads and agate have been found in the graves. It seems that Koṭumaṇam was a centre of the weaving industry as well, as a huge number of terracotta spindle whorls, iron rods, ivory and bone tools used in weaving, and well-preserved pieces of woven cotton were found here.<sup>1585</sup> Also, many inscribed potsherds (1456 in number, among which 598 had graffiti symbols) have been unearthed here.<sup>1586</sup> Punch-marked coins from the 3<sup>rd</sup> c. BC and some Roman coins were also found at the site.<sup>1587</sup> Just as the punch-marked coins, the Tamil Brāhmī potsherds of Koṭumaṇal bring us back to the 3<sup>rd</sup>–2<sup>nd</sup> centuries BC or even before, while the literary evidence might prove that the site still existed in the 1–3<sup>rd</sup> centuries AD. South of Karuvūr and Koṭumaṇam, we find the historical district called Pūlināṭu, which was, as we shall see, once the dominion of the early Cēras.<sup>1588</sup>

In the previous pages, I discussed the detailed archaeological findings that present the “international” embeddedness of Muciṛi, the Cēra emporium. In Karūr, archaeologists also discovered, in addition to the above, brick architecture, Roman amphorae, rouletted ware of local<sup>1589</sup> and Mediterranean origin, terra sigillata, potsherds with Tamil Brāhmī scripts even from the beginning of the 1<sup>st</sup> century AD, moulded pottery of kaolin, russet-coated painted black and red ware,<sup>1590</sup> and Sri Lankan “Lakshmi type coins”.<sup>1591</sup>

I discussed earlier that the location of the Cēra capital, called Vañci on the Malabar Coast, could not be proved from the ancient sources. It is possible that the mediaeval Cēramāṇ Perumāḷs were the kings who tried to identify their capital of Makōtai (at Koṭuṇṇallūr), probably built on an ancient centre, with Vañci/Karuvūr to prove its antiquity. No doubt, an important economic and political headquarters existed at Muciṛi, at Toṇṭi and Naravu, but the capital of

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<sup>1584</sup> Rajan 2015, 8–9.

<sup>1585</sup> Rajan 2015, 10.

<sup>1586</sup> Rajan 2015, 10.

<sup>1587</sup> Rajan 2015, 11; 30.

<sup>1588</sup> Chevillard 2008, 7. Regarding the location of Pūlināṭu, I followed Jean-Luc Chevillard, who relied on the maps given by Marr and by Auvai Turaicāmiṭṭai.

<sup>1589</sup> Nagaswamy 1974, 398.

<sup>1590</sup> Gurukkal 2016, 29.

<sup>1591</sup> Majumdar 2008, 413.

the Cēra kingdom was certainly at Karuvūr in Koṅkunāṭu from the first half of the second century AD, where the archaeological findings discussed before show the existence of an important trade corridor through the Palghat Gap.

Trade routes of the early Cēra kingdom

We know that important trade routes (*peruvali*) passed through mediaeval Koṅkunāṭu, such as the *koṅkapperuvali*, the *vīranārāyaṇaperuvali*, the *nāṭṭupperuvali*, the *rājakēśaripperuvali*, the *ayiraipperuvali*, the *makadēsaṅ-peruvali*, the *atiyaṅmāṅ-peruvali*, the *pērarrupperuvali*, the *cōlamādēvipperuvali*, the *pālapperuvali*, and the *kāraitṭuraipperuvali*. Among these, two have particular importance for us: the *koṅkapperuvali*, an ancient east-west route that connected the Kāviri delta with Koṅkunāṭu, which route might have passed Uṛaiyūr, Kuḷittalai, and Karūr, and the *rājakēśaripperuvali* that connected Koṅkunāṭu with Malaimaṅṭalam of Kerala.<sup>1592</sup> Selvakumar, in his excellent paper, analyses the routes of early historic Tamil Nadu in detail. According to his research, we find an important highway that starts at Karuvūr, the Cēra capital and goes on the southern bank of the Kāviri to Uṛaiyūr, the Cōḷa capital.<sup>1593</sup> There was another important highway that connected Karuvūr with northern settlements and the Mysore Plateau of Karnataka. This route linked Pukaḷūr, Araccalūr, Erettimalai; deviated west from Peruntuṛai, and through Avināci, Kōpicceṭṭippālayam, and Cattiyamaṅkalam reached the Mysore Plateau via the Timpam Ghat.<sup>1594</sup> Karuvūr was the junction of the most important routes of the age. It was connected to the Cēra homeland across the Pālakkāṭ Gap through the sites of Koṭumuṭi, Nattakkāṭaiyūr, Koṭumanal, Cūlūr, Vellālūr, Pērūr on the banks of the Noyyal river to the settlements and ports of Kuṭanāṭu and Kuṭṭanāṭu.<sup>1595</sup> The inland capitals of the Pāṅṭiya and Cōḷa kingdoms were connected through three different ways which met in a junction at Koṭumpālūr. From there, the eastern route crossed via Koṭṭāmpaṭṭi and Mēlūr; the western route touched the Ciṛumalai Hill via Vāṭṭippaṭṭi; the middle route passed Tuvaraṅkuṛicci, Nattam, and Aḷakarmalai.<sup>1596</sup> Other routes existed between Maturai and Aḷakaṅkuḷam via Paramakkuṭi and Irāmanātapuram, and between Maturai and Toṅṭi on the eastern shore. The southern ports like Becare/Bacharē and Nelkynda of Kuṭṭanāṭu were linked to Maturai via Tēni and Kambam–Kumuḷi, and Muciṛi also had a route that connected it to the Pāṅṭiya

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<sup>1592</sup> Rajan 2015, 1.

<sup>1593</sup> Selvakumar 2016, 295–296.

<sup>1594</sup> Selvakumar 2016, 296.

<sup>1595</sup> Selvakumar 2016, 296–297.

<sup>1596</sup> Selvakumar 2016, 298.

capital Maturai.<sup>1597</sup> Selvakumar mentions a route that connected Maturai and the Cēra seashore settlements, which passed Nattam, Oṭṭaṅcattiram, Neykkārppaṭṭi, Koḷumam, Uṭumalaipēṭṭai, Poḷḷācci, Pērūr, the Pālakkāṭ Gap, and finally reached the Malabar Coast via Kollaṅkōṭ.<sup>1598</sup> Maturai of the Pāṅṭiyas had further connections to Koṟkai of the Gulf of Mannar and Kaṅṅiyākumari with an additional route between Koṟkai and Tirunelvēli. Koṟkai was also linked to the region around Kollaṅ in Kerala via Āticcanallūr, Kurṟālam, and the Western Ghats following the Tāmiraparaṅi Valley.<sup>1599</sup> Another routes connected the Kōyampuṭṭūr region of Koṅkunāṭu with the north- and south-eastern shores of Tamil Nadu; one linked the Pālakkāṭ region with Kaṭalūr via Pērūr, Tiruccenkōṭu, Rācipuram, Āttūr, Viruttāccalam, and Vaṭalūr; another one led through Kaḷḷakkuṟicci, Tirukkōvilūr to Arikkamēṭu (Arikamedu).<sup>1600</sup> We know two another crucial routes, one that led via the shores connecting Kaṅṅiyākumari, today's Pāṅṭiccēri (Pondichéry), and today's Ceṅṅnai, and another system of routes that connected Vacavacamuttiram and Kāñcipuram with settlements of Andhra Pradesh.<sup>1601</sup> Beside these interstate routes, we can be sure that the Malabar Coast was interlaced with further trade routes that connected northern Malabar to southern Malabar and all these settlements to either the great routes of the Pālakkāṭ region or to Kaṅṅiyākumari.

After these details, let us have a look at the royal vocatives in the *Patirruppattu* that are connected to geographic data:

Palyāṅaiccēlkeḷu Kuṭṭuvaṅ / III. decade

- King of the Pūliyar (*pūliyar kō*), 21: 23;
- Fighter of the tall Ayirai (*neṭum varai ayiraiṭ porunaṅ*), 21: 29;
- Frightening appearance with a spear-army, who annexed the country of the Koṅkars (*koṅkar nāṭ' akappaṭutta vēl keḷu tāṅai vēruvaru tōṅṅal*), 22: 15–16;
- Kuṭṭuvaṅ who attacked Akappā (*akappā erinta ... kuṭṭuvaṅ*), 22: 26–27.

Kaḷaṅkāykanṅi Nārmuṭi Cēral / IV. decade

- Man of the Nēri (*nēriyōṅ*), 40: 20.

Cēṅkuṭṭuvaṅ / V. decade

- King of the westerners (*kuṭavar kōmāṅ*), V. 2.

<sup>1597</sup> Selvakumar 2016, 300.

<sup>1598</sup> Selvakumar 2016, 301.

<sup>1599</sup> Selvakumar 2016, 302–303.

<sup>1600</sup> Selvakumar 2016, 304.

<sup>1601</sup> Selvakumar 2016, 305–306.

Āṭukōṭpāṭṭu Cēralātaṅ / VI. decade

- King of the westerners (*kuṭavar kō*), 55: 9;
- Fighter of the excellent country with gardens at the cool sea (*taṅ katal paṭappai nal nāṭṭuṭ porunan*), 55: 6.

Celvakkaṭuṅkō Vāliyātaṅ / VII. decade

- Fighter of the Nēri (*nēriṭ porunan*), 67: 22.

Peruñcēral Irumporai / VIII. decade

- Lord of Pukār (*pukāar celvan*), 73: 9;
- Body shield of the Pūliyar (*pūliyar meymmarai*), 73: 9;
- Fighter of the Kolli (*kollip porunan*), 73: 11.

Ḥaṅcēral Irumporai / IX. decade

- King of the Koṅkar (*koṅkar kō*), 88: 19;
- Fighter of the people in Toṅṭi (*toṅṭiyōr porunan*), 88: 21;
- King of the Koṅkar (*koṅkar kō*), 90: 25;
- Bull of the Kuṭṭuvar (*kuṭṭuvar ēru*), 90: 26;
- Body shield of the Pūliyar (*pūliyar meymmarai*), 90: 27;
- Fighter of the people in Marantai (*marantaiyōr porunan*), 90: 28.

Reviewing these epithets, we can draw up some tendencies of the territorial changes and the relative expanse of the Cēra kingdom in a later period (2<sup>nd</sup>–3<sup>rd</sup> c. AD). What is essential here is to visualise the vast landscape of the monarchy that covers Kuṭānāṭu, the north- and mid-western division on the Malabar Coast; Kuṭṭānāṭu, the rich-in-lake hinterland of Muciṛi, Becare, and Nelkynda; Koṅkunāṭu with Koṭumaṅam, Karuvūr/Vañci, and with the Kolli Hills; and finally, the northern parts of Pūlināṭu south of the Koṅku region. We see that the Cēras invaded and, even if only for a shorter period, conquered Pukār on the Coromandel Coast, fought against the Cōḷas at Nēri, fought around the Ayirai Hill, and annexed areas of the *iṭaiyar* and the chief called Āy in South Malabar. The epithets of the last king of the *Patirruppattu* Ḥaṅcēral Irumporai seem to suggest that in his time, the Cēra kingdom reached its greatest extent, so we could explain the central motif behind the *Patirruppattu* as a large-scale anthology that seeks to present how the kingdom of the Irumporais became extensive, wealthy, and powerful.

The directions indicated by the Cēra military enterprises show the intention to gain control over the Malabar Coast and the Kāviri Valley and the most important trade routes of

the age while trying to weaken, make dependent, or defeat their rivals. Thus, in my view, the Cēra expansions were not only schematic literary examples of the predatory warfares in early South India, but they also have historical value: the Cēras tried to control the inland trade of South India between the ports of the Malabar Coast and the Coromandel Coast, for which their capital in Karuvūr had a perfect strategic position. At the same time, the Cēras laid their hands on the mines of Koṅkunāṭu, rich in precious stones. This way, the Cēras at a particular time of their early history, probably around the second half of the 2<sup>nd</sup> century and the beginning of the 3<sup>rd</sup> century AD, were able to control most of the ports of the Malabar Coast, the trade routes via the Pālakkāṭ Gap, the mines of Koṅkunāṭu, and through their favourable position, they had the opportunity to profit from the ancient inland trade in South India offering a market at Karuvūr for goods flowing from all directions.

### ***Traders, markets and money***

In the previous chapters, I have tried to prove from the Early Old Tamil literary sources that to interpret Cēra kings as chieftains and their state as tribal is untenable since our available primary sources seem to suggest a different picture: the existence of a gradually strengthening ‘early kingdom’<sup>1602</sup> of the Cēras in southwestern India with all the necessary conditions to exploit the potential of trade.

The rise of a ritually confirmed kingdom with royal insignia that connected it to the northern political tradition of India may have been part of a rational process that ensured the stable succession of the Cēras’ lineage, the acceptance of their dynasty among the people inside and outside their kingdom, and their ability to compete with the surrounding monarchies, e.g., in the fields of economy and wealth. Considering this, the task awaits re-examining the *Patirruppattu*’s references to trade, traders, markets, and money.

We know from the *Periplus Maris Erythraei* (Chapter 49, 56) that Romans and other merchants of the *oikumene* travelled to India to buy or barter pepper, malabathrum, ivory, silk cloth, spikenard, precious stones, diamonds, sapphires, pearls, tortoise-shell, luxury items, and rare animals. In exchange, the Romans offered glass, copper, tin, lead, wine, antimony, linens, clothing, coins, realgar, orpiment, etc.<sup>1603</sup> Most of these commodities as the primary articles of Indo-Roman trade were confirmed by both the excavations in South India and the shipwreck of Bēt Dvārka, Gujarat.<sup>1604</sup> In Caṅkam literature, both the love (*akam*) and the heroic (*puram*)

<sup>1602</sup> I believe that the kingdom of Cēras meets the criteria of Kulke’s ‘early kingdoms’: Kulke 1993.

<sup>1603</sup> Gurukkal 2016, 77–78.

<sup>1604</sup> See: Cherian–Menon 2014; *The Oxford Handbook of Maritime Archaeology*, 518–519.



poems include several songs that report directly or indirectly on early trade. Although we often read about merchants trading salt, paddy, gold, clothes, liquor, fragrance, flowers, etc., commercial terminology such as ‘market’, ‘shop’, ‘coin’, ‘warehouse’, and ‘money’ are not frequent in the texts. These songs are either erotic compositions that proclaim love and the intricacies that come with it or heroic poetry that glorifies the acts of heroes. Still, both trends naturally obscure some of the world behind them or do not attach undue importance to them. Therefore, it is necessary to discover and examine these textual references and, where they are worthwhile, take their attestations seriously. In the case of those poems which deal with port towns, we sometimes have surprisingly informative descriptions of trade. For example, a very impressive picture of the early trade relations of the Cōlas is found in the *Pattinappālai*, in which we see “prancing, swift horses that arrived on water, bales of black pepper that arrived on legs/by winds/on wheels (*kāl*), gold (*pon*) and sapphire (*maṇi*)<sup>1605</sup> that were produced by northern mountains, sandal- and eagle-wood (*akil*) that were produced by western mountains, pearls of the southern sea, corals of the eastern sea, exports (*vārī*) of the Kaṅkai (Gaṅgā), yields of the Kāviri, food from Īlam (Śrī Laṅkā), and wealth from Kālakam (Burma).”<sup>1606</sup>

Regarding the Cēras, let us read the beginning of the much quoted 343<sup>rd</sup> poem of the *Puranānūru*:

[With] heaping up paddy having sold fish, mound[-like]-boats (*ampī*) can be confused for houses. Due to the bundles of black pepper (*karī*) heaped in the houses, [the latter] are confused for shores with clamorous sound. The golden gift brought by vessels reaches the shores by boats (*tōṇi*) of the backwaters (*kali*). Like Muciṛi where the sea roars like the *mulavu*-drum, [the town of] Kuṭṭuvan with a gold garland and stream-like toddy, who gives liberally the articles (*tāram*) of the seas and the articles of the mountains to those who come and have gathered [...]<sup>1607</sup>

In this poem, we see the early Cēra port called Muciṛi (Muziris), which was a fortified (*puricai*) town (*ūr*) with walls (*matil*),<sup>1608</sup> where fish were sold, paddy was heaped on boats, warehouses

<sup>1605</sup> The main meaning of the word *maṇi* is ‘sapphire’; however, in some cases, we have to consider understanding ‘precious stone’ or ‘jewel’ (cf. Skt. *maṇi*).

<sup>1606</sup> ‘*Nīrin vanta nimir pariṅpuraviyūm/kālīn vanta karuikarī mūṭaiyūm/vaṭamalaiṅṅiranta maṇiyūm poṇnum /kuṭamalaiṅṅiranta āramum akilum/tenkaṭal muttum kuṅakaṭal tukirum/kaṅkai vāriyūm kāvirīṅṅayanūm/īlatt’ unavum kālakatt’ ākkamum’*. *Pattinappālai*, 185–191.

<sup>1607</sup> ‘*mīn noṭuttu nel kuvai/micai ampīyīn maṇai maṇukkuntu/maṇaik kuvaiya karī mūṭaiyāl/kalic cummaiya karai kalakkuruṅtu/kalam tanta poṅ paricam/kalīṭ tōṇiyāl karai cērkuntu/malait tāramum kaṭal tāramum/ialaiṅṅ peytu varunarkku iṅṅum/punal am kaṭṭīn polan tārk kuṭṭuvan/mulāṅku kaṭal mulavīn mucirī anna ...’*. *Puranānūru*, 343: 1–10.

<sup>1608</sup> *Puranānūru*, 343: 16–17.

(*manai*) were full of black pepper sacks, golden gifts (*pon paricam*) were brought to the shore by the boats/canoes of the backwaters, and Kuṭṭuvan, the king gave rare articles (*tāram*) of the mountains and of the seas to his visitors (*varunar*).

In his monograph on the Muziris papyrus, De Romanis understood that the king is the one “who offers toddy as if it were water to those who come to pour there the goods from the mountains and those from the sea”; however, the word order suggests that the king has two attributes: he is the one with a *golden garland* (*polan tār*) and with *stream-like toddy* (*puṇal am kaḷ*). He is also the one who “gives liberally” (*īyum*) the articles of seas and mountains, in which case *talaiṭṭeytu* is an absolutive used as an adverb that is related (1.) either to the imperfective *peyareccam* ‘*īyum*’, or (2.) to ‘*varunar*’, ‘those who come’. Here, the meaning of *talaiṭṭeytu* is obscure. The interpretation chosen by V. I. Subramoniam as “having mixed”<sup>1609</sup> derived from the compound verb *talaiṭṭey-tal*<sup>1610</sup> does not seem to be attested in the old corpus.<sup>1611</sup> Considering our oldest attestations, we have different ways to interpret this passage. We could understand *ṭeytu* as ‘having showered’ and *talai* as an intensifier of the verb (“having intensely showered”). In this case the *articles* (*tāram*) which the king has given are the only possible subjects of the sequence, otherwise, if the *articles* would be showered by the *visitors* themselves, *īyum* as a transitive verb would remain without subject. Nevertheless, the best way seems to be to choose the other old meaning of *talaiṭṭeytu* as ‘having joined’ or ‘having gathered’ (a contracted form of *talaiṭṭeyar-tal*),<sup>1612</sup> and to connect it as an adverb to *varunar*, so that we translate “the ones who come having joined/gathered”. De Romanis, in his translation, mistakenly connects *marukkuntu* (Line 2), *kalakkuruntu* (Line 4), and *cērkuntu* (Line 6) as the acts of the *visitors*. Since these are all main predicates (3<sup>rd</sup> person neuter singular)<sup>1613</sup> of three separate sentences (or *mureccams* connected to Mucirī), the first six lines describe the port.

Regarding the Tamil syntax, we do not see the ‘golden gifts’ in the hands of the king’s visitors anymore, at least not in the hands of those who received ‘the articles of seas and mountains’, so we cannot even talk about *direct* exchange of gifts in this poem. When McLaughlin cites the passage mentioned above, he concludes that “it seems the Tamil elites regarded their contacts with the Roman traders as a form of gift exchange rather than straightforward commercial dealings”.<sup>1614</sup> In contrast, the appearance of gift-giving is a result

<sup>1609</sup> *Index of Puranaanuru*, 328.

<sup>1610</sup> *Tamil Lexicon*, 1782.

<sup>1611</sup> The old meanings of *talaiṭṭey-tal* are: (1.) to pour on the head, (2.) to shower intensely, (3.) to join/gather. Cf. *Kalittokai* 95: 27; *Akanānūru* 256: 20; *Paṭirūṭṭattu*, II. 9; *Aiṅkurunūru* 86: 4.

<sup>1612</sup> *Tamil Ilakkiyaṭ Pēraḱarāṭi*, 99; *Tamil Lexicon*, 1782; cf. *Aiṅkurunūru* 86: 4.

<sup>1613</sup> Rajam 1992, 605.

<sup>1614</sup> McLaughlin 2010, 49.

of the milieu of early Tamil literature, in which the ability to liberally “shower” gifts to the gift-seekers (*paricilar*) and supplicants (*iravalar*) was one of the most important features to define a hero.<sup>1615</sup> Therefore, in these cases, it is challenging to extract data for the reconstruction of the early economy since there are dozens of poems where chiefs and kings give away gifts to meet the criteria of ancient Tamil heroism; for instance, the chief called Pāri gifted a chariot to a creeper (*Puranānūru* 201: 3), while another one, Pēkaṅ gifted a garment (*paṭam*) to a peacock (*Puranānūru* 141: 11), etc., which are definitely not cases of economically rational ‘gift-exchange’. I agree with Subbiah that in these early centuries gift-exchange could have a “magical-cum-religious function” and “operated as a major mode of circulation of wealth, and as a process for legitimising or reinforcing social and moral ties between individuals and/or groups of peoples”.<sup>1616</sup> The exchange of prestigious gifts in Roman trade between Roman traders and Tamil rulers was a side-product rather to strengthen relations, and I believe it has little to do with actual trade. As economically rational actors, the Roman traders certainly knew that with prestigious gifts, they could facilitate make favourable deals with the Indians and have a safe stay as important guests of the Cēra kingdom surrounded by envious enemies, in which case the personal interests (safety and making profit) of the actual traders were undoubtedly more important than those of the Empire. In contrast, the Cēra king knew that with eye-catching presents, he could ensure that his economic partner would sail to him year after year with tons of products and with an insatiable desire for the goods available in his country, which trade boosted the prosperity of his kingdom and strengthened his power and popularity. Thus, in the case of prestigious gifts, we are most probably talking about a mere economic calculation, and only in the case of the wandering bards, their families, and the poorest can we talk about gifts as a redistribution of wealth that ensures someone’s livelihood. Otherwise, gift-giving was a mere selfless act and a manifestation of the grace of the kings and heroes that happened around the court by chance or regularly for stabilising relations. Anyway, we have evidence for those who tried to trade in the gifts given by the king; that is why Peruñcittiraṅār said in frustration, “I am not a gift-seeker for business” (*yāṅ or vāṅnikapparicilan allēṅ*),<sup>1617</sup> since he humiliatingly received a gift without the king meeting him in person. Thus, in the 343<sup>rd</sup> poem of the *Puranānūru*, although it is possible to point out the local fish- and pepper trade, the gift-giving tradition of kings, and the existence of ‘golden gifts’ brought by boats, it is, however, not possible to prove that the visitors of the king were either “Greeks” (*yavaṅar*), or the ones who actually

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<sup>1615</sup> On gift-giving, see: Subbiah 1991, 133–158.

<sup>1616</sup> Subbiah 1991, 134.

<sup>1617</sup> *Puranānūru*, 208: 6–7.

brought there the golden articles. The people who came to the king (*varunar*) could be identified rather as *paricilar* or the traditional ‘gift-seekers’ who quite frequently appear in the poems, which, however, does not exclude the possibility that we could have found *yavanar* among them.

In *Akanānūru* 149, we see the Pāṇṭiya siege of the fortified Muciṛi, where *yavanas* arrived on their ships (*kalam*):

Celiyaṅ with a tall and good elephant murderous in war seized statues (*paṭimam*) after he had overcome in a difficult battle, after he had surrounded [the town] so that clamour arose [in] the prosperous Muciṛi [where] gloriously crafted, *yavanar*-driven (*tanta*) good vessels came with gold (*pon*) and returned with pepper (*karī*), while they stirred up the white foam of Culli, the big river (*pēriyāru*) of the Cēralar.<sup>1618</sup>

In these lines, we read about *yavanar*, who imported gold to Muciṛi and exported black pepper from the port. Regarding the misunderstandings around this poem, the name of the river was certainly Culli<sup>1619</sup> and not the anyway anachronistic *pēriyāru*, ‘big river’. In fact, we do not have evidence to prove that a river called ‘Pēriyāru’ existed in the Cēra kingdom in these early centuries.<sup>1620</sup> Later and even today, the biggest river of Kerala is, of course, called Periyār, but regarding the Caṅkam texts, in all the cases when the compound *pēriyāru* ‘big river’ appears, except the one that has just been mentioned, we cannot indeed identify the river. The second possible misinterpretation is that the Muziris trade was an actual gold-pepper exchange. We know that during the Indo-Roman trade, pepper and gold changed hands in huge amounts, but it is unclear what happened in the port towns of the Malabar Coast when the *yavanar* arrived and stayed for a few months every year. It might seem to be a nuance, but we cannot confidently call the Muziris trade an ‘exchange’ (in the end, maybe it is),<sup>1621</sup> since, as we shall see, markets with gold as a measure of value and at least partial monetisation existed in the early Cēra kingdom.

In the 57<sup>th</sup> poem of the *Akanānūru*, we read again about the Pāṇṭiya siege of Muciṛi/Muziris, when “Celiyaṅ [whose] chariot [has] flags and horses with trimmed manes,

<sup>1618</sup> ‘... cēralar/culliyam pēriyāru veṅ nurai kalaṅka/yavanar tanta vinai mān nāṅkalam/ponnoṭu vantu kariyoṭu peyarum/valam kelu muciri āṛpp’ *ela vaḷaii*’. *Akanānūru*, 149: 7–11.

<sup>1619</sup> *Pre-Pallavan Tamil Index*, 375.

<sup>1620</sup> Regarding the other attestations, not even the old commentator of the *Patirrupattu*, nor Turaicāmiṭṭai or U. Vē. Cāminātaiyar talk about other than a ‘big river’ of the Cēras. See: *Patirrupattu*, 28: 10; 43: 15; 88: 25.

<sup>1621</sup> De Romanis 2020, 319.

besieged Muciṛi, the ancient harbour at the sea”.<sup>1622</sup> These passages underline the fact that Muciṛi/Muziris was an important town and a busy harbour that was threatened by both the neighbouring kings and the pirates or privateers roaming around the port.<sup>1623</sup> Although the Cēra kings do not seem to have been seafarers and probably did not reach the shores of the western Asian harbours on their own, I should emphasise that Neṭuñcēralātaṅ (around the second half of the 2<sup>nd</sup> c. AD) and Ceṅkuṭṭuvaṅ built a maritime fleet, with or without the help of the *yavaṅar*, sailed against the *kaṭampū* tribe, and defeated them on an island north of the Malabar Coast.<sup>1624</sup> However, except this, we do not know much about the seafaring of the Cēras.

Turning back to trade, we also see the Cēra king as a ruler of the big harbour(s), where storehouses were standing on the shores:

O fighter of the good country with gardens at the cool sea [around] the big harbour, which have fragrant *tālai*-groves at the storehouses (*pan̄tar*)<sup>1625</sup> in which the wealth of the good vessels<sup>1626</sup> sleeps at the ocean with resounding, sweetly melodious waves!<sup>1627</sup>

The existence of storehouses at the old harbours (cf. Puṛaṅāṅūru 343) shows the rational planning of the South Indian kings and merchant communities to ensure the accumulation and preservation of articles in the desired quantity.

In the previous pages, I introduced fragments of the love and the heroic poetry of ancient Tamils that contained valuable information on the trade of the Cēras. What we see in the *Patirruppattu*, the heroic anthology written exclusively for the Cēras is that this text (1.) rarely mentions trade, (2.) mentions the *yavaṅar* only once<sup>1628</sup> in a later composed *panegyrics* (II. *paṭikam* in which sinful *yavaṅas* were punished while their properties were confiscated), (3.) mainly deals

<sup>1622</sup> ‘*koy cūval puravik koṭit tēr celiyan/mutun̄r mun̄ruṛai muc̄iṛi mur̄i*’. *Akaṅāṅūru*, 14–15.

<sup>1623</sup> For the pirates of the Malabar Coast, see Plin. *Nat. Hist.* 6.26.101; *Periplus Maris Erythraei*, ch. 53; Ptol., *Geogr.* 7.1.7. and the *Tabula Peutingeriana*’s scroll (XII) on India. For a summary of the Tamil sources on *kaṭampū* tribe, read Marr 1985 [1958], 285–290.

<sup>1624</sup> *Akaṅāṅūru*, 127. 6–8; *Patirruppattu*, 12: 3; 11: 12; 17: 4–5; 20: 2–4; *Cilappatikāram* III. 25. 1; 185–187.

<sup>1625</sup> Although the word *pan̄tar* is either an harbour (*Patirruppattu*, 51: 16), or the proper name of a Cēra town/harbour (*Patirruppattu*, 67: 2; 74: 6), it seems that the word itself meant also “storehouses” (*paṅṭacālaikaḷ*) at least at the time when the old commentary had been composed. The word *pan̄tar* appears as of Dravidian origin in the *Dravidian Etymological Dictionary* 3922. In contrast, the idea of the possible Persian etymology (< *bandar*) of the word (Selvakumar 2008, 26) can be perhaps excluded as being anachronistic. *Encyclopedia of Islam*, 1013.

<sup>1626</sup> *kalam*: jewel, vessel, ship. *Tamil Lexicon*, 778.

<sup>1627</sup> ‘*in̄ icaiṭ puṅari v̄aṅkuṁ pauvattu/nal kalam verukkai tuñcuṁ pan̄tark/kamalum tālaiḷ kāṅalam perum turait/taṅ kaṭal paṭappai nal nāṭṭup poruna*’. *Patirruppattu*, 55: 3–6.

<sup>1628</sup> Although, the word *yavaṅa* is not directly attested in the *Patirruppattu*. For more, see: pp. 331–332.

with the wealth of those countries that the Cēras destroyed. Still, there are poems which show the prosperity of the Cēra kings and the fertility of their country, which passages are quite interesting in terms of trade. The 22<sup>nd</sup> poem, for example, talks about the ancestors of the Cēra king, who “helped with the many profits of the forests and the seas”, which refers to the distribution of resources to those in need.<sup>1629</sup> We also have poems in the *Patirruppattu* that sing about the fertility and the excellent yields of the lands.<sup>1630</sup>

It is fascinating that the 76<sup>th</sup> poem of the *Patirruppattu* talks about the king who “healed the wounds [of the elephants] like a merchant of stores (*paṇṇiya-vilaiṇar*)<sup>1631</sup> who strengthen the wood<sup>1632</sup> that swam on the great sea, after [he] went to the difficult[-to-approach] haven”.<sup>1633</sup> Thus, we have arrived at the question of the markets. Regarding the ‘merchants of stores’, the Tamil compound *paṇṇiya-vilaiṇar* (lit. “the ones with the price of the articles of trade”) contains the loanword *paṇṇiyam* < Skt. *paṇya* ‘article of trade’, and the Tamil word *vilai* ‘price’ from which the word for ‘merchants’ (*vilaiṇar*) is derived. The Sanskrit word *paṇya* ‘ware’, ‘commodity’<sup>1634</sup> is in turn a derivation of *paṇa* ‘a weight of copper’, ‘coin’, ‘commodity’<sup>1635</sup> from which another Sanskrit term, *āpaṇa* was derived, a word for ‘marketplace’ or ‘shop’, which we find in Early Old Tamil texts as *āvaṇam*.<sup>1636</sup> In fact, the word *āvaṇam* appears only six times in the whole Caṅkam corpus. The 77<sup>th</sup> poem of the *Akanānūru* suggests that the people of the marketplace (*āvaṇamākkal*) were literate people who destroyed the seal of a rope-bound pot (as a quasi-envelope?) in which palm-leaves (*ōlai*) were stored.<sup>1637</sup> In the 122<sup>nd</sup> poem, we see the wealthy marketplace together with streets to “fall asleep”, which means at least that these South Indian markets were busy places surrounded by streets that emptied at night when they were closed.<sup>1638</sup> In the 227<sup>th</sup> poem, we read about the noisy marketplace of Maruṅkūrpaṭṭiṇam that emits lustre, which was either a poetic image to emphasise its wealth or the markets were indeed illuminated places shining afar.<sup>1639</sup> In the *Paṭṭiṇappālai*, we read about continuous festivals (*vilavu*) in the wide marketplaces (*viyal āvaṇattu*) so that the markets must have been places where also festivals of the kingdoms

<sup>1629</sup> *Patirruppattu*, 22: 6

<sup>1630</sup> *Patirruppattu*, 60: 8; 69: 12–17; 78: 7; 89: 6.

<sup>1631</sup> *paṇṇiya-vilaiṇar*: dealers in stores and provisions. *Tamil Lexicon*, 2453. Here *paṇṇiyam* is certainly a Sanskrit loanword from *paṇya* ‘article of trade’, ‘ware’.

<sup>1632</sup> The old commentator of the *Patirruppattu* tends to understand ‘*kaṭal nāntiya maram*’ as *marakkalam*. I would suggest translating literally since *marakkalam* usually meant a boat or larger ship in later texts, however, here *maram* might mean only a seafaring raft (an *ampi*?).

<sup>1633</sup> *Patirruppattu*, 76: 3–5.

<sup>1634</sup> *A Sanskrit–English Dictionary*, 580.

<sup>1635</sup> *A Sanskrit–English Dictionary*, 580.

<sup>1636</sup> *Tamil Lexicon*, 249.

<sup>1637</sup> *Patirruppattu*, 77: 7–8.

<sup>1638</sup> ‘*malla āvaṇam marukutaṇ maṭiyiṇ*’. *Patirruppattu*, 122: 3.

<sup>1639</sup> *Akanānūru*, 227: 19–20.

were held.<sup>1640</sup> In the *Neṭunalvātai*, women worship in the prosperous evening market with folded hands.<sup>1641</sup> It is, of course, not surprising to see a king organising festivals in market towns to foster market activities. However, we have not yet found references to Cēra markets. For that, let us read the following passage of the *Patirruppattu*'s 68<sup>th</sup> song:

[...] after the price of the precious/rare toddy (*ka!*) was paid out as soon as [they] entered the market (*āvaṇam*), where flags of the toddy[-selling places] swayed, after [they] brought [there] the white tusks of the elephant that a king rode on [...]<sup>1642</sup>

Here, the precious/rare toddy/wine with a remarkably high price could refer to the expensive Mediterranean (Campanian or Laodicean) wine that arrived in South India in amphorae during the centuries of Indo-Roman trade. It is also possible that the wine mentioned here was only a sort of refined, aged palm wine, in which case local intermediaries conducted the 'tusk-for-toddy' transaction. We see the same thing happen in the 30<sup>th</sup> poem of the *Patirruppattu*:

On the areas of low lands which are densely surrounded by hills, the hunters (*vēttuvar*), [who have] murderous bows and *kāntal*-chaplet,<sup>1643</sup> give the price of wine (*pīli*) in the gold-possessing<sup>1644</sup> markets (*niyamam*), [after they] brought the white tusks of rutting forest-elephants together with the meat of wild cows (*āmān*) with red horns.<sup>1645</sup>

What is certain after reading these passages is that regarding the Indo-Roman trade (1.) there was a kind of rare/precious and expensive toddy/wine available in the Cēra markets, (2.) there were expensive elephant tusks (as one of the favourite imports of the Romans) collected by hunters or warriors in the battle, which had been exchanged directly or indirectly for Indian or non-Indian toddy/wine, and (3.) there were 'markets' which possessed (*uṭai*) gold. Here we find another Indo-Aryan word for 'market', *niyamam* < Skt. *nigama*, which, taking into account the

<sup>1640</sup> *Paṭṭinappālai*, 158.

<sup>1641</sup> *Neṭunalvātai*, 44.

<sup>1642</sup> 'vēnt' ūr yānai vel kōtu koṅṭu/ka! koṭi nuṭaikum āvaṇam pukk' uṭan/arum ka! noṭaimai tīrnta pīn...' *Patirruppattu*, 68: 9–11.

<sup>1643</sup> *kāntal*: Malabar glory lily (*Gloriosa superba*), a fiery colour flower of the high mountains. *Dravidian Etymological Dictionary*, 1451.

<sup>1644</sup> *pon uṭai niyamam*: "the gold-possessing market", "the golden market". Here I would rather see a reference to the actual gold (coins, bars, jewels, treasures, etc.) that the market possessed.

<sup>1645</sup> 'kāntal am kaṇṇik kolai vil vēttuvar/cem kōṭṭ' ā mān ūnoṭu kāṭṭa/matan uṭai vēlattu vel kōtu koṅṭu/pon uṭai niyamattup pīli noṭai koṭukkum'. *Patirruppattu*, 30: 9–2.

possible meanings in Sanskrit<sup>1646</sup> and the other eight attestations in Early Old Tamil literature,<sup>1647</sup> rather denotes a ‘market town’ or a ‘market street’.<sup>1648</sup>

O [you], the wealth of the gift-seekers! O [you], the king of strong men, [who possess] the *muracam*-drum<sup>1649</sup> that sounds in [your] excellent court<sup>1650</sup> [that is surrounded by] the gold-possessing market street (*niyamam*), [where] the flags of [your] old town cast a shadow, [where] the *mulavu*-drum sounds and the festivals (*vilavu*) do not know the end; [the old town] of the good country with vast areas, [where] many goods enter from the seas, mountains, rivers, and other [places]!<sup>1651</sup>

It is remarkable that, according to this passage, the marketplaces were close enough to the royal town that it cast a shadow over the shops, which might be a covert reference to state influence and state control over early trade. We have also seen the many goods entering from the seas, mountains, rivers, and other regions, which made the Cēra king wealthy and the bustling markets profitable.<sup>1652</sup> Moreover, an *ostrakon* found at Koṭumaṇal also shows that markets (*nikama*) de facto existed in the Cēra kingdom.<sup>1653</sup>

So far that is all that is preserved on Cēra markets in the Caṅkam texts; even if it seems minor, a few remarks should not be missed. For instance, from their names of Indo-Aryan origins, we can conclude that (1.) the markets were, at least initially, in the hands of speakers of Indo-Aryan languages, perhaps Jaina or Buddhist merchants, and (2.) northern Indian groups did not just influence the kingdom in terms of religion and policy as we have seen before, but we can also suspect “northern” influences on the institutions of trade. We should emphasise that

<sup>1646</sup> A *Sanskrit–English Dictionary*, 545.

<sup>1647</sup> See: *niyama* in *Akanānūru*, 83: 7; *Narriṇai*, 45: 4; *niyamattu* (obl. case) in *Tirumurukāruppatai*, 70; *Patirrupattu*, 15: 19; 30: 12; 75: 10; *Maturaikkāñci*, 365; *Malaiṇṇatukāṭam*, 480; *niyamam* in *Akanānūru*, 90: 12.

