

உலகத் தமிழ்ச் செம்மொழி மாநாடு
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ஆய்வரங்கச் சிறப்பு மலர்

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மாண்புமிகு தமிழ்நாடு முதலமைச்சர்
கலைஞர் மு. கருணாநிதி அவர்கள்

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மேதகு இந்தியக் குடியரசுத் தலைவர் அவர்களால் நேற்றைய தினம் தொடங்கி வைக்கப்பட்டுள்ள உலகத் தமிழ்ச் செம்மொழி மாநாட்டுன் அடுத்த கட்டம் இன்று தொடங்குகிறது. இது வெறும் அடுத்த கட்டம் மட்டுமல்ல; அவசியமான கட்டம்; அன்னைத் தமிழுக்கு அரிய பயன்தரும் கட்டம்; மாநாட்டுன் ஆரூயிர் போன்ற கட்டமாகும். இன்றிலிருந்து தொடங்கி, நான்கு நாட்களுக்கு நடைபெறப்போகும் ஆய்வரங்கங்களின் மூலம் தான் - தமிழ்மொழியை மேலும் செழுமைப்படுத்திடவும்; அது என்றும் உயிரோட்டமுள்ள மொழி என்பதை மெய்ப்பித்திடும் வகையில், அதனை வளர்த்து. 21ஆம் நூற்றாண்டின் தேவைகளுக்கேற்ப முன்னெடுத்துச் செல்லவும், உயிய ஆலோசனைகளையும், உயர்ந்த கருத்துரைகளையும் நாம் பெற இருக்கின்றோம்.

இங்கு நடைபெறவீள்ள ஆய்வரங்கிலும், இணையத் தமிழ் மாநாட்டிலும் பங்கு கொள்ள வந்திருக்கிற உங்கள் அனைவருக்கும் எனது மனமாற்றத் அன்பையும், நன்றையையும், வரவேற்றையும், பாராட்டையும் முதற்கண் தெரிவித்துக் கொள்வதில் நான் மெத்த மகிழ்ச்சியடைகிறேன்.

தமிழ்மொழி-தமிழர் பண்பாடு - நாகரிகம் ஆகியவற்றைப் பொறுத்தவரை, முன்னெப்போதும் இல்லாத அளவுக்கு, இப்போது எல்லா முனைகளிலும் புதிய ஆர்வத்தையும், எழுச்சியையும் என்னாலே காண முடிகிறது. ஏற்தாழ ஐம்பதுக்கும் மேலான நாடுகளிலிருந்தும், இந்தியாவின் பல்வேறு பகுதிகளிலிருந்தும் ஏராளமான ஆய்வரினருக்கள் இங்கே வந்திருப்பது எனக்குப் புதிய தெம்பையும், நம்பிக்கையையும் தருகிறது.

ஆய்வரங்குகளில், கட்டுரையாளர்கள் யாராயினும் தாங்கள் எடுத்த முடிவுகளே முந்த முடிவுகள் என்று எதிர்பார்ப்பதும், வலியுறுத்துவதும் எவ்வித நன்மையும் பயக்காது என்பது என் கருத்து. ஆழ்ந்த ஆய்வுகளின் காரணமாக உருவாகிடும் சிந்தனைகளைச் சேகரித்துக் கோவைப்படுத்துவதே ஆய்வரங்குகளின் பணியாகும். தங்களையாத்த அறிஞர்களின் முன்னிலையில், தாங்கள் அறிந்தவற்றை

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எடுத்துக்கூறி, எந்த அளவு தாங்கள் கருத்து அவர்கள் கருத்தோடு ஒத்துப்போகிறது - எந்த அளவு வேறுபடுகிறது என்று அறிந்து, மேலும் அது குறித்த விவாதத்திற்கும், சிந்தனைக்கும் வழிவகுத்திட வேண்டும். இத்தகைய ஆய்வரங்குகள் நடப்பதிலிருந்து நல்ல பலன்களை எதிர்பார்த்திடும் மக்கள் முன், ஆய்வறிஞர்கள் எல்லோராலும் ஏற்றுக் கொள்ளப்பட்டு உருவாக்கப்பட்டுள்ள கருத்துக்களை வழங்கிட வேண்டும். ஆய்வரங்குகளில் வைக்கப்படும் கட்டுரைகளும், விளக்கப்படும் கருத்துக்களும் மக்களைப் புதிய கோணத்தில் சிந்திக்கத் தூண்டிடும் தன்மையுடையவையாக இருத்தல் வேண்டும். அந்த அளவுக்கு மிக உயர்ந்த தரத்தை உடையவையாகக் கட்டுரைகளும், கருத்துரைகளும் இருந்தன என்று கருதப்படக்கூடிய அளவுக்கு, இந்த ஆய்வரங்கங்கள் அமைந்திட வேண்டும் என்று நான் பெரிதும் விரும்புகிறேன்.

கொல்கத்தாவில் ஆசியக் கழகம் வழி 1784இல் வில்லியம் ஜோன்ஸ் அறிவித்த இந்தோ-ஜரோப்பிய மொழிக் குடும்பம் என்னும் கருத்தாக்கம் சமஸ்கிருதத்தை மையமாகக் கொண்டமைந்தது. திராவிட மொழிக் குடும்பம் என்னும் கருத்தாக்கத்தை 1816இல் எல்லிசு, அவரைத் தொடர்ந்து 1856இல் கால்டுவெல் என ஐரோப்பிய அறிஞர்கள் பலரும் மையப்படுத்தி ஆராய்ந்தனர். இந்தோ ஆரிய மொழிக் குடும்பத்தினின்றும் வேறானது திராவிட மொழிக் குடும்பம்; அக்குடும்பத்தின் முதன்மை மொழி தமிழ் என்னும் உண்மையை உலகத்திற்கு அவர்கள் உணர்த்தினர்.

1927இல் ஜான் மார்ஷலின் சிந்துவெளி நாகரிகம், திராவிட நாகரிகம் என்னும் கண்டுபிடிப்பு உலகத்தின் கருத்தைத் தமிழின்பால் ஈர்த்தது. அதன்பின், உலகின் பல்வேறு மூலகைளிலிருந்தும், அறிஞர்கள் தமிழ் மொழி, இலக்கியம், பண்பாடு, நாகரிகம் முதலியன குறித்தெல்லாம் அறிந்து கொள்வதில் ஆர்வம் காட்டினர். அவர்கள் ஆராய்ந்து தமிழின் தொன்மை, தனித்தன்மை, செவ்வியல் தன்மை, தமிழர்தம் இலக்கிய விழுமியம், கலைநலம், பண்பாட்டு வளம், நாகரிக முதிர்ச்சி முதலியவற்றை எல்லாம் வெளிப்படுத்தினார்கள். இவற்றின் காரணமாக உலக அறிஞர்கள் செம்மொழி எனத் தமிழை மதிக்கத் தொடங்கினர்.

உலக அறிஞர்களால் செம்மொழியை மதித்துப் போற்றப்பட்ட தமிழ்மொழி, ஒரு நூற்றாண்டுக் காலத் தொடர் போராட்டத்திற்குப் பிறகே, அதன் தாயகத்தில் செம்மொழி என அங்கீகாரப் பிரகடனம் பெற முடிந்தது. தமிழ்மொழிக்கு, செம்மொழித் தகுதி கோரி முயற்சியெடுத்த ஓவ்வொருவருக்கும், செம்மொழியை அறிவிக்கை செய்ய நடவடிக்கை எடுத்த ஓவ்வொருவருக்கும் இந்த மாநாட்டின் வாயிலாக எனது நன்றியையும், பாராட்டையும் தெரிவித்துக் கொள்கிறேன்.

கிரேக்கம், இலத்தீன், தமிழ், ஹெப்ரு, அரபு, சீனம், சமஸ்கிருதம் ஆகிய ஏழும் இவ்வரிசை முறையிலேயே உலகப் பெருஞ்செம்மொழிகளாக மதிக்கப்படுகின்றன. ஆயினும் அவற்றுள் தமிழ் தனிப்பெருஞ்சிறப்புடையது.

உலகத்தின் மிகத் தொன்மையான இனம் தமிழ் இனம். தமிழர் நாகரிகம் உலகளாவிய சீறந்த நாகரிகம். தமிழ் இலக்கியத்தின் வரலாறு மறைந்த குமரிக்

கண்டத்திலிருந்து தொடாங்குகிறது. குமரிக் கண்டத்தில் முதல் தமிழ்ச் சங்கம் இருந்ததென்றும், அதன் காலம் கி.மு.8000 என்றும் அறிஞர்கள் சிலர் கூறுகின்றனர். குமரிக் கண்டத்தின் மறைவு பற்றிக் கலித்தொகையும், சிலப்பதிகாரமும் குறிப்பிட்டுள்ளன. திராவிட இனத் தொன்மை பற்றி அறிஞர்கள் பலர் ஆய்வு செய்து அறிவித்துள்ளனர்.

- இரவீந்திரநாத் தாஷூர், திராவிடம் தந்த செழிப்பும் வலிவும்தான் ஆரிய நாகரி கத்தின் நலிவைப் போக்கி அதன் அடிப்படையை அலுங்காமல் காத்தது என்கிறார்.
- சோவியத் நாட்டு மொழி அறிஞர் சாகிரப் என்பவர் வட இந்தியத் திராவிட மொழிகளையும், தென்னகத் திராவிட மொழிகளையும் ஒப்பிடவர். அவர் தமிழர்கள் தென்னாட்டிலிருந்து வடத்திசை நோக்கிப் பரவினர் என வண்மையாக வாநிட்டு நிலை நாட்டுகிறார்.
- காஷ்மீரில் வாழும் மலைவாழ் மக்கள் திராவிடமொழிப் பிரிவின் கிளைமொழியைப் பேசுகின்றனர்.
- பீகாரின் ராஜ்மகால் குன்றுகளில் வாழும் 'குருக்கர்' என்போர் திராவிட மக்களே என்பது அவர்கள் பயன்படுத்தும் நாட்டுப்பூர்ப் பாடல்கள் மற்றும் பழங்குதைகளின் வாயிலாகத் தெரிய வருகிறது.
- இந்திய நாகரிக அடையாளமான சேலையும், வேஷ்யும் திராவிட நாட்டுக் கொடையாகுமென்று பேராசிரியர் எஸ்.கே.சட்டர்ஜி இந்தோ-ஆரியன்-இந்து என்ற நாலில் எழுதியுள்ளார்.
- அரப்பா, மொகஞ்சதாரோ ஆராய்ச்சியில் கண்டறிந்த தாய்த் தெய்வ வழிபாடு திராவிட வழிபாடேயாகும்.
- அமெரிக்காவில் கொலராடோ ஆற்றின் கரையில் கட்டப்பட்ட சிவன் கோயில், திராவிடரின் கடவுளைக் காட்டுகிறது.
- ஆதிச்சநல்லூரின் மண்டை ஓடுகள் சிந்துவெளியில் கிடைத்த மண்டை ஓடுகளுடன் ஒத்துள்ளன.
- சோவியத் நாட்டுப் பேராசிரியர் கோந்திரதோவ் என்பார், உலகின் பழைமைகு நாகரிகங்களின் எண்ணிக்கையில் மூன்றில் ஒரு பங்கைப் பிற இனத்தவர்க்கும், இரு பங்கினைத் திராவிடர்களுக்கும் உரியதாக்குவதே உண்மையான பங்கீடு என்று கண்டறிந்து உரைக்கின்றார்.
- எழுத்து முறையை எகிப்தியருக்குத் திராவிடர் கொடையாகக் கொடுத்தனர்.
- மெசப்போமியா நாகரிகமும், எலாமியர் ஏற்றமும் குமரிக் கண்டத் தமிழரிடமிருந்து சென்றவை.
- பாபிலோனிய மதகுரு ஒருவர் எழுதிய பழங்குதை ஒன்றில், மெசப்போமியர்க்கு நாகரிகம் கற்பித்த 'ஓனசு' என்பார், தமது குழுவினருடன் வந்தார்; நாகரிகம் ஆய்வரங்கச் சிறப்பு மலர்

கற்பித்தார்; ஏர் உழவுக் கருவிகளைக் கொடுத்தார்; அறிவியல்களை, கட்டடக்கலை, ஆண்டவன் வழிபாடு ஆகியவற்றைக் கற்பித்தார் என்று கூறப்பட்டுள்ளது.