<sup>1648</sup> According to the *Tamil Ilakkīyaṇ Pērakarāṭi* (p. 1366), the word *niyamam* means “bazaar/market street” (*kaṭai teni*) in the old literature, which term has a clear Indo-Aryan origin (< *nigama*). Cf. *Narriṇai*, 45: 4–5. Its meaning as a “temple” is a later development that might be reflected first in the *Cilappatikāram*, (II. 14: 8). I think that the temples referred to as *niyamam* were perhaps temple-economies uniting the two functions, the ritual and the economic. There is one more word connected to the question of markets, *aikāṭi* ‘bazaar’, see: *Akanānūru*, 93: 10; *Narriṇai*, 258: 7; *Paripāṭal*, 2: 9; however, these passages do not contribute much to our research.

<sup>1649</sup> The royal drum called *muracu*/*muraicu*/*muracam* is one and (might be the most important) among the regalia of the sovereign monarch in ancient South India. DUBYANSKIY 2013, 310; 313–314.

<sup>1650</sup> According to the *Tamil Lexicon* (p. 783) the *kalimakil* as a lexicalised compound can be interpreted as ‘public audience’, or ‘royal court’. Occasionally, we can consider the literal meaning as ‘bustling mirth’ although it clearly refers here to the daily court of the Cēra king.

<sup>1651</sup> ‘*kaṭalavum kallavum āravum pīravum/vaḷam pala nikaḷtarum naṇam talai nal nāṭṭu/vilav’ arup’ ariyā mulav’ imil mūt’ ūrk/koṭi nīlal paṭṭa poṇ utai niyamattu/cīr peṇu kali makil iyampum muraciṇ/vayavar vēntē paṇicilar verukkai*’. *Patirrupattu*, 15: 16–21.

<sup>1652</sup> We still have one another reference on *niyamam* in the *Patirrupattu*, but that reports only on the country of one of their enemies mentioning the “bright price that is given in the market street/town that possess toddy” (*kaḷ utai niyamatt’ oḷ vilai koṭukkum*). *Patirrupattu*, 75: 10.

<sup>1653</sup> Mahadevan 2003, 141.



when Pliny the Elder, the author of the *Periplus Maris Erythraei*, and Ptolemy reported on the Cēra kingdom, they were still aware only of the external, Indo-Aryan name of the dynasty, the Cēraputra (Caelobothras, Κηπρόβοτος, Κηροβόθρος), “the son of the Cēras”, which seems to be an ‘official name’ of the state also known from the Aśokan inscriptions. The fact that in the 1<sup>st</sup>–2<sup>nd</sup> centuries AD, this name of the state is still in use suggests that either the kingdom proudly promoted its hybrid identity (Tamil cultural life with brāhmaṇical influences around the court), or/and the traders as intermediaries between westerners and the locals were not Dravidian, but Indo-Aryan speakers. Even if the Caṅkam texts are silent, we know well from epigraphical remains that Jainas and Buddhists were living in the Tamil kingdoms, even around Muciṛi/Muziris<sup>1654</sup> and Karuvūr, the Cēra capital, and some of them were indeed involved in trade which was connected to the functioning markets.<sup>1655</sup> Mahadevan states that at Vellaṛai (modern Vellarippatti) a “merchant guild” (*nikamatu*) was functioning in ancient times, since the name of Antai Assutaṅ, the superintendent of pearls (*kālatika*) and the *kāviti* (an honorary rank and title) of the ‘guild’, and the name of Nanta-siri Kuvan, the learned one (*kaṇi*) can be found on the 3<sup>rd</sup> Māṅkuḷam inscription (2<sup>nd</sup> c. BC); moreover, the “members of the merchant guild” (*nikamatōr*) appears on the 6<sup>th</sup> Māṅkuḷam inscription.<sup>1656</sup> I think it is perhaps better to translate the *nikamatu* of the 3<sup>rd</sup> inscription as the ‘market(-street)’ of Vellaṛai, and *nikamatōr* of the 6<sup>th</sup> inscription as the ‘men of the market(-street)’. At the same time, we leave open the possibility that here *nikamam* meant a ‘merchant guild’ or something else since this specific meaning of *niyamam/nikamam* cannot be satisfactorily proved from the contemporary Tamil sources. Interestingly, Ptolemy in the 2<sup>nd</sup> c. AD also mentioned a “capital city” (μητρόπολις) called Nigama (Νίγαμα) in the Tamil South, which could have been a marketplace whose name reflects the Sanskrit term (*nigama*) for ‘market’.<sup>1657</sup>

Thus, we arrived at the last topic that needs to be examined: gold and money. The complaints of Pliny the Elder that a considerable amount of coins happened to be absorbed by the eastern trade year by year,<sup>1658</sup> together with the record of the *Periplus* which talks about a large amount of money (χρήματα πλείστα) imported into southern India,<sup>1659</sup> give us the preconception that the Cēra kingdom must have been full of “money” from the West. As a general statement, we should point out that the Caṅkam literature abounds in gold-related passages; everywhere, we see golden treasures, ornaments, and jewellery. This also means that

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<sup>1654</sup> Subramanian 2011.

<sup>1655</sup> Champakalakshmi 2011, 259–360; Mahadevan 2003, 315–319; 405–409.

<sup>1656</sup> Mahadevan 2003, 141; 319; 323.

<sup>1657</sup> Ptol., *Geogr.* VII. 1. 12.

<sup>1658</sup> Pliny the Elder, *Naturalis Historia*, VI. 101; XII. 84.

<sup>1659</sup> *Periplus Maris Erythraei*, 56. See: Meyer 2007, 61.

the Tamils, from the earliest times, had to have sources of gold other than those of the Roman Empire, including Indian mines. On the other hand, the Romans may have been the first ones in South Indian history who paid with gold in large quantities regularly at the coasts of South India. While formerly a significant portion of the gold stocks had been obtained by the Tamils in the battles against other Indian chiefs and monarchs, now trade was a peaceful and secure way to acquire treasures and necessary articles at the same time, by which the kingdoms could embark on the path of prosperity. In the 1<sup>st</sup>–4<sup>th</sup> centuries AD, when the poems of the *Patirruppattu* were composed, the Cēra tribal supremacy had already crossed the threshold of becoming an early kingdom, behind which changes in trade must have been the engine of economic stability. In the literature, predatory warfare still existed to punish those who challenged the superiority of the Cēras. However, if we consider the direction of the Cēra expansions (not speaking, of course, about the legendary march to the Himalayas), we can assume that the intrusion into Koṅkunāṭu through the river valleys, where hoards of Mediterranean coins were found, which seem to trace a vital trade route in these centuries,<sup>1660</sup> and the further conquests to the eastern shores of Pukār (e.g., see the vocative *pukāar celva* in *Patirruppattu* 73: 9) were aimed at stabilising inland trade via Palghat Gap and making efforts to reach the east coast to get their hands on the trade of both the Malabar and the Coromandel Coast.

Gold undoubtedly played an essential role in early trade; however, the evidence extracted from the poems is again very scarce. We have already seen the references in the *Patirruppattu* to markets which possess gold. From the phrasing, which in this way appears only in this particular text, we assume that in a market which possessed gold, gold was undoubtedly a medium of exchange, a store of value, and perhaps a standard of payment in these early markets. Unfortunately, we do not know how these transactions were executed and who the actors were. Still, from the Indo-Aryan names of these early markets (*āvaṇam* and *niyamam*), we can assume that Jaina or Buddhist traders might have been involved to a greater or lesser extent. We saw that people could bring their valuable articles (such as elephant tusks) to the markets. At the same time, the poets also emphasise in the Cēra texts that after they brought rare and valuable things there, they had to pay a *bright price* for the articles they wanted (such as wine/toddy). It is possible that we see a tusk-for-wine ‘direct’ exchange without being articulated in the texts, but since these markets were trading places where gold was stored, we might already find monetised markets in the Cēra kingdom where people obtained gold (either bars or coins) in exchange for their goods, which ‘money’ they could spend on their needs, or spare and

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<sup>1660</sup> For the maps with the locations where the coins were found, see MacDowall 1995.

exchange at another marketplace. In any case, this system of market-trade would make it easier to collect and sort the articles which changed hands in huge quantities during the transactions with the Romans; however, it also makes it easier for the local elite or the king himself to collect taxes and tolls from trade. The *bright price* is again not a frequent phrase in the Caṅkam texts. ‘Price’ (*vilai* and *notai/notaimai*) as ‘bright’ (*ol*) appears only in the *Patirruppattu*, and the combinations of these words with the verb *koṭu-ttal* ‘to give’ and with *tīr-tal* ‘to leave’ are also attested only in this text. Is the bright price a ‘high/expensive’ price, or is it ‘bright’ because of the standard of payment, i.e., gold was *de facto* ‘bright’? We should also emphasise that in all the available passages in which the words *vilai* and *notai* are attested (twenty-eight in number), we find references to bride-price, barter-price, flower-selling women, price for toddy or salt, rare price for jewel, but we have only a few passages in which prices are connected to markets. To point out the presence of barter in these early societies is not a difficult thing, as we have several passages on the traditional open barter between the different eco-regions (*tiṇai*). However, examining the possibility of finding monetised markets in these kingdoms is not easy from the sources. The *Patirruppattu* connected to the Cēras has particular importance in this case since we see a few sequences which talk about gold-possessing markets and large-value transactions there, which sort of markets appear only in this text of the Caṅkam corpus. Regarding the question of money, in the 81<sup>st</sup> poem of the *Patirruppattu*, we see “lustre-emitting bars which were completed by the work of flames, became solid in the moulds”.<sup>1661</sup> The text certainly talks about cast gold bars, which bears a great economic historical significance because these bars served to accumulate wealth, as we also see in the *Perumpāṇāruppaṭai*:

... the cattle-herder-woman, having fed [her] relatives with the food [from] the price of buttermilk, does not take pure gold (*pacum poṇ*) in bars (*kattī*)<sup>1662</sup> [from] the price of ghī (*ney*), [but] obtains black calves (*nāku*) [of] the good cow of the buffalo (*erumai*)...<sup>1663</sup>

Adding to these, we have evidence for gold bars not only from literary sources but Tamil Brāhmī inscribed gold bars have already been found by archaeologists in recent years at Thenur near

<sup>1661</sup> ‘*alal viṇai amainta nilal viṭu kattī kattaḷai valiṭṭa*’. *Patirruppattu*, 81: 16–17.

<sup>1662</sup> Another reading is to understand *kattī* as an absolutive from the verb *kattu-tal* 5. tr. (*Tamil Lexicon*, 651): “does not take pure gold having fixed/tied the price of the ghī”. Still, pure gold here meant accumulated wealth from which the relatives could not be fed.

<sup>1663</sup> ‘... *āyamaḷ/alaḷai vilai uṇaviṇ kiḷai uṭaṇ arutti/ney vilai kattī pacum poṇ kollāḷ/erumai nal āṇ karu nāku perūum*’. *Perumpāṇāruppaṭai*, 162–165.

Madurai.<sup>1664</sup> While gold bars were used primarily to accumulate wealth, gold and other coins were in circulation, which could be used for marketplace transactions not only by the merchants and the elite but by all the people who in some way received such money. I agree with De Romanis, who points out that local coins found at Muziris “suggest the strong presence of local people with a monetised economy of their own”.<sup>1665</sup> We have quite a few beautiful examples of Cēra silver and copper coins found by archaeologists at ancient Cēra sites, with dynastic symbols and portraits perhaps imitating Roman coins.<sup>1666</sup> We have knowledge not only about the Cēra coinage but also about the gold merchants at one of the ancient Cēra capitals, Karuvūr/Karūr. On the 9<sup>th</sup> Pukaḷūr inscription, we read about the seat of Natti, the gold merchant (*poṇ vaṇikan*) of Karuūr,<sup>1667</sup> who had perhaps become connected to the local Jaina community. Even his rare name is telling since we know another Natti from the early inscriptions (4<sup>th</sup> of the Māṅkuḷam inscriptions), a senior Jaina monk.<sup>1668</sup> In short, metalsmithing and local minting were well-established in the early kingdom of the Cēras in the centuries of the Indo-Roman trade. Besides hoards of local coins, the presence of Roman gold and silver coins discovered in South India is a well-researched topic;<sup>1669</sup> instead of introducing it in detail, let us turn back to the *Patirrupattu* to see whether the circulation of coins can be found in the poems. Several poems talk about coins and money, but their values as historical sources are uncertain, as they must be identified as later compositions. These special comments are epilogues in prose that appear at the end of the “summary poems” (*patikam*) of each decade (*pattu*) of the *Patirrupattu*. Reading these poems, one has the impression that these were composed by an editor in the early Middle Ages, perhaps the one(s) who collected the poems into a chronologically ordered anthology. The author must have been the editor since the language and the verse form are uniform, and the author seemed to already know the whole anthology when he added the “summary poems” to each decade. I assume that the author of these epilogues might have been the same as the author of the *patikams*, and the differences in word usage can be explained by the fact that the *patikams* were still written in an archaic form befitting the poems, while the epilogues were mere appendices that helped the recipient/scholar to contextualise the poems and their backgrounds. Turning back to the coins, we find them exclusively in those lines when the author speaks about the gifts that the poets received. In the VI. *patikam*, we read that the king gave hundred thousand *kāṇam*-coins (an

<sup>1664</sup> <https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/city/madurai/thenur-gold-treasure-found-four-years-ago-is-2300-years-old-recent-study-reveals/articleshow/23754735.cms> (downloaded: 17<sup>th</sup> December 2021).

<sup>1665</sup> De Romanis 2020, 115.

<sup>1666</sup> Krishnamurthy 1997; Mahadevan 2003, 118; Gurukkal 2016, 49–51.

<sup>1667</sup> Mahadevan 2003, 417.

<sup>1668</sup> Mahadevan 2003, 321.

<sup>1669</sup> See e.g.: Turner 1989, MacDowall–Jha 2003, Meyer 2007, Ruffing 2009, Majumdar 2017.

ancient weight; an ancient gold coin; gold; *Tamil Lexicon*, 859) and nine *kā*-measure (a standard weight, hundred *palam*; *Tamil Lexicon*, 840) of gold to the poetess. In the VII. *patikam*, we read that the king gave the poet a hundred thousand *kāṇam*-coins as a little gift (*cīru-puram*). In the VIII. *patikam*, we read that the king gave the poet nine times a hundred thousand *kāṇam*-coins and the royal throne/bed. In the IX. *patikam*, the king gave to the poet thirty-two thousand *kāṇam*-coins. However, too many conclusions cannot be drawn because of the uncertain date of these passages. Two interpretations can be outlined: (1.) the author of these epilogues had a specific knowledge of the ages he wrote about, and indeed a large amount of money changed hands as gifts in exchange for these ancient poems, or (2.) the author projects the monetised economy of his mediaeval age on the past and records imaginary quantities when speaks of gifts given to the poets. Even so, we have seen the literary evidence of monetised markets in the early Cēra kingdom, and we have seen those who speak probably a few centuries later (around the 5<sup>th</sup>–6<sup>th</sup> centuries) of these ages with large quantities of coins and gold in circulation. The reconstruction of a treasury in the Cēra kingdom might be possible from the *Akanānūru*:

[...] having heaped in one place the *āmpal* measure rows of diamonds (*vayiram*), female statues (*pāvai*) made of gold, and good vessels worthy of praise, which had been given as humble tributes by the disobedient, at the court of Māntai/Marantai, the good town [of Cēralātaṅ] [...] <sup>1670</sup>

This could mean that in the Cēra residency at Māntai/Marantai, a designated place/room existed where the tributes had been accumulated. We see another ruler, Naṅṅaṅ Utiyaṅ, who had well-protected golden treasures in his town, where we read about “the gold which was put [down] by the very ancient chiefs (*vēḷir*) for the sake of protection, at Pāḷi with a difficult defence, [town of] Naṅṅaṅ Utiyaṅ.” <sup>1671</sup> This again underlines the fact that the early Cēra kings were very much interested in accumulating wealth to provide a stable foundation for the economy since they also certainly knew what Kauṭilya said wisely in the *Arthaśāstra* that “all undertakings presuppose the treasury”, <sup>1672</sup> but also, all undertakings assume rational planning.

I have introduced the literary evidence on maritime trade, markets, and money in Early Old Tamil texts about the ancient Cēra kings. Even though the often flattering Tamil literature ordered by kings and chiefs is rather laconic about specific themes, the main results of this

<sup>1670</sup> ‘nal nakar māntai murratt’ *oṅṅār paṇi tīrai tanta pātu cāl nal kalam poṇ cey pāvai vayiramoṭu āmpal oṅṅurāy nīraiyaḱ kuvaiv*. *Akanānūru* 127: 6–9.

<sup>1671</sup> ‘naṅṅaṅ utiyaṅ arunkatip pālit/ton mutir vēḷir oṅṅiṅar vaitta/ponniṅum ...’. *Akanānūru* 258: 1–3.

<sup>1672</sup> ‘kośa pūrvāḥ sarvārambhāḥ’. *Arthaśāstra* II. 8. 1. (Transl. by Patrick Olivelle)

chapter are that (1.) the monarchical character of the early state formation of the Cēras has been proved, (2.) the suggestion that Cēra kings would have thought of Indo-Roman trade only as gift-exchange has been refuted, and (3.) a Tamil literature-based study has been carried out that has convincingly argued for the existence of an early money economy in ancient southwestern India. From the available textual sources and the related archaeological findings, I create the following model of the early Cēra economy: (1.) a traditional barter exchange between the different eco-regions as the most mentioned mode of trade in the Caṅkam corpus, (2.) a monetised system of marketplaces where wealthy people, local elite, and merchants carried out monetised transactions, and (3.) a system of gift-exchange as a distribution of one's wealth to establish/stabilise political/economic/ritual relations. As Selvakumar also suggests, below the level of open barter, there must be at least another one: the gift/credit/debt-based reciprocal micro-economies between relatives and fellow villagers.<sup>1673</sup> Thus, the closed communities which I called micro-economies,<sup>1674</sup> which topic was out of the scope of this chapter, would be based on trust, sympathy, and caring for each other; the open barter took place between “strangers” of the eco-zones and “people who are familiar with the use of money, but for one reason or another, don't have a lot of it around”,<sup>1675</sup> and the monetised world of markets would be available only for those who have gained wealth measurable in some kind of money which was recognised by the local ruler and accepted by the merchant community. I think we are far from being able to fully understand what the function of local coins and Roman coins in this economy was, but I assume that they were in use and circulated not just as treasure but as actual money to pay with, withdrawn from circulation in the Mediterranean.

On the level of economic actors, we can determine economically rational acts of the Cēra kings to create a predictable economy with great promises, such as the fortification of port towns where warehouses were built to accumulate and preserve the articles; the military campaigns in which Cēra kings sought to annex trading routes and occupy ports of the Coromandel Coast; the fact that kings allowed establishing gold-possessing markets and managed to mint local coins to show off their authority and perhaps to establish a monetised trading system beyond barter, and the possibility to exchange one's wealth to gold bars as *commodity money*. We are still in the early stages of state development; however, our sources show that in the case of the Cēras, we have to deal with an early kingdom of a hybrid nature which

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<sup>1673</sup> Graeber 2011, 29.

<sup>1674</sup> In the *Paṭirrupattu*, we find a few references to how these micro-economies function, e.g., when people share millet flour with others (*Paṭirrupattu*, 30: 24–25). However, taken as a whole, the topic of micro-economies is quite invisible in the Cēra texts.

<sup>1675</sup> Graeber 2011, 37.

has Tamil literary life and culture but strong brāhmaṇical influences around the court; a partly monetised economy with perhaps Jaina and Buddhist merchant communities in the background; a well-organised hinterland which was able to serve the Indian Ocean trade and to make vast stocks of goods regularly and reliably available, a fascinating example of which is the Muziris Papyrus.<sup>1676</sup> The transport of tons of goods from inland to the shores, even if it is somewhat invisible in the Caṅkam corpus, required rigorous supervision by the state, which could not base the service of merchant ships that arrived regularly on chance. Through the *rational actors theory* lens,<sup>1677</sup> we consider common goals, opportunities, and constraints at both the Romans and the Cēras. Regarding their goals, both the Romans and the Cēras were interested in maintaining trading relations, gaining high profit, and acquiring necessary goods; regarding the opportunities, both intended to organise and protect the trade; regarding the constraints, both were facing with rivals, fraudsters, robbers, and pirates, as well as cultural difficulties such as language. The Romans set the goals to boost the Roman economy (traders, of course, for an actual living), and the Cēras did it for the same reason but also in order to strengthen the royal power. They both struggled with rivals, enemies, and pirates to maximise their profits from trade and while Roman traders certainly got a foothold in India and occasionally provided military assistance to the Tamil rulers,<sup>1678</sup> the Cēra kings extended their influence to markets and merchant communities to keep a close watch on the large-scale business.

Maritime trade has thus boosted the Cēra country's economy and, at the same time, made it vulnerable to the Mediterranean, the centre of the Indo-Roman trading system. Therefore, when the kingdom of the Cēras declined, probably around the same century when the decline of the Roman Empire took place, only the Cēra kings and their stakeholders, who had not survived the loss of regular income and a change in maritime trade paradigm, failed, but everyday life continued on a lower level during the early mediaeval transition period preparing for the political-economic rebirth under the mediaeval Hindu kingdom of the Perumāḷs.

### ***Protection of trade***

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<sup>1676</sup> It must be mentioned that 'lighthouses', as quite a modern infrastructure, could have been found at the ports of other Tamil kings (*Akanāṇūru*, 255: 5–6; *Perumpāṇāruppaṭai*, 346–351). Although these are not attested in the Cēra texts, we can still assume that these buildings were also used at the Malabar Coast.

<sup>1677</sup> For an introduction to the theory, read: Lyttkens 2012, 19–23.

<sup>1678</sup> *Mullaippāṭṭu*, 45–49, 59–63, 63–66; *Cilappatikāram*, II. 14, 66–67.

When I analysed the political nature of the early Cēra state, an important argument was that the Cēras were aware of their territories and trade interests. They sought to protect the Cēra ports of trade and punish those who threatened their trade relations. In this chapter, I look for the answer to the question of who may have been the pirates of the Malabar coast from whom the Graeco-Roman writers warned travellers and whether we can trace them in South Indian sources.

Profitable trade and naval fleets equipped with rich cargo have attracted pirates from the earliest times in both West and South Asia. Diodorus mentioned lootings by Red Sea pirates following Agatarchides,<sup>1679</sup> later by Strabo,<sup>1680</sup> Pliny the Elder,<sup>1681</sup> the author of *Periplus Maris Erythraei*,<sup>1682</sup> and Philostratos.<sup>1683</sup> They all complained about the sea robbers among the Arabic people, “villains” who travel on their pirate ships and plunder the merchant ships from Egypt, enslaving shipwrecked people and those fleeing the vessel. The *Periplus Maris Erythraei* notes that this is why “they are constantly being taken prisoner by the governors and kings of Arabia,” so the task of the rulers was to ensure lucrative trade rather than to cooperate with the pirate leaders. Following the *Periplus*’ guidance, the merchants did their best when they sailed on extra speed to the Katakekaumenē Island, leaving behind the Arabia that was “fearsome in every respect”.<sup>1684</sup> The next region where traders had to be careful with pirates was South India.<sup>1685</sup> Pliny the Elder mentioned the neighboring pirates of Nitrias (*vicinos piratas, qui optinent locum nomine Nitrias*) at Muziris, the first marketplace of India (*primum emporium Indiae*), as one of the reasons why the ships should avoid that port. Another reason was the difficulties of loading and discharging the cargoes from ships to boats since Muziris lay on a river, relatively far from the seashore (*praeterea longe a terra abest navium statio, lintribusque adferuntur onera et egeruntur*), and according to Pliny, Muziris around the first half of the 1<sup>st</sup> century AD did not abound in commodities (*neque est abundans mercibus*).<sup>1686</sup> The *Periplus Maris Erythraei* seems to confirm Pliny as it warns of the presence of pirates north of Naoura and Tyndis of Limyrikē (Malabar Coast) at the Sēsekreienai-islands (perhaps today’s Veṅgurlā Rocks), Isle of the Aigidioi (perhaps

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<sup>1679</sup> Diod. Sic., *Bibl. Hist.*, III. 43. 5.

<sup>1680</sup> Strabo, *Geogr.* XVI. 4.18.

<sup>1681</sup> Pliny the Elder, *Naturalis Historia*, XXXIV. 175–176.

<sup>1682</sup> *Periplus Maris Erythraei*, 20.

<sup>1683</sup> Philostratos, *Vita Apollonii*, III. 35.

<sup>1684</sup> *Periplus Maris Erythraei*, 20. Citations were transl. by Lionel Casson.

<sup>1685</sup> Even Fǎxiǎn (4–5. c. AD) talks about the dangerous pirates of South India (Hǎizhōng duō yǒu chāo zéi, yù zhé wú quán.). Legge 1886, 112. In later centuries, piracy on the South Indian coasts was still dangerous for merchants and travellers. Thus, the Nestorian *Chronicle of Seert* (11<sup>th</sup> century) and Marco Polo (13<sup>th</sup> century) still complain about the piracy on the western shores of India. *La Chronique de Séert*, 324–326; *The Travels of Marco Polo*, 376–377; 380–381.

<sup>1686</sup> Pliny the Elder, *Naturalis Historia*, VI. 26. 104.



Aminidvīp/Aminidivi Islands?), Isle of the Kaineitōi (perhaps Oyster Rocks near Kārvār, Karnataka), and around Leukē Nēsos, the “White Island” (perhaps Pigeon Island, Nētrāṇi Dvīpa).<sup>1687</sup> Ptolemy recorded Ariakē, a coast of piratical people (Ἀνδρῶν Πειρατῶν) with the following places: Mandagora/Mandagara (Bāgmāṃḍlā–Bāṅkōṭ, Maharashtra), Byzantion (Vijaydurg, Maharashtra), Chersonēsos (around today’s Kārvār, Karnataka), the mouth of the river Nanagounas (Tāptī river), Armagara, Nitra emporion, together with two inland towns with pirates: Olochoira (Uḍupi, Karnataka?) and Mousopallē.<sup>1688</sup> Adding to these, the Tabula Peutingeriana also marks the presence of pirates (“PIRATES”) with red capital letters around the Malabar Coast and the southernmost tip of India. Thus, we conclude that the pirates who threatened the Malabar Coast must have lived north of the Cēra kingdom, north of Naṛavu, in a place called Nitrias, located in the Konkan archipelago and/or in an emporion called Nitra. As I have discussed earlier, I accept locating Naṛavu around today’s Eḷimala instead of Kaṅṅūr or Maṅgaḷūru, as far as the geographic description of Tamil literature suggests, and I have also accepted the identification of Naoura of the *Periplus* with Naṛavu of the Caṅkam poems. If so, the *Periplus* recorded that the pirates could have been found north of Naoura of Limyrikē so that Naoura cannot be the same as Nitrias or Nitria. It would be strange for the Cēra kings to threaten themselves from another town. If we accept the identification of Leukē Nēsos, the “White Island” with the heart-shaped island of the Konkan Coast, which bears the name Nētrāṇi or Nitrān, then we found our pirates on the Konkan Coast. However, this identification, as Casson highlighted, is mainly based on the similarity of names, and this has led Warmington and Schoff to come to this conclusion.<sup>1689</sup> Casson argues that the place called “Nitriaia” was a port of trade in Ptolemy instead of an island. Indeed, neither Pliny nor Ptolemy mentions this place as an island, so one could think that Nitra emporion of Ptolemy is identical with the later Mangarouth of Kosmas Indikopleustes, today’s Maṅgaḷūru, where the Netravaṭī river flows. If this place was Nitrias/Nitra, the pirates must have lived somewhere close to it, perhaps in the northern archipelago, as the sources record.

What we learn from the Caṅkam sources is that the king Neṭuñcēralātaṅ was the first among the Cēras, who led a naval campaign against northern tribes. He was the one:

[...] who chopped down the foot of the *kaṭampu*-tree, after [he] went to the land of the resisting ones, [which land was] inside an island of the dark sea [...]<sup>1690</sup>

<sup>1687</sup> To identify the locations, I used: Casson 1989, 297.

<sup>1688</sup> Ptol., *Geogr.* VII. 1. 7; 84. To identify the locations, I used: *Barrington Atlas*, 60–74,

<sup>1689</sup> Casson 1989, 217.

<sup>1690</sup> ‘irul munṁrt turutti ul/muraṇiyōrt talaic cenru/kaṭampu mutal taṭinta ...’. *Patirruppattu*, 20: 2–4.

Thus, we see direct evidence that Neṭuñcēralātaṅ sailed the “dark sea” and attacked his enemies on an island (*turutti*), which island must have been somewhere among the Lakṣadvīp islands, or instead around the southern Konkan, where the pirates were mentioned by Pliny, Ptolemy, and the *Periplus Maris Erythraei*. The same episode can be found in the 17<sup>th</sup> poem of the *Patirruppattu*, in which Neṭuñcēralātaṅ “liberated the great sea [that] possessed shiny spray [and] scattered precious offerings (*arum paḷi*) [once he] returned and arrived [together with his] warriors [carrying] the victorious wide *paṇai*-drum which was fashioned after chopping the *kaṭampu*-tree”.<sup>1691</sup> We find the defeat of the *kaṭampu*-tribe in other poems as well without the maritime context.<sup>1692</sup> In the 127<sup>th</sup> poem of the *Akanānūru*, which mentions some of the heroic exploits of Cēralātaṅ, we read that he, “having navigated (*ōṭṭi*) on the ocean, destroyed the *kaṭampu*”, or “having driven back (*ōṭṭi*) the ocean, destroyed the *kaṭampu*.” Once he defeated the *kaṭampu*-tribe, he collected his tributes at the great mansion of Māntai/Marantai.<sup>1693</sup> In the 41<sup>st</sup> poem of the *Patirruppattu*, we see the son of Neṭuñcēralātaṅ, Kaṭal Piṛakkōṭṭiya Ceṅkuṭṭuvaṅ (“Ceṅkuṭṭuvaṅ who drove back the sea”), whose “legs conquered the cool sea with sounding waves” (*paṭum tirait paṇik kaṭal ulanta tāḷē*).<sup>1694</sup> Anyway, his royal epithet Kaṭal Piṛakkōṭṭiya was mentioned initially in the V. *paṭikam* by the poet called Paraṇar. Although we cannot see the maritime activities of Ceṅkuṭṭuvaṅ in the Caṅkam poems, we read about it in the early mediaeval *Cilappatikāram*, in which we find this king as the one who “overthrew the *kaṭampu*[-tribe] with fences of the vast/dark water” (*mānīr vēlik kaṭamp’ erintu*; III. 25. 1), or the one with cruel war “who overthrew the *kaṭampu* of the sea” (*kaṭal kaṭamp’ erinta*; III. 25. 187). In the 90<sup>th</sup> poem (Line 20) Iḷaṅcēral Irumporai, another Cēra king was mentioned as being one who “threw a spear so that the ocean was destroyed” (*kaṭal ikuppa vēl iṭṭum*). All these texts show that the Cēra kings de facto sailed the seas whenever they felt it necessary to take their army further north to fight.

The question may arise: who is the tribe whose totemistic tree was the *kaṭampu*-tree (*Neolomarckia cadamba*)? We might extract an answer to this question from the Caṅkam poems. In the 88<sup>th</sup> poem of the *Patirruppattu*, we read that the Cēra kings “chopped off the entire foot of the *kaṭampu* which possesses *aṇaṅku*” (*aṇaṅk’ uṭaiṅ kaṭampinṅ mulu mutal taṭintu*; Line 6). In this poem, the ancestors of the king also “destroyed Naṅṅaṅ of the *vākai*-tree with Sun[-like] flowers” (*cuṭar*

<sup>1691</sup> ‘tuḷaṅku picir uṭaiya māḱ kaṭal nīkkik/kaṭamp’ arutt’ iyaṛriya valam-paṭu viyaṅ paṇai/āṭunar peyamtu vant’ arum paḷi tūy’. *Patirruppattu*, 17: 4–6.

<sup>1692</sup> *Patirruppattu*, 11: 11–14; 12: 2.

<sup>1693</sup> *Akanānūru*, 127: 4–8.

<sup>1694</sup> *Patirruppattu*, 41: 27.

*vī vākai nannaṅ tēyttu*; Line 10). This king among the Cēra ancestors must have been Nārmuṭiccēral, who “chopped down the protected foot of the *vākai*-tree<sup>1695</sup> with fire-like flowers of Nannaṅ with golden chariot and golden chaplet”.<sup>1696</sup> However, from the IV. *patikam* of the *Patirruppattu*, we learn that Kaḷaṅkāykkkaṅṅi Nārmuṭi Cēral was the king “who destroyed the strength of Nannaṅ in the war for the position at Peruvāyil with the *kaṭampū*-tree [which had] wheel-like flowers, who chopped the entire foot of his golden *vākai*-tree”.<sup>1697</sup> This act might have happened during the campaign against Pūlināṭu, but as we shall see, the homeland of Nannaṅ seems to be somewhere else, so in this *patikam*, we might see consecutive, legendary acts of the king. In the 199<sup>th</sup> poem of the *Akanānūru*, we see the following lines:

I will not come even if I obtain wealth great as if the country would have been given [to me], which was lost due to Kaḷaṅkāykkkaṅṅi Nārmuṭiccēral with sharp sword which gave [him] triumphant victory, while Nannaṅ with gold ornaments died on the battlefield in the battle at the great harbour (*perunturai*) with the large golden *vākai*-tree, in the west [...]<sup>1698</sup>

Thus, we know that Nannaṅ fought and died in the battle at the great harbour or Perunturai if we interpret it as the name of a town, against Nārmuṭiccēral, so that his or the harbour’s golden *vākai*-tree was destroyed. We also know from this poem that Nannaṅ’s place must have been in the west, north of the Cēra lands. According to this poem, the defeat of Nannaṅ was equal to the loss of his country. The compound *perunturai* means either the ‘big harbour’ or the ‘big ghat’, so we cannot be sure whether we learn about the river port or the seaport of Nannaṅ.

Now let us read a longer passage of the 152<sup>nd</sup> poem of the *Akanānūru*, in which we read a closer geographic/historical setting around Nannaṅ:

[...] in the slopes of Pāli in the tall/long Ēlil mountain of Nannaṅ with a pearl necklace, the chief of Pāram with joy of charity/abundant toddy, who liberally gives/flings elephant bulls [due his] famous liberalism, the chief with a spear who overcame Piṅṭaṅ while breaking [his] opposition on the battlefield, [Piṅṭaṅ] who very much swarmed around showing copious enmity like a colony of small white

<sup>1695</sup> *vākai*: sirissa, *Albizzia*. *Dravidian Etymological Dictionary*, 5333.

<sup>1696</sup> ‘*ponam kaṅṅiṅ polam tēr nannaṅ/cuṭar vī vākaik kaṅṅi mutal taṅṅinta*’. *Patirruppattu*, 40: 14–15.

<sup>1697</sup> ‘*urul pūm kaṭampūṅ peruvāyil nannaṅai/nilaic ceruvil āṅṅalai arutt’ avāṅ/pon paṭu vākai muḷu mutal taṅṅintu*’. *Patirruppattu*, IV. 7–9.

<sup>1698</sup> ‘... *kuṭāatu/irum pon vākaip perunturaic ceruvil/polam pūn nannaṅ porutu kaḷatt’ oliya/valam paṭu korram tanta vāy vāl/kaḷaṅkāykkkaṅṅi nārmuṭiccēral ilanta nāṭu tant’-anna/valam peritu perinum vāralen yāṅē*’. *Akanānūru*, 199: 18–24.

shrimps that attacks while the good vessels which give the wealth (*tanam*) of great harbour (*perunturai*) with seashore groves at the extension of the sounding water, had been sundered/dispersed, [port of] Tittan̄ Veliyaṅ with famous wrathful army that nurtured the *akavunar* bards [who possess] fine staff [...] <sup>1699</sup>

This passage has particular importance for us because we read about Nannan̄ as the lord of the slopes of Pāli in the tall/long Ēlil mountain, which is certainly identical to today's Eḷimala of northern Kerala, north of Kaṅṅūr. He was also the chief of Pāram, a former capital of the chief called Miñili, a friend of Nannan̄ who died at the Pālipparantalai battle by the side of Nannan̄. <sup>1700</sup> Nannan̄ also defeated Piṅṅan̄ at Kaḷumalam, a little-known chief. <sup>1701</sup> The third name in this passage must only be a part of the comparison since Tittan̄ Veliyaṅ was a Cōla king <sup>1702</sup> who did not have territories and interests near the northwestern shores of Malabar, so the 'great harbour' here (Pukār?) is probably not the same as the 'great harbour' of Nannan̄ in the 199<sup>th</sup> poem of the *Akanānūru*. After all, most important for us is the 391<sup>st</sup> poem of the *Narriṅai*, in which we read about "Ēlil Hill of the good country of Nannan̄ at the gold-yielding Koṅkānam [mountains]" (*poṅ paṭu koṅkānam nannan̄ nal nāṭṭ' ēlil kunram*; Lines 6–7). Although Koṅkānam is a hapax legomenon, the geographic position given by the poet confirms its location north of the Cēras, and Koṅkānam probably meant to be the Sahyādrī mountain range on the Konkan Coast. In the 73<sup>rd</sup> poem of the *Kūrintokai* (Lines 2–4), we read that the tribe called *kōcar* once marched against Nannan̄'s land and felled his mango tree. Here, we have to make a short note on Nannan̄, who was either the founder or a later chief of his dynasty, but anyway, his name became a symbol of pedicide because, according to the legend, he murdered a young girl who had ignorantly eaten from a fruit that fell from his totemistic mango tree. This was the *casus belli* for the *kōcar* who attacked and defeated Nannan̄ together with his mango tree. <sup>1703</sup> Nannan̄ mentioned above must be referring to his dynasty. As we have read all the references of the Caṅkam poems on Nannan̄(s), it is almost impossible to decide who was who in these stories. However, it can be said that the lineage of Nannan̄ was once the chief of a land called Punṅāṭu, <sup>1704</sup> of Viyalūr and Pāli, Ēlilkunram, Pāram, Koṅkānam, Pūlināṭu. Later in the

<sup>1699</sup> 'nun̄ kōl akavunar̄ puranta pēricai/ciṅam keḷu tāṅṅai tittan̄ veliyaṅ/iran̄ku nīr̄ parappiṅ kāṅalam perunturai/tanam̄ taru nan̄kalam citaiyat tākkum/ciṅu velliraviṅ kuppai anna/uru pakai tarūm moȳm mūcu piṅṅan̄/muṅai muraṅ uṭaiyak kaṭanta ven̄v̄l/icai nal ikaik kaḷiru v̄cu vaṅ makil̄/pārattut talaiwaṅ āra nannan̄/ēlil netuwaraiṅ pālic cilampil'. *Akanānūru*, 152: 4–13.

<sup>1700</sup> *Pre-Pallavan Tamil Index*, 679.

<sup>1701</sup> *Pre-Pallavan Tamil Index*, 484.

<sup>1702</sup> *Pre-Pallavan Tamil Index*, 430–431.

<sup>1703</sup> For these legendary events, see *Kūrintokai*, 292; 73. and *Puranānūru*, 151.

<sup>1704</sup> Was it the same as the rich-in-beryl Pounnata of Ptolemy (Πουννάτα ἐν ἧ Βήρυλλος) between the Pseudostomos/Periyār river and the Baris/Pampā river? In that case, it appears in some mistakenly mapped "category" as Karuvūr, which can be found not on the Malabar Coast but in northwestern Koṅku Nāṭu. Or should

*Malaiṣaṭukāṭām*, Naṅṅaṅ seems to be a chief seated in Toṅṭaimaṅṭalam.<sup>1705</sup> Turning back, in the 90<sup>th</sup> poem of the *Akanāṅṅūru*, the *kōcar*-tribe appears as a folk somehow connected to the sea.

[...] the marketplace (*niyamam*) of the fierce-eyed *kōcar*, [their] faces [lined] with scars inflicted by iron, fertile, since it has the noise of the great sea, east of Cellūr of the god with rare power [...]<sup>1706</sup>

After all, if we read the 15<sup>th</sup> poem of the *Akanāṅṅūru*, I believe we can quite confidently identify the region that was ruled by the dynasty of Naṅṅaṅ and the tribe *kōcar*.

[...] like the Tuḷu land, with forests of peacocks with drum-eyed tail feathers, becoming full of the jackfruit cultivated on [tree] tops as round green unripe fruit by the upright *kōcar* with big ornaments, rejoicing in the truth [...]<sup>1707</sup>

We can conclude that the regions north of the Malabar Coast, Tuḷunāṭu, the Ēlilkunṅam or the Ēlil neṭunvarai together with the Koṅkāṅam/Sahyādri mountain range on the Konkan Coast, and Pūlināṭu were in the ancient times the dominion of Naṅṅaṅ and/or the *kōcar*-tribe. We have seen that Naṅṅaṅ was probably the overlord of Kaṭampin Peruvāyil, in which town the *kaṭampu*-tree was the protected totemistic tree. We know that the Cēras from the time of Neṭuñcēralāṭaṅ to Ceṅkuṭṭuvaṅ made a great effort to defeat their *kaṭampu* related enemies who lived on the islands of the Arabian Sea, north of the Cēra homeland, and that is why the *Cilappatikāram* mentions this event among others during the campaigns in the northern directions (*vaṭaticai maruṅkin*).<sup>1708</sup> We know that Naṅṅaṅ was famous for his gold ornaments and chariots. We see another ruler, Naṅṅaṅ Utiyaṅ, probably a descendant of Naṅṅaṅ, who had well-protected golden treasures in his town, where we read about “the gold which was put [down] by the very ancient chiefs (*vēḷir*) for the sake of protection, at Pālī with a difficult defence, [town of] Naṅṅaṅ Utiyaṅ.”<sup>1709</sup> We see that the *kaṭampu*-tribe must have lived in the coastal areas of the Konkan Coast near the lands that were governed by Tuḷu-speaking tribes, the *kōcar*, and Naṅṅaṅ. One

we understand *puṅṅātu* as ‘lowland’ (*pul nātu* as a synonym of *pul pulam*)? Cf. *Akanāṅṅūru*, 396: 2. Marr, anyway, takes it as a proper name and considers it possible to localise at modern Mysore. Marr 1985 [1958], 287.

<sup>1705</sup> <sup>1705</sup> *Pre-Pallavan Tamil Index*, 484–485.

<sup>1706</sup> ‘*arum tirai kaṭavuḷ cellūrk kuṅāṭu/perum kaṭal muḷakkir’ āki yānar/irump’ itam paṭutta vaṭu uṭai mukattar/katum kaṅ kōcar niyamam ...*’. *Akanāṅṅūru*, 90: 9–12. (Transl. by Eva Wilden)

<sup>1707</sup> ‘*mey mali perum pūṅ cemmāl kōcar/kommaiyam paṅcum kāyk kuṭumi vīḷainta/pākal ārkaip paraik kaṅ pīḷit/tōkaik kāviṅ tuḷu nāṭ’ aṅṅa*’. *Akanāṅṅūru*, 15: 2–5. (Transl. by Eva Wilden)

<sup>1708</sup> *Cilappatikāram*, III. 25.1; 185–187.

<sup>1709</sup> ‘*nāṅṅaṅ utiyaṅ aruṅkaṭiṭ pālī ton mutir vēḷir oṅpūnar vaitta poṅṅinūm ...*’. *Akanāṅṅūru* 258: 1–3.

might think that the tribal roots of the Kadamba dynasty of Banavāsī and Palāśikā (c. 345–610 AD) can be seen in the early appearance of the *kaṭampu*-tribe, whose later homeland is partly identical with the region we defined, and whose naval fleet of Goa was famous in the early Middle Ages.<sup>1710</sup>

Finally, we have to consider the possible reasons behind the naval attacks of the Cēras against the *kaṭampu*-tribe living north of their kingdom. As far as we see from the ancient sources, the Cēra rulers had no territorial interest in the northern archipelago considerably far from their kingdom; where despite the victory, the Cēras did not consolidate their power, and because the expenditures of this naval campaign must have cost more than it could have benefited, I interpret this event as a retaliation for some maritime activity of the *kaṭampus*, possibly out of revenge, which could have been aimed at destructive victory and the collection of tributes. Due to the strategic position of the Cēra kingdom, Muziris and Tyndis were initially the main markets of Roman trade with South India, providing significant revenue to the Cēra rulers. Therefore, we regard the northern attacks of these kings as an attempt to restore the loss of prestige caused by piracy and the security of the sea routes. Regarding the Cēra fleet, everything we have described in our study on Tamil shipping is of great importance since, with their knowledge of navigation and the technical expertise of the *yavanas* stationed or settled in South India, they could easily set up a fleet that could attack their enemies on the sea. I agree with Subrahmanian and De Romanis that the *yavana* bodyguards in the Tamil courts<sup>1711</sup> may have been recruited by the Tamil kings from the armed soldiers travelling on merchant ships, who had originally travelled to India to protect against pirates.<sup>1712</sup> Maybe as a precaution against pirates and robbers, we can also see the ports illuminated at night and the ships shining with the lanterns.<sup>1713</sup> Although the Caṅkam literature makes no specific mention of pirates, the reason for this can also be seen in the fact that ancient Tamil literature was heroic poetry commissioned by the royal court, and the concept did not include mentioning robbers capturing the incomes of the royal treasury. Nor can we be sure that these pirates were piratical folks and not the privateers of another ruler. By the way, I find the latter more likely in this ancient atmosphere when predatory warfare was in fashion.

The Cēra rulers were not only sponsors of poetry but also beneficiaries of Indo-Mediterranean trade relations, so they tried to preserve the stability and security of these contacts through their prestigious gifts and embassies and by means of their soldiers. However,

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<sup>1710</sup> Marr 1958 [1985], 287; Moraes 1995, 281; *Epigraphia Indica*, XIII. 309.

<sup>1711</sup> See, for example: *Mullaippāṭṭu*, 45–49, 59–63, 63–66.

<sup>1712</sup> Subrahmanian 1980, 252; De Romanis 1997, 104.

<sup>1713</sup> *Perumpāṇāruppāṭai*, 316–317; Gurukkal 2010, 234.

the mooring conditions around Muziris and the labyrinthine world of the lagoons and backwaters in Kuṭṭanāṭu favoured the pirates who, with their local knowledge, could easily hide or escape with the loot. If we talk about piracy instead of the employment of privateers, it could only have real benefits if the products could be sold. Still, in my opinion, the pirates had the opportunity to sell the loot mostly beyond the borders of the Tamil kings, in the land of Tuḷu Nāṭu, in Nannan's country and beyond. The network of northern markets, adequate economic power, and consumer demand were given in these ages, as we know that the Sātavāhana kings occupied the Nānāghaṭ mountain pass in the 2<sup>nd</sup> century BC, which opened the way for them to the Konkan Coast. During the reign of Gautamīputra Śātakarṇi in the 2<sup>nd</sup> century AD, the interests of the Sātavāhana dynasty extended to a large part of the western coast of India. From the 1<sup>st</sup> century AD, the Sātavāhana, the Kuṣāṇa, and the Śāka dynasties shared the coasts of West India north of South India, which dynasties became active participants in the Indian Ocean trade system through their ports and their regular sea voyages. Thus they may have had some influence on the southern Konkan. Returning to the question of the sale of loot, another alternative could be the active cooperation with pirate towns such as Mousopallē and Olokhoira, mentioned by Ptolemy, somewhere in the present-day state of Maharashtra, which perhaps provided them commercial connections with *dakṣiṇāpatha* ('southern route') and with *uttarāpatha* ('northern route').

Recognising the thriving trade relations, the more minor rulers and militant tribes of the areas north of the Cēras could envy the rich cargo, so they sought some profit by attacking the *yavana* (Greek, Roman, Persian, Arabic, etc.) fleets that came to India year after year. Although the links between the *kaṭampu* tribe of the Old Tamil literature and the later Kadamba dynasty cannot yet be sufficiently proven, the identities of their settlements and their totemistic trees may point to a specific relationship. The *kaṭampus* who lived in the archipelago west of the Konkan coast seem to have been wholly or partially identical to the pirates whom Pliny, Ptolemy, and *Periplus Maris Erythraei* mentioned and whose location can be pinpointed north of Naoura/Naravu, around Nitra/Nitrias, inland and in the archipelago near and north of today's Maṅgaḷūru, Karnataka, which region was governed by either Nannan, the *kōcar*, or the independent or feudatory *kaṭampu*-tribe.

As we see in the *Perumpāṇāruppatai*, the Tamil kings guarded the inland trade routes with archers to protect the merchants who transported the products of the mountains or seas through the lush forests.<sup>1714</sup> Speaking about the Tamil kingdoms in general, we find several references

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<sup>1714</sup> *Perumpāṇāruppatai*, 66–82. De Romanis 2020, 123.

in the Caṅkam texts that refer to forest robbers who raid cattle and eat its meat,<sup>1715</sup> or wayside robbers who threaten the travellers on the trade routes or at the crossroads.<sup>1716</sup> According to K. Rajan, in the first stage of the memorials, Iron Age graves (*patukkai*) were raised for the people who were killed by warlike tribes (*maravar*, *kānavar*) by charging arrows, of which *patukkai* was most probably a stone heap (*kaṅkuvai*), or a cairn.<sup>1717</sup> Most probably, the literary topos that record the dead travellers killed by robbers or martial warriors refer to this ancient chapter of history.

The *Patirruppattu* remains silent about the robbers, reflecting that the Cēra king was a prosperous protector of his country. Once it mentions (*Patirruppattu*, 15: 11–13) the “villages (*arampu*) [in the destroyed lands of the enemies] where the agricultural tracts perished together with the grassy-leafy lands [where] rascals (*pullāl*), [who carry their] flesh-reeking bows as [their] ploughs, roam [among] the old houses destroyed by the vines of the reddened *kāntaḷ*”. Talking about the protection of trade, we read an interesting passage in poem 13<sup>th</sup> (Lines 23–24), in which the king appears as being the one who “nourished the relatives (*pāram*) of those, who had given protection to the clans since the grain merchants [were] not [able to] protect the families in the world”. As we see at the end of the same poem (Line 28), thanks to the Cēra king, “the country, which is [now] protected by you, has become flourishing” (*pūttanru ... nī kātta nātē*). However, not just this poem but the whole *Patirruppattu* abounds in passages which talk about the protective role of the Cēra king as one of the central motifs of the anthology. Talking about the centuries when the Cēras ruled during the Indo-Roman trade, it can be said that the expanding wars and the lucrative trade attracted rascals who tried to get rich from robbery. Even if the king and his loyal army were a powerful protector of his universe, because of the envious kings, chiefs, and robbers, it was necessary to guard the harbours and the markets and build fortifications around the important settlements. We have already seen Naṅavu of “unceasing fertility and of unchangeable yield” as an important centre of the early Cēras, where “warriors (*maravar*) shiver in the cold wind of the coming sea, after the waves with foamy sprays together with the clouds became bewildered, [warriors] who possess bows whose laziness of the strings had been removed”,<sup>1718</sup> which perhaps shows that Naṅavu was fortified with troops of warriors.

<sup>1715</sup> For examples, see: *Akanāṅṅuru*, 97; 129; 265; 309.

<sup>1716</sup> For examples, see: *Kalittokai*, 6; *Akanāṅṅuru*, 1; 35; 63; 257, etc.

<sup>1717</sup> Rajan 2014, 223.

<sup>1718</sup> ‘...*(m)arāa vilaiyul arāa yānart/totalai maṭi kalainta cilai utai maravar/poṅku picirp puṅari maṅkuloṭu mayāṅki/varum kaṭal ūtaiyṅ paṅikkam ...*’. *Patirruppattu*, 60: 8–11.



Taking a look at Toṇṭi, the 18<sup>th</sup> poem talks about the gate (*katavu*) of Toṇṭi with seashore groves, on which Poraiyaṅ had impressed Mūvaṅ,<sup>1719</sup> his enemy’s sharp, thorn-like teeth.<sup>1720</sup> This poem was essential for us because it highlighted the closeness of the sea, and if we decide to translate *katavu* as ‘gate’, then the poem probably refers to a fortified mansion of the Cēra king in Toṇṭi. The Cēra king, anyway, appears as a ‘fighter’ (*porunaṅ*) here, with an army with anger that is difficult to chill down and victorious spears. When we read about Muciṛi, we saw that it was a “good and big town with difficult paths mingled with weapons [around] the fortification where birds of prey (*paruntu*) dwell and sleep/sigh (*uyirttu*) on the central walls”.<sup>1721</sup> Furthermore, as we read about Vañci/Karuvūr, the inland capital of the Cēras, we saw the town with ‘outer walls’ (*puṛa matil*) surrounded by the water of Porunai.<sup>1722</sup> All these passages reflect the necessity to fortify the towns connected to trading activities, and why else would the Cēras fortify a town and build walls around it than against those who are going to attack and sack it?

## **King and religion**

### ***The synthesis of Pre-Aryan beliefs and northern traditions***

The early Cēra monarchs as interactive kings were not only the followers, mediators, and propagators of the ancient Pre-Aryan beliefs found among the people of the Malabar and Koṅku regions, and were not only the origo of the king’s cult that connected the “vulnerable” people of the kingdom to their powerful lineage that protected them, but they were also the ones to whom we owe the first religious paradigm shift of Cēra history. A change that “exalted” the Cēra kings over the tribal chiefs when the Cēras gave way to increasing influences to the more significant part of brāhmaṇical groups and rites and, to a lesser extent, to the Buddhist and Jaina teachings. Thus, their kingdom transformed the Cēra hegemony from a Dravidian chiefdom to a hybrid kingdom that found the *via media* between the brāhmaṇical relations and the diverse Dravidian society living in the shade of his royal parasol.

This chapter does not analyse the Jews and Christians settling in ancient South India. Suppose we do not consider their oral theories of origin as historical sources. In that case, we have very little evidence that these groups settled on the Malabar Coast as early as the 1<sup>st</sup>–2<sup>nd</sup>

<sup>1719</sup> *Pre-Pallavan Tamil Index*, 706.

<sup>1720</sup> *Narriṅai*, 18: 2–5.

<sup>1721</sup> ‘*paruntu uyirtt’ iṭai matil cēkkum puṛicai paṭai mayaiṅku āṛiṭai neṭu nal ūṛē*. *Puṛaṅāṅūru*, 343: 15–17.

<sup>1722</sup> ‘*pul ilai vañciṭ puṛa matil alaikkum/kalleṅ porunai āṅkaṅ*’. *Puṛaṅāṅūru*, 387: 33–34.

centuries AD. What we have is the following: the text called *Acts of Thomas* (3<sup>rd</sup> c. AD) speaks of the Apostle Thomas in India, who arrived there around 52 AD, and mentions a Hebrew flute girl in an Indian court; Eusebius (4<sup>th</sup> c. AD) talks about Pantaenus, the philosopher (probably around 181 AD) who met with those people in India, who were aware of the Gospel of Matthew given by Apostle Batholomew to them; Jerome (4<sup>th</sup> c. AD) writes about Indian Christians in his letters; Dorotheus of Tyre (3<sup>rd</sup>–4<sup>th</sup> c. AD) reports on the death of the Apostle Thomas in South India. Although these sources designate a possible period of origin for South Indian Jewish communities (if the early Christian converts were, in fact, Jews) and Christianity, Jews and Christians still do not appear in the Tamil sources at all.<sup>1723</sup> In 345 AD (or according to other calculations in 811 AD), a missionary called Thomas of Cana arrived on the Malabar Coast, whose name and figure might have been mingled in the tradition with the legends of the Apostle Thomas.<sup>1724</sup> From the 4<sup>th</sup>–5<sup>th</sup> centuries AD, we have several evidences to prove that Jewish, Christian and West Asian merchants regularly travelled to or settled down in South India. Both the Bene Israel and the Cochin Jewish communities have traditional stories that trace their origin back to Solomon, the Babylonian Captivity, the siege of Jerusalem, etc.; however, what is certain is that from the perspective of a historian, their South Indian presence can only be supported by (non-folkloristic) sources from the middle of the first millennium AD. Even if we know from Philo and through the example of Nicanor that agencies and people in business of Jewish origin held a significant part of the Alexandria–Red Sea trade, for the time being, this cannot serve as sufficient evidence to assume the appearance of these merchants also on the other side of the Arabian Sea. Unfortunately, we have to give a similar and narrow answer regarding the question about Buddhists and Jainas in the early Cēra kingdom. Although we guess that all these groups mentioned above, including Jews and Christians, that a few communities them must have lived somewhere on the ancient Malabar Coast even in the early centuries AD, for the time being, the remarkable silence of our sources does not allow us to reconstruct their history. Anyway, there are things that the Cēra sources do not report, for example, the Indo-Roman trade, which is perhaps missing because our Tamil sources are still heroic poems regulated by a system of literary conventions, or maybe the reason could also be that the coast and its vivid world could not be “seen” from the king’s residence at Karuvūr in later centuries.

After these introductory words, when we open the Cēra panegyrics of the *Patirrupattu*, we find a complex system of ancient beliefs and influences of northern religions. In this study,

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<sup>1723</sup> Katz–Goldberg 1993, 33–34.

<sup>1724</sup> Weil 1986, 182.

we must confine ourselves to the religious phenomena that appear in the *Patirruppattu* as the most important anthology of the early Cēras and not undertake a comprehensive study of the history of religion covering the whole of Tamil South India. In this analysis, I mainly use poets' compositions. One might rightly ask, how could they represent the early religion in the Cēra kingdom? In my opinion, these ancient poets used only non-anachronistic images that could be understood and contextualised by the audience in the Cēra court and used well-known images that the audience could understand during the public recitations at the royal festivals. The value of these poems as historical sources, together with their (seemingly) formulaic descriptions, lies in the fact that they were probably included in the text at the request and order of the king to the greatest satisfaction of the king, who was impressed to identify his name with these themes.

The concept of *aṇaṅku* as being one of the ancient features of the Dravidian belief system can be found in some passages of the *Patirruppattu*. According to the Tamil Lexicon, the term *aṇaṅku* has meanings varying between 'pain', 'disease', 'fear', 'lust', 'killing', etc.<sup>1725</sup> Previously, Hart's influential idea and his "reductionistic interpretation"<sup>1726</sup> resulted in the definition of *aṇaṅku* as a "potentially dangerous sacred force" that, according to Hart, sometimes meant a sort of deity,<sup>1727</sup> sometimes a force that resided in places, or other passages it had to be associated with the chastity of women as far as *aṇaṅku* was concentrated in their breasts. Only married women could be safe from this "dangerous power," which, however, entered their bodies with widowhood again.<sup>1728</sup> As Hart summarizes, "*aṇaṅku*, then, was a force that was present in all sacredly charged objects, whose very presence constituted the presence of the sacred ... it was dangerous and if not handled correctly could go out of control and result in catastrophe."<sup>1729</sup> V. S. Rajam, however, conducted an exhaustive study (and gave an in-depth answer to Hart) on the possible meanings and the semantic changes of the term *aṇaṅku*, which study has proved that "*aṇaṅku* in ancient Tamil society signified a bundle of diverse qualities; when one or more of those qualities were present in an *entity* (like a deity, a human being, a human being's body-part, a person's quality, a person's action, a supernatural being, a place, or certain tradition), that entity was perceived to "have" some quality which the ancient Tamils chose to signify by the term *aṇaṅku*; the *effect* that such an entity created in its perceivers or experiencers was also called *aṇaṅku*; and a person, deity, or a supernatural being was personified as an *aṇaṅku* by virtue

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<sup>1725</sup> *Tamil Lexicon*, 61. Cf. the verb *aṇaṅku-tal* 5. intr.

<sup>1726</sup> Rajam 1986, 267.

<sup>1727</sup> Hart 1975, 21–22.

<sup>1728</sup> Hart 1976, 321.

<sup>1729</sup> Hart 1976, 321.

of having the *aṇaṅku* quality or causing an *aṇaṅku* effect in another entity.”<sup>1730</sup> Thus it was a term that could denote ‘strength’ of the chieftain, ‘beauty’ of the heroine, ‘sexuality’ of the heroine’s breasts, ‘horror’ of the dead warriors’ heads, ‘substantiality’ of a promise, ‘vigilance’ of demons, ‘awe-inspiring quality’ of the king’s strength, ‘dangerous elements’ of ancient towns and seashores, etc.<sup>1731</sup> Still, I consider *aṇaṅku* a very ancient term which must have deeper roots in the belief systems of ancient Dravidians, and therefore has to be analysed among the “religious” patters.

What we see in the *Patirruppattu* is that in the 11<sup>th</sup> poem the Cēra king who “approached the great sea of vast dark expanse, being mounted on an elephant bull like the famous and victorious Vēḷ with fierce anger, who cut down the entire foot of [the tree of] Cūr<sup>1732</sup> protected by the awful (*aṇaṅk’ uṭai*) *avuṇar* (*asura*).”<sup>1733</sup> Here *aṇaṅku* means the awful or strong character or frightful appearance of those demons. In the II. *patikam*, the king has *amaiyārt tēytta aṇaṅk’ uṭai nōl tāḷ* “sturdy legs possessed by *aṇaṅku* that destroyed the disobedient”. In this case his athletic leg (*tāḷ*) is already sturdy (*nōl*), so *aṇaṅku* cannot denote its strength but refers to “the *effect* that such an entity created in its perceivers” as Rajan stated, so we might translate it again as “awful”, which nature was experienced by the destroyed ones. In the 44<sup>th</sup> poem, the king “entered [the fort] like the *aṇaṅku*, took the *muracam*-drum of the king Mōkūr, made [him who had] high words [of promises] humble, cut off the foot of his [totemistic] *vēmpu*-tree, accomplished to make a *muracu*-drum [from the tree] and tied [your] many elephant bulls [to the rest of the trunk]”.<sup>1734</sup> In this passage, the king entered the fort like the *aṇaṅku*, which makes us think about how exactly to interpret *aṇaṅku* here. Is this *aṇaṅku* an early personification of the term, or the king entered the fort in a way that ‘distress’ or ‘anxiety’ (*aṇaṅku*) enters one’s body/mind? There is a doubtful attestation of the word in the 62<sup>nd</sup> poem (Line 11), in which, depending on how we split the sandhi, we read people either as “[they] said ‘Tōṭṭi!’,”<sup>1735</sup> [as being] someone with large, greeting hands (*vaṇaṅk’ uṭai taṭak kaiyar tōṭṭi ceppi*), or “[they] said ‘Tōṭṭi!’,” [as being] someones with large,

<sup>1730</sup> Rajan 1986, 265–266.

<sup>1731</sup> Rajan 1986, 268–271.

<sup>1732</sup> I chose to translate *cūr* as a proper name of a malevolent power that evolves to the character of Cūrapatumaṅ, the demon slaughtered by Murukaṅ. Cf. *Puṇaṅāyūru*, 23: 4–5. Another possible translation is “fearful”, literally “fear-possessing” (*cūr-uṭai*). See: *Tamil Lexicon*, 1565.

<sup>1733</sup> ‘*naḷi irum paraṅṅiṅ māḱ kaṭal muṇṇi/aṇaṅk’ uṭai avuṇar ēmam puṇarukkum/cūr uṭai muḷu mutal taṭinta pēr icaik/kaṭum ciṅa viṇal vēḷ kalir’ ūmt’-āṅku*. *Patirruppattu*, 11: 3–6.

<sup>1734</sup> ‘... *aṇaṅku nikaḷnt’-anna/mōkūr manṇaṅ muracam koṅṭu/ṇeṭu moli paṇitt’ avan vēmpu mutal taṭintu/muracu ceya muraccik kaliru pala pūṭṭi*. *Patirruppattu*, 44: 13–16.

<sup>1735</sup> According to the *Tamil Ilakkiyaṅ Pēraḱarāṭi*, here *tōṭṭi* means a greeting about which no other old information has survived. *Tamil Ilakkiyaṅ Pēraḱarāṭi*, 1235. However, we see *tōṭṭi vaṇakkam* in *Peruṅkatai*, I. 45. 64. In his commentaries on *Peruṅkatai*, U. Vē. Cāminātaiyar claims that it is a “goad-like greeting” (*aṅkucam pōṅra vaṇakkatai*) when the person bends like a goad. A similar idea is the *vilvaṅakkam* (*Kural*, 827), or the reverential bowing known as *daṇḍa-praṇāma* (*A Sanskrit–English Dictionary*, 399).

strong hands (*aṇaṅk' uṭait tatak kaiyar tōṭṭi ceppi*). In the 68<sup>th</sup> poem (Line 19), we see “women with bewitching (*aṇaṅku*) grace” (*aṇaṅk' elil arivaiyar*). Somewhat unique is the passage found in the 71<sup>st</sup> poem, which I have to discuss later from another point of view. In that poem, we see the Cēra king who “departed after [he] took the tributes (*tirai*) like a *pācam* (*piśāca*) which departs after it has taken the oblation (*pali*), because [they,] with [their] bodies full of shivering, worshipped [him] as the *aṇaṅku*.”<sup>1736</sup> Thus, we can conclude that the poet Aricil-kiḷār had already personified *aṇaṅku* as a ‘tormenting spirit’. In the 79<sup>th</sup> poem (Line 14), we find the king sitting on the throne/cot (*kaṭṭil*) according to the awful tradition (*aṇaṅk' uṭai marapiṇ*), and one more reference to *aṇaṅku* in the 88<sup>h</sup> poem, in which the Cēras cut the entire foot of the *kaṭampū* tree possessed by *aṇaṅku*, where we might translate again ‘awful’ or ‘dangerous’ tree considering the effects caused by the destruction of a totem. Sivabalan adds that the Cēras might have believed that a deity resided in a *kaṭampū* tree.<sup>1737</sup> This idea is not far-fetched at all, enough to mention the ecstatic ritual recorded in the *Kuriṅciṅpāṭṭu*, in which people clasped their hands around the trunk of the *kaṭampū*-tree and were trembling like the banana trees on the seashore,<sup>1738</sup> but we find other literary evidences that show the belief that the *kaṭampū* was the abode of a deity.<sup>1739</sup> In this case, the meaning of *aṇaṅk' uṭai* is, I believe, still far from ‘holy’ or ‘divine’, and I would stick to translating ‘awful’, ‘dangerous’, or maybe ‘mysterious’.

Another important term is *cūr*, which almost falls into the same category as *aṇaṅku*, an ancient term that denotes ‘fear’, ‘affliction’, ‘disease’, etc., while it soon became the proper name of a malevolent power that later evolved to the character of Cūrapatumaṅ, the demon slaughtered by Skanda/Murukaṅ.<sup>1740</sup> We have already seen the citation from the *Patirruppattu* when the king “cut down the entire foot of [the tree of] Cūr protected by the awful *avunār*.”<sup>1741</sup> Here, the questionable *Vēḷ* could be anyone as there is no direct reference to this particular chief (*vēḷ*). Still the easiest and the best interpretation so far is to assume that this story refers to the Mango tree of Cūrapatumaṅ chopped down by Murukaṅ who mounted on his elephant bull, Piṇimukam.<sup>1742</sup> If we reject this interpretation, saying that there is no proof to identify these two, then we simply read ‘fearsome roots [of a tree]’. In the 31<sup>st</sup> poem (Lines 34–35), we read about the king’s army, which “appeared like Cūr to the enemies, [but] became protection to the friends”. Here, if we were not satisfied with translating Cūr as the proper name of a

<sup>1736</sup> ‘*mey paṇi kūṛā aṇaṅk' eṇaṅ paṛāvaliṅ/pali koṅṭu peyarum pācam pōlap/tirai koṅṭu peyarti ...*’. *Patirruppattu*, 71: 22–24.

<sup>1737</sup> Sivabalan 1996, 98.

<sup>1738</sup> *Kuriṅciṅpāṭṭu*, 176–179.

<sup>1739</sup> *Kūṛuntokai*, 87: 1; *Kalittokai*, 101: 12–14.

<sup>1740</sup> *Tamil Lexicon*, 1565. Cf. the verb *cūr-tal* 11. tr.

<sup>1741</sup> ‘*aṇaṅk' uṭai avuṇār ēmaṅ puṇarkkum/cūr uṭai mulu mutal taṅinta ...*’. *Patirruppattu*, 11: 4–5.

<sup>1742</sup> Sivabalan 1996, 94.

malevolent power, we might search for the opposite pair of ‘protection/shelter’ (araṇam, < Skt. śaraṇa) so that *cūr* may mean ‘fear’, ‘torment’. We find another fascinating passage in the 67<sup>th</sup> poem of the *Patirruppattu*, in which “the wings (*parai*) of the fast-flying bees which inflated themselves [with pollen] without moving away from the blossoming *kāntal*-flowers, failed to work after they became desired by the Cūr.”<sup>1743</sup> This literary topos, which perhaps found its way to literature from folk beliefs, underlines the understanding of *cūr* in the *Patirruppattu* as the proper name of a malevolent being.

Staying with malevolent creatures, the demons called *pēy* (often in the *aḷapetai* form *pēy*) and the demonic women called *pēymakaḷ(ir)/pēypenṭir* are worth mentioning. Vacek identified these creatures as ‘ghosts’, as “one representative of what may be called ‘meta-nature’”.<sup>1744</sup> Manuel and Sundramathy chose to translate ‘fiend’,<sup>1745</sup> but the translations ‘evil spirit’, ‘ghoul’, or ‘goblin’ are also among the usual interpretations. These demons have either negative or positive sides; the positive is when, as a subcategory of *kāñcittiṇai*, the *pēy* protects the fallen bodies on the battlefield (*pēykkāñci*; *Puranānūru*, 281); the negative is when the *pēy* itself tries to approach those bodies and the wife of the warrior protects her wounded husband (*toṭākkāñci*).<sup>1746</sup> Generally speaking, the *pēy* and the *pēymakaḷ* are usually connected to the battlefield, to the wasteland and to burial grounds (*cuṭukātu*), but they can reside in trees, appear in dreams, or cause mirage (*pēy tēr*), and their descriptions are quite often very horroristic. In the *puram* poetry we see these demons and demonesses, who usually come in groups, eat corpses and eyeballs, and play and dance in the oozing blood, for which description we find a beautiful and mature example in the *Tirumurukāruppaṭai* (Lines 47–56). Sivabalan seems to have convinced himself that, following S. Vidhyanandhan, certain barbarians who were cannibals might have lived long before the pre-Caṅkam period. He cited a reference from the *Maturaikkāñci* (Lines 28–36), “which states that a male ghost *pēymakaṇ* made fireplace of heads of the beheaded enemies, boiled their blood; and cooked using the cut arms as ladle cooked”. As he continues, “It seems possible that a certain barbaric tribe who took human flesh had lived in those days”.<sup>1747</sup> I would instead think that here we simply meet a *puram* topos, which is also reflected in *Puranānūru* 372 when the *pēys* prepare a feast from the fallen corpses of the battlefield. Even if a sort of “human sacrifice” (*uyirppali*) appears in the *Cilappatikāram* (V. 76–88), which episode instead seems to me an overwhelmed fantasy of Iḷāṅkōvaṭikaḷ about heroism, when the heroes willingly cut and offer

<sup>1743</sup> Cf. *Kuruntokai*, 52: 2.

<sup>1744</sup> Vacek 2012, 29.

<sup>1745</sup> Sundramathy–Manuel 2010, 97–99.

<sup>1746</sup> Vacek 2012, 30. *Tolkāppiyam Poruḷatikāram Purattiṇaiyiyal*, cū. 77: 5–6; 10–11.

<sup>1747</sup> Sivabalan 1996, 101.

their heads on a sacrificial altar (*pali-pīṭikai*),<sup>1748</sup> we do not find objective evidence either for human sacrifices or for cannibalism in the Caṅkam texts. If we open the *Patirruppattu*, we read the following:

[...] demonic women (*pēymakaḷ*) with shaggy hair were riding on donkeys (*kalutu*) and roaming around, [where] the *viṭattar*[-trees]<sup>1749</sup> of twisting fruits grew [pervasively] together with the dark *uṭai*[-trees],<sup>1750</sup> while the sugar cane fields with thick flowers became exhausted [and] the villages perished by the water, which was furiously destroyed by you, are similar to the bodies which were killed and left behind by the God of Death (*Kūrru*) [...]<sup>1751</sup>

We should mention that in the case of *kalutu*, it is also possible that these demonic women were riding on another ghostly creature, the *kalutus* (Tamil Lexicon, 804),<sup>30</sup> however, this poetic image seems to be a bit weird and unprecedented. In the 22<sup>nd</sup> poem, we see the demonesses (*pēymakaḷ*) again to roam on the wasteland where white jackals howl and owls with bulging eyes shriek.<sup>1752</sup> In the 30<sup>th</sup> poem, these demonesses (*pēymakaḷ*) appear again on the occasion when the *uyarntōṅ* performed post-battle sacrifices:

[...] the black-eyed crows and kites perched and filled [themselves] full according to the amazing tradition where ants do not swarm, with the great oblation (*pali*) of strong wine (*makil*) that is sprinkled with blood (*neyttōr*), while black-eyed demonesses were trembling and clapping [their] hands; while they shivered [out of desire] for the difficult-to-obtain *piṇṭam*<sup>1753</sup> that was offered by the *uyarntōṅ* in order to honour deities according to the tradition with the precious power of the sounding *mantiram*<sup>1754</sup>[...] <sup>1755</sup>

<sup>1748</sup> Dubianski 2000, 16–17.

<sup>1749</sup> According to the *Tamil Lexicon*, it is identifiable with *viṭattērai*, Ashy babool (*Dichrostachys cinerea*). *Tamil Lexicon*, 3654. The name of this tree is anyway a hapax legomenon in the Caṅkam texts.

<sup>1750</sup> The *Tamil Lexicon* provides three options to identify this tree: 1. Umbrella-thorn babul (*Acacia planifrons*) 2. Buffalo-thorn cutch (*Acacia latronum*) 3. Pea-podded black babul (*Acacia eburnea*).

<sup>1751</sup> ‘*kūr*’ *aṭū nira yākkai pōla/nī civant’ irutta nīr ali pākkam/viri pūm karumpiṇ kalani pulleṇat/tiri kāy viṭattarotū kār uṭai pōkik/kavaṭṭ talaiṇ pēymakaḷ kalut’ ūmt’ iyaṅka’*. *Patirruppattu*, 13: 11–15.

<sup>1752</sup> *Patirruppattu*, 22: 35–38.

<sup>1753</sup> *piṇṭam* (< Skt. *piṇḍa*): anything globular or round; embryo, ball of rice; ball of cooked rice offered to the *manes*, etc. *Tamil Lexicon*, 2656. Here it refers to certain balls of rice used in post-battle rituals.

<sup>1754</sup> *mantiram* (< Skt. *mantra*): Vedic hymn, sacrificial formula, incantation, spell, etc. *Tamil Lexicon*, 3068.

<sup>1755</sup> ‘... *mulaṅku mantiratt’/arum tīral marapiṇ kaṭavul pēṇiyar/uyarntōṅ ēṇiya arum pēal piṇṭam/karum kaṇ pēy makaḷ kai puṭaiyū natuṅka/neyttōr tūya nīrai makil irum pali/erumpu mūcā irumpūtu marapiṇ/karum kaṇ kākkaiyoṭu parunt’ irunt’ āra’*. *Patirruppattu*, 30: 34–39.

Leaving the thorough analysis of this passage for later, what we have seen is the demonesses bustling around and being excited for the bloody sacrifices. In the 35<sup>th</sup> poem:

[...] demonesses (*pēy*) dance in the village common where the blood had taken on a red glow that looked like the sky at night fall in the wasteland where bodies dance, which remained there after [their] heads had been cut off,<sup>1756</sup> while flocks of female and male owls filled themselves full with the food [found] on the vast battlefield [...] <sup>1757</sup>

In the 36<sup>th</sup> poem (Lines 12–13), “the red flood of blood flows, while fearfully rising demons are dancing after they ate [and] rejoiced”, which reflects the same idea as seen before, but here we have to deal with another group of demons, the *kūliyar*. We have another attestation of the word *kūliyar* in *Patirruppattu* 19: 1, however, it perhaps meant “demon-like foot-soldiers (*kāl kūliyar*) seizing plunder and food”, rather than “demons with forked legs (*kavar kāl kūliyar*) with food [seized by] plunder”. Our last reference for demonesses is the following:

[...] demonesses without beauty caused painful anxiety together with the torsos (*yūpam*)<sup>1758</sup> which abounded in valour<sup>1759</sup> and remained [on the battlefield]<sup>1760</sup> after [their] heads had been cut, when a crowd of winged *eruvai*-birds filled themselves full with blood [from] the expanse of shiny flesh that remained on the place of the battle [...] <sup>1761</sup>

Thus, we conclude that these demonesses were connected to the warfare, to the horrors of the battlefield, and to death. Either we translate demon, ghost, ghoul, goblin, devil, evil spirit, or

<sup>1756</sup> Cf. *Cilappatikāram*, III. 26: 206–208. The headless torsos (*kabandha*) that retained vitality are known from Sanskrit literature as well, e.g. cf. *Raghuvamśa*, VII. 51.

<sup>1757</sup> ‘... viyal kalatt’/alak’ utaic cēval kilai pukā ārat/talai tumint’ eñciya mey ātu parantalai/anti mālai vicumpu kaṇṭ’-anna/cem cūtar koṇṭa kuruti manṛattup/pēy ātum ...’. *Patirruppattu*, 35: 4–9.