- சங்ககாலம் கி.மு.4ஆம் நூற்றாண்டின் தொடக்க காலம் எனக் கொண்டால், சங்க லிங்கியாங்களிலிருந்து தீராவிட நாகரிகத்தை அறிய முடிகிறது.
- மத்திய தரைக்கடல், குமரிக்கண்டம், சிந்துவெளி, எகிப்து, சுமேரியா எங்கணும் பரவியது தமிழர் நாகரிகமே' என்று இராமச்சந்திர தீஸ்தர் தமிழர் தோற்றமும் பரவியதும்' என்ற நூலில் கூறியுள்ளார்.

இன்று கிடைத்துள்ள நூல்களில் முதலாவதாக இருப்பது தொல்காப்பியம். இது லிங்கண நூல். எந்தவொரு மொழியிலும், லிங்கண நூல் முதலில் தோன்றாது. லிங்கணம் எழுதுவதற்குச் சில நூற்றாண்டுகளுக்கு முன்பாவது, பலவகை லிங்கியாங்கள் எழுதப்பட்டிருக்கும். தொல்காப்பியர் தனக்கு முன்பிருந்த பல லிங்கணப் புலவர்களைப் பற்றி 'என்ப', 'என்மனார் புலவர்' போன்று 256 இடங்களில் குறிப்பிட்டுள்ளார்.

காக்கைபாழனியம், அவிநாயம் முதலிய பல லிங்கண நூல்கள் தொல்காப்பியர் காலத்திலேயே இருந்தன என்றும், அவை அபிந்தன என்றும் அறிஞர்கள் கூறுகின்றனர். இவற்றின் அடிப்படையில் பார்க்கும்போது, தொல்காப்பியத்திற்கு முன்பே, பல லிங்கண நூல்கள் இருந்தன என்பதும், அவற்றுக்கும் முன்பே, பல லிங்கியாங்கள் இருந்தன என்பதும் தெளிவாகின்றன. தொல்காப்பியரின் காலம் கி.மு. ஆறாம் நூற்றாண்டுக்கு முந்தையது எனப் பெரும்பாலான ஆய்வாளர்கள் கருதுகிறார்கள். தொல்காப்பியத்திற்கு முன்பிருந்த லிங்கிய, லிங்கண நூல்கள் எவை எவை; தொல்காப்பியரின் காலம் எது என்பதைப் பற்றிய ஆராய்ச்சி தொடர்ந்து நடைபெற்று, தமிழ் மொழிக்குச் சிறப்பு சேர்க்கும் நல்ல முடிவுகள் - உறுதியான, அழுத்தந்திருத்தமான, அசைக்கமுடியாத முடிவுகள் - எட்டப்பெற வேண்டுமென்று நான் பெரிதும் எதிர்பார்க்கிறேன்.

இல்காப் பெரும்புகழ்த் தொல்காப்பியம் போன்றதோர் ஒருங்கிணைந்த தொன்மையான லிங்கணம் எந்த மொழியிலும் இல்லை. அகம், புறம் என்னும் பொருள்மைப் பகுப்பும்; தினை, துறை வகுப்பும்; சுட்டி ஒருவர் பெயர்கொளப் பெறாதவாறும்; கூற்றுநிலையில் அமைந்திமோறும் உள்ள அகப்பால்களும்; பொய்யும் வழுவும் விரவா மெய்யான தூய காதலைப் போற்றும் மரபும்; மகேசனை மையப்படுத்தாது மனிதனை மையப்படுத்தும் பாடல்களும் கொண்ட சங்க லிங்கியம் போன்றதோர் தொல்லிலக்கியம் எந்த மொழியிலும் இல்லை. திருக்குறள்போல உலகப் பொதுமையான அற லிங்கியமும் எந்த மொழியிலும் இல்லை; கடவுளை விடுத்துக் குழமக்களைத் தலைமக்களாகக் கொண்ட சிலப்புதிகாரம் போல ஒரு தொன்மையான காப்பியமும் எந்த மொழியிலும் இல்லை; ஆசியா முழுவதும் கோலோச்சிய பெளத்த சமயத்திற்கு மணிமேகலை போல ஒரு காப்பியம் பாலி மொழியிலும் இல்லை; வேறு எந்த மொழியிலும் இல்லை. எல்லாச் சமயங்களையும் - சைவ, வைணவ சமயங்களையும் -

சமண, பெளத்த சமயங்களையும் - சிறித்துவ, இசலாமிய சமயங்களையும் இதயத்திலே ஏந்திக்கொண்ட மொழி தமிழ். சமயந்தோறும் நின்ற நையல் எனப் போற்றப்பெறும் தமிழ், சமயங்களையும் வளர்த்துத் தன்னையும் வளர்த்துக் கொண்ட மொழி. அது மட்டுமல்ல, எல்லா மெய்ப்பொருள் தத்துவங்களையும் விளக்கும் மொழி அது.

தமிழ்நாட்டு எல்லை கடந்து இந்தியாவின் வடபுலம் வரை மட்டும் அல்ல - கடல் கடந்து அயல்நாடுகளுக்கும் சென்று - திரைகடலோடுத் திரவியம் தேடியது மட்டுமன்றித் தக்கட்டும் பண்பாட்டுப் பங்களிப்பைச் செய்த இனம் தமிழ் இனம்.

நாகப்பட்டினம் மாவட்டம் மயிலாடுதுறைக்கு அருகில் கழுக்காணி முட்டத்தில் அண்மையில் தமிழ்நாடு அரசின் இந்து சமய அறநிலையத் துறையினரால் முதலாம் இராசாதிராசன் காலத்தைச் சேர்ந்த கி.பி. 1053இும் ஆண்டைச் சேர்ந்த 85 செப்பேடுகள் பூமிக்கு அழியிலிருந்து கண்டெடுக்கப்பட்டுள்ளன. வில், புலி, கயல் ஆகிய சேர, சோழ, பாண்டியர்களின் முத்திரைகளோடு கிடைத்துள்ள அந்தச் செப்பேடுகள் வரலாற்றாய்வாளர்களுக்குப் பெரும் கருவுலமாகும். தஞ்சையை விசயாலயச் சோழன் பல்லவர்களிடமிருந்து கைப்பற்றியதற்கான புதிய வரலாற்றுக் குறிப்பு இச்செப்பேடுகள் கிடைத்துள்ளது.

மேலும் உள்ளாடசி முறைக்கு உலகிற்கு எடுத்துச் சொல்லும் வரலாற்றுப் பதிவாக விளாங்குகிறது உத்திரமேற்றுக் கல்வெட்டு. இவையெல்லாம் தமிழர்களின் தொடர்ச்சியான வரலாற்றுப் பதிவுகளுக்கு எடுத்துக்காட்டுகளாகும்.

இப்படி காலந்தோறும் தமிழ், தமிழர்கள் கொண்டுள்ள எண்ணற்ற சிறப்புக்களை அடுக்கலாம்; தொடுக்கலாம். அவற்றையெல்லாம் தமிழழத் தாய்மொழியாகக் கொண்டுள்ள தமிழர்கள்தான் வெளிநாட்டவர்க்கு எடுத்துறைத்திடவேண்டும்; ஆனால் தமிழழத் தாய்மொழியாகக் கொள்ளாத வெளிநாட்டவர் அவற்றைத் தமிழர்களுக்கு விளக்கிச் சொல்லும் நிலைதான் தொடர்ந்து நிகழ்ந்து வருகிறது. எல்லிக், கால்டுவெல், போப், வின்சோலோ, ஆல்பர்ட் சுவைட்சர் போன்றோர், ஜான் மார், ஆலீஸ், ஹெரால்டு விப்பன், கமில் சுவலபில் போன்றோர், ஜார்ஜ் ஹார்ட், அல்ஸ்கோ பர்ப்போலா போன்ற அயல்நாட்டு அறிஞர் பெருமக்கள் ஆய்ந்தறிந்து தமிழின் பீடும் பெருமையும் குறித்துக் கூறியிருக்கிறார்கள்.

அந்தகு அறிஞர்களுள் சிலர் கூறியவற்றை இங்கு சான்றுக்காகச் சுட்டிக்காட்ட விழைகின்றேன். நோபல் பரிசு பெற்ற ஆல்பர்ட் சுவைட்சர், 'திருக்குறளைப் போல அறிவார்ந்த அறநெறிகளைத் தாங்கிய இலக்கியம் உலக இலக்கியாங்களில் எங்கும் இல்லை ('There hardly exists in the literature of the world a collection of maxims in which we find such lofty wisdom.') என்கிறார்.

"தமிழர்களின் பண்பாடு உலக நாகரிகத்தின் அழியாத மாபெருஞ் செல்வத்துள் ஒன்று என்பதில் ஐயம் இல்லை" என்று கூறும் செக் நாட்டைச் சார்ந்த கமில் சுவலபில், "உலகப் பண்பாட்டுச் செல்வத்திற்குத் தமிழ்ப் படைப்புப் புலமையின் மிகவும் குறிப்பிட்டத்தக்க பங்களிப்புக்களாகக் கலை, இலக்கியப் படைப்புகள்

திகழ்கின்றன; ஹோமரின் கவிதைகளையும், சேக்சுபியரின் நாடகங்களையும், ரெம்பிராண்டின் ஓவியங்களையும், பிரான்சின் தேவாலயங்களையும், கிரேக்கச் சிற்பங்களையும் உலகம் முழுவதும் எப்படி நேசித்து, வியந்து, போற்றுகின்றதோ, அப்படிப் போற்றப்பட வேண்டியவை அவை” என்று குறிப்பிட்டுள்ளார்.

தமிழ் இனம் ஏனோதானோ இனம் அல்ல; தமிழன் புகழ்மிக்க பாரம்பரியத்துக்குச் சொந்தக்காரன் என்பதை முதலில் தமிழன் உணர வேண்டும்; பிறருக்கும் உணர்த்த வேண்டும் என்பதற்காக மட்டும் அல்லாமல், தமிழ், தமிழ் இனம், தமிழ் இலக்கியம், பண்பாடு, நாகரிகம் என்று ஒவ்வொரு துறையிலும் பதித்துள்ள முத்திரைகள், சாதனைகள், இவையெல்லாம் ஒவ்வொரு தமிழனுக்கும் பூரிப்பையும், பெருமித்ததையும் ஏற்படுத்தக்கூடியவை என்றாலும், அந்தப் பூரிப்போடும் பெருமித்ததோடும் நிறைவு அடைந்துவிடக் கூடாது; தமிழுக்கும் தமிழ் இனத்துக்கும் ஆற்றவேண்டியவை இன்னும் ஏராளமாக உள்ளன என்பதை உணர வேண்டும்.

இந்திய மொழிகள், உலக மொழிகள் அனைத்திலும் தமிழ் இலக்கியச் செல்வங்கள் மொழிபெயர்க்கப்பட வேண்டும். கிரேக்க மொழியிலும், பிரெஞ்சு மொழியிலும், ஜெர்மன் மொழியிலும், பிற மொழிகளிலும் தமிழியல் குறித்தும் தமிழினம் குறித்தும் எழுதப்பெற்றுள்ளவை அனைத்தும் தமிழ் மொழியில் மொழிபெயர்க்கப்பட வேண்டும்.

உலகங்கும் உள்ள தமிழியல் நூல்கள், ஆவணாங்கள் மின்மயமாக்கப்பெற்று உலகில் ஏந்த மூலையில் உள்ளவர்களும் அவற்றைப் பயண்படுத்த ஏற்பாடு செய்யப்பட வேண்டும்.

துறைதோறும் தமிழ் பயண்பட வேண்டும். வகைவகையாய் அகராதிகளும், தொகைதொகையாய்க் கலைக்களான்சியங்களும் வரவேண்டும். இன்னும் என்னென்ன வேண்டும் தமிழுக்கு என ஆய்வரங்கத்திலும், இனைய மாநாட்டிலும் பங்கேற்கிறவர்கள் - அறிஞர் பெருமக்கள் எடுத்துச் சொல்லி இந்த அரசுக்கு ஆணையிட வேண்டுமெனக் கேட்டுக் கொள்கிறேன்.

தமிழ் எங்கள் உயிருக்கு நேர் என்ற பாவேந்தர் கருத்துப்படி, பாட்டையை அமைத்துக் கொண்டு, உயிர் உள்ளவரை தமிழுக்காகப் பாடுபட - என்னைத் தமிழுக்கு முழுமையாக ஒப்படைத்திட - எனது தமிழ்த் தொண்டுப் பயணத்தை மேலும் வேகமாகத் தொடர்ந்திட - உரிய ஊக்கத்தையும், உறுதியையும் இந்த உலகத் தமிழ்ச் செம்மொழி மாநாடு எனக்கு அளித்துள்ளது.

தொய்வின்றிக் குறிப்பிட்ட கால திடைவளியில் தொடர்ந்து உலகத் தமிழ்ச் செம்மொழி மாநாட்டுக்கான ஏற்பாட்டையும், பணிகளையும் பிற பணிகளோடு மேற்கொள்ளும் வகையில், பாண்டியப் பெருமன்னர்கள் சங்கம் வைத்துத் தமிழ் வளர்த்த மதுரை மாநகரில் தொல்காப்பியர் உலகத் தமிழ்ச் சங்கம்’ தொடங்கப்பெற்று விரைவில் செயல்படவுள்ளது என்கிற மகிழ்ச்சியான செய்தியை உலகத் தமிழ் மக்களுக்கு இம்மாநாடு வாயிலாக அறிவிப்பதில் பெருமிதம் கொள்கிறேன்.

பல்கலைக்கழக நல்கைக் குழுவின் நிதியுதவியோடும், தமிழக அரசின் நிதியுதவியோடும் தமிழ்ப் பல்கலைக்கழகத்தில் உலகச் செம்மொழிகள் ஆய்வு மையம் தொடங்க முயற்சிகள் மேற்கொள்ளப்படும் என்பதையும் இந்த நேரத்தில் மகிழ்ச்சியோடு தெரிவித்துக் கொள்கிறேன்.

இன்றுமுதல் நான்கு நாட்கள் நடைபெறும் ஆய்வரங்கின் பல்வேறு அமர்வுகளில் வழங்கப்பெறும் கட்டுரைகளிலும், முகப்பரங்கம், கலந்தாய்வரங்கம், பொழிவரங்கம், கலந்துரையரங்கம் ஆகியவற்றிலும் முன்வைக்கப்படும் கருத்துகளும், அவை மீதான ஆரோக்கியமான விவாதங்களும் தமிழ் வளர்ச்சிக்கும், தமிழியல் ஆய்வு வளர்ச்சிக்கும் பெரிதும் பயன்படும் என்று கூறி உலகத் தமிழ்ச் செம்மொழி மாநாட்டின் ஆய்வரங்கை மகிழ்ச்சியோடும், மன்றினரவோடும் தொடங்கி வைக்கிறேன்.

நன்றி; வணக்கம்!

INAUGURAL ADDRESS OF THE SEMINAR

Hon'ble Chief Minister of Tamilnadu
KALAIGNAR M. KARUNANIDHI

INAGURAL ADDRESS

Hon'ble Chief Minister of Tamilnadu

KALAIMAR M. KARUNANIDHI

The World Classical Tamil Conference, inaugurated yesterday by Her Excellency the President of India, enters its next phase today. This is not merely the next phase; this is an essential phase; a phase that will yield great benefit to Mother Tamil; a phase that constitutes the very life of this conference. For four days from today, we are going to benefit from the appropriate suggestions and profound ideas, from the many seminar sessions. These would encompass further enrichment of Tamil; ways to chart Tamil's growth in sync with the needs of the 21st century; and thereby establishing it as a vibrant language.

I am indeed very happy to extend my heartfelt affection, gratefulness, welcome and appreciation to all of you, who have come here to participate in the Seminar sessions and in the Internet Tamil Conference.

As far as Tamil language, Tamil culture and Tamil civilization are concerned, I am now able to find a new enthusiasm and a new resurgence on all fronts, never seen earlier. I get a new bout of energy and fervor, from the large number of scholars who have assembled here from about fifty countries and from the various parts of India.

It is my view that it would not yield any benefit, if any delegates in the Seminar sessions should expect or insist that their positions have the ultimate validity. The mission of these sessions is to collect and organise the thoughts resulting from incisive research. Presenting their ideas before their peer scholars; finding out the extent to which these ideas agree or are in conflict with their ideas; and paving the way for healthy debate and evolution of thought – this is the objective. To the people who expect good results from such seminars, the scholars should present thoughts and findings that have evolved consensually. The papers presented and the ideas put forth in these sessions should induce people to think from new angles. I earnestly desire that the seminar sessions should be so meaningful, that the papers and ideas are considered to be of such high quality.

The concept of Indo-European language family propounded by William Jones in 1786, through the Asiatic Society of Calcutta, was Sanskrit-centric. Ellis in 1816, Caldwell in 1856, and many other European scholars conducted research centered on the concept of a Dravidian language family. They made

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it known to the world that the Dravidian language family was distinct from the Indo-Aryan language family, and that Tamil was the primary language of the former family.

John Marshall's finding in 1927 that the Indus Valley civilization was Dravidian, attracted world attention towards Tamil. Thereafter, scholars from the different parts of the world started evincing interest in Tamil language, literature, culture and civilization. Based on their researches, they showed to the world the antiquity, uniqueness and the classical nature of Tamil; and the literary eminence , artistic achievements, richness of culture and the maturity of the civilization of the Tamil people. Based on these, world scholars started respecting Tamil as a classical language.

While Tamil had been lauded by world scholars as a classical language, it could obtain formal recognition as a classical language, in its own motherland, only after one hundred years of continuous struggle. To each and every one who had endeavoured to seek classical language status to Tamil, and to every one who contributed to the declaration of Tamil as a classical language, I convey my gratitude and appreciation, through this conference.

Greek, Latin, Tamil, Hebrew, Arabic, Chinese and Sanskrit are the seven languages – in that order - which are recognised as the classical languages of the world. Among these, Tamil has a unique merit.

The world's most ancient race is the Tamil race. The Tamil civilization is a great civilization in the world. The history of Tamil literature dates back to the submerged Kumari continent. Some scholars aver that the first Tamil Sangam functioned in Kumari continent, and that its period was 8000 B.C.. Ancient Tamil literary works, Kalithokai and Silappatikaram, have referred to the disappearance of Kumari continent. Many savants have researched on and declared their findings on the antiquity of the Dravidian race.

- Rabindranath Tagore says that the nourishment and strength provided by Dravidam had removed the debility of the Aryan civilization, and sustained its basis.
- Soviet linguist by name Sahiraf had conducted a comparative study of the North Indian Dravidian languages and the South Indian Dravidian languages. On this basis, he has strongly argued and established that the Tamils had spread from South India northward.
- Hill tribes in Kashmir speak a dialect of the Dravidian language.
- That the Kurukhs, who live in the Rajmahal hills of Bihar, are Dravidian, is ascertained from the folk songs and the folk tales prevalent among them.
- Professor S.K. Chatterji has stated in his book 'Indo-Aryan Hindu' , that the symbols of Indian civilization, saree and dhoti, are the contributions of the Dravidian land.
- The mother goddess worship evidenced from the researches of Harappa and Mohenjodaro sites, is the Dravidian cult of worship.
- The Shiva temple constructed on the banks of Colorado river in America, points to a Dravidian god.
- The skulls unearthed in Adichanallur resemble the skulls excavated in Indus Valley sites.
- Professor Kantratov of Soviet Union has stated, on the basis of his research, that out of the total number of the ancient civilizations of the world, it would be proper to apportion one third to the other races, and two third to the Dravidians.
- The Dravidians had contributed to the development of the Egyptian script.

- The Mesopotamian civilization and the eminence of Elamios went there from the Tamils of the Kumari continent.
- The following statements are contained in an ancient story written by a Babylonian religious leader: The person by name Onus had come, with his group, to Mesopotamia and taught them civilization; gave them ploughing implements; taught them science, construction technology, and god worship.
- If we take the 4th century BC as the starting point of the Sangam age, we are able to know about the Dravidian civilization from the Sangam literary works.
- Ramachandra Dikshitar has stated in his book, 'Origin and Spread of the Tamils' as follows: "It was the civilization of the Tamils that had spread in the Mediterranean region, Kumari continent, Indus Valley, Egypt and Sumeria".

Tholkappiyam is the earliest of all the works now extant in Tamil . This is a grammatical treatise. In any language, a grammar would not appear first. At least a few centuries before a grammar is written, many literary works would have been written. Tholkappiar has referred to many grammarians before him – 'so they say', 'so have savants said' – in as many as 256 places in his work.

There is scholarly opinion that many grammars, such as Kakkaippadiniyam and Avinayam, existed during Tholkappiar's time, and that they had been lost. On this basis, it is clear that there were many prior grammar works and before them, many literary works existed. Many scholars consider Tholkappiar's date prior to the sixth century B.C. Which were the literary and grammar works pre-dating Tholkappiam? What is the age of Tholkappiam? It is my fervent expectation that research would continue in respect of these questions, and firm and conclusive findings would be forthcoming, to add glory to the Tamil language.

No language can claim an integrated grammar work of an antiquity as that of Tholkappiam of undimmed glory. Thematic segmentations of poetry as Akam and Puram; Thinai and Thurai divisions; non-identity of protagonists by names; Akam poems in the form of statements by characters; a tradition of true and pure love untainted by duplicity and blemish; poems anchored in men and not in god – No ancient literature in any language can match the Sangam corpus in these aspects. No language can boast of a universalist, ethical literary work as Thirukkural ; no language has an ancient epic such as Silappatikaram, with ordinary men and women and not gods as central characters; for Buddhist faith, which ruled the best part of Asia, there is no epic on a par with Manimekalai, even in the Pali language; nor in any other language. Tamil has enshrined in itself all religions: Saivism and Vaishnavism; Jainism and Buddhism; Christianity and Islam. Exalted as the damsel who stood by all religions, Tamil nurtured religions, and also nurtured itself in the process. Not only that. It is a language that throws light on all spiritual philosophies.