<sup>1758</sup> Although *yūpam* (< Skt. *yūpam*) means first of all ‘sacrificial post’, here we followed the additional meaning given by the *Pūṅkalam* 1083, where *yūpam* is a synonym of *uṭarkurāi*, “torso”. Hildebeitel (Hildebeitel 2016, 53) claims that the name of the demon called *Kabandha* (“headless torso”) is also a name for a sacrificial post. This could help us to understand why *yūpam* as a sacrificial post means *kabandha*; however, having made a thorough search, I was not able to verify his statement unless his source was the *Pūṅkalam* cited above, whose gloss was perhaps based on this *Patirruppattu* passage.

<sup>1759</sup> If we split sandhi in a different way, we may read “the torsos which abound in swords (*vāl*)”.

<sup>1760</sup> Cf. *Tolkāppiyam Poruḷatikāram Purattinaiyiyal*, cū. 71.

<sup>1761</sup> ‘amark kaṇ amainta avir niṇaṇ parappin/kulūuc cirai eruvai kuruti ārat/talai tumint’ eñciya āṇ mali yūpamot’/uruv’ il pēymakal kavalai kavarrā’. *Patirruppattu*, 67: 8–11.



fiend, we must say that these creatures called *pēy* were sometimes ghost-like beings (residing e.g. inside the trees), sometimes horrific but somewhat anthropomorphic creatures; but no matter in which form they materialised, they could physically intervene in the material world.

Once we have already mentioned the battlefield, it is necessary to speak of some omens that foretold the outcome of the battle. Among these one was the tradition to make a prediction with *kalāṅku*-beans. The *kalāṅku*-bean can be identified with the Molucca bean (*kalārcikkāy*). According to the *Tamil Lexicon*, throwing these beans also refers to a kind of play popular among the girls. As another meaning, we should mention the divination which could have been made with the help of these beans by a soothsayer when possessed (cf. *Narriṅai*, 47: 8). If we rely solely on the *Patirrupattu*, it must be said that this custom was practiced mostly by the Cēras' enemies, while the Cēra king was able to overwrite the laws of nature and the (superstitious?) prophecies with his power.<sup>1762</sup> Another tradition of warfare predictions was the divination with the *uṇṇam*-tree which was “a small tree with golden flowers and small leaves which, in ancient times, was invoked for omens before warriors proceeded to battle.”<sup>1763</sup> As is the *kalāṅku*-bean, the *uṇṇam*-tree had only two attestations in the *Patirrupattu* and it seems that the Cēras did not invoke it for omens, but experienced its distressed crown and dried trunk in the perished land of their enemies. One time the Cēra king was called even as “the enemy of the *uṇṇam*-tree with small trunk, little leaves, and gold-like flowers”.<sup>1764</sup> This could perhaps mean that the Cēra king said no to these ancient customs not because they might not have believed in them, but because such a denial of things would suggest that the outcome of the Cēra king's wrath was unpredictable and unsurpassed. We observe a special relationship between Cēra kings and vows/oaths (*vañciṅam*, *onrumolī*, *neṭumolī*). While the Cēra warriors' vows were always unbroken, fulfilled, and fruitful, the enemies' oaths proved to be futile. Thus we read about the king who “declared an oath<sup>1765</sup> by means of [his] *muracam*-drum with thundering sound” and defeated the disobedient,<sup>1766</sup> “the sworn (*onrumolī*) [Cēra] warriors who accomplished [their] vows (*vañciṅam*)<sup>1767</sup> without breaking it”,<sup>1768</sup> the Cēra king as “the one who performed the sacrifice

<sup>1762</sup> Cf. *Patirrupattu*, 15: 5; 32: 8.

<sup>1763</sup> *Tamil Lexicon*, 488.

<sup>1764</sup> *Patirrupattu*, 23: 1; 40: 17; 61: 6.

<sup>1765</sup> POC: *onrumolītal* – “declaring an oath” (*vañciṅankūral*).

<sup>1766</sup> *Patirrupattu*, 66: 4.

<sup>1767</sup> *vañciṅam*: oath, asseveration. *Tamil Lexicon*, 3466. There is another way to understand this line if we follow the POC, which glosses *vañciṅam muṭittal*: “completion of the seizure of the circles/states of the foes” (*mārār maṅṭalaṅkalaik koṅṭu muṭittal*). It is clearly based on the theory of *vañcittiṅai* described in *Purapporuḷveṅṇāmālai* 3: 1.

<sup>1768</sup> *Patirrupattu*, 41: 17–18;

(*vēlvī*) without breaking [his] vow (*paṭivam*),<sup>1769</sup> after [he] listened the *kēlvi* (*śruti*)”,<sup>1770</sup> about “[Cēra] warriors, strong men who do not protect the entrance ... having taken an oath (*neṭumoli*)<sup>1771</sup> as the ones with the desire of finishing [the war] each day”,<sup>1772</sup> or the king “who won over the Great Cōlaṅ who ruled in Potti, and over the young Palaiyaṅ Māraṅ who ruled in Vittai, so that the taken vow has excelled”.<sup>1773</sup> In contrast, we see chieftains and kings, who sworn an oath against the Cēras, trembling in fear,<sup>1774</sup> and the army of Mōkur, who declared an oath together with chiefs and kings, again trembling in fear.<sup>1775</sup> We see an interesting oath taken by the Cēra king as the commander of his warriors:

[After] he declared: “If we are ones who sweetly enjoyed this day in order to distribute their murderous weapons to the thunderbolt-like warriors [who are] people having bodies with glorious scars imprinted by the edges of swords, [and who are] people having bright flowers of *kuṭalai* tied with white fronds, we will not eat food [from now], unless we conquer tomorrow the walls with ramparts made from earth!”<sup>1776</sup>

This rigorous fast in order to achieve victory seems to be unique in the old *puram* corpus. I think the idea behind it was that the warriors will not have to wait so long, since the Cēra king's army was definitely stronger than any other armies, if not in reality, at least in these panegyrics. In fact, we see a similar example in the 68<sup>th</sup> poem of the *Patirrupattu*, in which we read the following:

Unless [the Cēra warriors] attack the persistent forts with desirable/cruel lines, while the *muracam*-drum with rumbling sound echoes in the big vast sky, [which sound] had been urged [with drumsticks into] a fierce/fast noise in the middle of the military camp which stationed in various lands, [the *muracam*-drum] which sounded like the sea as if the wind became [its] drumsticks; unless [they] themselves, [who have] distress that perplexes [their] bodies and who are ones

<sup>1769</sup> POC: *paṭivam* – “The vows which are earlier conducted as being an instruction for the sake of performing the *yāga/yākam*” (*yākam paṇṇutarku uṭalāka munḍu celuttum virataṅka*).

<sup>1770</sup> *Patirrupattu*, 74: 1–2.

<sup>1771</sup> For *neṭumoli* as ‘oath’, see: *Tolkāppiyam Poruṭatikāram Purattinaiyiyal*, cū. 63: 13.

<sup>1772</sup> *Patirrupattu*, 81: 9; 11–12.

<sup>1773</sup> *Patirrupattu*, IX. 6–8.

<sup>1774</sup> *Patirrupattu*, 30: 30–31.

<sup>1775</sup> *Patirrupattu*, 49: 8–9.

<sup>1776</sup> *Patirrupattu*, 58: 2–7.

with heart-declared effort, achieve to conquer the residences of the disobedient, while a lot of time has passed which was multiplied without eating, will they obtain the desired long lifetime [...]?”<sup>1777</sup>

This may indicate again a solemn vow not to eat until they have conquered the fort. Another possibility is that there was a stalemate in the supply of food during the protracted campaign. If we imagine such a siege in the tropical heat of South India, perhaps the vow could have been a magical concentration of power (cf. *tapas*) in which the hunger and the distress heat the wrathful efforts, even if it was merely the poet’s imagination. I still infer from this that it was a popular idea among ancient Tamil people that by fasting a desirable goal would sooner be achieved by means of some supernatural intervention.

We should consider that these oaths and vows could have been influences of the Sanskrit epics which abound in these.<sup>1778</sup> We might think that the *Patirruppattu*, 58: 2–7 was very similar to the “I will not do X, unless I do Y” kinds of oaths, like e.g. the oath of Kṛṣṇa to slay Śālva, or Bhīma’s oath against Duḥśāsana, etc.<sup>1779</sup> The topic would require more in-depth research. In any case, due to the very laconic passages, the epic origin of these ideas remains a mere assumption for the time being. Even if we do not know the way how the allied enemies took an oath (as we learn about the usage of water, earth, foot, etc. in Sanskrit texts), at least in one case we observed that the king declared an oath by means of the royal drum.

Not counting that the whole battle was understood as a fertility sacrifice when the king was the ploughman and the army was his plough,<sup>1780</sup> bloody sacrifices called *pali* ‘oblation’ and ‘offering’ (< Skt. *balī*) were offered on the battlefield. For examples, see the following acts of the Cēras recorded in the *Patirruppattu*:

[...] while the rumble of the fur-covered black eye<sup>1781</sup> [of the *muracu*-drum] was sounding, and blood had been sacrificed together with the mixture of the different crops [...]<sup>1782</sup>

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<sup>1777</sup> *Patirruppattu*, 68: 1–8; 14.

<sup>1778</sup> See: Hopkins 1932; Minoru 1987; Minoru 1988.

<sup>1779</sup> Minoru 1988, 205.

<sup>1780</sup> *Patirruppattu*, 14: 17.

<sup>1781</sup> *kan*: “the eye [of the drum]”, “the place [where the drum had been placed]”. Here we have to understand the eye of the drum, which was a dark circle in the middle of the drum’s surface made of clay. *Tamil Lexicon*, 683.

<sup>1782</sup> *Patirruppattu*, 29: 11–12.

[...] after you had scattered colourful red millet together with blood [...] <sup>1783</sup>

[...] the black-eyed crows and kites perched and filled [themselves] full with the great oblation (*pali*), [when] strong wine (*makil*) and blood were sprinkled [...] <sup>1784</sup>

[...] after they worshipped the Ayirai <sup>1785</sup> according to the fearful tradition with hills of heaped cooked rice on which blood was sprinkled [...] <sup>1786</sup>

Except the Indo-Aryan term *bali* which was used for these sacrifices, the origin of these rituals is uncertain; it might have been an indigenous ritual connected to the ancient Dravidians, a unique synthesis of Dravidian and Vedic traditions, or a purely Vedic ritual. If we open the *R̥gveda* (III. 18. 3), we can find some advice “to offer one’s own blood if one wishes to bring into subjection a king, a country, or a fortified town without delay: the power of the abused blood reacts upon the person or object that has forced its owner to resort to the ritual”. <sup>1787</sup> This could be one of the possible explanations behind this ritual. This post-battle *pali* was usually eaten by crows and kites who might have been considered by the Tamils as *manes* (*pitṛ*). In other *puram* poems, we see *pali*-offerings in order to cause the rain to fall (*Puranānūru*, 143), to the poles of the deities (*Puranānūru*, 52), to the memorial stones (*Puranānūru*, 329), to the front gate of the protecting kings (*Puranānūru*, 331), or the dead (*Puranānūru*, 363). Going over all the attestations of the word in the Caṅkam poems, <sup>1788</sup> one can find references to *pali* offered to Murukaṅ, deities, deads and *manes*, hero stones, and even to snakes as a rare example for *sarṣabali* (*Perumpānāruppaṭai*, 232–233), which shows in fact that the Tamils seemed to be aware of the concept of the various Vedic *bali* oblations, <sup>1789</sup> but I found no closer reference in which blood was offered along with millet on the battlefield. The closest I found was the oblation offered to Murukaṅ during the *veriyāttam* dance. <sup>1790</sup>

Thus, we have no evidence whether the post-battle oblations of the Cēras were offered to the forefathers and the spirits of the dead warriors, to some deities such as Kūrruvaṅ/Yama, Korravai, or Murukaṅ/Skanda, or Bhūdevī to neutralise the battlefield or to evil spirits in order

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<sup>1783</sup> *Patirrupattu*, 19: 6.

<sup>1784</sup> *Patirrupattu*, 30: 37; 39.

<sup>1785</sup> POC: “the [word] *ayirai* means [the goddess] Korravai who lives in the Ayiraimalai” (*ayirai enratu ayiraimalaiyuraiyum korravaiyinaī*).

<sup>1786</sup> *Patirrupattu*, 88: 11–12.

<sup>1787</sup> Gonda 1980, 97.

<sup>1788</sup> Lehmann–Malten 2007, 297.

<sup>1789</sup> Kane 1941, 745–748.

<sup>1790</sup> *Tirumurukāruppaṭai*, 227–244.

to propitiate and feed them. One might consider another important meaning of the Sanskrit *bali* as “tax” or “tribute” (cf. *Arthaśāstra*, II. 6. 3), which would be a logical interpretation in connection to the return from the victorious battle, but the absolutive (*tūuy* from *tūvu-tal* v. 11. ‘to sprinkle’, ‘to scatter’) excludes this possibility since the attestations of the verb *tūvu-tal* in the *Patirruppattu* are always connected to bloody offerings. Scholars like Sivabalan believe that in these cases, “Kor̥ravai was ceremonially fed with sacrifices after attaining victory in a war”.<sup>1791</sup> If so, this idea can be supported with the 79<sup>th</sup> poem of the *Patirruppattu* (Lines 15–19) with the proviso that we agree with the mediaeval commentary:

Let your praises become immortal, o great man, after [you] had solidified like the Ayirai Hill [of] the deity<sup>1792</sup> with a frightening tradition, who does not accept other food-oblation (*maṭai*)<sup>1793</sup> than [the one which] gushes outside [being] the blood which flows [from] the vital spot amid the pain that perplexes the body which was worthy of *tumpai* [...]<sup>1794</sup>

Therefore, we might conclude that the post-battle sacrifices of the Cēras mentioned in these poems were complex offerings that fed the deity probably of Ayiraimalai, who might have been Kor̥ravai and/or Murukan, the forefathers, the evil spirits and other legendary beasts, and the earth to make the battlefield fertile and pacified.

However, we might find another reference which shows that the post-battle *pali* of the Cēras had to be connected to the brāhmaṇical practices. In the 30<sup>th</sup> poem cited above, we have seen *pali* as an “amazement[-causing] (*irumpūtu*) tradition [where] the ants do not swarm (*mūcā*)”. At first sight, I analysed *mūcā* as a *velippaṭai* here since the word *irumpūtu* also means ‘bush’, ‘shrub’, a meaning that can be found in the *Tivākaram* (2080; the 3<sup>rd</sup> meaning of *irumpūtu* is *cirutūru* ‘bush’, ‘thicket’), which perhaps existed in earlier centuries. The shrub is one place where ants can certainly swarm, so the negative signifier would help to distinguish this meaning of *irumpūtu* from the other one that means ‘amazement’. Another possibility was that *mūcā* is not a negative absolutive but a *ceyyā*-type of positive absolutive, which might have referred to the idea that the anthills are the ears of the earth and the ants are related to Prajāpati, so that they, in

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<sup>1791</sup> Sivabalan 1996, 95.

<sup>1792</sup> Ayirai is a hill which was an established place of worship. The POC seemed to know that the deity of the hill was the Goddess, Kor̥ravai, and the hill was her abode. See e.g. the mediaeval comments on 88: 11–12: *ayirai enratu ayiraimalaiyuraiyum kor̥ravaiyinaī*.

<sup>1793</sup> *maṭai*: cooking, boiled rice, oblation of food to a deity. *Tamil Lexicon*, 3025.

<sup>1794</sup> Here, the word *tumpai* might refer to the *tumpaittinai*, the “major theme of a king or warrior heroically fighting against his enemy”. *Tamil Lexicon*, 1972.

fact, swarm around the oblation.<sup>1795</sup> As Gonda concludes, the ants were the semi-divine addressees of the *bali* offerings. The third option was to translate literally: “the amazing tradition [where] ants do not swarm”. I suddenly found this translation as the most convincing one in parallel with what Gonda says referring to the *Baudhāyana-grhya-śeṣasūtra*: “in preparing a place for sacrificing one should take notice, of the 'disadvantages' (*doṣa*) of the sand, if there are ants in it, the kingdom will go to ruin.”<sup>1796</sup> I believe this might have been the reason why ants should have avoided the sacrificial ground. Adding to this, ‘the high person’ (*uyarntōṅ*)<sup>1797</sup> offered rice balls (*piṅtam*) “to honour the deities according to the tradition of the precious power of sounding *mantirams*”, thus we conclude that brāhmanical groups were undoubtedly involved in these sacrifices. However, during the oblation (*pali*) strong wine (*makil*) was sprinkled along with blood (*neyttōr*), which raises the question, do not we see two different rituals, one connected to the Tamil beliefs and one Vedic that took place at the same time? We find that, according to the Vedic scriptures, while offering *pinḍa*, a sort of beer (*surā*) was also offered to the western trenches of the wives of the Forefathers, which might answer the usage of beverages during the ritual.<sup>1798</sup> On the other hand, we do not really find an answer to what the practice of blood-sprinkling meant here, nor do we know whose blood the sacrificial priests (or others?) offered. At this point, it is necessary to turn back and conclude that these *pali* descriptions may designate a Dravidian sacrifice as well as a brāhmanical sacrifice. However, I believe we have to interpret it as an ancient Dravidian oblation for the victory, which began to intertwine with Vedic rituals at the time of the *Patirrupattu*.

The war was not just a heroic event when the disobedient or the conspirators were punished; the kingdom’s wealth and territories had increased, and a festive series of events was accompanied by religious rites. “It seems that Kapilar in the *Patirrupattu* was aware of the idea of *raṅotsava* or *yuddhotsava*, as he mentioned in one poem the “war [which was like] a festival of swords” (*vāl utai vilaviṅ pōr*).<sup>1799</sup> During the war, not only the priests fed the deities, but also the king fed his army. Among those kings, the one called Peruñcōrru Utiyaṅ Cēralātaṅ was famous for distributing great amount of rice among the soldiers, which, as *piṅtam mēya peruñcōrru nilai*, a literary sub-theme of *vañcittiṅai*, meant for a “situation of victorious warriors dining with the king

<sup>1795</sup> Heesterman 1957: 19.

<sup>1796</sup> Gonda 1980, 271.

<sup>1797</sup> According to the *Tivākaram* 20, the 12th meaning of *pārppār* (‘seers’) is *uyarntōr*; however, here, both of these and all the other meanings refer to the brāhmiṅs.

<sup>1798</sup> Gonda 1980, 179; 456.

<sup>1799</sup> *Patirrupattu*, 66: 13–14. Cf. *Subhāṣitaratnaśoṣa*, 1576; Bhāsa, *Dūtavākya*, I. 4; Bhaṭṭanārāyaṅa, *Veṅṣaṅhāra*, 6. 10; *Mahābhārata*, VII. 35. 5; Daṇḍin, *Kāvyādarśa*, 2. 269, etc.

or the king symbolically breaking the ball of cooked rice in the company of the warriors.”<sup>1800</sup> However, it is not clear whether in the *Akanānūru* 233: 8–9, we see Utiyañcēral who offers sacrificial rice (*peruñcōru*) to the ancestors (*mutiyar*), or we see “the day when the great rice was given by Utiyañcēral who honoured [his] ancestors” (*mutiyarp pēñiya utiyañcēral peruñcōru koṭutta nānrai*), while the two events were either related or not. Be that as it may, the king offered cooked rice to his army and maybe to his ancestors as well. In the *Patirruppattu*, we read the following:

[...] O, king of fierce anger! Your muracam-drum with roaring voice was beaten [to announce] the fact that the great cooked rice (*peruñcōru*) is poured, [after your] warriors, who desire war, [who] were crowded on the great battlefield, [who have] legs with spotted, bright anklets and the maxime not to run [away], joined [to] the melody with [their] voices which resemble the earth-shaking thunder, [...] <sup>1801</sup>

The lines cited above are connected to an infinitive (*āra*) which marks here simultaneous events with crows, blood, oblation, and other offerings by the high priest, which customs were discussed earlier. Thus we see that the bloody post-battle sacrifices have to be connected to a sumptuous feast organised by the king to his victorious warriors.

The ancient Cēras paid homage to various deities. In the *Patirruppattu*, we find direct references to Māl (Viṣṇu) and Tiru (Śrī), Muruku, Kūrruvaṅ/Kālaṅ/Maṭaṅkal (Yama), Aruntati (Arundhatī), and to the deity resides in the Ayirai Hill. We might find Civaṅ/Śiva attested when the poet sang about “the Imayam (Himalaya) which became the boundary of the northern direction, the tall mountain which rises [with] rocks, which has the state of the deity”.<sup>1802</sup> I have already written about the doubtful attestation of Murukaṅ/Skanda who cut the foot of Cūr. Except these, the poems sometimes talk about the upper sphere/world of the deities to be rejoiced or satisfied.

Regarding the *Patirruppattu*, the word *kaṭavul*, which denotes ‘deity’, appears 13 times in the poems, and the word *teyvam* of Indo-Aryan origin appears 5 times (among them twice in oblique case). Considering the latter, from the five attestations, once the word is connected to the enemies when they spoke (*ceppa*) to the *teyvam* (82: 1), twice the word is connected to the *purōcu* (*purohita*) of the king (74: 26; 9: 10), and two times connected to the deity of a mountain (51:13; 88: 24). The *teyvam* found in 51: 13 is a question of interpretation:

<sup>1800</sup> *Tolkāppiyam Poruḷatikāram Puyattinaiyiyal*, cū. 65: 9. Cf. *Purapporuḷveṅpāmālai* 3. 23; *Pre-Pallavan Tamil Index*, 599.

<sup>1801</sup> ‘ōṭāp pūṭkai oḷ porik kalal kāl/perum camam tatainta ceruṭ pūkal maṅavar/urumu nilam atirkkum kuraloṭu kolai puṅamtu/perum cōy’ ukuttark’ eriyum/kaṭum cīnam vēntē nin taḷaṅku kural muracē’. *Patirruppattu*, 30: 40–44.

<sup>1802</sup> *Patirruppattu*, 43: 6–7.

[...] [the Cēra king] covered the open spaces of the harbour [with a roof] where the eastern met the western sea, at the cool ocean which sounds [with] conches [of] the great god (*perum teyvam*) [who] roams [along with] snakes [with] rare sapphires (*maṇi*) that lay athwart here and there [in] the big mountain, [which snakes] appeared like the possessed (*veri-uru*) tremble of the innocent girl who dances, frisks and trembles [...]<sup>1803</sup>

In this poem what is sure that we see a great god around a big/great mountain. The question is the snake (*ara*), the sapphire (*maṇi*), the big/great mountain (*perumalai*) and the connection between them. If we understand *perumalai* as the Himālaya (POC: *perumalai* – Imayam) and the snake as an unmarked sociative, which snake is similar to the sapphire (in colour? in nature that it can be found in the mountain?), or which snake, according to the famous literary topos, guards a sapphire/precious stone; then the great god could be Civaṇ/Śiva together with Vāsukī. If we understand the snake as an unmarked locative, on which the great god “roams” and we connect *maṇi* which lays athwart in the big mountain (Vēnkaṭam?) directly to *teyvam*, then the sapphire-blue god could be Māl/Viṣṇu together with Śeṣa. We can also understand another unidentified god in an unidentified mountain, or the plurality of gods, then the snakes have to be connected to the sapphire but also to the mountain (Meru? cf. the old commentary of *Puraṇānūru*, 228: 14) as being the place where they slither. Because the snake’s movement is compared to the trembling girl’s movement, which ‘girl’ definitely stands in feminine singular (*iyalīṇal olkiṇal āṭum maṭam makal*), I might see behind this phrase only one particular snake with only one particular god, who was perhaps identical with Civaṇ/Śiva.

In the 88<sup>th</sup> poem, we read about “the big river which abounds in water, which came [from] the mountain of the deity (*teyvam*) [whose will is] difficult to change, who was truly asked for the much-praised *tumpai*<sup>1804</sup> on your behalf”. The *Patirruppattu*’s old commentary suggests that the deity was asked for giving victory in the *tumpai*-battle (*attumpaiṭ pōrai ninakku venri tarutarṅku*). It is perhaps possible that here we have to understand Imayam/Himālaya with the river Kaṅkai/Gaṅgā where the deity Civaṇ/Śiva resides, and who was asked for the *tumpai*-garland or *tumpai*-victory (just as Arjuna asked for the Pāśupata Weapon). Whereas a big river

<sup>1803</sup> ‘*iyalīṇal olkiṇal āṭum maṭam makal/veri uru nuṭakkam pōlat tōṇriṭ/perum malai vayiṇ vayiṇ vilanikum aru maṇi/ara valanikum perum teyvattu/valai ṇāralum paṇiṭ pauvattuk/kuṇa kuṭa kaṭalōṭ? āyīṭai maṇanta/pantar antaram vēyntu? Patirruppattu*, 51: 10–16.

<sup>1804</sup> *tumpai*: white dead nettle (*Leucas aspera*). *Tamil Lexicon*, 1972. The occurrence of this plant recalls the *tumpaitṭinai* literary setting that focuses on the battle. *Tolkāppiyam Poruḷatikāram Purattinaiyiyal*, cū. 70.



with abundant water is mentioned there, we might exclude the Ayirai Hill from the possible interpretations as well as the Vēnkaṭam, but it is still possible to search for another ancient places of worship such as today's Sabarimala, the residence of the deity Ayyappan/Aiyappaṇ, where the river Pampā flows. Anyway, in the other three cases when *teyvam* were mentioned, we cannot even attempt to identify those deities, but at least from the contexts given, I suppose that we have to deal with deities known from northern traditions.

Although Civaṇ/Śiva's attestation is a matter of debate, Māl, “the black one” can be found in an ancient form, whose identification with Viṣṇu in the *Patirruppattu* is beyond doubt. Let us read the following description of an ancient pilgrimage to the shrine of Māl:

[...] after [they] had bathed at the cool ghat of the green lands which had not been grazed, [as being] people who noisily hit the clear long-shaped<sup>1805</sup> bells so that the crying clamour unitedly arose and sounded [in] the vast regions in [all] the four different directions, [after] the hands of the men were raised together, [who were men] of the earthly world [which was] encircled by the sea [and] which was densely mingled with mountains; [after they] praised the red feet of the Lord (*celvaṇ*) who has a *tulāy*-garland<sup>1806</sup> with fragrant clusters, an eye-blinding discus (*tikiri*), a chest [on which] Tiru (Śrī) abides [and] abundant garlands [on which] bees blow themselves up with [the nectar],— returned [to their] villages, [where they] sleep.<sup>1807</sup>

Here we certainly see a description of Māl/Viṣṇu with well-identifiable attributes such as the *tulāy*/*tulasī* garland, the goddess Tiru/Śrī on his chest, and the discus or *tikiri*/*cakra*. He appears in the form of a divine king (*varadarāja*?) which makes the Cēra king with his wide chest, garlands, and the *dharmacakra* of the kingdom comparable to him. The old commentator identifies this *celvaṇ* with *tiruvaṇantapurattut tirumāl*, Māl of Tiruvaṇantapuram (now Tiruvanantapuram, Kerala). U. Vē. Cāminātaiyar pointed out that the *Cilappatikāram* III. 26: 62 must have been talking about the same deity mentioned by the *Patirruppattu*'s commentator, since the deity's residence at Āṭakamāṭam was the same as the above mentioned town according

<sup>1805</sup> Another possible interpretation is to translate *vaṭi maṇi* as a cast bell. To see an example of making a cast bell, read *Kūṟuntokai*, 155.

<sup>1806</sup> *tulāy*: sacred basil (*Ocimum tenuiflorum*), cf. Skt. *tulasī*. *Tamil Lexicon*, 1999.

<sup>1807</sup> 'kuṇṇu talai maṇantu kuḷūuk kaṭal uṭutta/maṇ keḷu ṇālatu māntar ōrāṅkuk/kai cumant' alaṟum pūcal mātirattu/nāl vēru naṇam talai oruṅik' elunt' olippat/teḷ uyar vaṭi maṇi eṟyunar kallena/uṇṇāp paim nilam paṇit turai maṇṇi/vaṇṭ' ūtu poli tārt tiru ṇemar akalattuk/kaṇ poru tikirik kamaḷ kural tulāy/alaṅkal celvaṇ cēvaṭi paravi/neṅcu mali uwakaiyar tuṅcu paṭiḷ peyara'. *Patirruppattu*, 31: 1–10.

to the old commentary of the *Cilappatikāram*.<sup>1808</sup> Marr pointed out that there must have been other important shrines of Māl/Viṣṇu across Kerala (Marr 1985 [1958]: 314), so it is quite possible that the commentator's suggestion was only his best guess. What is more, from the *Periplus Maris Erythraei* (ch. 54) we know that Nelkynda which laid about 500 stades from Muciri of the Cēras was already located in the Pāṇṭiya kingdom, so it seems that at the time when the *Periplus* was written (sometime between 50–70 AD) the southern parts of the Malabar Coast were on Pāṇṭiya hands. In Ptolemy's time (c. 150 AD), the questionable southern Malabar was mostly the territory of a chieftain called Āy. As we considered the rule of Kaḷaṅkāykanṇi Nārmuṭi Cēral earlier than the southern expansion of the Cēra kingdom, it would mean that South Malabar together with its Viṣṇu shrines were still on the hands of enemies or feudatories. This does not mean that people from the Cēra kingdom could not enter these areas in order to visit a sacred shrine, yet it makes a little doubtful and to interpret it as the shrine of Tiruvaṅantapuram seems to be anachronistic. What is more, the people in fact did travel, worship, and return on the same day, so if our assumption is right that those areas were not yet Cēra territories in the middle of the 2<sup>nd</sup> century AD, then the shrine has to be searched for somewhere else. I think that a reasonable suggestion would be the ancient shrine at Tirunelli (Kerala), which was certainly within the territories of the Cēra kingdom, had green lands around, and a cool stream called Pāpanāśini where the sacred bath mentioned in the poem could have been taken place.

Let us speak a bit more about the way of worship described in this poem. We already see the holy bath taken at the cool ghat in order to purify the body (and probably the soul as well), the hitting of bells, and the crying clamour of the people who either de facto cry in tears from the religious experience, or loudly praised the deity, while, if we agree with Turaicāmiṭṭai, they raised their hands together (*kai cumantu*). Sivabalan, however, translates *uṇṇā paṇim nīlam paṇit turai maṇṇi* as “those observing fast bathe in the cold bathing ghats”.<sup>1809</sup> He might have thought of the mediaeval commentary which says, “regarding *uṇṇā paiṇṇīlam*, it is a way of talking [about] a sort/group of people who slept without eating having desired the boon [given by the deity] inside that temple of Tirumāl” (*uṇṇā paiṇṇīlam enṇratu attirumāl kōyilul varam vēṇṭi uṇṇātu kiṭanta makkattokuti enṇravāru*). In this case, he together with the editors of the *Tamil Lexicon* who translated *paiṇṇīlam* as ‘mankind’ and ‘human race’(p. 2276), accepted the old commentator's suggestion without considering that if we take *paiṇṇīlam* as a lexicalised noun then it is unfortunately a hapax legomenon. As far as the translation of *paiṇṇīlam* as “green land”

<sup>1808</sup> Cāminātaiyar 1980, 74.

<sup>1809</sup> Sivabalan 1996, 97.

is more natural, I find this explanation of the commentator far-fetched. Even so, we are in an early phase of religion history when it is quite uncertain whether we find temples where the deities give boons, and even if temples existed, those buildings were most probably wooden or brick structures, far from what *kōyil* might have meant for the mediaeval commentator. It might be possible that the commentator's suggestion was not anachronistic, however, one might want to see literary and archaeological evidences to prove his statements.

Another poem that might refer to Māl/Viṣṇu is the passage found in the 15<sup>th</sup> song, in which we read the following: “I desired your many qualities, o great man whose good fame does not diminish, [whose fame is] like that of Neṭiyōṅ of excellent and delightful<sup>1810</sup> festivals [...]”.<sup>1811</sup> Here Neṭiyōṅ, the “tall man” could be interpreted as Māl, however, as Wilden points out, although the name Neṭiyōṅ could have referred to Viṣṇu's change of size in the *trivikrama* story of the dwarfish *vāmanāvatāra*, and although Cāminātaiyar also understands Tirumāl in his commentary,<sup>1812</sup> the same name was used in another Caṅkam poems for Murukaṅ (*Akanānūru*, 149), and for Intiraṅ (*Puranānūru*, 241) as well, so from this single passage it is rather impossible to decide whose festival we see.<sup>1813</sup> Interesting that we see two further evidences for the appearance of Viṣṇu/Kṛṣṇa around the Cēra court. One is the name of the poet Kumattūr Kaṅṅaṅār of the Second Decade (*iraṅtām pattu*), whose name Kaṅṅaṅ(ār) (< Pkt. *kaṅha*) is the Tamil equivalent of the name Kṛṣṇa. The other evidence can be found in the VII. *pātikam*:

These ten songs were sung by Kapilar<sup>1814</sup> on Celvakkatuṅkō Vāliyātaṅ [who] flawlessly shone with [his] brilliant mind after [he] confused [his] *purōcu* (*purohita*), [who] gave Okantūr [rich] in paddy [to a] *kōttiram* (*gotra*) [as being] the one who achieved to have the Dark Hued One (*māyavan*)<sup>1815</sup> in [his] heart, [who] accomplished the virtue (*aram*) at the time when the sacrifice (*vēlvī*) which possessed a place worthy for praising, was arranged [...]<sup>1816</sup>

<sup>1810</sup> If we consider the other old meanings of *ēmam*, the passage can be also translated as the excellent festivals that “became [the source] of protection” (*ēmam ākiya*).

<sup>1811</sup> *Patirruppattu*, 15: 38–40.

<sup>1812</sup> Cāminātaiyar 1980, 20.

<sup>1813</sup> Wilden–Schmücker 2019, 6.

<sup>1814</sup> Kapilar is one of the best and most famous poets of the Caṅkam corpus, an intimate friend of Pāri, later Celvakkatuṅkō Vāliyātaṅ's court poet. For more details, see: *Pre-Pallavan Tamil Index*, 219.

<sup>1815</sup> According to the POC, Māyavaṅ is Tirumāl who could be already identical with Viṣṇu/Kṛṣṇa.

<sup>1816</sup> ‘... *ēttal cānra iṅai utai vēlvī/ākkiya polutū aram turai-pōki/māya-vaṅṅanai maṅai uraṅ perravan/kōttiram nellī okantūr ittuṅ/purōcu mayakki/mallal uḷḷamoṭu māc' ara viḷaṅkiya/celvakkatuṅkō vāliyātanaik/kapilar pātinār pattuṅ pātū*’. *Patirruppattu*, VII. 6–13.

Okantūr was a name of an early *brahmadeya*-village. What follows after is not easy to understand, since in *kōttiram nellin okantūr*, the word *kōttiram* could either mean a *brāhmaṇa* clan (*gotra*); a type of paddy (see: *Pre-Pallavan Tamil Index*, 181), or more specifically the paddy fit to offer in *hotra*-oblation (*kōttiram nel*). Thus, the king gave the village either to 1. the one who achieved to have the dark hued deity in his heart/mind (we can split the sandhi to read either *per<sub>r</sub>avaṅk' oṭtiram* or *per<sub>r</sub>avaṅ kōttiram*), or 2. to the *kōttiram* but then *per<sub>r</sub>avaṅ* is an apposition of *vāliyātan* (Line 12). Anyway, agreeing with the old commentator, Māyavaṅ is the same as Tirumāl who could have been already identical with Viṣṇu/Kṛṣṇa.

We see the word *tiru* several times attested in the *Patirrupattu*. When we saw it on the chest of Māl, the interpretation was out of question. When we see the noun *tiru* connected to the king's chest, we may meditate on the possibilities whether we should translate it literal or not. Thus, these passages (14: 11; 16: 17; 40: 13) can be interpreted in two different ways: 1. Tiru (Śrī) as the Goddess, who extends (*ñemar*) on the chest of the king; 2. *tiru* as “brilliance” and since a noun can be used as an adjective, the translation would be “brilliant wide chest”. The description is clearly formulaic as the repetitions suggest.<sup>1817</sup> In the northern Indian (and later South Indian) traditions, it is well known that there were deep relations between the kingship/dominion (*kṣatra*) and the welfare, fortune (*śrī*). Śrī as a goddess is not just believed to select a mighty king as her husband, but also described as one who resides in the monarch.<sup>1818</sup> The king's person anyway has connotations with Viṣṇu, who himself often compared to the deity, as far as he guards and protects the world.<sup>1819</sup> Thus I believe that in all these cases we can already understand this ancient idea behind the ambiguity. We see the goddess Tiru in the 74<sup>th</sup> poem (Lines 1–2): “May your lineage (*vali*) live [long], [lineage] with [your wife being] another Goddess (*tiru*) with descending dark tresses that resemble the tender black-sand!”, so this means that just as Māl/Viṣṇu was traditionally compared to the king, the goddess Tiru/Śrī had to be compared to the queen whose beauty anyway competes with the celestial girls.<sup>1820</sup>

One among the deities, Kūrṟu/Kūrṟuvaṅ, the God of Death, seems to be the only one who lives on Earth, because his divine duty was to collect his victims in the material world. The poems, which have the *pūvai nilai* (“bilberry flower-theme”) as a dominant theme,<sup>1821</sup> enumerate the qualities shared by the king and the deities (in most of the cases comparing with Kūrṟu), the comparison of which was, according to Kailasapathy not empty, since “the bards began to

<sup>1817</sup> *Patirrupattu*, 16: 17; 31: 7; 40: 13.

<sup>1818</sup> Gonda 1956, 131.

<sup>1819</sup> Gonda 1969, 164–167.

<sup>1820</sup> *Patirrupattu*, 14: 13.

<sup>1821</sup> *Tolkāppiyam Poruḷatikāram Purattinaiyiyal*, cū. 63: 9–10.

compare the kings to gods” as “the highest form of encomium.”<sup>1822</sup> In the Cēra panegyrics we find references when the king or his army was compared to Kūr̥ruvan/Kālan/Maṭaṅkal. In the 39<sup>th</sup> poem, we see the Cēra king as being a “strong man with fierce anger which is similar to [the anger of] Kālan”.<sup>1823</sup> In the 51<sup>st</sup> poem, the king is “of the sight which is like the thrown net of the huge and dark God of Death (Kūr̥ram)”.<sup>1824</sup> In the 62<sup>nd</sup> poem, we find the king as the one “[whose] fierce vigour recalled the nature of the God of Death (Maṭaṅkal), [the god who] roams around having roared with a vicious frenzy (*pollā mayal*), [the god with a] radiating glitter together with the illusion (*māyam*) of a multiplied Sun with bright flames and yellow sparks”.<sup>1825</sup> The God of Death (Kāla, Yama) was the son of Sūrya in northern mythology, therefore, this might be the idea on which our comparison with the multiplied Sun-image based.<sup>1826</sup> In the 72<sup>nd</sup> song (Lines 15–16) we read that the king who was “similar to the fire of the God of Death with lustre of red flames that destroyed the foaming spray”, which is perhaps a reference to the submarine fire (*pralayāgni*) at the end of a *yuga*.<sup>1827</sup> Therefore, I think that even if the Tamils had their own conception of the God of Death, in the *Patirruppattu* we see a character based on Yama’s characteristics.