Not only crossing Tamilnadu boundaries and extending northward; crossing the seas and reaching foreign shores..., not just to garner wealth, but also making cultural contributions in all directions- this has been the signature of the Tamil race.

About 85 copper plates belonging to 1053 A.D. of the first Rajathi Rajas were discovered out by the personnel of Hindu Religious Endowment Department of the Government of Tamilnadu while digging the earth at Kazhukkani Muttam near Mayiladuthurai of Nagappatinam district. These copper plates

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with the stamp of the marks of the Bow, Tiger and Fish are rich treasures to the researchers of the history. A new historical fact came to light that the Chola king Vijayalayan captured Thanjavur from the Pallavas.

The officials of the government surveyed the said villages and merged them into one. The Uttiramerur inscription reveals the historical record of the ancient local governance to the world.

We can go on recounting and weaving the accomplishments of the Tamil language and of the Tamils over epochs. It is up to the Tamils to carry this to peoples in the other countries. But, it has come to such a pass that foreigners, whose mother tongue is not Tamil, are now explaining all this to the Tamils. Savants like Ellis, Caldwell, Pope, Winslow; and scholars like George Hart and Asko Parpola are conducting research and writing about the eminence and glory of Tamil. I would like to point to a few statements of such scholars of eminence. The Nobel Laureate Albert Schwitzer, referring to Thirukkural, says: "There hardly exists in the literature of the world, a collection of maxims in which we find so much lofty wisdom".

The Czech scholar Zvelabil asserts that "there is no doubt that the culture of the Tamils belongs to the great and immortal treasures of the world's civilization." He further states: "The following works of art and literature are among the most remarkable contributions of the Tamil creative genius to the world's cultural treasure and should be familiar to the whole world and admired and beloved by all in the same way as the poems of Homer, the dramas of Shakespeare, the pictures of Rembrandt, the cathedrals of France and the sculptures of Greece."

The Tamil race is no run-of-the-mill race; the Tamils own an illustrious tradition – the Tamils should first be aware of this; should also make others be aware of this. That Tamil and the Tamil race, have left imprints and achievements on Tamil literature, culture and civilization, fills every Tamil with pride and pleasure. But the Tamils should not feel fulfilled with this pride and pleasure. We should realize that a lot remains to be done to Tamil and to the Tamil race.

The Tamil literary treasures should be translated into the Indian and the world languages. The writings on Tamilology and the Tamil race in Greek, French, German and other languages should be translated into Tamil. Books and documents on Tamilology available in any part of the world should be converted into electronic format, and arrangements should be made to provide universal access to these treasures.

Tamil should be used in every field. Dictionaries of different kinds, and encyclopaedias of different fields should be produced. I would appeal to the scholars, participating in this Seminar and in the Tamil Internet Conference, to highlight what further actions are to be taken to enrich Tamil, and issue directives to this governments.

Charting the path in line with Paavendar's thought "Tamil is our life breath"; to strive for Tamil till my last breath; to dedicate myself totally to the cause of Tamil; to continue with greater vigour my journey of service to Tamil "this World Classical Tamil Conference has given me renewed enthusiasm and resolve. To make arrangements for the next World Classical Tamil Conference within a defined interval, along with other services to Tamil, "Tholkappiar World Tamil Sangam' will be set up and start functioning shortly in Madurai city – the venue where Pandian emperors had established Sangam and nurtured Tamil. I am proud to announce this happy news to the Tamils worldwide, through this conference.

I am confident that the ideas emanating from the papers to be presented in the different academic sessions over these four days; the opinions and thoughts placed during the plenary session, symposium, special lectures and panel discussions; and the healthy discussions on these, will be of great value to the development of Tamil and to the growth of research in Tamilology. With this reassuring thought, I hereby inaugurate the Seminar of the World of Classical Tamil Conference with pleasure and a sense of fulfillment.

Thanks, Vanakkam.

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உலகத் தமிழ்ச் செம்பெருடி மாநாடு

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முகப்பரங்கப் பொழிவுகள்

PLENARY LECTURES

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Tolkāppiyar Araṅku

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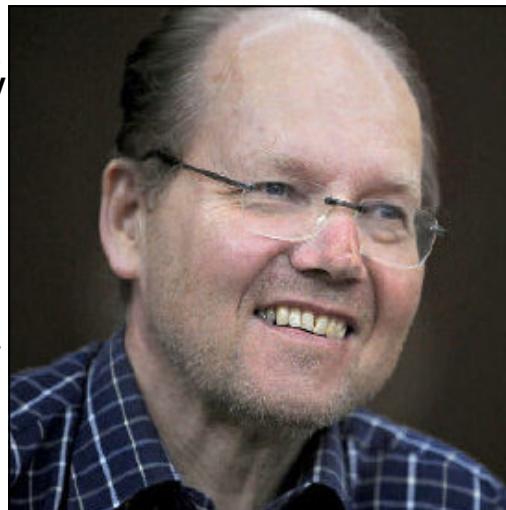


Hon'ble Chief Minister of Tamilnadu, Kalaignar M. Karunanidhi, has created out of his personal funds an endowment in his name for Classical Tamil Research in the Central Institute of Classical Tamil. From the endowment, ***Kalaignar M. Karunanidhi Classical Tamil Award*** is given to scholars and researchers of eminence every year from 2009. The award is one of the highest honours conferred in India. It carries a cheque for INR Rs.10,00,000, a citation plaque and a bronze replica of the donor Kalaignar M. Karunanidhi.

The first recipient of the prestigious ***Kalaignar M. Karunanidhi Classical Tamil Award*** is Dr. Asko Heikki Siegfried Parpola, popularly known as **Asko Parpola**.

Asko Parpola (born in 1941 in Forssa, Finland) earned M. A. (1963) and Ph. D. (1968) at the University of Helsinki, where he served as Professor of Indology 1981-2004 and is now Professor Emeritus at the Institute of World Cultures, University of Helsinki, Finland.

He has also worked as Research Fellow at the Scandinavian (now Nordic) Institute of Asian Studies in Copenhagen 1968-72; Research Fellow at the Academy of Finland 1972-81; Acting Professor of Sanskrit at the University of Gothenburg 1973; Acting Professor of Comparative Religion at the University of Helsinki 1977; Fellow Commoner of Churchill College, University of Cambridge 1987; Research Scholar at the Institute for Research in Humanities, University of Kyoto, 1999; Research Scholar at Research Institute for Humanity and Nature, Kyoto, 2006; Hermann Collitz Professor at the Linguistic Society of America's Linguistic Institute at Stanford University 2007. He is Member of the Finnish Academy of Sciences and Letters since 1990, and Member of the Academia Europaea since 2000; was Chairman of the Institute for Asian and African Studies, University of Helsinki 1994-98; Vice-President (1981-93) and President (1994-98) of the Finnish Oriental Society; Board Member (1970-2005) and President (1991-93) of the European Association of South Asian



Archaeologists; Member of the Consultative Committee of the International Association of Sanskrit Studies 1981-2009. He is in the editorial committee of the international journals Studia Orientalia (Helsinki), Acta Orientalia (Oslo), Electronic Journal of Vedic Studies (Cambridge, Mass.), and Scripta (Seoul).

Prizes and decorations: M.A. prize, University of Helsinki, 1963; Recognition Prize for Life Work, Alfred Kordelin Foundation, 2003; Commander of the order of the Finnish Lion; Knight I of the Finnish order of White Rose; Knight of the order of Senegal's Lion.

To his credit he has published about 25 books and numerous papers.

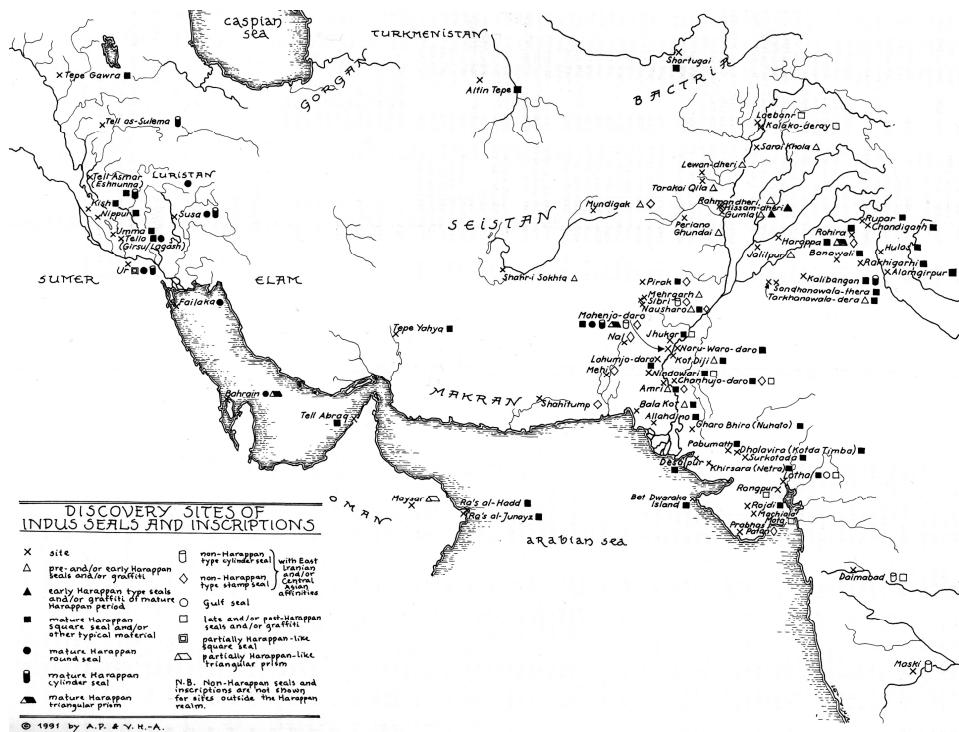
A Dravidian solution to the Indus script problem

ASKO PARPOLA

aruvar payanta ... perum peyar muruka
 ninn aṭi y-ulli vantanen
 (Tirumurukārruppaṭai 255, 269, 279)

The Indus Civilization and its forgotten script

Stone seals inscribed with an unknown script were obtained from Harappa in the upper Indus Valley in the 1870s and 1880s. In the early 1920s, curiosity about their origin initiated excavations at Harappa and 750 km away at Mohenjo-daro in Sindh. Immediately more seals of the same kind were found. The publication of these discoveries turned attention to a few seals of the Harappan type that had come to light in Mesopotamia.



(Fig.1)

They dated the newly found Harappan or Indus Civilization to the third millennium BCE. Radiocarbon dating has fixed the duration of the Mature Harappan phase, during which the Indus script was used, to 2600-1900 BCE. About 40 Harappan seals come from the Gulf and Mesopotamia, left there by sea-faring Indus merchants.

Since the 1920s, ceaseless archaeological research has revealed some 1500 Harappan sites in Pakistan and western India. The Harappan realm in the Greater Indus Valley is one of the earliest cradles of civilization. Its urban culture is among the first four in the world to possess a script of its own. Some 5000 short Indus texts from more than 50 sites are known today, and much other data as well has accumulated. But the decipherment of the Indus script has remained the most intriguing problem pertaining to this impressive city culture that initiates Indian civilization. The Indus script vanished together with the Indus Civilization, which collapsed many centuries before hymns composed in Vedic Sanskrit begin the historical period in South Asia around 1000 BCE.

The numerous unsuccessful attempts to understand the Indus script include a recent claim that it is not a writing system based on language, but consists of non-linguistic symbols. Similar misconceptions prevailed about the Mesopotamian cuneiform script and the Egyptian hieroglyphs before their decipherments. Extreme shortness of texts and their restriction to seals, small tablets and pottery graffiti have been adduced as proofs for this thesis, but all these features characterize also the Egyptian hieroglyphic script during the first 600 years of its existence. Yet this early form of Egyptian script was real writing, and can be partially read on the basis of later texts. (Fig. 2.)



The high degree of sign standardization, the arrangement of texts into regular rows, and the presence of hundreds of recurring sign sequences from different sites all indicate that the Indus script is real writing.

Most attempts to read the Indus script apply the unsuited method of comparing the Indus signs with similar-looking signs of other scripts and transferring their phonetic values to the Indus signs. This general error is often coupled with the mistake of deriving Brahmi from the Indus script, though it is based on the Semitic consonant alphabet.

Preparatory work

How then can the Indus script be deciphered? We may turn to successful decipherments and to the history of writing for guidance. Most ancient scripts have been deciphered with the help of translations into known scripts and languages. But here no such help is available. Historical information of the kind that opened up the cuneiform script is virtually missing. Later Indian texts tell us nothing about the Indus Civilization. Contemporary cuneiform sources speak of the most distant land called Meluhha, widely understood to denote Greater Indus Valley, but they offer little further information. There is no related writing system to help with the phonetic values of the signs. Nor is there any fair certainty of the underlying language, which was a great advantage in unraveling the Ugaritic and Mayan scripts. All surviving texts are very short and probably not complete sentences but just noun phrases. This naturally hampers grammatical analysis, as does the absence of word dividers.

In spite of all the difficulties, there are some positive circumstances. One is the relatively high number of preserved inscriptions. Collecting and publishing all available evidence reliably and legibly belongs to the fundamental preparatory tasks that have proved useful in all decipherments. This aim is being realized partly in the photographic Corpus of Indus Seals and Inscriptions; its third volume has just come out.

Several versions of a standardized text edition in machine-readable form have been completed, and a thorough revision is again being done. Computerization has enabled the compilation of concordances that systematically record all occurrences of individual signs and their sequences, and various other indexes and statistics. Among the things to be standardized is the direction of writing, normally from right to left and in seal stamps carved in mirror image from left to right. Other routine tasks are location of word boundaries and search for possible grammatical markers. One way to segment longer texts is to see if their component parts occur elsewhere as complete texts.

A crucial but difficult task is the compilation of a reliable sign list, which distinguishes between graphemes and allographs. The allographic variation constitutes one important basis for interpreting the pictorial meaning of the Indus signs. Signs may represent the same grapheme if their shapes are reasonably similar and they in addition occur in very similar contexts. Based on these criteria, my sign list has very nearly 400 graphemes.

It is difficult to construct even parts of the Indus grammar on the basis of textual analysis. The positional sequences of signs can be exploited to analyse the Indus texts syntactically, to define textual junctures, and to classify the signs into phonetically or semantically similar groups. Such analyses have been carried out with automated methods. Data accumulated in this way will certainly be useful in decipherment once a decisive breakthrough has been achieved — in other words when the language has been identified and some signs have been read phonetically in a convincing manner. But such analyses alone are unlikely to provide that breakthrough.

The language underlying the Indus script

In the decipherment of any ancient script, there are two principal unknowns to be clarified, namely the underlying language or languages and the type of the script.

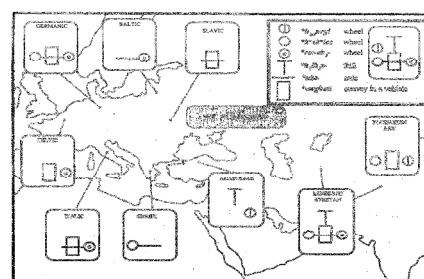
The language problem is most crucial. If the language of the Indus script belonged to a language family not known from other sources, the Indus script can never be deciphered. This is clear from the case of Etruscan, an isolated language written in an easily read alphabetic script. Etruscan can be read phonetically, but in spite of this is not much understood beyond the texts covered by copious translations. But as the Harappan population numbered around one million, there is a fair chance that linguistic relatives have survived and that traces of the Harappan language can be found in the extensive Vedic texts composed in the Indus Valley less than a thousand years after the collapse of the Indus Civilization.

While it is likely that various minority languages were spoken in the Greater Indus Valley, only one language was written. The sign sequences are namely uniform throughout South Asia. This argument is reinforced by the Indus seals found in the Near East. Some of them have native Harappan and some non-Harappan sign sequences.

One would expect that the most frequently attested Indus sign would very often occur next to itself, but this is never the case in the Indus Valley. The combination is however attested on a round Gulf-type seal coming from the Near East. The seal contains five frequently occurring Indus signs but in unique sequences. This suggests that Harappan trade agents who resided in the Gulf and in Mesopotamia became bilingual and adopted local names, but wrote their foreign names in the Indus script for the Harappans to read. The cuneiform texts in fact speak not only of a distant country called Meluhha, but also of a village in southern Mesopotamia called Meluhha whose inhabitants had purely Sumerian names.

According to its inscription, one Old Akkadian cylinder seal belonged to "Sulilishu, interpreter of the Meluhhan language". This implies that the Meluhhan language differed from the languages commonly spoken and understood in ancient Near East, above all Sumerian, Akkadian and Elamite. Near Eastern languages appear historically much less likely to have been spoken in the Indus Valley than languages known to have existed in South Asia.

Because the origin of the Aryan languages is such a controversial issue, especially in India, it is necessary to trace these languages back to their source, the Proto-Indo-European. The location and dating of Proto-Indo-European too have been long debated, but a fair consensus concerning this problem is in sight. When the Proto-Indo-European-speaking community dispersed, its language had a dozen terms related to wheeled vehicles. Wheeled vehicles were invented shortly before 3500 BCE in south-eastern Europe, from where they quickly spread to areas where the principal Indo-European languages were later spoken (fig. 3).



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Greek and Armenian are the closest linguistic relatives of Indo-Iranian, and the protoforms of these languages are likely to have been spoken in the Pit Grave or Yamnaya cultures which between 3300 and 3000 BCE spread with ox carts from North Pontic steppes eastwards to the Ural mountains. The Eurasian steppes are the native habitat of the horse. It was there that the horse was first yoked to pull a light-wheeled chariot, at the end of the third millennium BCE. Early Aryan loanwords in Finno-Ugric languages spoken in north-eastern Europe locates Proto-Aryan to the Volga steppes.

From the Volga-Ural steppes the horse-drawn chariot spread southwards to the Bronze Age culture in southern Central Asia, the "Bactria and Margiana Archaeological Complex" or BMAC, which flourished about 2300-1500 BCE. BMAC people started moving to Iran and to the Indus Valley in the Late Harappan period, around 1900-1600 BCE. At the same time, the BMAC sites were surrounded by nomadic peoples from the Eurasian steppes, who probably spoke early forms of Indo-Iranian. On their way to Iran and India, these migrants took over the rule and culture of the BMAC. Alexander Lubotsky (2001) has listed all words shared by Iranian and Indo-Aryan which do not have an acceptable Indo-European origin. In structure, these words largely agree with the 383 foreign loanwords in the language of the Rigveda listed by Frans Kuiper (1991). Lubotsky has suggested that most words in both lists come from the language of the BMAC. This justified conclusion implies that these foreign words of an unknown language were borrowed by Rigvedic Aryans before they entered the Indus Valley, or from the language of the Daasas, an earlier wave of Indo-Iranian speakers with a BMAC substratum. Hence these words do not represent the Harappan language. Their use for the decipherment of the Indus script would in any case not be feasible for the simple reason that the exact meaning of so many of them is unclear.

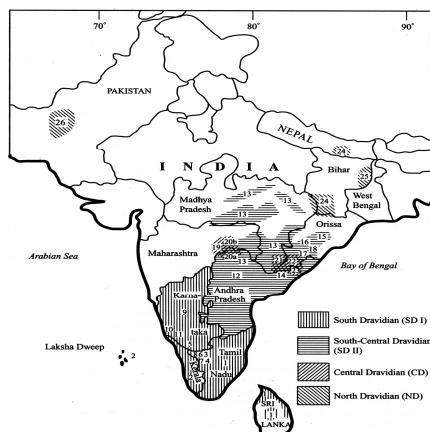
Although Indo-Iranian languages have been spoken in the Indus Valley since the second millennium BCE, they were hardly spoken by Harappan people in the third millennium. The domesticated horse played an important role in the culture of the Indo-Iranian speakers, but according to faunal remains the horse came to South Asia only after 2000 BCE and it is not depicted in Harappan art. The first appearance of the horse is in Swat, in the BMAC-derived Gandhara Grave culture; its characteristic "face urns" seem to be connected with the cult of Aśvins, the Vedic gods of chariots.

Burushaski spoken in northernmost Pakistan is a linguistic isolate, but possibly related with the Ketic languages of Siberia. There is little trace of Burushaski further south. Burushaski's arrival from the north was probably preceded by the Himalayan group of Tibeto-Burman languages, which may be connected with the Northern Neolithic of the Swat Valley and Kashmir. The Northern Neolithic had some contact with the Early Harappans but only in its own northern area.

In general the Sino-Tibetan languages always restricted to the Himalayan regions in South Asia are unlikely candidates for a genetic relationship with the Harappan language.

The Austro-Asiatic languages known from Central and Eastern India, with linguistic relatives in South-East Asia and minor participation in the linguistic convergence in South Asia, are also unlikely to have descended from the Harappan language.

The only remaining alternative among the well-known potential linguistic relatives of the Harappan language is the Dravidian language family (fig. 4).



The 26 Dravidian languages are now mainly spoken in Central and South India. However, one Dravidian language, Brahui, has been spoken in Baluchistan in the northwest for at least a thousand years, as far as the historical sources go. In contrast to Burushaski, Tibeto-Burman and Austro-Asiatic languages, which are very small minority languages in South Asia, the Dravidian speakers until recently constituted one fourth of India's population.

Loanwords from Dravidian have been identified from Indo-Aryan texts composed in northwestern India around 1100-600 BCE. These six examples are from the earliest text, the Rigveda (the capital letters are retroflex consonants, which did not exist in Proto-Indo-Iranian):

- mukham ‘face, front, mouth’ < PD *mukam ‘id.’
- khalam ‘threshing floor’ < PD *kaLam ‘id.’
- phalam ‘fruit’ < PD *paZam ‘ripe fruit’
- kuNDam ‘pit’ < PD *kuNTam ‘pit’
- kaaNa- ‘blind in one eye’ < PD *kaaNa ‘not seeing’
- kiyaambu- ‘watery plant’ < PD *kiyampu ‘taro, aroid, Colocasia’.

The retroflex consonants, a diagnostic feature of the South Asian linguistic area, can be divided into two main groups. One of them, marked with horizontal lines in the map, is distributed over the Indus Valley and the Dravidian-speaking areas.

In addition to the retroflex consonants, Indo-Aryan has several other structural features that have long been interpreted as borrowings from Dravidian. Some of them exist at the earliest level. Historical linguistics thus suggests that the Harappans probably spoke a Dravidian language. With this conclusion we turn to the problem of script type.