While the king was compared to the God of Death, his queen or better to say his favourite wife was compared to Aruntuti/Aruntati (Skt. Arundhatī), the Red Star (also mentioned as *vaṭamāṇ* ‘the northern star’) which star is identifiable either with the morning star (Venus) or the star called Alcor.

[Your] lady (*celvi*) of your old mansion is like the Red Star<sup>1828</sup> [by which] even the minds of the sky-roaming [celestial] girls became exalted, [your lady, whose] beautiful curved navel became the [source of] light for the golden [waist-]jewelry, [whose] bright forehead became the [source of] light for [her] earrings, [whose] fidelity is abundant in virtues [and whose] tresses [were] sprouting,<sup>1829</sup> so that bees swarm around.<sup>1830</sup>

<sup>1822</sup> Kailasapathy 1968, 74.

<sup>1823</sup> *Patirruppattu*, 39: 8.

<sup>1824</sup> *Patirruppattu*, 51: 35–36.

<sup>1825</sup> *Patirruppattu*, 62: 6–8.

<sup>1826</sup> *Purāṇic Encyclopaedia*, 367.

<sup>1827</sup> Skt. *pralayāgni*, Tam. *vatavaitti*. *Tamil Lexicon*, 3018.

<sup>1828</sup> *A Sanskrit-English Dictionary*, 82; *Tamil Lexicon*, 133.

<sup>1829</sup> The sprouting (*olivarum*, *olinta*, etc.) tresses of women are a usual image in Caṅkam literature. Cf. *Narrai*, 6: 10; 141: 12; 313: 4.

<sup>1830</sup> ‘...*vanṭu paṭa/olinta kūntal aram cāl karpiṅ/kulaikku vīlakk’ ākiya oḷ nutal ponnin/ilaikku vīlakk’ ākiya am vāṅk’ unti/vicumpu valaṅku makaliṅ uḷḷum ciraṅta/cemmāṅ anaiaḷ nūṅ tol nakarc celvi*’. *Patirruppattu*, 31: 23–28.

As Sivabalan points out, who anyway prefers to understand a plurality of wives, “the queens were beautiful as *Aruntati* who was the most beautiful and the most reddish of all stars”, therefore we might think that not only the character of Aruntati as the faultless and blissful wife of Vasiṣṭha, but its colour as a star could be the source of comparison, as far as in ancient times ‘redness’ (*cemmai*) also meant ‘goodness’, ‘spotlessness’, ‘uprightness’, ‘fairness’, etc.<sup>1831</sup> Because there is only one morning star in the sky, I take this part as a reference to the unique and favourite wife among other queens of the king. Reading this passage, one might consider interpreting the star as Aruntati since the king is mentioned another time as the “husband of the [lady with] red jewels,<sup>1832</sup> [with] fragrant forehead [that] smells from afar, [with] fidelity that outranks even the desirable deity”.<sup>1833</sup> All the more so if we add the following:

May you become the one who does not have pain, after you were visibly flourishing together with your woman with shiny forehead, with a fidelity which resembles the star with glowing-flame[-like] glances that knows the lifetimes (*vāl nāl*) of [those] brides (*vatuvai makalir*) who repeatedly looked [up on it] [...]<sup>1834</sup>

The above-mentioned passage most probably refers to the ancient custom when the brides who recently got married looked up to the Aruntati/Arundhatī star and pledged their vow of loyalty to their husbands (*pativrata*). However, it is also possible that here, the brides were simply wishing a long life from the star.<sup>1835</sup> Anyway, comparing women to Aruntati is not a unique feature of the *Patirrupattu* as we find several similar references in the Caṅkam corpus.<sup>1836</sup> In other poems, the queens were compared to either ‘dolls’ (*pāvai*) or, most probably, to the Goddess of the Kolli Hills, where the *kollippāvai*, a woman-shaped statue was found from the ancient times, which image “believed to have been carved by the celestials and to have the power of fascinating all those who look at it”.<sup>1837</sup> Therefore, we see the Cēra king as “the husband of [his] image-like (*pāvai*) fine woman in [his] fine house which had been fashioned by workmanship [so that it was] like a painting (*ōvam*)”,<sup>1838</sup> and in another poem we read the

<sup>1831</sup> *Tamil Lexicon*, 1598.

<sup>1832</sup> What we see here is a so-called exocentric or possessive compound (*anmolittokai*), “an elliptical compound in which any one of the five *tokai-nilai*, q.v., that precede this in the enumeration, is used figuratively so as to signify something else of which this compound becomes a descriptive attribute.” *Tamil Lexicon*, 183.

<sup>1833</sup> *Patirrupattu*, 65: 9–10.

<sup>1834</sup> ‘*nōyilai ākiyar.../(...)/vatuvai makalir nōkkinar peyarntu/vāl nāl ariyum vayan̄ku cūṭar nōkkattu/mīnoṭu puraiyum karpiṇ/vāl nutal arivaiyoṭu kāṇ-varap̄ polintē*. *Patirrupattu*, 89: 13; 17–20.

<sup>1835</sup> Sivabalan 1996, 104.

<sup>1836</sup> For example, *Kalittokai*, 2: 21; *Aṅkurunūru*, 442: 4; *Puranānūru*, 122: 8–9; *Perumpāṅāruppaṭai*, 302–303.

<sup>1837</sup> *Tamil Lexicon*, 1157.

<sup>1838</sup> ‘*ōvatt’ anna viṇai puṇai nal il/pāvai anna nallōl kaṇavan*’. *Patirrupattu*, 61: 3–4.

following: “After [you] had worn the cool and fragrant garlands together with the sandal-paste that shone in desirable glorious lines among the goddess-like (*pāvai*)<sup>1839</sup> women (*makalir*) of [your] beautiful and tall/long painting-like mansion (*nakar*).”<sup>1840</sup>

We may see one of the last traces of the ancient Dravidian Muruku cult recorded in the *Patirruppattu*. At the beginning of history, Muruku was an ancient fertility deity, a guardian spirit of the hilly (*kuriñci*) regions,<sup>1841</sup> then it presumably became an anthropomorphic, heroic figure called Murukaṅ/Cēyōṅ/Cevvēḷ, and later this character evolved to Skanda, the son of Śiva and the commander of a divine army. As Dubianski stated, “at an early stage of his cult Murukaṅ was, no doubt, worshipped as a virtually omnipresent spirit, dwelling ... in groves, at crossroads, on river islands, in the *kadamba*, at sites for village festivals and social occasions, in poles and ‘in numerous other places’ ... along with this, his preference for mountains becomes evident”.<sup>1842</sup> His most ancient accounts happen to occur in the name of *muruku*, which meant ‘tenderness’, ‘tender age’, ‘youth’, and ‘beauty’.<sup>1843</sup> The single reference in the *Patirruppattu* could be connected to a very ancient Muruku image, since we read about “[countries with] blackened (*karutta*) ancient towns [where] the bustle died away [after] Muruku got enraged”.<sup>1844</sup> We have choice to interpret Muruku here as a commander who came with havoc, or Muruku as an ancient Dravidian spirit which, by means of its raging nature, destroyed cities as if they had cursed. Here, the old commentator elegantly circumscribes the phrase without giving an explanation; U. Vē. Cāminātaiyar, however, understands Murukakkaṭavuḷ which might underline our interpretation of the term’s antiquity,<sup>1845</sup> but if we open Turaicāmiṭṭai’s comments, we will find Murukavēḷ who destroyed Cūraṅ together with his old town.<sup>1846</sup> So it is a matter of debate; however, we can conclude that the *Patirruppattu* was written in the centuries when Muruku lost its/his ancient character and transformed into Murukaṅ/Skanda/Subrahmaṇya.

An ancient rite can be observed in the *Aiṅkurunūru* which has to be discussed in brief without going into much detail about the person of Murukaṅ and the rites surrounding him. In

<sup>1839</sup> Here *pāvai anna makalir* could mean either “doll-like women” (*Tamil Lexicon*, 2636) or “goddess-like women” (cf. *koliṭṭipāvai*; *Tamil Lexicon*, 1157).

<sup>1840</sup> ‘ōvatt’ *anna uru kelu netum nakarṭ/pāvai anna makalir nāṭṭaṅ/pukanra māṅ poriṭ polinta cāntamoṭu/taṅ kamaḷ kōtai cūti ...*. *Patirruppattu*, 88: 28–31.

<sup>1841</sup> Dubianski 2000, 18.

<sup>1842</sup> Dubianski 2000, 19.

<sup>1843</sup> *Dravidian Etymological Dictionary*, 4978.

<sup>1844</sup> ‘*muruk’ uṭaru karutta kali aḷi mūt’ ūr*. *Patirruppattu*, 26: 12.

<sup>1845</sup> Cāminātaiyar 1980, 57.

<sup>1846</sup> Turaicāmiṭṭai 1973, 108–109.

the ten songs called “The Ten [Poems] on Frenzy” (*verippattu*) of the *Aiṅkurunūru*<sup>1847</sup> written by Kapilar, we find details of an ancient ritual, an ecstatic dance called *veriyāṭal/veriyayartal* (also as *veri*, *veriyāṭtam*, and *veriyāṭtu*) performed by the *vēlan* “the man with a spear”, the priest of Murukaṅ. As Dubianski points out, these ecstatic dance rituals were performed in groups, while the priest performed a solo, while he became possessed by Murukaṅ or became Murukaṅ himself.<sup>1848</sup> The literary situation is the following: “symptoms of the love-sick condition in the heroine (weight-loss, apathy, the withering of her body and fever) is ascribed, by her relatives, to an illness inflicted by a *pēy*-demon”; therefore “a *vēlan* priest is invited ... to diagnose the disease and cure it”.<sup>1849</sup> As for preparing the ritual, the priest first purified the ‘sacrificial ground’ (*kalam/kaḷaṅ*) chosen and measured out by himself.<sup>1850</sup> Once the *vēlan* fell into a trance, he used various methods during the divination, e.g. ecstatic dance, throwing the *kaḷanku*-beans, anointing sacrificial animal blood on the girl’s brow, sacrificing animals, etc. Regarding the places of Murukaṅ worship, the *Aiṅkurunūru* refers to “pepper-growing slopes” (*kari vaḷar cilampu*; 243: 1) and “rock caves with pepper” (*kariya kal mukai*; 246: 1–2), which could refer to the pepper producing mountain ranges in north Malabar/southern Konkan, but more probably to the famous pepper region of Kuṭṭanāṭu (Kottanarichē) with Nelkynda and Becare together with its mountain slopes. The performance of divination had a unique way recorded in the 245<sup>th</sup> poem of the *Aiṅkurunūru*:

If the elderly priest of [our] village, who is from an unfailing tradition, predicts the truth with [the help of] Molucca beans, holds up the Kaṅṅam (image) and utters “Muruku,” will this be rightful to the one, who caused her suffering?<sup>1851</sup>

Lehmann quotes the mediaeval commentator who explains the word *kāṅṅam* as “an image that is made to cure a disease” (*nōyṭaṇittarkuṭṭu paṅṅik koṭukkum paṭimam*) and comes to the conclusion that “the practice of divination as described in the poem had gone out of use at the time of the commentator and the word *kāṅṅam* had probably lost the meaning it had earlier when the poem was composed”.<sup>1852</sup> Thus, an ancient ritual of “exorcism” can be reconstructed from these poems; however, Wilden is right when she mentions “the fact that these rites are a target of mockery (since the girl is actually not possessed but lovelorn)”, which literary situation was

<sup>1847</sup> *Aiṅkurunūru*, 241–250.

<sup>1848</sup> Dubianski 2000, 24. See e.g.: *Paṭṭiṇappālai*, 155; *Tirumurukārruṭṭai*, 190–197; 222.

<sup>1849</sup> Dubianski 2000, 24.

<sup>1850</sup> Cf. *Tirumurukārruṭṭai*, 222.

<sup>1851</sup> Transl. by Thomas Lehmann. Lehmann 2020, 217.

<sup>1852</sup> Lehmann 2020, 218.



overlooked by those who focused on religion history.<sup>1853</sup> She adds to this that “the material might possibly mirror Pre-Aryan religious customs, but decidedly not customs contemporary to the poems depicting them”.<sup>1854</sup> From the slightly sarcastic narrative of Kapilar or, better to say, of the literary setting he applied, I instead think that the rites were still in fashion when the poems were composed. Still, those who believed in them were already considered as being superstitious, old-fashioned, or purblind by some members of the contemporary society. What is sure, in the *Patirruppattu*, neither the worship of Murukan nor the divination of the vēlan appears, which, in my opinion, shows a new paradigm in religious history.

We see the bard called *akavalaṅ* who mastered the metre called *akaval* (*akavu-tal* ‘to utter a sound as a peacock’, ‘to sing’, ‘to dance as a peacock’, ‘to call’, ‘to summon’; *Dravidian Etymological Dictionary*, 10) to be attested in the *Patirruppattu*, however only in one poem, which again shows that the *akavalar* groups were probably still existed but as performers were not ordinary sights around the royal courts/victorious battlefields. Poets like Paraṇar of the *Patirruppattu* still found the related tradition respectable that may have been somewhat obsolete by that time but recalled a mysterious shade of the archaic past. According to Kailasapathy, we have to connect *akavalar*, whose name refers to the oldest metre called *akaval* (later *ācīriyappā*), to the ones called *akavunar*, to the women called *akavaṅ makalīr* and perhaps to *mutuṅāyṅ peṅṅīr*; since all of these have to be connected (as just the *vēlan*) to soothsaying and exorcism. Kailasapathy refers to the commentator Pērācīriyar, who reveals that those who sang *akaval* songs which had “the *ōcai*, rhythmic flow peculiar to the metre” were people who hailed fertility or abundance, wailed over the dead, and summoned particular spirits and exorcised them.<sup>1855</sup> Hart states that even “the word *akaval* means a prophetic utterance”.<sup>1856</sup> Although we have only a single reference to *akavalar* in the *Patirruppattu*, we should emphasise that as just as the other Caṅkam anthologies, *Patirruppattu* also contains poems written exclusively in *akaval/ācīriyappā* metre (sometimes mixed with *vañci* lines). According to Hart, “it is extremely significant that the name of the meter used for all of the early anthologies is *akaval*, for that shows that the meter was first used for oracular purposes, probably by the *Akavunans*.”<sup>1857</sup>

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<sup>1853</sup> Wilden 2006, 21.

<sup>1854</sup> Wilden 2006, 21.

<sup>1855</sup> Kailasapathy 1968, 66–67.

<sup>1856</sup> Hart 1975, 145.

<sup>1857</sup> Hart 1975, 145. For more on “poetry and prophecy”, see: Kailasapathy 1968, 61–69.

[...] let the *akavalan*-bard<sup>1858</sup> receive horses, [the bard, who] set out to the village common, [who] entered the side of the street, [who] took [his] fine stick with joints (*kaṅṅi*) and praised the battlefield!<sup>1859</sup>

Whatever might be the connection between the metre and the soothsayers, we learn from this passage that the *akavalan* had a stick (*kōl*), which might have had a magico-religious significance. However, I think we are still far from being able to understand its actual function. Hart, however, interprets this passage that here the *akavunan* used his stick as a quasi ‘magic wand’ “after the battle was over, perhaps to bring it [the battlefield; comment made by me] back to a normal condition”, as he says. However, such a function of the *kōl* of the *akavalan* cannot be verified. The least we can say is that the metre called *akaval*, which is associated with the name of this group was in vogue until the end of the “Caṅkam period” (and even after that if one wanted to “dress up texts as classical”),<sup>1860</sup> but we can take this *Patirruppattu* passage with the “rite” of the *akavalar* (if it was really a rite!) only as a euphonious reference to the past traditions.

The word *kaṭavul* appears 13 times in the *Patirruppattu*. The word itself has an obscure origin. I agree with Dubianski that the closest meaning could be ‘that which goes beyond boundaries’ or ‘that which moves about’, a deity which was able “to move around in space and stretch beyond strictly drawn boundaries”.<sup>1861</sup> In the poems in which the word *kaṭavul* appears, we find references to a deity or multiple deities who preferred to stay in forests;<sup>1862</sup> to the homage paid to the deity according to a fearful tradition at the time of the Vedic *āvuti/āhuti* libation;<sup>1863</sup> to the king who paid homage in a way which was fit to be desired by the deities who obtained permanence in the sky again after the *āvuti* libation;<sup>1864</sup> to the bloody offering of *pali* and *piṅṅam* in the battlefield when the *uyartōn* paid homage to the deity/deities according to the tradition with the precious power of the sounding *mantiram*;<sup>1865</sup> to a hanging fortress which was created in the sky having feared the deity;<sup>1866</sup> to skilful musicians who praised the deity;<sup>1867</sup> to the Imayam which has the state of a deity, perhaps of Civan;<sup>1868</sup> to the king who desired to take a

<sup>1858</sup> *akavalan*: a group of bards who mastered the metre called *akaval*. POC: “singing *pāṇan*” (*pāṭum pāṇan*).

<sup>1859</sup> ‘*maṅṅam paṭarntu maruku ciraip pukkuk/kaṅṅi nuṅ kōl koṅṅu kaḷam vāḷttum/akavalan peruka ...*’. *Patirruppattu*, 43: 26–28.

<sup>1860</sup> Wilden 2014, 225.

<sup>1861</sup> Cf. *Dravidian Etymological Dictionary*, 1109. Dubianski 2000, 5. For a different interpretation, see: Hart 1975, 26–27.

<sup>1862</sup> *Patirruppattu*, 13: 20.

<sup>1863</sup> *Patirruppattu*, 21: 5.

<sup>1864</sup> *Patirruppattu*, 21: 15.

<sup>1865</sup> *Patirruppattu*, 30: 33–34.

<sup>1866</sup> *Patirruppattu*, 31: 18–19.

<sup>1867</sup> *Patirruppattu*, 41: 6.

<sup>1868</sup> *Patirruppattu*, 43: 6.

rock for the divine (*kaṭavuḷ*) Pattinī;<sup>1869</sup> to perhaps Aruntati as a desirable deity;<sup>1870</sup> to the divine (*kaṭavuḷ*) *vākai*-tree;<sup>1871</sup> to the king as someone who fed the deities with sacrifices (*vēḷvi*);<sup>1872</sup> to the deity of the Ayirai Hill;<sup>1873</sup> and to the forests which were named after a deity, perhaps the Vintāṭavi (< Skt. Vindhyaṭavī).<sup>1874</sup> We can conclude that at least half of these attestations must be somehow connected to northern religious ideas. However, I should emphasise that our data were extracted from poems of eight poets whose dating, identification, and social background are uncertain; therefore, this makes the analysis fragile, but one thing is common in these poets that all of them were quite close to the Cēra court; thus, their narratives were even closer to what the king wanted to hear. Therefore, we can conclude that even if we cannot reconstruct a detailed history of the Cēra country, the poems allow us to see the Cēra kingdom and its religion from above, from the perspective of the kingdom and its institutions.

We find legendary places of worship in the *Patirrupattu*, from which I already mentioned the Kolli Hills together with the image called *kollippāvai*, which range of hills can be pinpointed at Kollimalai in Nāmakkal District, Tamil Nadu. The other important shrine was perhaps acquired by Palyānai Celkeḷu Kuṭṭuvaṇ for his kingdom, who was therefore called “the fighter of the Ayirai” (*ayirai poruna*).<sup>1875</sup>

O fighter of the straightly rising tall Ayirai mountain that lies athwart, so that the frontier of famous lands perished, [the hill, where] the *kokku*-bird, which is watching keenly/from afar,<sup>1876</sup> does not fear to circle<sup>1877</sup> [in the air] without going to the waterless slopes with prosperous tall peaks that encompass great yield!<sup>1878</sup>

The old commentator tells us that Ayirai is a hill (*oru malai*). Later, he seems to be better informed as he adds that the deity of the hill is the Goddess, Korṟavai, as we see in his comments on

<sup>1869</sup> *Patirrupattu*, V. 4.

<sup>1870</sup> *Patirrupattu*, 65: 9.

<sup>1871</sup> *Patirrupattu*, 66: 15.

<sup>1872</sup> *Patirrupattu*, 70: 18–19.

<sup>1873</sup> *Patirrupattu*, 79: 18.

<sup>1874</sup> *Patirrupattu*, 88: 2.

<sup>1875</sup> *Patirrupattu*, 21: 29.

<sup>1876</sup> *pākuṭi*: a hapax legomenon. There is no useful old comment on this. Agesthalingom suggests (*Index of Patirrupattu*, 92) that it means ‘minuteness’. Turaicāmiṭṭai (Turaicāmiṭṭai 1973, 72) who reads ‘*pākuṭi pāval kokkiṇ*’ as ‘*cēmaiṭṭiruntē nuṇṭtu nōkkum kokkiṇ*’ (“the *kokku*-bird, which sharply stares from the distance”). U. Vē. Cāminātaiyar says that “*pākuṭi* is like *kūmai*”. The *Tamil Lexicon* (p. 2581) glosses ‘long distance’ (*veku tūram*). The *Tamil Ilakkīyaḥ Pērakavāṭi* (p. 1596) seems clueless and glosses both *vekutūram* and *kūmai*, so it is up to the translator how to interpret this hapax.

<sup>1877</sup> *pari-vēṭṭu* (< Skt. *pari-veśa?*): “circling, hovering, as of a bird”. *Tamil Lexicon*, 2519.

<sup>1878</sup> ‘*pal payam talīya payam keḷu neṭum kōṭṭu/nēr aral maruṅku valippatāḥ pākuṭi/pāval kokkiṇ pari vēṭṭu*’ *aicāc/cīr uṭait tētta munai keḷa vilankiya/nēr uyar neṭum varai ayiraiḥ poruna*. *Patirrupattu*, 21: 26–29.

*Patirruppattu*, 79: 18 and on III. 10. We know that in ancient times, a river called Ayiriyāru also existed, which caused confusion around Ayirai whether we should understand it as a river, a hill, or both. I believe that the *Pre-Pallavan Tamil Index* made a mistake while mixing up these things and giving the attestations of the word *ayirai* (*Patirruppattu*, III. 8; 79: 18; 88: 12; 90: 19; *Cilappatikāram* III. 28: 145) among those poems (*Akanānūru*, 177: 11; 253: 20) which contain the word *ayiri(-y-āru)*. In the *Akanānūru*, *ayiri* is undoubtedly a river, while in the *Patirruppattu*, we have no reason to understand *ayirai* other than a hill/mountain (read: 21: 29; 70: 26). What we read in the epic *Cilappatikāram* is the following:

[...] even if [one among the Cērar] was the man who entered the tall/long mountain where gold turns up in the prosperous country of the *yavaṇar* with harsh words; even if [one among the Cērar was the one of] the rare power that attacked Akappā having caused [his enemies] to run on the dark/vast battlefield with [his] very huge army, even if [one among the Cērar was] the one who bathed in the water of the two seas having performed ablutions (*maṇṇi*) in/at Ayirai according to the fearful tradition, even if [one among the Cērar] was the one who performed sacrifices [for which] wine (*matu*) [was] taken having brought the *catukkappūtar* within [the boundaries of] Vañci [...] <sup>1879</sup>

This passage (with its uncited previous lines) seems to sum up the ancient acts of the Cēras, more precisely, the contents of the *patikams* of the *Patirruppattu*. Here, although one of the Cēras (who was, in fact, Palyāṇai Celkelu Kuṭṭuvaṇ) performed ablutions in/at Ayirai, we cannot confidently state that just because of this act, this place was nothing else but the Ayiri river, since ablutions could have been certainly performed in a river but also in mountain streams, sacred ponds, water tanks in and around the shrines as a religious ritual or cleansing ceremony (cf. *Patirruppattu* 31: 6). Aiyangar says the following in his work on Vañci: “A careful study of the progress of Chēra conquests seems to indicate that they began extending their authority northwards along the West Coast through the whole of what is the Malaiyāḷam country now extending even further to include part of the Tuḷu country of Kanara, as the chief Nannan is associated with Tuḷunāḍu elsewhere, then struck across towards Kongu, the middle block. Ayirai, therefore, is what is called now Hagari in Kanarese [today’s Vēdāvati river; comment

<sup>1879</sup> ‘vaṅcol yavaṇar vaḷanāṭ’ āṇṭu/pon paṭu neṭum varai pukuntōṅ āyinuṁ/mikaṇ perum tāṇaiyōṭu irum ceru oṭṭi/akappā eṇinta arum tiral āyinuṁ/uru kelu maraḇiṇ ayirai maṇṇi/iru kaṭal nīrum āṭiṇōṅ āyinuṁ/catukkaṇ pūtarai vañciyul tantu/matuk koḷ vēḷvi vēṭṭōṅ āyinuṁ’. *Cilappatikāram*, III. 28: 141–148.

made by me], which in modern times is only a river, but in these poems is referred to as a hill on the top of which was a shrine to the goddess of victory, and a river flowing there from as well.”<sup>1880</sup> Although one might want to see Ayirai in ancient Tuḷu Nāṭu in today’s Karnataka, the arguments of Aiyangar seems to be not only inadequate but misleading, since in his work, earlier and later traditions are mixed with his own beliefs. In this study, I accept the identification of *ayirai* with Aivarmalai near Paḷaṇi, Tamil Nadu.<sup>1881</sup> Even so, the description in the *Patirruppattu*, which states that the *kokku*-bird does not fear to circle around Ayirai and does not go to the waterless slopes with prosperous tall peaks, seems to verify the identification with Aivarmalai. If we look around from the top of the Periya Aivarmalai, we can see the long slopes of the Āṇaimalai, the proximity of which mountain is perhaps what the poem also refers to.

After all, we should discuss the people called the “gracious ones” (*antaṇar*; 2 attestations in the decade poems) and the “seers” (*pārppār*; 1 attestation in the decade poems + 5 in the *patikams*) in the *Patirruppattu*. Although the names of these groups do not appear very often in the text, their influences can be easily examined in the poems. In the *Dravidian Etymological Dictionary*, we find that *antaṇar* meant a ‘brahman’ in Tamil and Malayalam. However, there is no entry for *pārppār*. In the *Tamil Lexicon*, we find *antaṇar* as ‘gracious one’, ‘brāhmaṇa’, ‘sage’, ‘Brahmā’, and ‘Jupiter’, while for *pārppār* we find ‘brāhmaṇa’, ‘Brahmā’, and ‘Yama’. According to these entries, the *Dravidian Etymological Dictionary* and the *Tamil Lexicon* claim that the word *pārppār* must be derived from Skt. *brāhmaṇa*, therefore, the Dravidian etymology can be excluded. The *Tamil Ilakkiyaḥ Pēraḥarāti* records that the oldest meanings of *antaṇar/antaṇar* are *pirāmaṇar/pirāmaṇar*, while of *pārppār/pārppār* are *antaṇar* and *pārppānar*. I think that these identifications give rise to preconceptions which make the textual reconstruction difficult; therefore, I prefer to use ‘gracious ones’ in the case of *antaṇar* and ‘seers’ in the case of *pārppār* (< Tam. *pār-ttal* ‘to see’) because these words can be either umbrella terms for northern “religious” groups including Buddhists or Jains, or actual words for *brāhmaṇas*.

Regarding the *Patirruppattu*, the first attestation of *antaṇar* can be found in the 24<sup>th</sup> poem:

O husband of [your beloved with] perfect jewels, the nature of whose speech is perfect, whose fame, which is incomparable, shines along with the country, after [you] have become worthy for singing [praises] while the world followed your path, after [you] have acted by praising (*valimolī*) the gracious ones (*antaṇar*) who

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<sup>1880</sup> Aiyangar 1940, 65.

<sup>1881</sup> *Tamil Lexicon*, 112.

desire the virtues (*aram*) [and] act by exercising the six namely: reciting, sacrificing, doing these [two for] others, giving, and receiving [offerings].<sup>1882</sup>

The *antaṇararutolil* or the six occupations of the *antaṇar* (learning, teaching, offering a sacrifice, conducting a sacrifice, giving, receiving) are well-known from early texts such as the *Mānavadharmasāstra* I. 88. (*adhyāpanam adhyayanam yajanam yājanam tathā/dānam pratigrahaṃ caiva brāhmaṇānām akalpayat*), but it is already mentioned in the *Tolkāppiyam Poruḷatikāram Purattiṇaiyiyal* 74: 1. (*aruwakaip paṭṭa pārppaṇaṭṭa pakkamum*). This poem shows the poet Pālai Kautamaṇār's idea that kingship and Vedic rituals were intertwined at the time of Palyānaiccelkelu Kuṭṭuvan's reign (around the end of the 1<sup>st</sup> century AD). This poem makes clear that this poet in fact understood *antaṇar* as *brāhmaṇa*. What is more, the gracious ones were desiring the virtues, *aram*, a word that is often associated with the word *dharma* claiming that the latter serves as its etymology. Even if the word itself is a Dravidian one (see: *Dravidian Etymological Dictionary*, 311), it is certainly connected in later ages to *dharma*. Although I tried to be literal in my translations, we cannot rule out that these two words mean the same at the time of the *Patirruppattu*. Let us read another passage which makes clear the characteristics of the 'gracious ones':

[...] while [you] say “quickly give away the moving oxen (*pāṇṭil*)<sup>1883</sup> having adorned with jewels, and the horses with trimmed mane cut by a weapon with a blade, if you see the musicians (*vayiriyar*) outside the walls which are difficult [to conquer for the] vanguards, [where] elephants which bathed in the dark mud, disliked standing in the sandy front yard after the water was poured, when the rare vessels were raised by the gracious ones (*antaṇar*) [with a] complete knowledge (*muṭitta kēḷvi*) [of] sacrifices (*vēḷvi*) [which are] worthy of fame [that] was glittering on [their] tongues that [became] brightened by explaining (*karaintu*) the virtues (*aram*)!”<sup>1884</sup>

Here the poet Kapilar mentions the *antaṇar* is a sense of Vedic *brāhmaṇas*, who has *muṭitta kēḷvi* 'complete knowledge/accomplished *śruti*/completed studies' and who perform sacrifices worthy

<sup>1882</sup> 'ōtal vēṭtal avai pīrarc ceystal/ital ēṙal enr' āru purint' olukum/aram puri antaṇar vaḷimolint' oluki/ñālam nin vali olukaṭṭa pāṭal cāṇru/nāṭ' utaṇ viḷaṅkum nāṭā nallicaṭ/tiruntiya iyal molit tirunt' ilai kaṇava'. *Patirruppattu*, 24: 6–11.

<sup>1883</sup> Here I followed the old commentary (*tēr pūnum erutukaḷ*) and U. Vē. Cāminātaiyar (*nārai erutu*; Cāminātaiyar 1980, 169) who both understand *pāṇṭil* as *erutu* 'ox'. However, I cannot exclude the possibility to understand *pāṇṭil* as having the usual 'lamp' meaning or to translate it as 'chariot'. *Tamil Lexicon*, 2598.

<sup>1884</sup> 'aram karaintu vayanṅkiya nāvin pīraṅkiya/urāi cāl vēḷvi muṭitta kēḷvi/antaṇar arum kalam ēṙa nēr paṭṭu/irum cēṙ' āṭiya maṇal mali murrattuk/kāḷiru nilai muṇaiya tār arum takaiṭṭin/puram cīrai vayiriyark kāṇin vallē/ekku paṭai arutta koy cival puravi/alāṅkum pāṇṭil ilai aṇint' im ena'. *Patirruppattu*, 64: 3–10.

of fame (*urai cāl vēlvi*), however, it is also possible to connect these as they had “knowledge of sacrifices”, as I have translated above. In connection to *antaṇar*, the word *kēlvi*, which could mean ‘hearing’, ‘question’, etc. (< Tam. *kēl-tal*), certainly means *śruti* (Vedas and Vedic scriptures), just as the *vēlvi* ‘sacrifice’ (< Tam. *vēl-tal*, *vēttal*) means Vedic oblations, libations, and rituals.

Now let us speak about the “seer” called *pārppān*, a word which has a possible Tamil etymology, but all our lexicons agreed that it meant *brāhmaṇa*. The only one decade poem that mentions this group of people is the 63<sup>rd</sup> song:

You do not know to make obeisance to others than the seers (*pārppār*). You do not know the fear of eyes other than of [your] friends after [you] joined [them] with a heart that is not humble in order to start adorning [them]. You do not know widening [your] chest [which is] redolent with fragrance when it fights with a bending bow to others than [your women]. You do not know falsity in [your] spoken words, even if the time [has come] which changes the elements (*tīram*) of the earth.<sup>1885</sup>

It is again Kapilar who mentioned the *pārppār* as Vedic *brāhmaṇas* around the court. U. Vē. Cāminātaiyar glosses *antaṇar* for *pārppār* and gives a parallel passage of the *Puranānūru*, in which we read “may you bow your head, o great man, having raised [your] hand in front of the sages of the eminent Four Vedas!” (*iraiñcuka peruma nin cenni cīranta/nānmarai munivar ēntu kai etirē*’; *Puranānūru*, 6: 19–20). Adding to this, the VI. *patikam* (Lines 4–5) mentioned that the king “gave to the seers (*pārppār*) a village in the western country (*kutanātu*) together with tawny cows (*kapilai*)”. This is a clear statement made by the one who composed the *patikam* (supposed to be the poet) that the king called Āṭukōṭpāṭṭu Cēralātaṅ gave a *brahmadeya*-village<sup>1886</sup> to this group of people in the Malabar region and a tawny *kapilā* cow which might have been used during the worship called *kapilāpūjā*.<sup>1887</sup> These information lead us to the II. *patikam*’s ‘epilogue’ in which the ancient author states that “having sung [the decade songs], [the following] gifts [had been] obtained: [the king] gave a portion [of the revenue] that came to the southern lands [during] thirty-eight years and gave five-hundred *brahmadeya*-villages (*piramatāyam*) of the Umparkāṭu [to the *brāhmaṇas*]. Although the evaluation of these data is not

<sup>1885</sup> ‘*pārppārkk*’ *allatu paṇip’ ariyalaiyē/paniyā ullamo!*’ *ani-varak kēlī/nattōrkk*’ *allatu kaṇ aṅcalaiyē/vaṇaṅku cilai poruta nin maṇam kaṇal akalām/makalirkk*’ *allatu malaṇpp’ ariyalaiyē/nilam tīram peyarum kālai āyiyum/kīlanta col nī poyp’ ariyalaiyē*. *Patirruppattu*, 63: 1–7.

<sup>1886</sup> *piramatāyam*: “land granted to Brahmins free of assessment”. *Tamil Lexicon*, 2685.

<sup>1887</sup> *Tāntrikābhīdhānakośa* II. 47.

easy, since the phrasing and the prose form are too weird to be inseparable parts of the *patikam*, however, it shows that sometimes, when the *Patirruppattu* was edited, the author of the epilogue believed to know that Imaiṅvarampaṅ Neṅuñcēralātaṅ gave not less than five hundred *brahmadeya*-villages to brāhmaṅical communities in the division called Umparkāṅṅu (“elephant-forest”).<sup>1888</sup> Marr agrees with K. Govindan that this poet, Kumaṅṅṅūrk Kaṅṅṅaṅār was a *brāhmaṅa*, what is more, he might have born or come to the Cēra court from Kumaṅṅṅūr near today’s Tiṅṅṅivaṅam, Tamil Nadu.<sup>1889</sup> I think I can agree with them in the fact that the author of these lines was a *brāhmaṅa*, but I doubt that he could be identical with the author of the *patikam* who was possibly not the one called Kumaṅṅṅūrk Kaṅṅṅaṅār since we can observe the uniform style of all the *patikams* and some unusual grammatical features (such as the regular appearance of the accusative suffix). Regarding the *brahmadeya*-villages in Cēra history, Veluthat mentions a town called Cellūr which can be found in *Akanānūru* 220, which is, according to him, identifiable with the present-day Talipparaṅmpu, Kerala.<sup>1890</sup> Cellūr was a town of the poet Korraṅṅār, west of the place called Niyamam/or the marketplace of the *kōcar*.<sup>1891</sup> According to the ancient poems, Cellūr was also a fearful/beautiful (*uru kelu*) town with imperishable fires (*keṅāat tīyīṅ*), where we see a “tall pillar with difficult/rare protection (*kaṅi*), with eye-pleasing (*kāṅ-taku*) beauty (*vanappīṅ*), which had been tied [in] the centre with ropes, [pillar] with completed sacrifices (*vēṅvi*) difficult [to perform] (*aritiṅṅiṅ*)”, and this poem also mentions Maṅuvāṅ Neṅiyōṅ (“the tall man with a battle-axe”), which can be an early reference to Paraśurāma.<sup>1892</sup> We can agree with Veluthat, considering the available literary and geographic data, that this town might have been an early *brāhmaṅa*-settlement in North Kerala.<sup>1893</sup> Although it is hard to imagine five hundred such a settlement, and that number seems to be an exaggeration, some brāhmaṅa-settlement must have existed in these early centuries. To prove this, let us continue our analysis with further sources.

The epilogue of the III. *patikam* is the last poem of the *Patirruppattu* in which the word *pārppāṅ* occurs and in which the *pārppāṅ* received quite a special gift from the king:

Having sung, the [following] gifts [had been] obtained: [when the king] said: “what is desirable for you, take [it!]”, [he replied,] saying: “I and my wife (*pārppāṅi*) desire to enter the heaven (*cuvarkkam*)!”, [thus the king] asked the great men (*periyōr*)

<sup>1888</sup> Perhaps the southwestern slopes of the Nilgiris. Marr 1985 [1958], 283.

<sup>1889</sup> Marr 1985 [1958], 299.

<sup>1890</sup> Veluthat 1978, 12.

<sup>1891</sup> *Pre-Pallavan Tamil Index*, 386.

<sup>1892</sup> *Akanānūru*, 220: 3–8.

<sup>1893</sup> Veluthat 1978, 12–14.



of the seers (*pārppār*) and made [them] to perform nine great sacrifices, [then] at the tenth great sacrifice [both] the seer (*pārppān*) and [his] wife (*pārppāni*) became invisible.

In this one, we see the seers or *brāhmaṇas* performing great sacrifices that resulted in a *svargagamana*, when the seer and the female seer/his wife entered the heaven (*cūvarkkam* < Skt. *svarga*) so that we have all the reasons to believe that the author of these lines was knowledgeable in a Vedic sense and to interpret the Cēra kingdom as a place where such things could happen. This also shows that, at least in the prose of the *patikam*, the poet called Pālai Kautamaṇār had a Vedic priestly occupation. The same story had been re-narrated by the *Cilappatikāram* when we read about a Cēra king as “the one who let the man (*ālan*) of the Four Vedas (*nānmarai*) go to the world of upper state (*mēl nilai ulakam*), after [he] received [his] composition (*ceyyuḷ*)”.<sup>1894</sup> At some point, we will return to this poet and his songs.

In the 21<sup>st</sup> poem, we do not see *antaṇar* and *pārppār* anymore but *kaṭavuḷ pēṇiyar* ‘those who pay homage to the deity/deities’. For a further analysis, first of all, let us read the following lines:

O [you,] the man of the chest [on which Mother] Earth (*maṇ*) abides, who gives good jewels as the noise excelled when the [skin-]covered muracam-drum was sounding, [who possesses] elephants which have strength in war, [you, who] have raining (*māriyam*) toddy (*kaḷ*) and doubtless superiority which had grown high [from your] abundant prosperity, [you, who] paid homage in a way which is fit (*taka*) to be desired by the deities who obtained permanence in the sky, [you, who paid homage] with the two scents together (*uṭan*) which emit fragrance,—

[the scent of] the libation (*āvuti*) of heated ghī [from which] the dark (*mai*) [smoke] of the cooking arose in the middle of [your] palace (*nakar*) rich with (*koṇṭu*) the sound of the sea, while the seasoning was unceasingly sizzling whenever it had been put on the fat pieces of the pure meat which had been minced on the cutting-board (*ūnattu*) by the goat-traders (*pācavar*), in order to feed the limitless guests wishing to take up [what is served] without exchanging glances [during] the feast;

[and the scent of] the libation (*āvuti*) with great name [in which] the desirable body (*mey*) had spread whenever sparks (*cutar*) arose from the fire which was taken by those who pay homage to the deities according to [their] frightful

<sup>1894</sup> ‘*nānmaraiyālan ceyyuḷ koṇṭu/mēl nilai ulakam viṭuttōn ...*’. *Cilappatikāram*, III. 28: 137–138.

tradition, [who have] truthful speech abounding in excellence [which] resembles the Sun (*kālai*),<sup>1895</sup> [who have] shining principles that do not consider the distress, while by worshipping ‘word (*col*), names (*peyar*), eyes (*nāttam*), hearing (*kēlvī*), heart/mind (*neñcam*)’, these five together, they became a help [for you].<sup>1896</sup>

From a religious point of view, this is one of our most exciting passages in the *Patirruppattu*, in which Palyānaiccelkelu Kuṭṭuvan, the king who annexed Koṅkunāṭu, who was the first worshipper of the Ayirai Hill, who bathed in two seas, etc., seems to be also the one who fostered *brāhmaṇa* communities in his kingdom. In the poet’s imaginary, the way how the king paid homage to the deities in the sky (!) appears as a double libation or *āvuti* (< Skt. *āhuti* ‘offering oblations with fire to the deities’),<sup>1897</sup> one of the court and one of the *brāhmaṇas*. The courtly libation was certainly a profane sacrifice when meat had been cut and seasoned by the butchers/goat traders in order to be offered to the fire of the oven, to roast with heated butter, and to feed the limitless guests as an ancient custom associated to the consistently liberal heroes. The *brāhmaṇical* libation was a Vedic one performed by those who paid homage to the deities, when some elliptical liquid, perhaps *ghī* (which is why it is not repeated in the poem), was offered to the fire altar. If we think about what “the libation (*āvuti*) with great name [in which] the desirable body (*mey*) had spread” could mean, we have three options to interpret. One way is how the old commentary takes (*virumṇu meḃ yeṇṇum orru malintatu; ‘mai parantu’ eṇṇatu pātamāyīṇ mai pōlap paranta eṅka*) who suggests *mai* instead of *mey* so that we see the “darkness” of the elliptical smoke to arise. The other option is to take *mey* as it is, ‘a body’ of someone that spread in the fire of the Vedic sacrifice. Following this, one possibility is to think about Agni, who the Vedic hymns had summoned and who was the original recipient of the oblations. The other possibility is to interpret it as Viṣṇu, whose aspect as *yajñadehottama*, “supreme with a body consisting of sacrifice” is well-known, as we read in the notes of Bisschop for the 31<sup>st</sup> stanza of the *Śivadharmottara*’s *śāntyādhyāya* chapter: “[t]he close relation between Viṣṇu and sacrifice is well established, as in the notions of *yajñavarāha* and *yajñapurusa*. Perhaps this [the name of

<sup>1895</sup> Although *Kālai* normally means *Kūrru*, I followed the suggestion of the old commentary which glosses *kālai* as *ātittan* < Skt. *āditya* ‘Sun’, which idea was taken up by U. Vē. Cāminātaiyar who glosses *cūriyan* < Skt. *sūrya* ‘Sun’ and gives parallels. Cāminātaiyar 1980, 40.

<sup>1896</sup> ‘*col peyar nāttam kēlvī neñcam eṇṇ’ aint’ uṭaṇ pōrri avai tuṇai āka/evvam cūlātu viṭaṅkiya kolkaik/kālai aṇṇa cīr cāl vāymoḷi/uru kelu maraṇṇiṇ kaṭavul pēṇiyar/koṇṭa tīyīṇ cuṭar elu-tōrum/virumṇu meḃ paranta perum peyar āvuti/varunar varaiyār vāra vēṇṭi/viruntu kaṇ māṇāt’ unūiya pācavar/uṇatt’ alitta vāl niṇak kolum kurai/kuy iṭu tōrum āṇāt’ āṇṇak/kaṭal oli koṇṭu ceḷu nakar naṭuvan/aṭu mai elunta aṭu ney āvuti/iraṇṭ’ uṭaṇ kamaḷum nāṇṇamoṭu vāṇattu/nilai peru kaṭavulum viṭai takaṇ pēṇi/ār vaḷam paḷuṇiya aiyam tīr cūṇṇiṇ/māriyam kaḷḷiṇ pōr val yāṇaiṇ/pōrṇṇ’ uru muracam karaṅka āṇṇuc cūṇṇantu/nal kalam tarūum maṇ paṭu māṇpa’.* *Patirruppattu*, 21: 1–19.

<sup>1897</sup> *A Sanskrit-English Dictionary*, 162.

*yajñadehottama*; comment made by me] is a reference to Viṣṇu as the supreme Puruṣa, whose body constitutes the sacrifice in the *Puruṣasūkta* (*R̥gveda* X. 90)".<sup>1898</sup> I find this second reading as the most convincing one and insist that the poet had some inner knowledge of Vedic sacrifices, which can be proved from the *patikam*'s epilogue that called him a *pārppān*, who was aware of the *Puruṣasūkta*. Therefore, he might have thought to articulate Viṣṇu's "dissolution" in the sacrifices. Thus, as Pālai Kautamaṅār says, this was "the way which was fit to be desired by the deities who obtained permanence in the sky". Suppose we accept that Pālai Kautamaṅār was a brāhmaṇa. In that case, we talk in this early period of religious history about Vedic communities that probably, in exchange for privileged rights, entered the service of the kingdom and, even if they might not have lived like that,<sup>1899</sup> accepted the non-vegetarian lifestyle in the Cēra court. We cannot be sure whether in this text we see a Vedic and/or an ancient Dravidian pantheon; also, we cannot be sure about what was the "taste" of those deities, but we might interpret this as an early description of an already forming world of deities of North and South that gladly accepted the mixed smoke of the Vedic rituals and of the roasted meat prepared in courts of the heroic kings.

In this poem we have seen an obscure enumeration of words: 'word (*col*), names (*peyar*), eyes (*nāttam*), hearing (*kēlvi*), heart/mind (*neñcam*)', which things became a help for the king. Starting with the old commentary, the commentator understood *col* as "the treatise [which] talks [about] the grammar of words" (*collilakkaṇam collu nūl*) which seems to refer to the second division of the *Tolkāppiyam* (*Collatikāram*), *peyar* as "the treatise [which] talks [about] the grammar of meanings" (*porulilakkaṇam collu nūl*) which seems to refer to the third division of the *Tolkāppiyam* (*Porulatikāram*), *nāttam* as "the treatise on astrology/astronomy" (*cōtita nūl*), *kēlvi* as the Vedas (*vētam*), and *neñcam* as "the pure and peaceful heart/mind which does not follow the path of the senses" (*intiriyaṅkaḷin valiyōtātu uṭaṅkiya tūya neñcinai*). Turaicāmiṭṭai suggests that *neñcam* is *ākamaṃ* (< Skt. *āgama*) which is a matter of interpretation as both the old commentator and Turaicāmiṭṭai see *vedāṅgas* here, which idea was borrowed by Marr.<sup>1900</sup> This list, given as a quasi *specula principum* or Fürstenspiegel-like context, conducts the king how to reign. Another possibility is that we do not see *vedāṅgas* here but a secular list of 1. speech (*col*), 2. fame (*peyar*), 3. inspection (*nāttam*), 4. audience (*kēlvi*), 5. intelligence/valour/conscience (*neñcam*); five words which are extremely important for the king, and for which one can certainly find parallels in

<sup>1898</sup> Bisschop 2018, 153; footnote 32.

<sup>1899</sup> On meat eating cf. *Mānavadharmasāstra*, V. 27–57.

<sup>1900</sup> Marr 1985 [1958], 311.

early *rājadharmas*. There is another list offered by Eva Wilden who considers it possible that here the post-Vedic *pūjā* tradition was mentioned: words (*col-mālai*), names (enumerating names, cf. *sahasranāma*), eye (cf. *darśana*), Vedic learning (*kēḷvi/śruti*), and heart/mind (cf. *viñāna*).<sup>1901</sup> If we consider the things which were mentioned before, then in this poem we might see an early unfolding synthesis of the northern and southern traditions, and here we may consider that both the second and the third interpretation are possible. For the ones who were knowledgeable in the Vedas, the five elements of the early *pūjā* tradition served as an obvious interpretation, while the non-*brāhmaṇical* audience thought of the list as an enumeration of five important tools of government. For the ones knowledgeable in grammar, e.g. the old commentator, the first interpretation was satisfying. Again, I think that the ambiguity could not have been a coincidence.

We find another passage that can be called a quasi Fürstenspiegel in the 22<sup>nd</sup> poem of Pālai Kautamaṇār:

Anger, desire, excessive pity, fear, untrue words, possession of excessive love, punishing with cruelty, and other [such things] in this world become obstacles on the road for the wheel which knows the virtues (*aram*), o offspring of strong men who governed for aeons (*ūli*), while [their] people passed away without suffering with bodies that had become old, people who share [what they] ate, [who] did not separate from their beloved retinue, walking straight like the flawless, learned ones without desiring other's property, without causing affliction to others, while the many profits of the forests and the seas helped [them], staying away [from what is] evil, desiring much what is good.<sup>1902</sup>

Here what is important is that we see the “wheel that knows the virtues” (*aram teri tikiri*), the *dharmacakra* of the kingdom appear, which makes the king *de facto* a *cakravartin*. Reading the advices on reign given in this passage, one may interpret the selfless, non-violent, non-extremist advices as Jaina or Buddhist influences. In this case, the reference to the ‘virtuous wheel’ (*aram teri tikiri*, Line 4) may be identifiable with the *dharmacakra* of the Jainas or with the wheel that the Buddha set in motion, what is more, the flawless, learned ones (*arivinar*, Line 8) who walk

<sup>1901</sup> The idea came up first in Hamburg during our *Patirruppattu* reading sessions. Wilden–Schmücker 2019, 8.

<sup>1902</sup> ‘*ciṇanē kāmam kalī kaṇṇōṭṭam/accam poyc col aṇṇu miḱa ūṭaimai/teṛal kaṭumaṇṇoytu pīravum ivvulakatt’/aram teri tikirikku valī aṭai ākum/tītu cēṇ ikantu nanru miḱap purintu/kaṭalum kānamum pala paṇam utavaṇ/pīraṇ pīraṇ naliyātu vērruṇ poruḷ vekkātu/māyil arivinar cevviṭṭiṇ naṭantu tam/amar tuṇaiṇ pīriyātu pātt’ unṭu mākkal/mūta yākkaiyoytu piṇi inru kaliya/ūli uyta uravōr umpal’*. *Patirruppattu*, 22: 5–11.

straight, might be identifiable with the *tīrthankaras*, *arhats*, etc. of Jainism, or with the monks (*bhikṣu*), the enlightened ones, etc. of Buddhism. Even the name of the poet of this decade is telling: Pālai Kautamaṅār, in which we might see the name Gautama which can be an Indo-Aryan name of a *brāhmaṇa*, or it could refer to either Gautama Buddha, or to Indrabhūti Gautama, the first disciple of Mahāvīra. However, if we keep in mind Kautamaṅār’s seemingly vast knowledge on the Vedic treatises and the later epilogue that called him a *pārṣṣpān*, we conclude that he was rather a *brāhmaṇa* who could have been influenced by Jaina and/or Buddhist teachings.

Be as it may be, Kautamaṅār says that the king should abstain from extremities in order to secure a smooth road for the wheel of virtues. Here we see the Tamil metaphor of *dharmacakra*, the royal attribute considered as “the wheel or circle of religion or law”,<sup>1903</sup> which was certainly the understanding of Ṁaṅkōvaṭikaḷ as well, who talks about the “[Cēra] king with strong sword, who is eminent from generation to generation (*valivali*),<sup>1904</sup> with the wheel (*tikiri*) that [he] keeps holding up (*ēntiya*)”.<sup>1905</sup> Marr adds to this that the king called Vāliyātaṅ had originally the name Āliyātaṅ instead of the grammatically weird *vāliyātaṅ*, so that it would mean “Ātaṅ who wields the *cakra*(*ālī*) of kingship”.<sup>1906</sup> The poet of the Second Decade, Kumaṭṭūr Kaṅṅaṅār was aware of the concept of *pañcamahābhūta*,<sup>1907</sup> which is not surprising if we see his name and his *brāhmaṇical* reputation in the II. *paṭikam*. In another poem we read about the king Kaḷaṅkāykaṅṅi Nārmuṭi Cēral as the one who set right the excellent family (*tiṅai*) of a declining lineage (*kuti*), which probably referred to the *kulavardhana* aspect of kings who make their families advanced, prosperous.<sup>1908</sup>

[...] [who] paid homage to the deity according to the *mantra*-tradition, [who] confused Maiyūr Kiḷāṅ, the minister [in whom] the truth circulates [with his] *purōcu* (*purohita*) of flawless knowledge, [who] brought the *pūtar* (*bhūtāḥ*) of severe strength and of difficult powerful tradition, which were living at the great crossroads, [who] established [their cult] here, [who] performed *cānti*[-ritual] (*śānti*) according to the tradition that had been studied [...] <sup>1909</sup>

<sup>1903</sup> *A Sanskrit-English Dictionary*, 449.

<sup>1904</sup> *Tamil Lexicon*, 3547.

<sup>1905</sup> ‘... *ēntiya tikiri/valivalic ciraṅka vayavāḷ vēntē*. *Cilappatikāram*, III. 28: 170.

<sup>1906</sup> Marr 1985 [1958], 164.

<sup>1907</sup> *Paṭirrupattu*, 14: 1–4; cf. *Puraṅānūru*, 2:

<sup>1908</sup> See: *A Sanskrit-English Dictionary*, 295.

<sup>1909</sup> ‘*mantiram maraṅṅi teyvam pēṅi/mey ūr amaiccayan maiyūr kiḷāṅai/purai aru kēḷiṅ purōcu mayakkī/arum tīral maraṅṅi perum catukk’ amanta/vem tīral pūtarai tant’ iṅṅa nīrū/āynta maraṅṅi cānti vēṭṭu*. *Paṭirrupattu*, IX. 10–15.

In this passage extracted from the last available *patikam*, written for Iḷaṅcēral Irumpoṛai, we find further details that could strongly connect the kingdom to northern religious practices. The first is the king who followed a magical (*mantiram*) or *mantra*-tradition which directly reflects Vedic traditions. This king was the one who said to “brought the *pūtar* (*bhūtāḥ*) of severe strength and of difficult powerful tradition, which were living at the great crossroads” to his capital. These were probably spirits living at crossings (< Skt. *catuṣkabhūta*). We find them referred in the *Cilappatikāram*, in which the *pūtacatukkam* is one of the five squares (*manram*) of Pukār,<sup>1910</sup> where the *pūtam* loudly proclaims that he will bind the wicked and sinful people with a rope (*pācam*) and consume them,<sup>1911</sup> which was an excellent method against superstitious criminals. Another reference of the *Cilappatikāram* said, as we have seen before, that one among the Cēras performed sacrifices with wine (*matu*) after he brought the *catukkappūtar* within the boundaries of Vañci.<sup>1912</sup> It is perhaps possible that we see a reference to a cult similar to the *bhūtakōla* which is still alive in northern Malabar and Karnataka. The *Maṇimēkalai* also mentions the guardian *pūtam* of Pukār: “after beating [them], the *pūtam* devours the infernal ones (*narakar*) of the ancient village (*tol pati*), [*pūtam*] with a rope (*pācam*) by which [the *narakar*] had been tied, [*pūtam*] which causes torment with loud roar sounding like a thunder while the strong teeth shine in [its] killing red mouth”.<sup>1913</sup> As Decaroli sums up, “this spirit, although easily angered, uses his powers to watch the marketplace, constantly looking for crimes”.<sup>1914</sup> Seeing the strong connections in the tradition between these *pūtar* and Pukār, this might mean that the poet wanted to emphasize the Cēra interests in the eastern shores, which made them capable to borrow cults from there.

After Iḷaṅcēral Irumpoṛai set up the *catukkappūtar*, he performed a *śānti*-ritual, a ritual appeasement of the world that surrounded him, “the appeasement or pacification (*śānti*) of all cosmic powers to secure the welfare of the kingdom”.<sup>1915</sup> We cannot be sure what that means here, since the *cānti*-ritual was probably a ceremony that “derives from consecratory forms originating in late-Vedic Atharvan ritual manuals (*Śāntikalpa* and *Pariśiṣṭas*)”, which continued to “develop” and found its way into the *Viṣṇudharmottara* and the *Śivadharmottara*.<sup>1916</sup> Except the fact that this ritual certainly appeased the cosmic power around, we know nothing about how

<sup>1910</sup> The *catuṣka* as being a part of a city, read for example: *Rāmāyaṇa* V. 53. 22.

<sup>1911</sup> *Cilappatikāram*, I. 5: 128–134.

<sup>1912</sup> ‘*catukkaṭṭ pūtarai vañciyul tantu/matuk koḷ vēlvi vēttōṇ āyinuṁ*’. *Cilappatikāram*, III. 28: 147–148.

<sup>1913</sup> ‘*viṭutta pūtam vilākkōḷ marappiṇ/maṭitta cevvaṅ val eyiru ilaṅka/iṭik kural muḷakkattu iṭumpai ceṅṭiṭum/toṭutta pācattu tol pati narakaraiṭ/pūṭaittu unum pūtamum ...*’. *Maṇimēkalai*, I. 21–24.

<sup>1914</sup> Decaroli 2004, 126.

<sup>1915</sup> Bisschop 2018, 44.

<sup>1916</sup> For further details, read: Geslani 2012; Bisschop 2018.

it was performed, following which way of the rite. It is also possible that the *pūtar* were the ones who had to be appeased, which act shows that the king created cosmic peace in his kingdom and established “institutions” that helped people comply with the laws.

The 74<sup>th</sup> poem mentions some sort of rite which we cannot really identify. Balasubramanian thinks that the ritual described in that poem is the one called *putrakāmeṣṭiyāga* performed by the royal couple in order to beget a son,<sup>1917</sup> but, I was not able to prove this, since the syntax of the poem is extremely problematic. Although the old commentary also tends to understand a *yāga* (*vallōn – yākam paṇṇuvikka vallavan; ad Line 13*) and it is very possible that the old commentator construed the poem thinking of the above mentioned *putrakāmeṣṭi* without naming it, I still cannot find explanation for the ritual hunting/skinning scenes, and cannot find a well-functioning syntactical link between actions and subjects. If we saw the *putrakāmeṣṭi* rite behind these lines, then according to the *Rāmāyaṇa*, it would mean a ritual preserved in the *Atharvaveda*,<sup>1918</sup> or it could be even an allusion to the *Rāmāyaṇa*. Without going into much detail, in this poem we see the king who fulfils a religious vow, and the king, the son or the queen who is girded with a dotted deerskin. Someone also ritually hunts the deer for its skin and stitch it around, it could be either the king, his son with a syntactical twist making *vallōn* an apposition to *putalvan*, or the master of the ritual. It is perhaps possible to think that it is a reference to the *upanayana* of the prince because of the dotted deerskin-context, however, in the case of the *kṣatriyas* the skin would be of a ruru-antelope instead of a deer,<sup>1919</sup> and the hunting/skinning scene is still rather unusual. Most likely, however, the king transferred his power to the queen, who owned it until the prince became an adult.

The last major topic connected to the *brāhmaṇas* around the Cēra court is the person of the *purōcu* (*purohita*), who appears in the 74<sup>th</sup> poem. What we see in this poem is the following:

[...] after [you] understood the entireness inside yourself, o great man, at [the time of] your penance when [you] departed towards various wide areas, you said to [your] old man with grey hair (*narai mūt’ ālan*) who helps [you] to rule that [real] generosity, glory, wealth [of the spirit], lack [of the material wealth,] and deities (*teyvam*) are [available only] for the ascetics (*tavam utaiyōr*).<sup>1920</sup>

<sup>1917</sup> Balasubramanian 1980, 33; 84.

<sup>1918</sup> ‘*iṣṭim te’ham kariyāmi putriyām putrakāraṇāt/atharvasirasi proktaih mantraiḥ siddhām vidhānataḥ.*’ *Rāmāyaṇa*, I. 15. 2.

<sup>1919</sup> Gonda 1980, 105–106.

<sup>1920</sup> ‘*niṅ-vayin/mulut’ unarnt’ olukkum narai mūt’ ālanai/vanmaiḥ māṅpum vaḷaṇum eccamum/teyvamum yāvatum tavam utaiyōrkk’ ena/vēru-paṭu nanam talaiḥ peyarak/kūriṇai peruma niṅ paṭimaiyānē.*’ *Patirruppattu*, 74: 23–28.

Here according to the old commentary, we should understand *narai mūt' āḷaṅ* 'the old man with grey hair' as *purōkitan* as it is obvious from the poem itself. Thus, Peruñcēral Irumporai around the end of his life when the succession of the throne was in good hands, at the time of his penance, departed towards various wide areas. I think that most reliable explanation is that the king left for the forest to follow a reclusive lifestyle living in a forest (*vanavāsa*), adopting the third *āśrama*, the *vānaprastha*, while we must leave open the questions of whether he could have become a monk (*bhikṣu*) or a penitent ascetic (*saṃnyāsin*).<sup>1921</sup> The *vēru-ṭaṭu naṇam talai* could also refer to the dharmaśāstric way to die, when "he may set out in a north-easterly direction and, subsisting on water and air, walk straight on steadfastly until his body drops dead".<sup>1922</sup> What is certain, the king left the kingdom after transferring his royal power to his son, chose a lifestyle of turning to the gods (*teyvam*) accompanied by rigorous penance (*tavam* < Skt. *tapas*). He is not the only one in the *Patirrupattu*, who decided to leave for the forest. In the III. *ṭatikam* we find "Palyāṇaiccelkelu Kuṭṭuvaṅ who had gone to the forest (*kāṭu pōnta*) following Neṭumpāratāyaṅār [whose] knowledge (*kēḷvi*) rose high [by means of its] unceasing fame [and] with strength that abounds in ability." The name of the Pāratāyaṅār in question, whom the old commentator calls the king's *purōkitan*, might have come from the proper name Pāratāyaṅ < Skt. Bhāradvāja (*Tamil Lexicon*, 2620), so that the honorific plural could mean one particular person, a *purohita* or *rājaguru* whose name was Pāratāyaṅār, or although I believe this is less possible, as a *de facto* plural noun they could have been influential *brāhmaṇas* belonging to the *bhāradvāja-gōtra*. It is easy to find another possible etymology of the Tamil name (< Skt. *bhārata?*), but it is almost impossible to come closer to the hidden truth other than what we find in the poem. Most important at this point is that the king seemed to have a loyal counsellor of *brāhmaṇa* origin at the court, although we must mention that among these attestations only one belongs to the decade poems, while three can be found in the *ṭatikams*. In the other two which had not yet been presented, we see "Celvakkāṭuṅkō Vāliyāṭaṅ [who] flawlessly shone with [his] brilliant mind after [he] confused [his] *purōcu* (*purohita*)"<sup>1923</sup> and Iḷaṅcēral Irumporai "[who] confused Maiyūr Kiḷāṅ, the minister (*amaicciyaṅ* < Skt. *amātya*) [in whom] the truth circulates [with the help his] *purōcu* of flawless knowledge".<sup>1924</sup> Here we see that, according to these poets, the *purōcus* were people who could confuse others with their vast (perhaps Vedic) knowledge, or who could be confused by the king whose knowledge surpassed that of his master, which is definitely a high-level flattering. In the

<sup>1921</sup> Cf. *Mānavadharmasāstra*, VI. 2. For the entire issue of what a king could and could not become, see: Dezső 2022. Cf. *Mānavadharmasāstra*, VI. 2.

<sup>1922</sup> *Mānavadharmasāstra*, VI. 31. Transl. by Patrick Olivelle (Olivelle 2005, 149).

<sup>1923</sup> *Patirrupattu*, VII. 10–12.

<sup>1924</sup> *Patirrupattu*, IX. 11–12.



90<sup>th</sup> poem, we read about the Cēra king who “studied, while their companions’ places (*turai*) became full without rest.”<sup>1925</sup> This is interesting in the light of the old commentary that interprets *tantunaitturai* as “their standard (*aḷavāna*) treatises of the paths (*turai*; *vedāṅgas*?) of the first men of the seers/*brāhmaṇas*” (*pārppārmūtalāyīṇār tattamakku aḷavāna turainūlka!*). We cannot, of course, take the mediaeval interpretation of such an elliptical passage completely seriously, but it is interesting to play with the idea that such institutions (*vedāśrama*, *matha*) existed in the kingdom.

We find references to the astrological/astronomical knowledge of the Cēra court poets, who mention different constellation of stars and planets. In the 13<sup>th</sup> poem we find an astronomical description that perhaps reflects an observation of the stationary or northwards(?) -moving Velli and the Alal (Mars) in an opposite (southwards?) motion that might happened around the beginning of the monsoon season because as the poet said “clouds tarried [above] the fields that desired rain”.<sup>1926</sup> According to the observations or astronomical knowledge of the ancient Tamils, Venus which stands visible at daytime probably had an important role associated with rainfalls. The *Patirruppattu* tells us that if the Venus bends to the north, it is a forerunner of turbulent rains.<sup>1927</sup> However, we learn from the *Puranānūru* that the southwards motion of Venus meant to be unauspicious.<sup>1928</sup> In the 229<sup>th</sup> poem of the *Puranānūru* written for a Cēra king, we find an amazing and very complicated description of a planetary constellation with full of terms which have certainly been translated into Tamil from the Indo-Aryan astronomical terminology. In my opinion, the astronomical description of the *Patirruppattu* shows some sort of northern influence in the Caṅkam poems. There is a single reference in which a month called *māci*, the eleventh solar month (February-March) or the tenth *nakṣatra*, is attested in the *Patirruppattu*, which could somewhat prove my previous statement on northern influences, however, as the Tamil is many times ambiguous, we can translate that passage also as “the month (*tiṅka!*), [when] the animals (*mā*), which stood (*ninra*) [in] the mist (*māci*), shrink (*kūr*) [from cold]”.<sup>1929</sup>

According to the analysis of the previous pages, I conclude that the Cēras and the Vedic communities which settled down in their kingdom had a strong relation even from the first centuries AD. As we have seen earlier, south of the Bēttigō mountain to the region of the Batoi people laid an area where *brāhmaṇas* were living, who were also magi.<sup>1930</sup> To interpret *brāhmaṇas*

<sup>1925</sup> *Patirruppattu*, IX. 3–6.

<sup>1926</sup> *Patirruppattu*, 13: 25–26.

<sup>1927</sup> Cf. *Patirruppattu*, 24: 24–26; 69: 13–15.

<sup>1928</sup> *Puranānūru*, 35: 7; 117: 1–2.

<sup>1929</sup> See: *Patirruppattu*, 59: 2.

<sup>1930</sup> Ptol., *Geog.* VII. 1. 74.

as magi is comparable to the fact that the Tamils understood *mantiram* as not only ‘mantra’ but first of all ‘magic’, ‘charm’ in the early texts. The only one settlement that was mentioned in that region is Bragmē/Brammē, an unidentified settlement of *brāhmaṇas* in the Cēra interior. Thus, in the middle of the 2<sup>nd</sup> century AD, we have not only Indian textual evidence to the influential *brāhmaṇas* around the Cēra court, but Ptolemy’s record also underlines that these communities existed and flourished in the territory of the Cēra kingdom. Many of the words which have Indo-Aryan origin in the *Patirruppattu*, are connected to the Vedic religion: *āvuti* (*āhuti*), *amirtu* (*amṛta*), *avunar* (*asura*), *mantiram* (*matra*), *piṇṭam* (*piṇḍa*), *pali* (*bali*), *cānti* (*śānti*), *pūtar* (*bhūta*), *purōcu* (*purohita*) etc. We also find northern place names in the text such as the Imaiṃ/Himālaya, the Kaṅkai/Gaṅgā, and the Taṅṭāraṇiyam/Daṅḍāraṇya which was, according to the old commentary, an ārya country (*ōr āriya nāṭu*), but it is perhaps the same as the legendary Daṅḍakāraṇya in the Deccan, between the Narmadā and the Godāvārī rivers.<sup>1931</sup>

Although it is easy to find references in the *Patirruppattu* which talk about northern religious influences, still these are embedded in a unique Cēra context, in which South Indian or even local cults can be also discovered. Among these, the most important is the cult of totemistic trees or *kaṭimaram*. Let us talk briefly about the translation of the term *kaṭimaram*. Ramachandra Dikshitar, even if he devoted only a few sentences to the subject, named the questionable tree as *guardian tree* (*kāvalmaram*) which was, according to him, a symbol of sovereignty and “to fell that tree amounted to capturing the chieftain’s flag”.<sup>1932</sup> Nilakantha Sastri also used the term *guardian tree* in the single sentence written on the topic in his famous monograph, the *A history of South India*.<sup>1933</sup> Thani Nayagam called the tree a *guarded tree*, as he says “each king and each chief had a tree which symbolised him and was called the tree which he guarded”.<sup>1934</sup> In his monograph *The Eight Anthologies*, John R. Marr calls this tree a “protective tree”.<sup>1935</sup> In a later study, Marr compared the *protective* trees to the *sthalavṛkṣas* of Hindu temples.<sup>1936</sup> George L. Hart analyses the question that these trees were “tutelary trees”, which were “carefully guarded so that enemies could not approach it”, and were “to represent the cosmic tree, joining heaven and earth”.<sup>1937</sup> N. Subrahmanian used the terms “guarded tree” and “tutelary tree”.<sup>1938</sup> Dubiansky in his recent study returned to the term “guarded tree” and

<sup>1931</sup> *Pre-Pallavan Tamil Index*, 411. *The Geographical Dictionary*, 114.

<sup>1932</sup> Dikshitar 1930, 245.

<sup>1933</sup> Sastri 1958, 129.

<sup>1934</sup> Thani Nayagam 1964, 34.

<sup>1935</sup> Marr [1985] 1958, 315.

<sup>1936</sup> Marr 2012, 267–268.

<sup>1937</sup> Hart 1975, 16–17.

<sup>1938</sup> Subrahmanian 1980, 92; 140.

opposes Hart’s “cosmic symbolism”.<sup>1939</sup> Last but not least, the *Tamil Lexicon* defines it as a “tree planted and well guarded as a symbol of sovereign power or dominion, in ancient times”.<sup>1940</sup> Modern studies on the totemistic trees mention the *kaṭimaram* and the *kāvalmaram* as each other’s synonyms,<sup>1941</sup> however, to mention the term *kāvalmaram* is quite anachronistic because it is not attested in the Caṅkam texts and its earliest attestation seems to be found in the mediaeval commentary on *Puranānūru* (ca. 12<sup>th</sup> c. AD). Thus, these terms are indeed synonyms but to use *kāvalmaram* as a frequently used ancient term is misleading. Therefore, I prefer to use the term ‘totemistic tree’ which unites the possible and verifiable functions attributed to these trees, and the term ‘guarded tree’ which is the safer reading from the possible translations of the word *kaṭimaram*. Reading the Caṅkam poems, it is not a question that these trees were guarded, however, it cannot be proved whether these trees actually guarded anything (king, king’s power, dynasty, royal capital, etc.).

The poetry of the ancient Cēras abounds in natural symbolism. The various flowers, plants, trees, groves, forests are not only important for the description of the landscape, but many of them have a symbolic meaning that also determines the theme of the poem or the acts of the actors. The ancient Tamil kings and chiefs had a symbolic connection with certain plants, flowers, or trees, what is more, those plants, flowers, or trees became individual symbols of the particular rulers or dynasties. Thus, when the authors of the poems referred to the different kings and tribal chiefs only with the names of their symbolic plants, this was sufficient to identify the actors and their geographic environment for the learned audience. In the Old Tamil poems, the rulers and their warriors often wear a wreath (*kaṇṇi*) and garland (*kōtai, puṭaiyal*) made of various plants, which in the case of the Cēra kings was a *pōntai* or *paṇai* wreath from the flowers of the palmyra tree (*Borassus flabellifer*).<sup>1942</sup> Beyond these chaplets and garlands, the crowned kings of ancient South India had various *regalia* symbolizing their sovereign power and besides the royal drum called *muracu*, the parasol called *kuṭai*, or the royal staff called *kōl*, one of these most important insignia was the *kaṭimaram*. In the Caṅkam poems, we see that trees that symbolised the dynasties could be found in the courtyard of the mansions of rulers (*manram*), or in the common (*manram*) of those town/villages where the court of the ruler was built, where the exhausted bards arrived to sing songs and receive gifts.<sup>1943</sup> In those poems in which a tree appeared as a compound, in which the first part was the word *manram*, in all those cases the

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<sup>1939</sup> Dubiansky 2013, 318–320.

<sup>1940</sup> *Tamil Lexicon*, 669.

<sup>1941</sup> Dikshitar 1930, 245; Hart 1975, 16; Subrahmanian 1980, 92; Dubiansky 2013, 218.

<sup>1942</sup> Dubyanskiy 2013, 316. *Patirrupattu*, 42: 1; 51: 31; 67:13.

<sup>1943</sup> Ferenczi 2020, 37.

word *manram* was followed by dynastic plants. Thus, I translate the ‘manra-X’ type of compounds that denote trees as ‘courtly trees’, and I tend to interpret them growing in the middle of the ruler’s courtyard. Besides *kaṭimaram*, the *kaṭimilai* occurs several times in the early texts which have to be interpreted as a ‘forest [served as a] defense’. However, it is necessary to point out the difference between *kaṭimaram* and *kaṭimilai*. While the latter made it difficult for the enemy army to move around the fort due to its impenetrability, the former as standing alone, or as forming (sacred?) groves were found around the villages as stated in *Puranānūru* 23 and 162.

The Cēras often set the goal of cutting down the totemistic trees of their foes, when they chopped down the foot of the *kaṭampu*-tree, the *vākai*-tree of Nannan, and the *vēmpu*-tree of Palaiyan/Mōkur.<sup>1944</sup> An ancestor of Nannan had the totemistic mango tree cut by the *kōcar*, of which fruit was eaten by a young girl which is why Nannan killed her.<sup>1945</sup> This poem could serve as an evidence that the totemistic trees had magical power which had to be connected to the tree’s owners, therefore, the girl had to be killed. However, in the *Puranānūru* 372 the poet adorned himself with the fallen flowers of a *manra-vēmpu* for which he had no trouble. So it is rather uncertain whether these trees had some sort of mysterious power, or Nannan was simply short-tempered who accused the girl of stealing the fruit.

We see in other poems that to tie the royal elephants to the enemies’ totemistic trees was an often practiced custom.<sup>1946</sup> This act, as the *Puranānūru* 57 suggests in which we read *kaṭimaram taṭital oṃpu niṅ neṭu nal yāṅaikkuk kantu āṟṟāvē*, rather had a paraphrased meaning ‘do not kill the weak ones, but demand their loyalty!’. We have only one passage proving that the Cēras might have practiced this custom, in which we see the Cēra king by “tying the elephant bull to the guarded tree (*kaṭimaram*), [elephant] with sturdy feet that resemble mortars, [on which] shapely bells were fastened.”<sup>1947</sup> This act may refer to the humiliation of the enemies’ totemistic tree (*kaṭimaram*) as the penultimate or final act of a total victory, but could also refer to the descent of the enemies’ king into vassal status.

I mentioned the humiliation of the trees as a probably penultimate act before the total destruction, since I observe a final act of victory, at least connected to the Cēras, when the kings cut down the totemistic tree and made a royal drum (*muracu*) from its wood. This act can be found in *Patirrupattu* 11: 14, 17: 5, and 44: 15–16, and also in *Akanānūru* 347: 4–5, but all these poems report on Cēra kings. Thus, I assume that this rarely mentioned tradition could have

<sup>1944</sup> See: *Patirrupattu*, 11: 12–13; 12: 3; 15: 3; 20: 3–4; 40: 14–15; IV. 6–10; 44: 14–15; 49: 8–16; V. 13–17; 88: 6; 10. Cf. *Akanānūru*, 127: 4; 199: 19–20.

<sup>1945</sup> *Kūṟuntokai*, 292.

<sup>1946</sup> *Puranānūru*, 57: 10–11; 109: 11–13; 162: 5–6; 336: 3–4; 345: 1; 347: 9–12.

<sup>1947</sup> *Patirrupattu*, 33: 2–3.

been connected to the early Cēras, as far as its connection with other kings cannot be proved. The royal *muracu* drum enjoyed cultic respect, which had been regularly and ceremonially washed, which had a special bed,<sup>1948</sup> and to which drum sacrifices were offered.<sup>1949</sup>

Talking about South Indian and local cults, we observe the tradition of the *tuṇaikai* dance which was, according to the *Tamil Lexicon*, “a kind of dance in which the arms bent at the elbows are made to strike against the sides”.<sup>1950</sup> In the *Patirrupattu*, this dance was either a partner dance/festival dance in which the king had a chance to dance with other women than his (favourite) wife,<sup>1951</sup> or a victory dance performed on the battlefield by the king and his warriors.<sup>1952</sup> The *tuṇaikai* dance was sometimes performed by demons (*pēy*).<sup>1953</sup> We can conclude that the *tuṇaikai* dance was danced after the victory and on the occasion of the festivals, but its religious context is debatable unless it had to be associated with festivals accompanying the post-victory sacrifices. Regarding the folk traditions in the *Patirrupattu*, when I read about a group called *maṭivaiyar* “those [who wear] foliage” (27: 3) who joined to the musicians, this recalled my memories about a Malabari folk dance, the Kummāṭṭi, when the dancers wear masks and garments woven from grass during the performance which is accompanied by drummers. When I have seen the “great god (*perum teyvam*) [who] roams [along with] snakes [with] rare sapphires (*maṇi*) that lay athwart here and there [in] the big mountain, [which snakes] appeared like the possessed (*veri-uru*) tremble of the innocent girl who dances, frisks and trembles”,<sup>1954</sup> it recalled my memories on *sarppam tullal* or *nāgakaḷam tullal*, a unique ritual of Kerala, during which girls get into trance by becoming a manifestation of a Nāga, frisk, tremble, and sweep up the image of a snake made on the floor with colourful powders. However, for the time being, these are no more than interesting parallels that should be supported or rejected by further research in the future.