The type of writing system represented by the Indus script

Recent American-Pakistani excavations at Harappa with meticulous stratigraphy have produced new evidence on the evolution of the Indus script. Pottery has scratched symbols since 3300 BCE. Some of these pot-marks became signs of the Indus script, which was created during the final phase of the Early Harappan period, between 2800-2500 BCE. It is possible and indeed even probable that the Early Harappans got the idea of

writing through stimulus diffusion from the Proto-Elamites of the Iranian Plateau, but they did not copy the signs of the Proto-Elamite script. Only few specimens from this formative period are presently available. During the Mature Harappan period, the fully developed script was used without much change at all major sites. The script disappeared fairly soon after the collapse of the Indus Civilization.

Archaic Sumerian, the oldest logo-syllabic writing, mainly consists of iconic word signs or logograms occasionally complemented with rebus-based syllabic signs which also initially expressed “words”. Grammatical markers were at first ignored in writing, but were gradually introduced with the growing familiarity with phonetic signs and better ability to analyze language.

The logo-syllabic system demanded hundreds of signs. Devising the first syllabic scripts became possible around 2300 BCE, when many syllabograms were already in use in the cuneiform script. Logograms could now largely be eliminated. The Egyptian variant of logo-syllabic writing, whose rebus puns ignore vowels altogether, enabled an even more drastic reduction of graphemes. Around 1600 BCE, Semitic scribes in Egyptian-occupied Levant started writing their own language with just those phonograms of the Egyptian script that comprised a single consonant.

Logo-syllabic scripts have hundreds of graphemes, syllabic scripts manage with less than 100 and most alphabetic scripts with less than 40.

The number of known Indus signs is around 400, which agrees well with the logo-syllabic type but is too high for the script to be syllabic or alphabetic. Word divisions are not marked, but many inscriptions comprise only one, two or three signs, and longer texts can be segmented into comparable units. This is a typical word length in Sumerian-type logo-syllabic script, while in syllabic and alphabetic scripts many words require more signs. The Indus script was created before any syllabic or alphabetic script existed, so all main criteria agree in suggesting that the Indus script is a logo-syllabic writing system.

Methodology: the basic decipherment formula and initial clues

The prospects and methods of deciphering a logo-syllabic script without translations differ in some essential respects from those of syllabic and alphabetic scripts. The syllabaries and alphabets form closed systems that cover the entire phonology of the language, and can be decoded as a systemic whole. In logo-syllabic scripts, there are many more signs, and the phonetic bond between the signs is weaker. There is no chance of building such phonetic grids as in the decipherment of Linear B, and a complete decipherment of the Indus script is certainly not possible with presently available materials.

Most signs of early logo-syllabic scripts were originally pictures denoting the objects or ideas they represented. But abstract concepts such as ‘life’ would be difficult to express pictorially. Therefore the meaning of a pictogram was extended from the word for the depicted object to comprise all its homophones. In the Sumerian script the drawing of an arrow meant ‘arrow’, but in addition ‘life’ and ‘rib’, because all three words were pronounced alike in the Sumerian language, namely *ti*. Homophony is usually language-specific, and rebuses thus enable language identification and phonetic decipherment.

Individual signs of logo-syllabic scripts may be deciphered if four conditions can simultaneously be fulfilled: (1) the object depicted in a given pictogram can be recognized; (2) the said pictogram has been used as a rebus; (3) the intended rebus meaning can be deduced from the context(s); and (4) acceptably homophonous words corresponding to the pictorial and rebus meanings exist in a historically likely known language. (Method demands strictness with homophony; in the case of Proto-Dravidian, variation in the length of vowels and consonants is allowed, but not much else.)

The iconic shape of the Indus signs thus constitutes one of the chief keys to their interpretation. Unfortunately the pictorial meaning of most Indus signs is not clear. In some rare cases an iconographic motif added to an Indus inscription can suggest the intended meaning of a sign. The scene at the right end of one tablet from Mohenjo-daro (M-478) shows a human being who kneels in front of a tree and extends a V-shaped object towards it. The person apparently presents offerings to a sacred tree in what may be a pot shown in cross-section. (Fig. 5.)

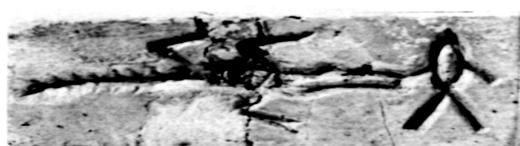


If so, the intended and iconic meanings of the V-shaped sign in the text coincide, and it can be understood directly from the pictogram. We need not know what the Harappan word for the depicted object was.

The plain 'fish' sign probably has the intended meaning 'fish' on Indus tablets such as H-902 B which seems to mention offerings of four pots of fish (fig. 6.).



In Mesopotamia fish offerings were made in temples, in India fish and meat and strong drinks were offered to godlings inhabiting sacred trees. That the signs looking like a 'fish' really have this pictorial meaning is certified by the Indus iconography, in which it is placed in the mouth of a fish-eating crocodile (fig. 7).



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But if phonetic decipherment is possible only in cases where the rebus principle has been employed, how can we locate such cases, and how can we deduce the intended rebus meanings? These are certainly among the most difficult tasks. Contextual clues include the function of inscribed artifacts. The vast majority of Indus texts are seal stamps and seal impressions. As with iconographic clues, we can use for their interpretation parallels from elsewhere, Western Asia and historical South Asia being most relevant.

A clay tag stamped with cloth impression on the reverse and with a square Indus seal on the obverse comes from Umma in Mesopotamia. The Harappans' contact with the Near East makes it highly probable that the Indus seal inscriptions chiefly contain proper names of persons with or without their occupational or official titles and descent, as do the contemporaneous Mesopotamian seal inscriptions.

Starting point: the 'fish' signs of the Indus script

In Mesopotamian and later Indian onomastics, names of gods are used to form personal names. We can expect to have theophoric components of proper names and of priestly titles in some fairly large and uniformly distributed group of signs in the Indus seals. The 'fish' sign, both plain and modified with various diacritical additions, occurs so frequently on Indus seals that almost every tenth sign belongs to this group.

Although Mesopotamian ECONOMIC texts often record rations of fish, fish is NEVER mentioned in Mesopotamian SEAL inscriptions. Yet the 'fish' sign, both plain and modified with various diacritic additions, occurs so frequently on Indus seals that almost every tenth sign belongs to this group. This suggests that at least in the Indus SEAL inscriptions, the 'fish' signs denote something else than 'fish' and are used as rebuses.

The most commonly used word for 'fish' in Dravidian languages is miin, and has the homophone miin meaning 'star'. Both words may be derivatives of the root min 'to glitter'.

Of course, one must check that the words in assumed readings are represented in more than one subgroup and can be reconstructed for Proto-Dravidian. In addition, the hypotheses must be checked against script-external evidence. Do the proposed interpretations make sense in the Harappan context, and with regard to the later South Asian tradition, and the Mesopotamian contacts?

There is some external evidence supporting the proposed Dravidian rebus reading of the 'fish' sign. The motifs fish and star co-occur on Mature Harappan painted pottery. Tamil speakers, who call these two things with the same word, have imagined the stars to be fish swimming in the ocean of night sky.

Additional support for reading the 'fish' sign as a rebus for 'star' is the absence of a sign depicting 'star' from the Indus script, although the 'star' symbol is painted and incised on Early Harappan pottery. The omission of a 'star' pictogram from the script is understandable as an economic measure, as the 'fish' sign covers the meaning 'star' as well.

The rebus meaning 'star' suits the expected meaning 'god' as a component of proper names in seal inscriptions. Whenever a god or goddess is mentioned in cuneiform texts, the pictogram of 'star' is prefixed to the name as its determinative, to indicate that

what follows is divine. In the Sumerian script, the 'star' pictogram means not only 'god' but also 'sky'. 'Star' is thought to have originally been an attribute of the sky-god An. With An as the leading divinity of the Sumerian pantheon, his symbol would then have started to mean 'god' in general. Astronomy, including the use of a star calendar, played an important role in ancient Mesopotamia, and deeply influenced the religion: all the main gods were symbolized by particular stars or planets.

In the Near East, the 'star' symbol distinguished divinities even in pictorial representations. Significantly, a seal from Mohenjo-daro depicts an Indus deity with a star on either side of his head in this Near Eastern fashion (fig. 8).



The 'fish' signs could well have been parts of Harappan proper names, for ever since Vedic times people in India have had astral names derived from their birth stars. There are indications that this kind of name-giving is of non-Aryan origin.

Methodology: Checking and verifying

The hypotheses can and must be subjected to script-internal checking in the manner of cross-word puzzles. One cannot overemphasize the importance of this operation. If we apply exactly the same assumptions and methods of interpretation to signs associated with an interpreted sign in a compound sign or in a recurring sign sequence, do we get sensible results? If yes, these provisional results must be subjected to further external checking: Are the posited compound words actually attested in Dravidian languages and not mere imagination? Particularly important is Old Tamil literature, the only ancient Dravidian source not much contaminated by Indo-Aryan languages and traditions. Interlocking of consistent readings with each other and with external linguistic data and clues constitutes the essence of all decipherments.

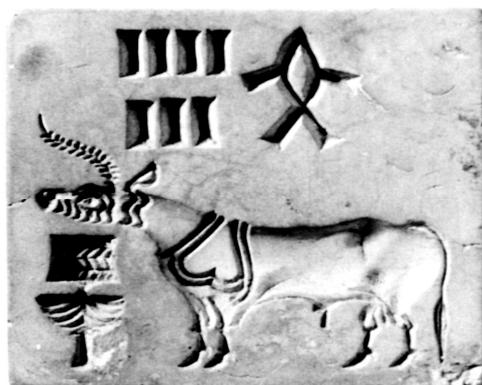
Compounds formed with 'fish' signs and Indian mythology

The numerals belong to those few Indus signs whose function and meaning can be deduced with fair certainty, partly from the fact that they consist of groups of vertical strokes, which is the way numerals are represented in many ancient scripts, partly from

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their mutual interchangeability before specific signs, including the plain 'fish'. Reading the sequence '6' + 'fish' in Dravidian yields the Old Tamil name of the Pleiades, arumiin, literally '6 stars'. Note that the numeral attribute precedes its headword in the Indus script as it did in Proto-Dravidian, but by no means in every language of the world.

'7' + 'fish' corresponds to the Old Tamil name of Ursa Major, eZu-miin. This sequence forms the entire inscription on one big seal from Harappa (H-9) (fig. 9).



In Mesopotamia big dedicatory seals were sometimes presented to divinities. The stars of Ursa Major have since Vedic times been identified with the ancient "Seven Sages". These mythical ancestors of priestly clans play an important role in early Indian mythology.

Because the Pleiades constitute the first constellation of the Vedic star calendar, its heliacal rise at the vernal equinox is thought to have marked the beginning of the New Year. This and the position of the marking stars in the sky dates the calendar to the twenty-third century BCE and suggests its Harappan origin. The Vedic people did not inherit the calendar from the Indo-Iranian tradition but adopted it in India.

Vedic texts prescribe the kindling of sacred fires under the Pleiades, because the Pleiades now have the Fire-God Agni as their mate. We are told that the Pleiades were the wives of the Seven Sages, but are now precluded from intercourse with their husbands, who divorced them. Therefore the Pleiades now rise in the east, while the Seven Sages (that is, the stars of Ursa Major) are in the north. The Fire God Agni mentioned as the mate of the Pleiades apparently represents the young vernal sun, whose conjunction with the Pleiades started the New Year.