### ***The cult and the memory of Tamil heroes***

We must agree with Kailasapathy’s definition, based on G. Thomson’s idea, that “the politics of the Tamil Heroic Age were marked by the ascendancy of an ‘energetic military caste,

<sup>1948</sup> *Puranānūru*, 50.

<sup>1949</sup> *Patirrupattu*, 19: 4–5; *Puranānūru*, 362: 3.

<sup>1950</sup> *Tamil Lexicon*, 1963.

<sup>1951</sup> *Patirrupattu*, 52: 13–15. Cf. *Narṇinai*, 50: 2; *Kalittokai*, 66: 18; 70: 14; 73: 16; *Kuṇṭokai*, 31: 2; 364: 6, etc.

<sup>1952</sup> *Patirrupattu*, 13: 5; 45: 12; 57: 4; 77: 4.

<sup>1953</sup> For example: *Tirumurukāruppatai*, 56.

<sup>1954</sup> ‘*iyalaṇal olkiṇaḷ āṭum maṭam maḷaḷ/veri uru nuṭakkam pōlat tōṇrip/perum malai vayin vayin vilankum aru maṇi/ara valankum perum teyvattu*’. *Patirrupattu*, 51: 10–13.

which, torn by internecine conflicts of succession and inheritance, breaks loose from its tribal bonds into a career of violent, self-assertive individualism’.”<sup>1955</sup> Around the beginning of the Christian Era, we can already distinguish two pathways in the old literature of the Tamil kingdoms: the erotic, “inner” (*akam*) poetry and the heroic, “outer” (*puram*) poetry. As Kailasapathy states, “those treating wars, exploits of kings and chieftains, the splendour of courts, and the liberality and munificence of heroes may be called heroic poems; those in which the love theme is predominant may be called love songs.”<sup>1956</sup> Following the statements of the *Tolkāppiyam*, in the erotic poetry, poets are not allowed to mention the names of the *dramatis personae*, while in the heroic poetry it is allowed.<sup>1957</sup> It was not only allowed, but it was quite remunerative, considering that the heroic poetry was ordered and funded by the kings and chieftains.<sup>1958</sup> So, while the poets, as “the counterparts in the Heroic Age of the modern mass-media”,<sup>1959</sup> were flattering the rulers reciting their masterful compositions, the kings and chiefs showered on them fabulous gifts and offered them abundant feasts, encouraging the bards to wander from one palace to another, or in some cases to settle down as loyal court poets.<sup>1960</sup> What is more, in agreement with Ganapathy Subbiah, in ancient South India the liberality and the boundless capacity of gifting (*koṭai, īkai*) were the most important criteria to distinguish a hero from others.<sup>1961</sup> In the Old Tamil *puram* poetry, the heroes (*talaivan, kilavōṇ*) were the perfect men, paragons (*cāṇrōṇ*) of the age. The term *cāṇrōṇ*,<sup>1962</sup> as Zvelebil states is “one of the key-words in Tamil poetry, if not the key-word of the best in Tamil culture.”<sup>1963</sup> It refers to a wise, learned, and respectable man, a great, noble person, a warrior, or a poet of the Caṅkam literature.<sup>1964</sup> The kings and the chieftains were almost always<sup>1965</sup> considered as noble warriors and liberal protectors (*puravalan*), whose generosity was not dependent on reciprocation, but was limitless and always available for the supplicants (*paricilar, iravalan*).<sup>1966</sup> The level of the donations was dependent only on military successes, capturing a booty, or receiving tributes.<sup>1967</sup> As we shall

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<sup>1955</sup> Kailasapathy 1968, 73.

<sup>1956</sup> Kailasapathy 1968, 5.

<sup>1957</sup> *Tolkāppiyam Poruḷatikāram Akattiṇaiyiyal*, cū. 57–58. (cited by Kailasapathy 1968, 5)

<sup>1958</sup> Dubiansky 2013, 308.

<sup>1959</sup> Kailasapathy 1968, 77.

<sup>1960</sup> In the collection of Ten Idylls (*Pattuppāṭṭu*) there are certain texts called *āruppaṭai* songs, which have the literary program to guide poets, dancers, artists and supplicants to the liberal donors of Tamilakam. Kailasapathy 1968, 35–48.

<sup>1961</sup> Subbiah 1991, 133.

<sup>1962</sup> The noun *cāṇrōṇ* can be derived from the verb *cāl-tal*, which means to be abundant, full or extensive; to excel in moral worth; to be great or noble; to be suitable or fitting; to be finished or exhausted. *Tamil Lexicon*, 1389.

<sup>1963</sup> Kamil Zvelebil 1973, 17.

<sup>1964</sup> *Tamil Lexicon*, 1397.

<sup>1965</sup> Not in the case of Iḷavelimāṇ, who was a famous tightwad, see: *Puranānūru*, 162.

<sup>1966</sup> For further details, see Subbiah 1991, 133–158.

<sup>1967</sup> Dubiansky 2013, 308.

see, it was necessary and favourable for the rulers to ritually keep these liberal and iconic heroes alive in collective memory, whose memorialising act could be: the fertile medium of the hero-cult; the assurance for the survival of generosity as a social norm and a tradition of redistributing wealth; the legitimation of the ancestors' deeds, which made them "immortal" and also legitimized their heirs; emphasis on the moral path on which the forefathers were walking, and the source of livelihood for bards, musicians, and dancers.

Those warriors, who were fighting in the armies of kings or chieftains, had to face the inevitable nature of death every day. As the poet Aiyāticciruṅṅēraiṅṅār sang on death in the 363<sup>rd</sup> poem of *Puṛaṅṅāṅṅūru*: "there is no life, that stays without perishing along with the body. Dying is reality, not just an illusion!",<sup>1968</sup> which is itself a quite a wise statement,<sup>1969</sup> or as Kaṅṅiyaṅṅ Pūṅkuṅṅraṅṅār said in his much-quoted poem, beside other illusionary things "there is no novelty not even in death" (*cāṅṅalum puṅṅwatu aṅṅṅē*).<sup>1970</sup> Death is indeed the last, irreversible event of the individual, who says farewell to the society, leaving behind a lifeless body, but also long-living memories. Of course, the durability and value of these memories were dependent on the social status of the individuals, the famous acts which they had performed and the dramatic/heroic/fabulous way, in which they passed away. From the royal perspective of memorialising, the death of a carpenter had probably a less important political value than the heroic death of a loyal soldier. In the latter case, the memorialising policy of the monarch together with the heroic poetry of the loyal poets were able to turn the sorrowful grief of the society into a proud, festal event of the kingdom and provided the support of the people and the continuous supply of the army. For a well-functioning military system, a sovereign Tamil monarch needed a well-established policy of memorialising, a festive and ritual way to remember and remind, and a desirable conception of after-life. In fact, death was an opening door either to the upper world of the heroic ancestors, or to reincarnation into a new body.

In battles, fearless heroism was expected from the warriors. Those who bravely persevered until the end of the battle, were glorified, regardless of whether they survived or died. Those who betrayed their king and ran away from the battle, were humiliated, or killed. To observe what happened if someone abortively left his martial duties, the best example is the poem of Kākkai Pāṅṅiṅṅiṅṅār Naccellaiṅṅār:

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<sup>1968</sup> '... vīyāṅṅtu/ūṅṅampōṅṅu niṅṅṅa uyirum illai/maṅṅaṅṅkal uṅṅmai māyamo aṅṅṅē'. *Puṛaṅṅāṅṅūru*, 363: 7–9. Cf. the end of the 366<sup>th</sup> *puṛaṅṅam* written by Kōṅṅtamaṅṅār: *Puṛaṅṅāṅṅūru*, 366: 23.

<sup>1969</sup> The idea was probably the effect of certain Buddhist/Jaina tenets, propagating the instability (*niṅṅlāmai*) of life.

<sup>1970</sup> *Puṛaṅṅāṅṅūru*, 192: 4.

When it was uttered by many, that the son of the old woman, whose belly is [wrinkled] like a lotus-leaf and whose slack, soft arms with bulging veins are parched, had withdrawn after his weapon was ruined, she got enraged and said: “If he deserted the crowded battle, then I will cut off my breasts that fed him.” She took a sword and searched [him] on the reddened battlefield turning over the fallen corpses. Once she saw the place, where the pieces of her fallen boy were scattered, she became even more glad than on the day she had given birth to him.<sup>1971</sup>

This research now turns to a deeper analysis of the different passages of Old Tamil poetry, where fearless kings and warriors passed away on the battlefield. First of all, we examine the horrors of the battlefield. In the 77<sup>th</sup> poem of the *Akanānūru*, the poet sang about “the red-eared kites, which perched at the crossing of stony roads, as they got scared from the emerging fire, which embraced the brave men who traversed the good battlefield, so their animate substance departed”.<sup>1972</sup> In the 253<sup>rd</sup> poem of *Puranānūru* a wife arrived to the battlefield lamenting the death of her warrior-husband, who was no longer able to join to his comrades’ mirth (... *ilaiyar tilaiṭṭa/nakāal ena vantamārē*), so she persuades the dead to speak (*kūru nin uraiyē*), whether she should run to his relatives (*kiḷaiyul oṅvalō*) since she became a widow.<sup>1973</sup> In the 368<sup>th</sup> poem of the *Puranānūru*, the king appears like a farmer<sup>1974</sup> having his sword as a plough (*vāl ēr ulava*) heaping up the men into straw bales (*āl alippatutta*), so that the poets cannot get their gifts (here horses and elephants) in exchange for their songs, since the elephants laid dead like mountains, and the horses fell down like the ships without wind in the huge flood of blood.<sup>1975</sup> The murderous king and a very similar flood simile appears in the 49<sup>th</sup> poem of the *Patirruppattu*:

... the many great desolations, which were created [by the king], so that heaps of corpses arose and the blood from the vital spots of warriors of bloody, red hands,

<sup>1971</sup> ‘*narampu eluntu ulariya nirampā mentōl/mulari maruṅkiṅ mutiyōl ciṟwan/ṭai alintu māriṅ enru palar kūra/manṭu/amarṅku utaintaṅ āyṅ unṭa en/mulai aruttiṭṭen yān ena cinai/koṅṭa vālotu ṭai pinam peyarā/ceṅkaḷam tulavvōl cūtaṅ vērākiya/ṭaiṭṭaṅ kiṭakkai kāṅū/inra nānriṅum peritu wantaṅalē*. *Puranānūru*, 278.

<sup>1972</sup> ‘*uyir tṛai peyara nal amar kaṭanta/ṭarukaṅ ālar talṅi teṟvāra/cem cevi eruṅai aṅcuvāra irukkum/kal atar kavalaṅ*’. *Akanānūru*, 77: 9–12.

<sup>1973</sup> *Puranānūru*, 253: 1–6.

<sup>1974</sup> Wilden 2006, 191–209.

<sup>1975</sup> *Puranānūru*, 368: 1–18.



rolls since it has overflowed the pits, similarly to the stream of a rainy day, spreading and rushing on the fields.<sup>1976</sup>

We may not need to quote more from the numerous poems about the devastation of war during which, as we have seen, great warriors lost their lives, but it is necessary to talk about what we have not yet touched upon, the death of kings. In the 56<sup>th</sup> poem of the *Patirruppattu*, we see the victorious Cēra “king dancing on the battlefield where [other] kings, who got enraged because of their huge ignorance, marched up [against him] and fell, their lives lost, leaving [their] bodies behind.”<sup>1977</sup> In the *Puranānūru*’s 62<sup>nd</sup> poem written by Kalāttalaiyār, we see how both the Cēra and the Cōla kings died together on the battlefield:

...[In] a highly virtuous and valorous battle, [both] kings perished, their parasols drooped and their superior royal drums, which excel in fame, became silent.<sup>1978</sup>

The death of coward kings can be seen in the 93<sup>rd</sup> poem of *Puranānūru* written by the famous poetess, Auvaiyār. Here the kings were killed by the army of a chieftain called Atiyamān Neṭumān Añci, as we read “those, who came [to fight] could not even endure the van [of your army], so they, the escaping coward kings, scattered and died.”<sup>1979</sup> Later we see the high priests (*mutalvar*) of the four Vedas whose doctrines abound in virtues (*aram puri kolikai nānmarai*), who embraced the bodies and laid them on the grassy ground, cut their bodies into pieces and buried them pretending that they died a heroic death, while saying: “go [to that] place, where warriors with bright anklets go, who fell in good battles, so that their valour became [immortalised in] pillars!”<sup>1980</sup> This quotation of the song might be a faint imitation of the *Rgveda* line from the famous funerary hymn for Yama: “Go forth, go forth on the ancient paths on which our forefathers departed!”<sup>1981</sup> Even so, we see another parallel image, when Yama was invited to sit down on the grass while the poet, who carried him there to the funeral, had to sing funerary

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<sup>1976</sup> ‘neyttōr toṭṭa cenikai maravar/nīram paṭu kuruti nilam paṭarant’ oṭi/maḷai nāl puṇalin aval parant’ oḷuka/paṭu piṇam piṇaika pāl pala ceytu’. *Patirruppattu*, 49: 10–13.

<sup>1977</sup> ‘maṭam perumaiyīn uṭaru mēl vanta/vēntu mey maranta vāḷcci/vēnt’ uku pōrkkalatt’ āṭum kōvē’. *Patirruppattu*, 56: 6–8.

<sup>1978</sup> ‘arattin maṇṭiya marappōr vēntar/tām māyntanarē kuṭai tuḷaṅkinavē/urai cāl ciṇappiṇ muraicu olintaṇavē’. *Puranānūru*, 62: 7–9. Although the literary theme of the simultaneous death of both kings can be found among the subdivisions of the *tumpai tiṇai* in the *Tolkāppiyam* (*iruvar talaivar taṭuti pakkamum. Tolkāppiyam Poruḷatikāram Purattiṇaiyiyal*, cū. 14: 5), it is difficult to deal whether the description was a memory of a real event (as suggested by the proper names found in the probably later colophon) or just a part of literary program.

<sup>1979</sup> ‘... vantōr/tār tānkutalum ārrār vēṭipattu/oḷal marīya pītu il maṇṇar’. *Puranānūru*, 93: 2–3.

<sup>1980</sup> ‘maram kant’ āka nal amar vīlnta/nīl kaḷal maravar celvūli celka’. *Puranānūru*, 93: 9–10.

<sup>1981</sup> ‘prehi prehi pathibhiḥ pūrvyebhir yatrā nah pūrve pitarah pareyuh’. *Rgveda*, X.14.7. *The Rigveda*, 1392.

songs,<sup>1982</sup> which reminds us of what we read in the Tamil poem: “those who are [wearing] cord [on their] body and spreading the green grass, laid down [the bodies].”<sup>1983</sup> It is interesting to entertain the idea of whether the Tamil poetess had an insight into Vedic rituals.<sup>1984</sup> In fact, the sin of these kings was that they did not fight until death in the murderous battle, but ran away and were deadly wounded on their backs. To liberate them from the disgrace, the priests cut them and provided them with a burial worthy for heroes. The rhetorical question taken by the poetess is, whether in this way “they have escaped [from their sins]” (*uyntanarmātō*). Regarding the “real hero” Atiyamāṅ Neṭumāṅ Añci, he got a grievous wound (*viluppun*) in a duel with a war-elephant, which was indeed an honourable mark worthy for a warrior.

If we look at other poems talking about the death of chieftains we can arrange the data into schematic literary trends. Just to give a few examples, the chieftain Evvi was killed on the battlefield, so the bards put down their harps (*yāl*),<sup>1985</sup> the chieftain Āy Eyiṅaṅ, son of Veḷiyaṅ, who was famous for his charity was killed on the field of Pāḷi when fighting against Miñili,<sup>1986</sup> the liberal chieftain called Pāri was murdered when the armies of the three crowned kings attacked his country,<sup>1987</sup> Atiyamāṅ Neṭumāṅ Añci was also killed on the battlefield by spears.<sup>1988</sup> To conclude, all the memorable kings and chieftains of the Tamil heroic poetry happened to die a heroic death in battles, except for a few cases when the king went to the forest and became a hermit,<sup>1989</sup> or starved to death for various reasons.<sup>1990</sup> All these cases were glorious enough for the establishment of memorials, as we will see later in the chapter. In contrast those kings and chiefs, who surrendered or fled from battle, got a wound on their back, whose tutelary tree had been cut off,<sup>1991</sup> who were not generous to others and did not shower gifts, or committed sinful acts, did not deserve to be praised, their doubtful heroic memories were not worthy enough to be preserved, and they were definitely unworthy of heroic monuments to be erected for them.

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<sup>1982</sup> “This strewn grass here, Yama—just sit here on it, in concord with the Aṅgirasas, our forefathers. Let mantras pronounced by poets convey you hither. Become exhilarated on this oblation, o king.” (*īmaṅ yama prastaramā hi sīdāṅghirobhiḥ pīṭrbhiḥsamvidānaḥ/ā tvā mantrāḥ kavīśastā vahantvenā rājanhaviṣā mādayasva*). *R̥gveda*, X.14. 4. *The R̥gveda*, 1391.

<sup>1983</sup> *‘ūram puri pacum pul parappinar kīṭappi*. *Puṛaṅāṅūru*, 93: 8.

<sup>1984</sup> Hart suggests that the costume of laying the bodies on grass is similar to Indo-Aryan rituals (Hart 1975, 85) but since he refers only the above cited poem from the Caṅkam corpus and we cannot find other reference on this rite, we believe that the poem refers to a custom performed by Vedic priests of South India.

<sup>1985</sup> *Akaṅāṅūru*, 115. Cf. *Puṛaṅāṅūru*, 233. on the death of Evvi.

<sup>1986</sup> *Akaṅāṅūru*, 208.

<sup>1987</sup> *Puṛaṅāṅūru*, 112, 113.

<sup>1988</sup> *Puṛaṅāṅūru*, 235.

<sup>1989</sup> E.g. *Paṭirruppattu*, III. 10.

<sup>1990</sup> *Akaṅāṅūru*, 55; *Puṛaṅāṅūru*, 66.

<sup>1991</sup> The ‘tutelary tree’ (*kaṭimaram*) was an important symbol of royalty at the time of Caṅkam literature, which tree had a deeper connection with the king’s life, “presumably the tree itself was believed to contain and to protect the king’s life energy.” Dubiansky 2013, 318.

According to the poets of the Caṅkam literature, the heroes who die in battle will reach the upper world<sup>1992</sup> (*vāṇ*, *vāṇam*; *uyar nilai ulakam*; *arum peṛal ulakam*; *tuṛakkam* etc.), which has been already “obtained by the ancestors who have unchanging strength and unfailing good fame,” as Māmūlaṅār sang.<sup>1993</sup> However, it was not just those warriors obtained the heaven, who won the battle, but also the defeated ones, as we see in several poems where the king’s army sent the enemies to the upper world,<sup>1994</sup> and perhaps also the people who had established good fame on earth.<sup>1995</sup> The reward for those who do not turn back in battle, is similar to the Northern tradition, as mentioned in the 89<sup>th</sup> verse of the seventh book of the *Mānavadharmasāstra*: “when kings fight each other in battles with all their strength, seeking to kill each other and refusing to turn back, they go to heaven.”<sup>1996</sup>

The upper world was not only inhabited by famous ancestors, but also by deities like Māyōṇ, Korṛavai, and Murukaṅ amongst others, and celestial damsels, who lived there in constant happiness.<sup>1997</sup> One among the deities, Kūṛru, the God of Death, seems to be the only one who lives on Earth, because his divine duty was to collect his victims in the material world. The poems, which have the *pūvai nilai* (“bilberry flower-theme”) as a dominant theme,<sup>1998</sup> enumerate the qualities shared by the king and the deities (in most of the cases comparing with Kūṛru), the comparison of which was, according to Kailasapathy not empty, since “the bards began to compare the kings to gods” as “the highest form of encomium.”<sup>1999</sup>

We should emphasize, that despite the feeling that the conception of heroic heaven might have been original among the Dravidians, we are still not always able to distinguish the different religious and cultural layers and borrowings in the texts, since the reconstruction of the chronology of Caṅkam texts is almost impossible and the only well-functioning tool is philology. Nonetheless, it should not be surprising to find rudimentary brāhmanical ideas and certain Indo-Aryan terms in the Tamil poems even around the early centuries of Christian Era, since the ancient tenets of the Vedas were already represented by different groups all over the subcontinent in varying degrees. We can see certain Northern impacts, for instance the role of

<sup>1992</sup> Hart uses the word ‘Valhalla’ as a quasi synonym and an attempt to define the general function of the ancient Tamil heaven-conception (Hart 1975, 41), although we consider it as a weird simplification.

<sup>1993</sup> ‘*māyā mainṭiṅ tuṛakkam eytiya toyṇā nal icai mutiyar*’. *Akanāṅūru*, 233: 6–7.

<sup>1994</sup> *Paṭirrupattu*, 52: 8–9; *Akanāṅūru*, 338: 16–17.

<sup>1995</sup> “Except those, who possess fame here [on earth], there is no abode [for others] in the higher world.” (*ivaṅ icai uṭaiyōrkku allatu avaṅ atu uyar nilai ulakattu uṛaiyuḷ iṅmai*). *Puṛaṅāṅūru*, 50:14–15.

<sup>1996</sup> ‘*āhaveṣu mithoṅnyonyam jighāmsanto mahikṣitah/yudhyamānāḥ paraṅ śaktyā svargaṅ yāntyaṅparāṅmukhāḥ*’, *Mānavadharmasāstra*, VII. 89. *Manu’s code of law*, 159.

<sup>1997</sup> Cf. *Paṭirrupattu*, 63: 13–14.

<sup>1998</sup> *Tolkāppiyam Porulatikāram Puṛattinaiyiyal*, cū. 63: 9–10.

<sup>1999</sup> Kailasapathy 1968, 74.

a heavenly chariot (Skt. *vāhana*; Tam. *vāna ūrti*) without driver, which helps the hero to reach the upper sphere.

...They say, that those who were praised by the singing learned bards, reach [heaven] on a heavenly vehicle not commanded by a celestial charioteer, after they accomplished their works to be done.<sup>2000</sup>

And the same idea in Kālidāsa's *Raghuvamśa*:

“A certain warrior having his head severed off by his adversary's sword instantly became the master of a celestial car, and with a heavenly nymph clung to his left side beheld his own headless trunk dancing about on the battle-field.”<sup>2001</sup>

The idea might have originated in the *Mahābhārata*, in which we read about Sudeva, the commander of Ambarīṣa's army, who was sitting in a *vimāna*, which was ascending to other worlds and rising above his king, after dying a heroic death on the battlefield.<sup>2002</sup> Although it is outside the scope of my current study, the comparison of *puṣam* poems with the *Mahābhārata* would be excessively fruitful for further studies because of the remarkable number of similarities.

As another otherworldly option, we must mention reincarnation, which was again either a mindset of the ancient Tamils which emerged independently from the North, or as Hart states, an adaptation of Aryan ideas in the South.<sup>2003</sup> Overall, the idea of reincarnation does not seem to be universally accepted in old Tamil societies, although it was present and became widespread from the Middle Ages.

Nonetheless, we find references to reincarnation among the ancient poems, for instance the poet Ammuvaṅṅār sang the following sorrowful line: “I don't fear dying, I fear, if I die, if birth becomes another, will I forget that he [is] my lover?”<sup>2004</sup> On the contrary, we read the critique of reincarnation in the 134<sup>th</sup> verse of the *Purānānūru* written by Uṟaiyūr Ēṇiccēri Muṭamōciyār about the chieftain called Āy Aṅṅiraṅ:

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<sup>2000</sup> ‘*pulavar pātum pukal utaiyōr vicumpiṅ/valavaṅ ēvā vāna ūrti/eytuṣa eṅpa tam cey viṅai muṭittu*’. *Purānānūru*, 27: 7–9.

<sup>2001</sup> ‘*kaścidviśatikhadḡahyottamāṅgaḡ/sadyo vimānaprabhutāmupetya/vāmāṅgasamśaktasurāṅganah svam/ nṛtyatkabandham samare dadarśa*’. *Raghuvamśa*, VII. 51. *The Raghuvamśa of Kālidāsa*, 58.

<sup>2002</sup> ‘*ambarīṣo hi nābhāgaḡ svargaḡ gatvā sudurlabham/dadarśa suralokasthaḡ śakreṅa sacivaḡ saha/sarvatejomayaḡ divyaḡ vimānavaram āsthitam/upary upari gacchantam svam vai senāpatiḡ prabhum/sa dṛṣṭvopari gacchantam senāpatim udāradhīḡ/ṛddhiḡ dṛṣṭvā sudevasya viśmitaḡ prāha vāsavam*’. *Mahābhārata*, XII. 98. 3–5.

<sup>2003</sup> Hart 1980, 116.

<sup>2004</sup> ‘*cātal aṅcēn aṅcuval cāvin/pirappu piritu ākuvatu āyīn/marakuvenkol eṅ kātalan enave*’. *Narrai*, 397: 7–9. *Narrai: A Critical Edition*, 852.

Āy is not a trader for the reward of virtue, saying that which you have done in this birth is for the next life. The path on which other worthy men used to walk, as they say, became [the path for] his hands' generosity.<sup>2005</sup>

Be that as it may, the heroic death meant the liberation from the ancient cycle, so once the monarch died in a glorious way, it was generally believed that he departed to the upper world, which was inhabited by his ancestors and when it happened, it was time to prepare and perform the funerary rites and to establish his long-lasting fame on earth.

In the Caṅkam texts we see two regular funerary customs: cremation and urn-burial. The funerals took place at the designated places, which were found in the wilderness, near the battlefield, at the crossroads or around other deserted places. These cremation fields and burial grounds were considered as fierce and dangerous areas, where owls were hooting, vultures were hunting, jackals were howling, demons were dancing and eating the corpses and an invisible and unpredictable power called *aṇaṅku* was potentially present. The 238<sup>th</sup> poem of the *Puṛaṇānūru* speaks about the different birds of prey (*ceñcēval*, *pokuval*), crows (*kākkai*), owls (*kūkaī*) and demonesses with their attendants (*pēey āyamōtu*) around the red burial urn (*centālī*) in the burial ground (*kātu*). The 364<sup>th</sup> poem also mentions the great burial ground (*perum kātu*),<sup>2006</sup> where innumerable burial urns (*ānā tāliya*) can be found and an owl hoots in a fast manner (*katum ena iyampum kūkaikkōlī*).<sup>2007</sup> The poetess Auvaiyār sang the following lines in the 231<sup>st</sup> poem of the *Puṛaṇānūru*:

If the bright fire of the pyre with charred fuel, which is like the wooden pieces of the hillman's field cleared [by fire], approaches [his body], let it approach! [However,] if [the fire] did not approach [his body] and [he] went and rose to reach to sky, let [him] rise! The fame of the man will not die, who was like the bright sun and whose parasol was like the moon with cool rays.<sup>2008</sup>

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<sup>2005</sup> 'inmai ceytatu maṛumaikku ām enum/aravilai vaṇikaṅ āy allan/pūṛarum cānrōr cenra neriyena/āṅku pattanru avan kaivaṇmaiye'. *Puṛaṇānūru*, 34. To add to this that in the Caṅkam literature references to *karma* are encountered, for instance the term 'nal-vinaī' in *Narriṇai*, 107: 8. can be interpreted as *karma*.

<sup>2006</sup> The primary meaning of *peru-ṇ-kātu* is 'great wilderness', but here it refers to the burning-ground as a synonym of *cutukātu*. *Tamil Lexicon*, 2871.

<sup>2007</sup> *Puṛaṇānūru*, 364: 11–13.

<sup>2008</sup> 'eri puṇa kuravaṅ kuraiyaḷ aṇṇa/kari puṛa viṛakiṅ īmam oḷ alal/kurukinum kurukuka kurukātu cenru/vicumpura nīḷinum nīḷka pacuṅkatir/tiṅkaḷ aṇṇa venkuṭai/oḷ nāyiru aṇṇōṅ pukal māyalave'. *Puṛaṇānūru*, 231.

There is a possibility, that the meaning behind the lines is the dilemma, whether the king has to be burnt or buried, as we see in another poem:

The head of the man who desired esteem, either let it be left or burnt, let it happen [according to] the way [it has to] happen!<sup>2009</sup>

Once the urn-burial was chosen, it was the duty of the local potter to create a large urn (*tālī*), which was able to receive the body or the remains of the dead. In case of the king's death, the poet Aiyūr Muṭavaṇār asks the master of the pots (*kalam cey kō*): “Are you able to form [your urn, using] the big world as the wheel and the Great Hill<sup>2010</sup> as the clay?”<sup>2011</sup>

Regarding the ancient Cēra funerary customs, we see only one poem in the *Patirrupattu*, although it is rich in details, which refers to the king's funeral:

[...] after you drove away many kings with *muracu*-possessing patrimony (*tāyam*) on the wastelands with owls (*kurāl*) [which feel] distressed anxiety [caused] by [other] owls (*kūkai*) with soft head which forgot the place, where they put the fresh fatless chops [of the corpses] which had [already] been carried away by carts, after [you] ruled the vast inlands [surrounded by] the swaying water,— at the burial ground (*kātu*) which shines on the square with *vanni*-trees, [where are] urns (*tālī*), [in which] kings, who sweetly passed away, had been buried, may [your songstresses] not see your famous (*pukalnta*) body [there], [your] sturdy limbs destroyed by pain, [in which your] entire strength [falls] asleep!<sup>2012</sup>

We see references in the Caṅkam corpus, when the king was burnt on a pyre,<sup>2013</sup> which sometimes integrated the story of the queen who stepped on her husband's pyre and committed a ritual suicide or *satī*, but it is extremely difficult to determine the nature and the origin of these literary motifs, because at first glance they do not seem to be original, but were more likely patterns from Indo-Aryan literatures.

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<sup>2009</sup> ‘*ituka onrō cutuka onrō/paṭu vali paṭuka iṭṭukal veyyōn talaiyē*’. *Puranānūru*, 239: 20–21.

<sup>2010</sup> According to *Tamil Lexicon*, which refers to *Piṅkalam: peru-malai* is equivalent to Mount Meru, the centre of the created world in the Hindu cosmogony. *Tamil Lexicon*, 2881.

<sup>2011</sup> ‘*iru nilam tikiriyā perumalai/maṇṇā vaṇaital ollumō niṅakkē*’. *Puranānūru*, 228: 14–15. On urn-burial, see: Rajan 2000, 9–23.

<sup>2012</sup> *Patirrupattu*, 44: 8–9, 17–23.

<sup>2013</sup> *Puranānūru*, 221, 231, 245, 246, 247, 250, 363.

When a hero died in ancient Tamilakam, his memory deserved a worthy funeral (burial or cremation), and the erection of his memorial stone, of which a qualified case would be the heroic death of the monarch. According to K. Rajan, in the first stage of the memorials, Iron Age graves (*patukkai*) were raised for the people who were killed by warlike tribes (*maravars*, *kānavars*) by charging arrows, of which *patukkai* was most probably a stone heap (*karkuvai*), or a cairn.<sup>2014</sup> The second stage was, when Iron Age graves were raised, and menhirs (*naṭukal*) were erected for those who died in cattle raids, but as we will see, not just for them but also for other warriors and kings, although the literary and archaeological evidence is very limited. Rajan identifies a third stage, when only the menhir (*naṭukal*) was raised in memory of the heroes and the grave seems to have been abandoned,<sup>2015</sup> and a fourth stage when we see the reduced size of the menhir reaching the level of later hero stones.<sup>2016</sup> Archaeologists have already discovered Iron Age edifices (13<sup>th</sup> c.–5<sup>th</sup> c. BC), hero stones with inscriptions, but without sculptural representation (4<sup>th</sup> c. BC–5<sup>th</sup> c. AD), hero stones with Tamil-Brāhmī script (the earliest are from the 4<sup>th</sup> c. BC)<sup>2017</sup> and hero stones with inscriptions and sculptural representations (from the 5<sup>th</sup> c.–16<sup>th</sup>–17<sup>th</sup> c. AD).<sup>2018</sup>

But what can we find in the literary works? The *Ainkurunūru*'s 352<sup>nd</sup> poem mentions the inscribed memorial stones of those who died from the arrows of *maravars*<sup>2019</sup> (*maravar vil ita tolaintōr elutt' uṭai naṭukal*), similar to the 53<sup>rd</sup> poem of the *Akanānūru*, where we find the same formulaic pattern with almost the same words (*maravar vil ita vilntōr elutt' uṭai naṭukal*). Nōy Pāṭiyār, the author of the 67<sup>th</sup> Akam provided more details:

...the shields and the implanted spears looked like another frontline around the towering memorial stones, which were adorned with peacock feathers at all the paths, having carved the names and the proud [acts] of [those] modest warriors who overcame in good battles<sup>2020</sup>

<sup>2014</sup> Rajan 2014, 223.

<sup>2015</sup> Rajan 2014, 225.

<sup>2016</sup> Rajan 2014, 226.

<sup>2017</sup> The stones were found at Pulimāṅkumpai in Āṅṭipatti taluk, Tēṇi district of Tamil Nadu. The most complete inscribed stone has three lines: *kal pētu tīyan antavan kūṭal ūr ākōl*, which means according to K. Rajan's interpretation: "this hero stone [is raised to] a man called *tīyan antavan* of *pētu* [village who died in] cattle raid of *kūṭal ūr*." Rajan 2014, 228.

<sup>2018</sup> Rajan 2014, 221–222.

<sup>2019</sup> The term *maravar* can either mean the inhabitants and hunters of hilly tracts, or warriors. *Tamil Lexicon*, 3119.

<sup>2020</sup> 'nal amar kaṭanta nāṇutai maravar/peyarum pīṭum eluti atartorum/pīli cūṭṭiya pīraṅku nilai naṭukal/vēl ūru palakai vēru munai kaṭukkum'. *Akanānūru*, 67: 8–11. Cf. *Akanānūru*, 131: 10–13.

Among the ancient love (*akam*) poems, many of the poets refer to the memorial stones, e.g. to the well-standing, imprinted stones (*nal nilai poritta kal*),<sup>2021</sup> to erected stones (*nāṭṭiya kal*),<sup>2022</sup> to the names on the fierce ancient memorial stones (*pēem mutir naṭukal peyar*),<sup>2023</sup> to the naturally standing tall stones, which look like planted, where many names have been carved on the vast surfaces,<sup>2024</sup> to the neglected, hard memorial stones with parched and broken top, having withered garlands and shabby writings made by sharp chisels,<sup>2025</sup> to the memorial stones standing in rows (*nirai nilai naṭukal*), which were erected for those modest warriors, whose good fame has been established, who were crowded and killing in the difficult battle,<sup>2026</sup> or the memorial stone at the difficult path, which was ruined by a forest elephant thinking that it was a man.<sup>2027</sup>

The heroic *puṛam* literature provides a more specific picture about the rituals around the memorial stones. The 232<sup>nd</sup> poem of the *Puṛanāṇūru* refers to the memorial stones adorned with peacock feathers (*pīlī*), where fibre filtered palm wine (*nār ari*) used to be offered.<sup>2028</sup> In another, the 260<sup>th</sup> poem mentions the names (*peyar*) on the surface, the decorative feathers of a bashful peacock (*maṭaṅcāl maññai aṇi mayir*), which has been used as adornment and the shady pavilion (*pantar*) above the stone.<sup>2029</sup> The 263<sup>rd</sup> poem gives the advice, that one should refrain him/herself from not bowing down, when going near the memorial stone of the man, who seized and brought many cattle from the enemies.<sup>2030</sup> The 264<sup>th</sup> poem tells about a stone erected by people (*naṭṭaṅar*) on a mound (*patukkai*) of a gravelly site (*paral uṭai maruṅkil*), on which the names were carved (*peyar poritta*), which was adorned by decorative peacock-feathers (*aṇi mayil pīlī cūṭṭi*), together with garlands of red flowers (*cem pūṇi kaṇṇiyoṭu*) with the picked leaves of bowstring hemp (*maral vakuntu totutta*).<sup>2031</sup> The hero hereby performed the same heroic act, which we have seen before, when he seized cattle with calves, but also chased away his enemies.<sup>2032</sup> In the 306<sup>th</sup> poem, the young woman with sprouting, tender tresses and a shiny forehead (*oli men kūntal oḷ nutal arivai*) was praising the memorial stone with joined hands without a break (*naṭukal kai toḷutu paravum oṭiyātu*).<sup>2033</sup> The 329<sup>th</sup> poem refers to the little village, where liquor was brewed in the

<sup>2021</sup> *Akanāṇūru*, 179: 7–8.

<sup>2022</sup> *Akanāṇūru*, 211: 15.

<sup>2023</sup> *Akanāṇūru*, 297: 7–8.

<sup>2024</sup> ‘*naṭṭa pōlum naṭāa neṭuṅkal/akal iṭam kuyiṇra pal peyar ...*’. *Akanāṇūru*, 269: 7–8.

<sup>2025</sup> ‘*pūntalai citaitta vaṅṅalai naṭukal/kaṇṇi vāṭiya maṅṅā maruṅkil/kūr uli kuyiṇra kōṭumāy eḷuttu ...*’. *Akanāṇūru*, 343: 5–7.

<sup>2026</sup> ‘*... aruṅcamam tataiya nūri/nal icai niṇṇutta nāṅ uṭai maṇṇavar*’. *Akanāṇūru*, 387: 13–14.

<sup>2027</sup> *Akanāṇūru*, 365: 4–5.

<sup>2028</sup> *Puṛanāṇūru*, 232: 3–4.

<sup>2029</sup> *Puṛanāṇūru*, 260: 25–28.

<sup>2030</sup> *Puṛanāṇūru*, 263: 3; 5.

<sup>2031</sup> *Puṛanāṇūru*, 264: 1–4.

<sup>2032</sup> ‘*... kaṇṇoḷu/karavai tantu pakaiṅar oṭṭiya*’. *Puṛanāṇūru*, 264: 4–5.

<sup>2033</sup> *Puṛanāṇūru*, 206: 3–4.



houses (*il atu kallin cil kuṭi cīrūr*), and to the memorial stones nearby, where daily sacrificial offerings (*nāl pali ūṭṭi*) were given, which were washed with good water (*nanṇīr āṭṭi*), where butter-lamps were lit for the sake of incense (*neyynarai kolī*). The author of the somewhat later *Malaiṭaṭukaṭām* refers to the sweet-sounding music of the bards (*in puru murarkai num pāṭṭu*), which used to be performed around the erected stones with names.<sup>2034</sup> The *Puranānūru*'s 335<sup>th</sup> poem states that there are no other gods than the glorious memorial stones of the heroes who stopped the enemies and killed their elephants, on which stones the paddy was scattered.<sup>2035</sup> The 314<sup>th</sup> poem mentions a wasteland (*parantalai*), which is densely crowded with memorial stones (*piṛaṅkiya naṭukal*), covered with dried leaves (*ival iṭu*).<sup>2036</sup> Another text, the *Paṭṭinappālai* refers to the memorial stones, surrounded with swords/spears and shields, as a part of a simile.<sup>2037</sup> Among the subdivisions of the “literary setting” *veṭci*, the *Tolkāppiyam Poruḷatikāram Purattinaiyiyal* gives six themes on the erection and the function of memorial stones: *kāṭci*: the selection of a particular stone for worship; *kalkōḷ*: the process of taking the stone; *nīrppātai*: pouring water on the stone; *naṭutal*: installing the stone; *cīrtaku maraṭṭin perumppātai*: accomplish the great offering according to the superior tradition;<sup>2038</sup> *vāḷttu*: praising the stone.<sup>2039</sup> As we have seen, there was a wide-spread tradition of the establishment of memorials for the heroes in ancient Tamilakam, so this investigation turns to what monuments were erected to the kings.