Later Sanskrit texts tell the myth in more detail and in several variant forms. According to them, the Fire God Agni (or the great ascetic god Śiva) seduced the Pleiades in the absence of their husbands, the Seven Sages. They were divorced. Only Arundhatii, the faithful wife of Sage VasiSTha, could not be seduced. She could remain as the star Alcor with her husband, the star Mizar of Ursa Major (see fig. 13).

This is really one of the central myths of the Hindu religion. In a Puranic version, God Śiva seduced six of the wives of the absent Seven Sages in their Himalayan hermitage. The Sages cursed Śiva's phallus to fall down. The phallus started to burn the world and stopped only when the Sages placed it on a vulva-shaped platform and worshipped it

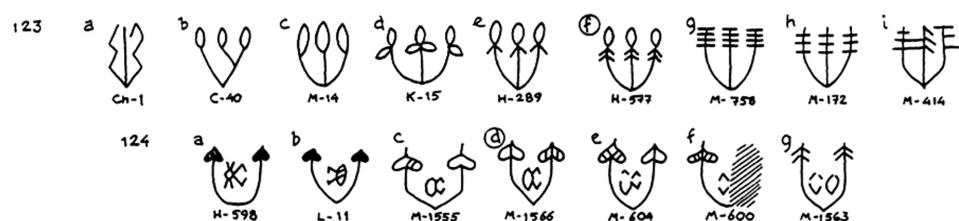
with cooling water-libations. This is how the cult of Śiva's linga or phallus originated. Śiva, one of the greatest gods of Hinduism, has mostly the phallus as his cult icon since the earliest historical times. Śiva's Vedic predecessor Rudra is thought to be of non-Aryan origin. In Vedic texts, Rudra is euphemistically called śiva 'benign', and equated with the Fire god Agni as is Śiva in the Pleiades myth.

Banyan fig and the pole star

One recurring sign sequence with the plain 'fish' sign as its latter member begins with a sign whose iconic meaning seems to be 'fig tree' (fig. 10). Can we here too have a Dravidian astral term?



The iconic interpretation as 'fig' is based on a comparison with Harappan painted pottery. In the script, the fig tree is shown as three-branched, just as on the painted pottery, except when another sign is placed inside it; then the central 'branch' is omitted. In the combined sign, the branches end in fig leaves as they do on the painted pottery, but in the basic sign with less space the fig leaves are simplified, and one or two down-going lines are sometimes added beneath the leaves on either side; in some variants three or four such lines replace the leaves altogether. (Fig. 11.)



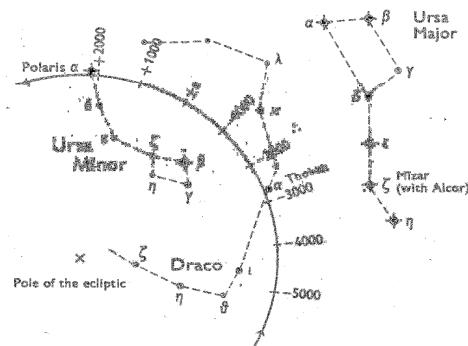
The 'three-branched fig tree' motif occurs on Harappan pottery from the Early through the Mature to the Late phase. In one variant from the time when the Indus script was created, four strokes are attached to either side of the middle stem (fig. 12).

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They are similar to the strokes of the Indus sign, except for their upward direction, which may be due to the direction of the two lower stems. The strokes seem to represent the air-root of the banyan fig.

The rope-like air-roots are characteristic of the banyan fig, *Ficus bengalensis* or *Ficus indica*. This mighty tree is native to South Asia and does not grow in the parts where the Indo-Aryan speakers came from. A post-Vedic Sanskrit name for the banyan fig is *vaTa*. This is a Dravidian loanword, ultimately derived from Proto-Dravidian *vaTam* meaning 'rope or cord'. As a name of the banyan fig, *vaTam* is short for the compound *vaTa-maram*, 'rope-tree', which is attested in Tamil. *VaTam* 'banyan' has a Proto-Dravidian homophone *vaTa* 'north or northern'. This yields the expected astral meaning to the sign sequence 'fig' + 'fish'. *VaTa-miin* 'north star' is attested in Old Tamil as the name of the star Alcor in Ursa Major (fig. 13).



In Old Tamil texts, vaTa-miin is a symbol of marital fidelity and this star is pointed out to the bride as an object of emulation during the wedding. Originally vaTa-miin probably denoted the pole star, which in the third millennium was the nearby star Thuban. The pole star is the 'immobile' centre of the rotating heavens, and called in Sanskrit dhruva, 'fixed, firm, immovable, constant'. It is a fitting symbol of firm fidelity, and indeed in Vedic marriage ritual the pole star is pointed out to the bride as a model in addition to Arundhati.

This interpretation explains in a new way some peculiar cosmological conceptions. In the first place, the Sanskrit texts mention the banyan fig as the tree of the northern direction. Homonymy connects the banyan with north in Dravidian, but there is no such linguistic association in Indo-Aryan languages. Secondly, in reply to the question, why do the stars and planets not fall down from the sky, the texts say that the heavenly bodies are bound to the pole star with invisible 'ropes of wind'. In Dravidian vaTa-miin as the name of the pole star also means 'rope-star' and 'banyan-star'. Around 1000 BCE, a late hymn of the Rigveda (1,24,7) speaks of the roots of a cosmic banyan tree being held up in the sky by God VaruNa.

The Vedic and Hindu texts repeatedly refer to heavenly fig tree. This conception seems to be reflected on an Indus tablet, which depicts an anthropomorphic deity inside a fig tree. At bottom the fig tree is flanked on either side by a star (fig. 14). They suggest a heavenly connection for the tree.

Identifying Murukan's name in the Indus texts

If the Harappan language was Dravidian, the Old Tamil literature assumes great importance in the study of the Indus religion. It is the only source granting us glimpses into the culture that prevailed among Dravidian speakers before their language and traditions became much contaminated with Indo-Aryan languages and traditions.

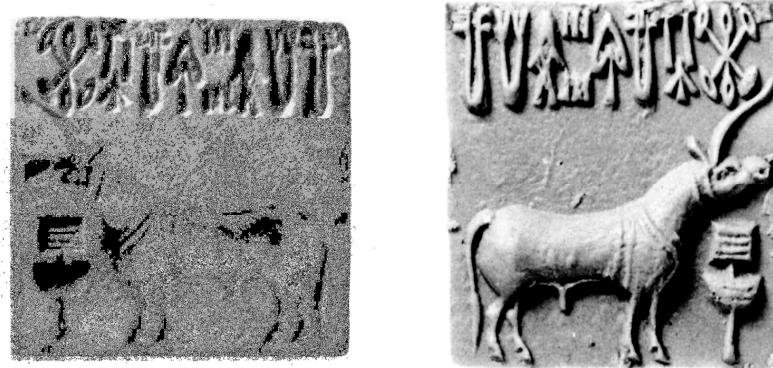
The principal native deity of the Old Tamil pantheon is a youthful god of war and love, in many respects resembling the North Indian war-god Skanda and early on explicitly identified with him. This god has various native Dravidian names, but the most important is Muruku or Murukan, which means 'youth, young man'. Skanda's Vedic predecessor Rudra is represented as a newborn baby and called in Sanskrit Kumaara, 'young boy, young man', an exact synonym of Murukan.

Both Vedic and epic myths of Rudra's or Skanda's birth mention the Pleiades, in Sanskrit krttiakaah, as the mothers or nurses of Rudra or Skanda, whose metronym therefore is Kaarttikeya; in late Old Tamil and Medieval Tamil texts Murukan is called aru-miin kaatalan 'son or beloved of the Pleiades'. Both Murukan and Rudra-Skanda are connected with the colour red and the rising sun. One reality behind the myth of Rudra's birth seems to be the sun's heliacal rise in the Pleiades, which marked the beginning of the New Year.

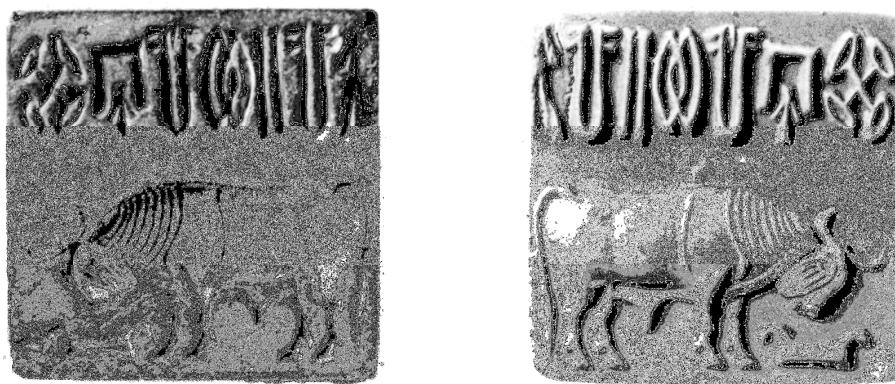
It seems possible that Murukan and Rudra-Skanda are both descended from a Proto-Dravidian deity and that this god is mentioned in the Indus inscriptions. But how to locate his name or names in the texts if we cannot read the script? The most reliable clue seems to be his association with the Pleiades, because the Pleiades can be identified in the Indus texts: their Old Tamil name aru-miin 'six-star' corresponds to the sign sequence '6' + 'fish'.

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One particular context where '6' + 'fish' occurs is a seal from Mohenjo-daro (M-112). The first three signs of this seal possibly denote an epithet. (Fig. 15.)



They recur in this same order in one other text only, another seal from Mohenjo-daro (M-241). The first sign has here a variant shape. (Fig. 16.)

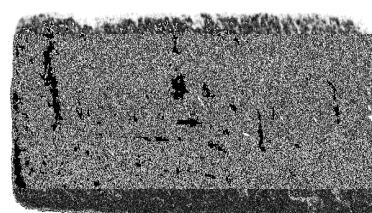


In passing I would like to introduce here an interpretation of this sign not included in my 1994 book. It seems to depict the traditional Indian spinner's spindle, i.e. the instrument used to spin threads from cotton. The cotton-cultivating Harappans must have had the spindle. In Proto-Dravidian it was called katir, which is homophonous with the root katir 'to shine, be radiant', often occurring in Old Tamil poems in connection with Murukan, who is associated with the rising sun. The sun is called in Old Tamil katir-k-kaTavuL, 'radiant deity'.

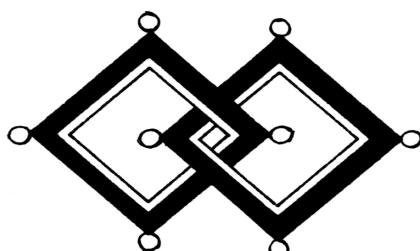
In any case, the two first signs both occur very infrequently, which makes their co-occurrence in these two texts significant. Therefore, the immediately following sequence in the second seal, the signs 'two intersecting circles' + 'two long vertical strokes', may be a name of Murukan, because it corresponds to a sequence in the first seal that includes '6' + 'fish', i.e. the name of the Pleiades. The identified sequence oc-



curs very frequently in Indus inscriptions, and some contexts strongly suggest that it refers to a deity. For example, it occurs on the obverse side of amulets whose reverse sides show an anthropomorphic deity sitting on a throne, surrounded by a kneeling worshipper and a snake on either side. (Fig. 17ab.) In South India, Murukan is associated with snake cult.