We read in the 221<sup>st</sup> poem of the *Puranānūru*, that the king as the protector (*puravalan*), who performed noble, memorable acts including liberal donations, ruling with a straight sceptre, sheltering the high persons of the Vedas, and so forth, turned into a memorial stone (*naṭukal āyinan*), because of the ignorant God of Death (*ninaiyā Kūrram*), who seized his sweet life (*in uyir uyttanru*) without considering his qualities.<sup>2040</sup> The king, who turned into a memorial stone, was Kōpperuñcōlan, whose story we vaguely know from other poems: it appears that his sons rebelled against him, so that he chose to sit down facing the North and died in this manner. This custom could be introduced under the influence of a Jaina religious practice of voluntarily fasting to death (*sallekhanā*). According to Māmūlanār and Veṅṅikkuyattiyār, there is another king, who chose the same way to die, a Cēra king, who received a shameful wound on his back

<sup>2034</sup> *Malaiṭaṭukaṭām*, 387–395.

<sup>2035</sup> ‘*onnā tevar muṇṇūru vilāṅki/olīru ēntu maruppiṅ kaḷīru erintu vīḷṇeṇa/kallē paraviṅ allatu/nel ukuttu paravum kaṭavulum ilavē*. *Puranānūru*, 335: 9–12.

<sup>2036</sup> *Puranānūru*, 314: 3.

<sup>2037</sup> ‘*kiṭuku niraṭṭu ehku ūṇri/naṭukallin aran pōla*. *Paṭṭinappālai*, 78–79.

<sup>2038</sup> According to the translation of L. Gloria Sundramathy and Indra Manuel, the line “*cīrtaku maraṭṭin perumppātai*” means “making the stone worthy of great offering by building a temple”, but also “engraving the merits of the hero on the stone or deifying the stone”, explanations which are based on Nacciṅārkkīṇiyar’s mediaeval commentaries; Sundramathy–Manuel 2010, 66–70.

<sup>2039</sup> *Tolkāppiyam Poruḷatikāram Purattinaiyiyal*, cū. 63: 19–20.

<sup>2040</sup> *Puranānūru*, 221: 1–13.

from Karikāl Vaḷavaṇ on the battlefield of Venṇi, so the king starved himself to death, whilst sitting and facing the North.<sup>2041</sup> We see the king’s loyal people with their old friendship (*tol nāḷputaiyār*) in the *Puranānūru*’s 223<sup>rd</sup> poem, who decided to follow the king to death, so they also turned into lasting memorial stones (*nilai peru natukal ākiya*).<sup>2042</sup> In the 261<sup>st</sup> poem we see the young hero who became a memorial stone and we see his suffering widow with shaved head (*maḷi talaiyoṭu*), although the hero here was a generous village elder (*kilār*) and not a king.<sup>2043</sup> In the 265<sup>th</sup> poem we read about another unknown ruler who turned into stone (*kal āyinaiyē*).<sup>2044</sup> These seem to be so far all the references we could extract from the Caṅkam corpus on memorial stones of the monarchs and chiefs, although it seems clear, that the heroes, the heroic warriors, the cattle-raiders, the chiefs and the kings, who died in battle or passed away in a honourable manner, were worthy for a memorial monument.<sup>2045</sup>

After the king’s death, the widowed queen either chose the sorrowful life of widows or stepped on to the pyre of her beloved, but either way she reached a turning point in her life. Again we cannot be sure whether these details are the projections of the author’s fantasy, memories of real historical events, or literary loans of Northern ideas. Whatever it is, the 246<sup>th</sup> poem of the *Puranānūru* suggests that some of the noble warriors intended to force a queen, namely Peruṅkōppenṭu, the wife of Pūta Pāṇṭiyaṇ, to adopt the life of widows sleeping on the bed of pebbles and following an ascetic lifestyle. Even the opening lines are suggestive, “Many warriors, o many warriors! You do not let me go, but forbid me to die, o intriguing wicked warriors!”<sup>2046</sup> but finally the queen, who was the author of the poem, proclaimed her courageous determination, addressed to the cunning men around the court, as she sang: “the black twigs of the funeral pyre, which were piled up at the burning ground, might be difficult for you, but for me, since my husband with big shoulders passed away, [...] the pond and the fire are all the same.”<sup>2047</sup> The *Puranānūru* preserved the last episode of the life of Peruṅkōppenṭu in the 247<sup>th</sup> poem, when the poet, as an eye-witness, saw the queen entering the funeral pyre of her husband. In the 240<sup>th</sup> poem the chieftain Āy Āṇṭiraṇ has reached the world of the celestials together with his woman<sup>2048</sup> (*maḷāiroṭu ... mēḷōr ulakam eytiṇaṇ*),<sup>2049</sup> when he was burnt on a pyre,

<sup>2041</sup> *Akanānūru*, 44. cf. *Puranānūru*, 66.

<sup>2042</sup> Cf. *Puranānūru*, 219.

<sup>2043</sup> *Puranānūru*, 261.

<sup>2044</sup> *Puranānūru*, 265: 5.

<sup>2045</sup> Kailasapathy 1968, 237.

<sup>2046</sup> ‘*pal cāṇṇirē pal cāṇṇirē/celkena collātu olikena vilakkum/pollā cūḷci pal cāṇṇirē*. *Puranānūru*, 246: 1–3.

<sup>2047</sup> ‘*peruṅkāṭṭu paṇṇiya karuṅkōṭṭu/numakku aritu ākuka tilla emakku em/peruntōḷ kaṇavaṇ māyntēna ... / (...) / ... poykaiyum tīyumu ṅaraṇē*. *Puranānūru*, 246: 11–15.

<sup>2048</sup> We cannot be sure that the text is talking about one wife, several wives, or other female attendants of the king, since the honorific plural was regularly used for singular and plural subject as well.

<sup>2049</sup> *Puranānūru*, 240: 4–6.

so that the poets headed for other countries. In fact, when the king died, his queen had only two choices, either agree with her bitter destiny, or step on her husband's pyre. In the opposite case of the queen's death, this unfortunate destiny had no effect on the widowed king. As we see in the *Puranānūru*'s 245<sup>th</sup> poem, beyond the Cēra king's terrible pain, there were no social restrictions, so he retained his political role and importance. In the case of the queen, her life in the royal dynasty hung between two threads, which started with the wedding ceremony and ended with death, either of the king or of her. As a queen, she was the source of life and the base of the dynasty's continuity: generally, her and womens' wombs were like a "rock shelter" for the tiger-like soldiers,<sup>2050</sup> but once the king died, she lost her previous significance together with her royal rights and became an ordinary widow who had to begin her bitter penance.

We may conclude that the memorialising process of the ancient Tamils had different techniques and layers through the centuries. First of all, the ancient heroic literature was not only a means to praise the great warriors but to keep them alive through their glorious memories mixed with a great quantity of literary topoi. Once the ancient literature of the Tamils has been edited and formed into a canon in the early Middle Ages, this canon was continuously studied (with more or less intensity), copied and preserved through the ages, which meant to be the next step of memorialising. I strongly believe that the *puram* literature became a memory space (*lieu de mémoire*) in which the poems were quasi symbolic memorials for the heroes. Following the criteria of Pierre Nora on *lieux de mémoire*,<sup>2051</sup> the Tamil heroic literature was able to crystallize and conceal the memory of the ancient heroes; it used a clear literary language full of symbolic patterns, but later itself became *symbolic* as a literary treasury of the ancient heydays; was *functional* as an initially oral, later semi-oral and court-poetry which was preserved by the Tamils through the millennia, and is *material* as a written *canon*, which has stood the test of time and survived the ages on palm-leaf manuscripts. Adding the fact that Old Tamil literature is our only indigenous textual source for the reconstruction of the early history of Tamilakam (except for the very sporadic inscriptions), we have the impression that the Tamils themselves looked upon the old literature as an imaginary *locus memoriae*, as a vast material of their collective memory, which became a part of their collective identity. Reading the texts of Old Tamil literature, we have the feeling that the poets intended to sing the universal and the eternal when they praised the fabulous acts and the memory of the heroes (hiding the unpleasant), rather than reflect to the fragile/fragmented history, which appears in the texts sporadically and indirectly with a secondary importance. The *puram* literature as well as the erected memorials both could

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<sup>2050</sup> 'puli cēmtu pōkiya kal aḷai pōla īnra vayirō'. *Puranānūru*, 86: 4–5.

<sup>2051</sup> Nora 1989, 18–19.

be identified as the bearers of the collective memory and seem to serve the dual purpose of remembering and reminding. Remembering, and in this sense praising the kings and the heroes as the protectors of the society by means of the “panegyric ritual” as a social mechanism, and the establishment of their memorials together with its rites, and reminding the society to the principles that heroes have designated with their lives, and to the heroic acts that could illuminate the unexperienced past. The literary references on the erection of memorials together with the more abundant archaeological findings, show the strong efforts of contemporaries to take the worthy members of the old societies with them into their “progressive present”. The old heroic literature, which was delightful and entertaining, indirectly recorded moral and social duties of heroes, highlighted symbolic events, fabulous memories and retouched historical records was no doubt a guarantee of the legitimate survival of clans and of the stable functioning of societies. Thus, the memory of the monarch was part of a larger conglomeration called the *memory of the heroes*, which was reflected in the flattering court poetry of the ancient Tamils, which secured the livelihood of the poets, gave icons and stories to the societies and as a symbolic memorial preserved the glory of the monarchs, so that they obtained the long-lasting earthly fame as the Cēra king did, who “lived in the mouths of learned poets with uttering tongues, after his good fame shining from afar has been established” (*cēṇ vīlaṅku nal icai niṟṟi nā navil pulavar vāy uḷāṇē*).<sup>2052</sup>

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<sup>2052</sup> *Puranānūru* 282: 10–11.

## Conclusion and results

In the previous pages, I attempted to present the history of the early Cēra kingdom from the perspective of the royal *panegyrics*, applying a quasi-Braudelian approach in which I have analysed the 1<sup>st</sup>–3<sup>rd</sup> centuries AD as a *longue durée* of South Indian history. To conduct this analysis, I have provided an annotated translation of the anthology called *Patirruppattu*, the praising words of the learned who served the ancient Cēra court. As we have seen, the *Patirruppattu* was not only a compilation of various older and later poems but a well-constructed and edited work, which was able to retell the history of the dynasty, the primary campaigns, and the territorial changes of the kingdom from the beginnings to the glorious heydays of the Irumporai Cēras.

This anthology, together with other Caṅkam compositions, proved to be a suitable source to reconstruct the political nature of the Cēra state in these centuries, which was, no doubt, a *kingdom* similar to the ‘early kingdoms’ studied by Kulke. This kingdom had gradually intensifying relations with the *brāhmaṇas* in and around the Cēra territories, while borrowing religious and political theories from the North together with the conception of the *dharmacakra* and the king as being a *cakravartin*. I have proved that at several points, the early Cēra kingdom was related to northern Indian traditions, not only in terms of governance but also of religion. The early Cēras provided protection for their Vedic *brāhmaṇa* communities, entrusted them with the performance of royal sacrifices, and made them personal advisers to the king while kings lived their lives (or at least part of it) under their religio-political guidance.

As I have shown, the early Cēra kingdom had well-defined but ever-increasing boundaries or frontier regions in these centuries. At the same time, we have seen the Cēra attempt to extend their hegemonic rule over South Indian countries, kings, and chiefs. To preserve the acquired territories, governors, princes, or loyal vassals were stationed in the most important settlements and regional centres. We have seen the directions of the Cēra campaigns in the *Patirruppattu*, which showed the zealous effort of the early Cēras to control both the Malabar region and the Kāviri Valley together with the networks of ancient trade routes. I have also discussed the relationship between the king and his army, the poems about campaigns, the characteristics of early fortifications in the Caṅkam texts, and the splendid festivals held to celebrate victory.

I have made an attempt to introduce the ancient geography of the Malabar Coast, together with its surrounding areas, based on contemporary Greek, Latin, and Indian sources.

I have examined the shipping and seafaring of the Cēras and their moderate engagement in coastal trade, the naval campaigns against those who threatened the Cēra interests, and the important role of Cēra merchants, Jaina traders, and perhaps royal officials in market trade. After that, I have introduced the important ports of trade, emporia, markets, and trade routes, which, I believe, resulted in a more detailed analysis than was available before, while I have clarified several important issues.

From the available textual sources and the related archaeological findings, I have created a model of the early Cēra economy, which consists: (1.) a traditional barter exchange between the different eco-regions as the most mentioned mode of trade in the Caṅkam corpus, (2.) a monetised system of marketplaces where wealthy people, local elite, and merchants carried out monetised transactions, and (3.) a system of gift-exchange as a distribution of one's wealth mainly to establish/stabilise political/economic/ritual relations. In the last subchapters, I have examined the relationship between king and religion, king and heroism, and king and memory. Overall, in these chapters, I have argued that at the time of the *Patirruppattu*, the religious history of the Cēra kingdom was in a stage that was characterised by a synthesis of Pre-Aryan beliefs and northern traditions. At the same time, I have shown that we are far from being able to interpret the ancient Cēra culture in these centuries as an untouched one without external influences. I have also proved that the *puram*-poetry, together with the *Patirruppattu*, were ancient *loci memoriae*, in which behind the formulaic language and literary conventions, we found actual memories of kings and heroes who fought under the royal banner of the Cēras.

Chronology has been a troubling factor in the study throughout. The possibility of *divisio regni* arose several times, however, It is rather difficult to tell whether more than one kings ruled at the same time, or there was always only one crowned king. However, there is no textual evidence that mentions two Cēra kings at the same time. The possibility of creating an internal chronology could not be attempted, and the synchronisms also proved to be fragile. Thus, the most critical chronological boundaries were fixed to the inscriptional material and the Greek and Latin sources, while for the reign of the eight kings of the *Patirruppattu*, we designated an extended period (1<sup>st</sup>–3<sup>rd</sup> centuries AD). In this period, if we consider the years given by the *Patirruppattu*'s epilogues, the Cēra kings ruled for 259 years and succeeded each other on the throne every 32 years on average. Even if the exact years were not taken into account, this data was used in this study as approximate information.

In summary, the dissertation sheds new light on the early Cēra kingdom, defining its culture as of a hybrid nature with Tamil literary life, with indigenous traditions, as well as with strong northern influences in the 1<sup>st</sup>–3<sup>rd</sup> centuries AD.

## Appendices

*An index of place names related to the ancient Cēra kingdom*

Adarima	Ptol., <i>Geog.</i> VII. 1. 86; an unidentified settlement in today's Kerala between the Pseudostomos/Periyār river and the Baris/Pampā river.
Aloē	Ptol., <i>Geog.</i> VII. 1. 86; perhaps a city around today's Āluva, Kerala. Kanakasabhai 1904, 20.
Āṅporunai	<i>Akanānūru</i> , 93; <i>Puranānūru</i> , 36; Amarāvati river. Same as: Poruṅai/Porunai river.
Arembour	Ptol., <i>Geog.</i> VII. 1. 86; an unidentified settlement in today's Kerala.
Āṭakamāṭam	<i>Cilappatikāram</i> , III. 26: 62; id. Tiruvaṅantapuram, the location of the <i>vaiṣṇava</i> shrine found in <i>Patirrupattu</i> 31 according to the old commentator. Cāminātaiyar 1980, 74.
Ayirai	<i>Patirrupattu</i> , III; 79; 88; 90; <i>Cilappatikāram</i> , III. 28: 145; an established place of worship; perhaps Aivarmalai near Paḷaṅi, Tamil Nadu. <i>Tamil Lexicon</i> , 112.
Bacharē	<i>Periplus Maris Erythraei</i> , ch. 58. Same as: Bakarē.
Bakarē	Ptol., <i>Geog.</i> VII. 1. 8; an ancient settlement around today's "Pirakkād"/Purakkāṭ, Kerala. Casson 1989, 297; <i>Barrington Atlas</i> , 61.

Balita	<i>Periplus Maris Erythraei</i> , ch. 58; an unidentified settlement in today's Kerala. See: Bammala/Bambala and Blinca. Kumar (et al.) 2013, 196; 200.
Bammala/Bambala	Ptol., <i>Geog.</i> VII. 1. 9; an unidentified settlement in today's Kerala, it might be the same as Balita of the <i>Periplus Maris Erythraei</i> (ch. 58) and Blinca of the <i>Tabula Peutingeriana</i> . If so, it might also be the same as today's Viḷiññaṃ, Kerala. <i>Barrington Atlas</i> , 61. Kumar (et al.) 2013, 196; 200.
Baris	Ptol., <i>Geog.</i> VII. 1. 86; perhaps today's Pampā river, Kerala.
Becare	Plin., <i>Naturalis Historia</i> , VI. 26. 105. See: Bakarē.
Berderis/Bideris	Ptol., <i>Geog.</i> VII. 1. 86; an unidentified settlement in today's Kerala between the Pseudostomos/Periyār river and the Baris/Pampā river.
Bēttigō	Ptol., <i>Geog.</i> VII. 1. 34; Western Ghats or part of it; it has been often connected to Tam. Potiyil/Potikai (today's Agastyamala or Potiyam, Kerala); the Greek name might reflect the Old Kannada <i>betta</i> , a word for 'firmness', 'mountain'. <i>Kittel's Kannada-English Dictionary</i> , 1205.
Blinca	<i>Tabula Peutingeriana</i> , XI; an unidentified settlement in today's Kerala. Probably the same as Bammala/Bambala and Balita. Kumar (et al.) 2013, 196; 200.
Bragmē/Brammē	Ptol., <i>Geog.</i> VII. 1. 74; an unidentified settlement of <i>brāhmaṇas</i> in the Cēra interior.



Bramagara	Ptol., <i>Geog.</i> VII. 1. 8; an unidentified settlement on the Malabar Coast; might be Brahmakuḷam, Kerala. Kanakasabhai 1904, 18.
Cellūr	<i>Akanānūru</i> , 220; ancient <i>brāhmaṇa</i> settlement in today's Kerala; might be identifiable with the present-day Talipparaṃpu, Kerala. Veluthat 1978, 12.
Chabēris emporion	Ptol., <i>Geog.</i> VII. 1. 13; see: Pukār.
Cotiarā	<i>Tabula Peutingeriana</i> , XI; might be a city ( <i>metropolis</i> ) in Kuṭṭanāṭu. Same as: Kottiarā. See: Kuṭṭanāṭu.
Cottonara	Plin., <i>Naturalis Historia</i> , VI. 26. 104–105; id. Kuṭṭanāṭu, “the country of the lakes” (modern days' Ālappuḷa, Koṭṭayam and Pattanamtiṭṭa Districts of Kerala). Same as: Kuṭṭanāṭu.
Cuḷḷi	<i>Akanānūru</i> , 149; the river at ancient Muciṛi, most probably the Pēriyār, Kerala.
Elangōn/Elangōros	Ptol., <i>Geog.</i> VII. 1. 9; an <i>emporion</i> in Kuṭṭanāṭu; Kanakasabhai: perhaps identical with Viḷayānkōt, Kerala (Kanakasabhai 1904, 20); Chattopadhyaya: perhaps identical with Kollam, Kerala (Chattopadyaya 1980, 91).
Ēḷilkuṅṅam/Ēḷil neṭunvarai	<i>Akanānūru</i> , 152; <i>Narriṇai</i> , 391; Eḷimala of northern Kerala, north of Kaṅṅūr.
Iṭumpil	<i>Patirrupattu</i> , V. 9; <i>Cilappatikāram</i> , III. 28: 118, “cruel place”?, a place in middle-southern India?, where Ceṅkuṭṭuvaṅ camped with his army; it might be the same as Iṭumpāvaṅam sung by Campantar ( <i>Tēvāram</i> , I. 17).

Kaḷumalam	<i>Akanānūru</i> , 270; a place in Naṛṛērkuttuvan's territory. <i>Pre-Pallavan Tamil Index</i> , 241.
Kamara	<i>Periplus Maris Erythraei</i> , 60; see: Pukār.
Kāmūr	<i>Akanānūru</i> , 135; 365; town belonging to the chief Kaḷuvuḷ defeated by the Cēraṅ, cf. <i>Patirrupattu</i> , 71; 88.
Karoura	Ptol., <i>Geog.</i> VII. 1. 86; the city called Karuvūr, the capital (or one of the capitals) of the early Cēra kingdom. Aiyangar 1940; Marr 1985 [1958], 159–163; Rajan 1994, 100.
Karuvūr	<i>Akanānūru</i> , 93; the city called Karuvūr, the capital (or one of the capitals) of the early Cēra kingdom; today's Karūr, Tamil Nadu. Aiyangar 1940; Marr 1985 [1958], 159–163; Rajan 1994, 100.
Kalaikarias	Ptol., <i>Geog.</i> VII. 1. 8; perhaps Cālakkuṭi, Kerala. Kanakasabhai 1904, 17–18.
Kaṭampiṅ Peruvāyil	<i>Patirrupattu</i> , IV; the town of Naṅṅaṅ in Tuḷunāṭu, north of the Cēra kingdom.
Kāviri	<i>Patirrupattu</i> , 74; the river Kāviri/Kāvēri at Pukār which town was probably invaded by the Cēras for a shorter period.
Kereoura	Ptol., <i>Geog.</i> VII. 1. 8; perhaps the today's Guruvāyūr. <i>Barrington Atlas</i> , 65.
Kolli	<i>Patirrupattu</i> , 73; 81; VIII; also known as: Kollikkuṭavarai, Kolli Hills still bear the same name in Tamil Nadu north of Karūr.

Komar	<i>Periplus Maris Erythraei</i> , ch. 58; today's Kaṇṇiyākumari or Cape Comorin, the southernmost tip of the Indian peninsula. See: Kumari.
Komaria	Ptol., <i>Geog.</i> VII. 1. 9; today's Kaṇṇiyākumari or Cape Comorin, the southernmost tip of the Indian peninsula. See: Kumari
Koṅkar nāṭu	<i>Patirrupattu</i> , 22; same as: Koṅkunāṭu, a division of the Cēra country where the folks called <i>koṅkar</i> lived
Koreour/Koureour	Ptol., <i>Geog.</i> VII. 1. 86; an unidentified settlement, perhaps south of Mysore. <i>Barrington Atlas</i> , 72.
Kottanarichē	<i>Periplus Maris Erythraei</i> , ch. 56; id. Kuṭṭanāṭu, “the country of the lakes” (modern days' Ālappuḷa, Koṭṭayam and Pattanaṁtiṭṭa Districts of Kerala). Casson 1989, 221. Same as: Kuṭṭanāṭu.
Kottiara	Ptol., <i>Geog.</i> VII. 1. 9; the city ( <i>metropolis</i> ) called Kottiara in Kuṭṭanāṭu. Same as: Cotiara.
Koṭukūr	<i>Patirrupattu</i> , V; an unidentified village/town in South India conquered by Ceṅkuṭṭuvan; perhaps in Koṅkāṇa nāṭu? Balasubramanian 1980, 21.
Koṭumaṇam	<i>Patirrupattu</i> , 67; 74; an ancient Cēra town which was famous for its craft; probably identifiable with today's Koṭumaṇal, Erode District, Tamil Nadu. Rajan 2015, 10.
Kouba	Ptol., <i>Geog.</i> VII. 1. 85; az unidentified settlement on the Malabar Coast west of the Pseudostomos/Periyār river in the inlands of Limyrikē.

Kourellour/Kourelloura	Ptol., <i>Geog.</i> VII. 1. 86; an unidentified settlement on the Malabar Coast; it might be the same as Kaṭavallūr, Kerala. Barrington Atlas, 65.
Kumari	<i>Patirrupattu</i> , 11; 43; today's Kaṇṇiyākumari or Cape Comorin, the southernmost tip of the Indian peninsula. See: Komar; Komaria.
Kuṭṭanāṭu	<i>Patirrupattu</i> , VI; the western division of the Cēra kingdom, north of Kuṭṭanāṭu, south of the neighboring Tuḷunāṭu.
kuṭṭuvar [nāṭu]	<i>Patirrupattu</i> , 90; Kuṭṭanāṭu; “the country of the lakes” (modern days' Ālappuḷa, Koṭṭayam and Pattanamṭiṭṭa Districts of Kerala). Casson 1989, 221. Same as: Kottanarichē.
Lacus Muziris	<i>Tabula Peutingeriana</i> , XI; a lake near Muziris and its Augustan temple.
Legomenon Pyrron Oros	<i>Periplus Maris Erythraei</i> , 58; “Dark Red Mountain”, probably the unique peak with red colour near Varkkala, Kerala. Casson 1989, 297; <i>Barrington Atlas</i> , 69.
Limyrichē	<i>Periplus Maris Erythraei</i> , ch. 53; 55; Malabar Coast. Casson 1989: 213–214 .
Limyrikē	Ptol., <i>Geog.</i> VII. 1. 8; Malabar Coast. Casson 1989: 213–214.
Maiyūr	<i>Patirrupattu</i> , IX; an ancient town in South India; the localization of this place is not possible; the chiefs of this village/town were strongly connected to the Irumporai branch of the Cēras both by marriage and service in public life. Marr 1985 [1958]: 299.

Malaya	The ranges of the Western Ghats from the Nīlgiris hills (Durdura) to Kaṇṇiyākumari. <i>Geographical Dictionary</i> , 213.
Māntai/Marantai	<i>Akanānūru</i> , 127; a Cēra town called Māntai and/or Marantai on the Malabar Coast. It might be the same as Gr. Morounda.
Mastanour/Mentanour	Ptol., <i>Geog.</i> VII. 1. 86; a settlement in South Mysore. <i>Barrington Atlas</i> , 73.
Melkynda/Melkyda	Ptol., <i>Geog.</i> VII. 1. 9; a town in Kottanarichē/Kuṭṭanāṭu. See: Nelkynda.
Morounda	Ptol., <i>Geog.</i> VII. 1. 9; an unidentified town in the interior of the people called Aioi (Āy) in Kuṭṭanāṭu. Pre-Pallavan Tamil Index, 85–86. It might be the same as Tam. Māntai/Marantai.
Mouziris	<i>Periplus Maris Erythraei</i> , ch. 53; Ptol., <i>Geog.</i> VII. 1. 8. See: Muziris.
Muciṛi	<i>Akanānūru</i> 57; 149; <i>Puranānūru</i> 343; Muttuppaṭṭi inscription; <i>Muttollāyiram</i> , 9. See: Muziris.
Muziris	Plin., <i>Naturalis Historia</i> , VI. 26. 105; <i>Tabula Peutingeriana</i> , XI; an ancient port of trade ( <i>emporion</i> ) and a fortified political centre of the Cēras around today's Koṭṭunṇallūr, Kerala including the village Paṭṭaṇaṃ. Cherian (et al.) 2004; Cherian–Selvakumar–Shajan 2007; Gurukkal–Whittaker 2001.
Nalopatana	Cosm. Indic. XI. 16; an unidentified settlement on the Malabar Coast that bears a Tamil name of a port town ( <i>paṭṭinam/paṭṭaṇam</i> ).

Naoura	<i>Periplus Maris Erythraei</i> , ch. 53; an ancient Cēra coastal town and marketplace on the Malabar Coast, north of Tyndis/Toṇṭi. Perhaps around: Eḷimala, Kerala.
Naṅrā Hill	<i>Patirrupattu</i> , VII; an unidentified hill in the Cēra kingdom.
Naṅavu	<i>Patirrupattu</i> , 60; 85; an ancient Cēra coastal town and marketplace on the Malabar Coast. Perhaps the same as: Naoura. Previously identified with: Kaṅṅūr, Kerala (Schoff 1913, 204), Honnāvāra, Karnataka (Pretzsch 1889, 23), and Maṅgaḷūru, Karnataka (Casson 1989, 297). Perhaps around: Eḷimala, Kerala.
Naroulla/Nalloura	Ptol., <i>Geog.</i> VII. 1. 85; an unidentified settlement on the Malabar Coast; according to Ptolemy an inland town west of the Periyār.
neacyndus-people's area	Plin., <i>Naturalis Historia</i> , VI. 26. 105. See: Nelkynda.
Nelkynda	<i>Periplus Maris Erythraei</i> , ch. 56. an emporion in Kutṭanāṭu. Iyengar identifies it with Niraṅaṃ, Kerala (Iyengar 1926, 458). Gurukkal identifies it with Nākkiṭa, Kerala. (Gurukkal 2016, 168–169).
Nēri	<i>Patirrupattu</i> , 40; 67; V. (?); A hill in the Tamil country belonging to the Cōḷas, conquered by the Cēras. <i>Tamil Lexicon</i> , 2360. Cf: Vāyil.
Nincildae	<i>Tabula Peutingeriana</i> , XI. See: Nelkynda.
Nitrias/Nitra	Plin., <i>Naturalis Historia</i> , VI. 26. 104; Ptol., <i>Geog.</i> VII. 7; an emporion and/or an island north of the Cēra border areas and Naoura/Naṅavu, perhaps in the territories of Naṅṅaṅ. It might be identical with an unidentified

	seashore site of South Karnataka, or with today's Pigeon Island/Netrani Island and the Leukē nēsos of the <i>Periplus Maris Erythraei</i> , ch. 53. Nitra was north of Limyrikē in Andrōn Peiratōn (Ptol., <i>Geog.</i> VII. 7). Pretzsch 1889, 23; Warmington 1974, 57; Schoff 1913, 203; Casson 1989, 21.
Paloura	Ptol., <i>Geog.</i> VII. 1. 85; an unidentified town of the Cēra kingdom; according to Ptolemy an inland town of the Cēras, west of the Periyār.
Pantar	<i>Patirrupattu</i> , 67; 74; an unidentified town on the Malabar Coast. Turaicāmiṭṭai: identical with today's Panlūr (sic! Pantalūr?) of Ponnani District, Kerala. Turaicāmiṭṭai 2002, 246.
Pantipolis/Pantipoleis	Ptol., <i>Geog.</i> VII. 1. 86; an unidentified settlement in today's Kerala.
Paralia	<i>Periplus Maris Erythraei</i> , 58; the coastline of the historical Tiruvāṅkūr/Travancore region of Kerala. <i>Barrington Atlas</i> , 68.
Pasagē	Ptol., <i>Geog.</i> VII. 1. 86; an unidentified settlement in the Bēttigō oros/Western Ghats between the Periyār and the Pampā rivers. <i>Barrington Atlas</i> , 73.
Podoperoura	Ptol., <i>Geog.</i> VII. 1. 8; an unidentified settlement on the Malabar Coast; Tam. <i>putupṭērūr</i> 'new great town'.
Porunai/Porunai river:	<i>Akanānūru</i> , 93; <i>Puranānūru</i> , 11; <i>Puranānūru</i> , 36; <i>Puranānūru</i> , 387; Amarāvati river. See: Āṅporunai.

Poudapatana	Cosm. Indic. XI. 16; perhaps the same as “Budfattan” of Abraham Ben Jiyū, today’s Vaḷapaṭṭaṇam, Kerala. De Romanis 2020, 96.
Pounnata	Ptol., <i>Geog.</i> VII. 1. 86; perhaps the same as Pūññār, Kerala. Kanakasabhai 1904, 20; Turner 1989, 74.
Pseudostomos	Ptol., <i>Geog.</i> VII. 1. 33; the Periyār river which originates in the Bēttigō oros.
Pukār	<i>Patirrupattu</i> , 73; A famous seashore settlement belonging to the Cōlas, perhaps conquered by Peruñcēral Irumporai; same as: Kamara ( <i>Periplus Maris Erythraei</i> , 60); Chabēris emporion (Ptol., <i>Geog.</i> VII. 1. 13), identical with Kāvērippaṭṭaṇam on the Coromandel Coast.
Pūlinātu	<i>Patirrupattu</i> , IV; 21; 73; 84; 90; the land of the <i>pūliyar</i> ; part of the Cēra kingdom. <i>Pre-Pallavan Tamil Index</i> , 593.
Salopatana	Cosm. Indic. XI. 16; an unidentified settlement on the Malabar Coast that bears a Tamil name of a port town ( <i>paṭṭinam/paṭṭaṇam</i> ).
Semnē	Ptol., <i>Geog.</i> VII. 1. 8; an unidentified settlement on the Malabar Coast. <i>Barrington Atlas</i> , 65.
Takaṭūr	<i>Patirrupattu</i> , 78; VIII; the fortified capital of Atikamāṇ Neṭumāṇ Añci sieged by the Cēras; it is perhaps Dharmapuri of modern times. <i>Pre-Pallavan Tamil Index</i> , 409.
Taṇporunai	<i>Puranānūru</i> , 11; <i>Tolkāppiyam Poruḷatikāram Karṇiyal</i> , 191; Nacciṇārkkiniyār’s comm., perhaps another name of the Culli/Periyār river. Cf. Poruṇai/Porunai river.

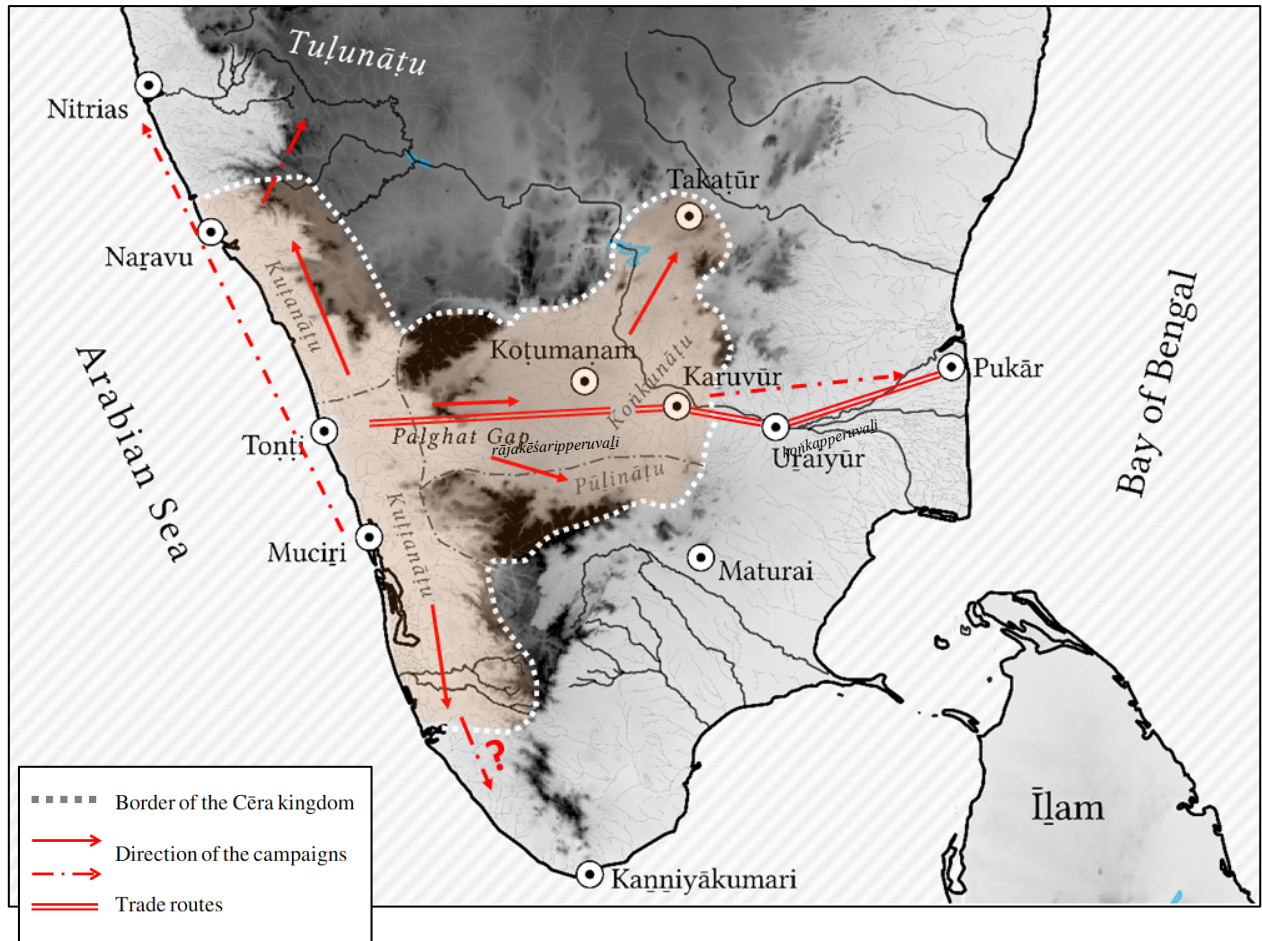


Toṇṭi	<i>Patirrupattu</i> , 88 ( <i>toṇṭiyōr</i> ); VI; the most-mentioned Cēra settlement in the Caṅkam corpus, a port and political centre on the Malabar Coast; perhaps around today's Kozhikode (Kōlīkkōṭ) District, Kerala; it might be identical either with Ponnāni, Kaṭaluṇṭi, or Kōyilāṇṭi. Selvakumar 2017, 274.
Tundis	<i>Tabula Peutingeriana</i> , XI; see: Toṇṭi.
Tyndis	<i>Periplus Maris Erythraei</i> , ch. 53; Ptol., <i>Geog.</i> VII. 1. 8; see: Toṇṭi.
Umparkāṭu	<i>Patirrupattu</i> , III; V; cf. <i>Akanānūru</i> , 357; “elephant-forest”, a division of the Cēra kingdom.
Vañci	<i>Patirrupattu</i> , IX; perhaps the same as Karuvūr. See: Karuvūr.
Vāyil	<i>Patirrupattu</i> , V; <i>Cilappatikāram</i> , III. 28: 116–117; perhaps a town south of Uraiyūr; Ceṅkuṭṭuvaṇ won at Nērivāyil (same as Vāyil here) over nine kings. <i>Pre-Pallavan Tamil Index</i> , 413.
Viyalūr	<i>Patirrupattu</i> , V; <i>Cilappatikāram</i> , III. 28: 114–115; an unidentified town in South India; perhaps in Tuḷunāṭu? Balasubramanian 1980, 21.



*A map on the political geography of the early Cēra kingdom*

(1<sup>st</sup>–3<sup>rd</sup> centuries AD)



This map was made by Máté Rottár (Oriental Collection, LHAS) and Roland Ferenczi.  
Source of geographic data: Natural Earth.



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