If the sign of 'two intersecting circles' expresses an ancient Dravidian name of Murukan, or a part of his name, the most obvious choice is Old Tamil muruku, 'young man', which has cognates in many South and Central Dravidian languages. This word has an exact and ancient homophone, whose meaning strikingly fits the form of the pictogram involved, namely muruku, 'ring, ear-ring, bangle' derived from the Dravidian verbal root *murV 'to bend or to be bent'. (Similarly, Proto-Dravidian *vaLay 'ring, circle, bracelet' comes from the root vaLay 'to bend or to be bent, be curved, turn around, surround, enclose'.) The idea of 'ring', of course, could be expressed by means of a single circle, but this could be interpreted in various other ways as well. But ear-rings are usually worn in pairs, one in each ear. This pictorial interpretation of the sign of 'intersecting circles' is supported by its formal identity with a symbol that in the traditional Tibetan Buddhist art represents royal ear-rings (fig. 18). The sign could also depict the ear with its ear-ring.



Muruku and the bangle cult

Besides 'ear-ring', the word muruku in Dravidian languages denotes 'arm-ring, bangle'. The meaning 'bangle' is endorsed by the disproportionately high frequency of the pictogram on the 40 or more inscribed Harappan 'stoneware' bangles. Several of these bangle inscriptions in fact contain nothing but the sign of 'intersecting circles'. It is not unusual for ancient inscriptions carved on various objects to mention the name of the object concerned, especially when given as votive offerings. These stoneware bangles were manufactured with a very difficult and expensive process, and they must have been prohibi-

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tively expensive. This is suggested by the fact that the saggars in which these bangles were heated were carefully sealed and stamped to prevent stealing. On a votive bangle, this pictogram could denote the Dravidian word muruku not only in the sense of 'bangle' but also in the sense of a 'boy child' wished for by the donor of the votive bangle. The homophony alone could make a bangle an appropriate gift in sympathetic fertility magic. But is there any factual evidence for such a usage?

The bangle has a strong association with pregnancy in many parts of India. During pregnancy and childbirth, the mother and baby are both in great danger of being attacked by demons. In Tamil Nadu, in the fifth or seventh month after the conception of the first pregnancy, the expectant mother is ritually adorned with bangles and blessed by older women. The bangles symbolize an enclosed circle of protection.

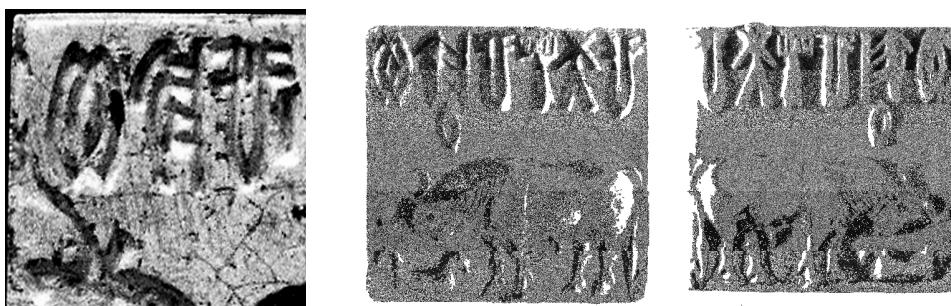
Bangles and rings are connected with pregnancy not only as protective amulets but also as charms effecting reproduction. Such a practice is attested as early as around 1000 BCE, in Atharvaveda 6,81, a three-versed hymn addressed to pari-hasta, 'bracelet', literally 'what is around the arm'. The bracelet is fastened upon a woman 'intending that she shall beget a son', as a charm that drives off the demons, opens up the womb and brings an embryo into it. In Indian folk religion, pregnancy bangles are offered to tree spirits or hung on sacred trees. William Crooke reports that at Allahabad, near the tomb of a Muslim saint, is

a very old, large Champa tree (*Michelia champaka*), the branches of which are hung with glass bangles. 'Those anxious to have children come and offer the saint bangles, 7, 11, 13, 21, 29, or 126, according to their means and importunity. If the saint favours their wish, the Champa tree snatches up the bangles and wears them on its arms.' (William Crooke, Religion and Folklore of northern India, 1926, p. 417)

In Karnataka, bangles are similarly offered to the Hindu goddess Ellamma (a form of Durgaa) by women wishing to become pregnant. This widespread folk custom is likely to go back to Harappan traditions. The deity standing inside the fig tree in a famous seal from Mohenjo-daro wears bangles on both arms. The seven anthropomorphic figures at the bottom of this seal, wearing their hair in the traditional fashion of Indian women, are likely to be female and to represent the 'Seven Mothers', the Pleiades, famous as child-granting and child-killing goddesses like their son Skanda. (Fig. 19.)



Several Harappan tablets illustrate worshippers kneeling in front of sacred trees and presenting offerings to them. The Buddhist Jaataka texts show that such worship of trees, especially to obtain children, was an important part of early historical folk religion, and tree spirits continue to be among the principal divinities that the Indians approach for getting children. In Bengal, the goddess SaSThii who presides over childbirth is worshipped under the banyan tree in the form of a cat made of rice paste, and bangles made of rice paste are presented to her. Thus it does not seem farfetched to read the sign of 'intersecting circles' on Harappan bangles as Dravidian muruku and to understand it to denote 'bangle' as well as 'boy child' and the proper name of the child-granting divinity, himself the divine child par excellence. Even today in Tamil Nadu, many couples desiring a male child make a pilgrimage to a famous shrine of Murukan and, after the birth, name their son after the god.



PiLLai 'young' as an attribute of the squirrel and of Muruku



The sign of 'intersecting circles' is three times (on a seal from Nausharo, M-1202 and H-771, fig. 20abc) followed by a complex sign, whose pictorial shape can be understood on the basis of a seal from Nindowari (fig. 21). It depicts the five-striped palm squirrel, which is found everywhere in the Indus Valley and is represented among the Harappan animal figurines. In the Indus sign the animal is represented with its tail up and head down, and its four feet cling to a long vertical stroke that can hardly represent anything else than a tree. The creators of the Indus script have tried to secure the identification by depicting the animal in its typical pose, for "in cool weather, the squirrels ... hang head down in the sun on the vertical trunk of a tree for considerable periods" (T. J. Roberts, *The mammals of Pakistan*, 1977, p. 228).

In Tamil, the striped palm squirrel is called aNil or aNil piLLai. In the latter expression, the word piLLai means 'child, infant, son, boy' as well as 'young of animals and trees'. In the case of the squirrel, parrot and mongoose, the word piLLai is added to the basic word in order to form an affectionate deminutive, and the word piLLai can also alone refer to the animal concerned. This Tamil usage of piLLai in the meaning of 'squirrel' goes back to Proto-Dravidian, for Central Dravidian preserves cognates of piL-Lai meaning 'squirrel'. This word is similarly added to the various names of the god Muruku to form affectionate variants that are popular as male proper names in Jaffna Tamil, and these names include Muruka-p-piLLa. Thus the compound sequence we are considering, 'intersecting circles' and 'palm squirrel', is matched by an actually attested Tamil compound.

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Murukan's name and the planet Venus: a case for cross-checking

Another possibility for verifying the reading muruku is to try and interpret the sign of 'two long vertical strokes' which is frequently postfixed to the sign of 'intersecting circles' (fig. 22). Actually this sign makes a double cross-check possible, for it also often precedes the 'plain fish' sign (fig. 23).



How can we read the pictogram of 'two long vertical strokes'? Such a simplified symbol lends itself to various pictorial interpretations, and it would be difficult to decide which of them, if any, is correct. But the tentative readings for 'two intersecting circles' and 'fish' enable a different approach. We can collect, first, all actually attested composite names of the god Murukan that start with the word muruku, and, secondly, all actually attested compounds denoting either stars or fish which end in the word miin. We are looking for two Dravidian compounds in which the missing component X (muruku-X and X-miin) is the same. If such a shared member should be found in these two very limited groups of actual compounds, the solution can be further tested by asking whether its meaning(s) will adequately explain the pictorial shape 'two long vertical strokes'.

To start with the names of the Old Tamil war-god, the best match for the sequence is the compound Muruka-veeL. The component veeL occurs in the same position in several other names of Murukan as well: besides Kanta-veeL and Kumara-veeL, in which the first members Kanta and Kumara are derived from Sanskrit Skanda and Kumara, Murukan is often called in Old Tamil Ce-v-veeL, with Dravidian *ke- 'red'. VeeL 'desire' even occurs alone as the name of Murukan, who is not only the god of war but the god of love and sex as well.

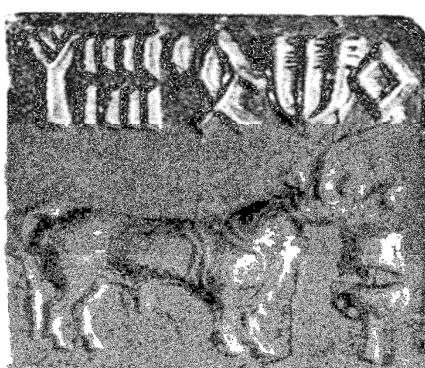
From Murukan's name we now turn to astronomical terms. The word for 'white' with the widest distribution in Dravidian languages is veL, a close homophone of Murukan's name VeeL. The compound veN-miin (< veL + miin) 'white (or bright) star' is known from Old Tamil as the name of the planet Venus, the brightest star of the morning and evening sky. The noun veLLi, derived from the root veL 'to be white or bright', denotes 'Venus' in several Dravidian languages, and the compound veLLi-miin occurs in Tamil.

The phonetic shape veL / veeL has thus emerged as the shared component X in the compounds Muruku-X and X-miin. This intended meaning of the sign 'two long vertical strokes' is homophonous with Proto-Dravidian veLi 'open or public space, space (in general)' and 'intervening space', i.e. the atmosphere between heaven and earth (Sanskrit antarikSa). 'Intervening space, atmosphere' could be the pictorial meaning of the sign, for on the basis of various other evidence it seems likely that the sign consisting of three long vertical strokes denotes 'the three worlds'. Another attested meaning for veLi is

'space between two furrows' in ploughing, which also fits well the 'two long vertical strokes'.

Additional cross-checking

The sign 'two long vertical strokes' is used in the Indus script not only as an attribute of the 'fish' pictogram, namely in the compound 'two long vertical strokes' + 'fish' = veL / veLLi + miin 'white star' = 'Venus', but also a synonym of the 'fish' sign. The synonymous usage can be observed by comparing two inscriptions, M-172 (fig. 24) and H-6 (fig. 25). The two signs, the plain 'fish' and the 'two long vertical strokes', both occur as the second member of a compound after one and the same first member. Identity of meaning is suggested by the fact that both compounds are embedded in the same context, which includes the preceding as well as the following sign. The matter is complicated by the fact that three graphemes in this sequence of four signs have variant forms (allographs) in the two inscriptions.



It is striking that this double usage of the 'two long vertical strokes' happens to agree with the semantics of the word veLLi, which offer yet another support to this interpretation of the sign 'two long vertical strokes'. In Tamil, at least, veLLi means not only 'Venus', but also 'star' in general. Two renderings for English 'star' in Chettiar's English-Tamil dictionary are viN-miin and vaan-veLLi. Here the words viN and vaan, both meaning 'sky', have been prefixed to miin and veLLi 'star', in order to avoid confusion with homonyms, such as miin 'fish'. The word veLLi meaning 'star' also occurs in other compounds as a synonym of miin. Thus both viTi-veLLi and viTi-miin are used in Tamil for 'the star of the dawn, Venus' (the first member veTi / viTi means 'to dawn, break as the day').

Future prospects

Thus there is a fair number of consistent rebus interpretations which interlock with each other and with external linguistic and cultural data to an extent that excludes chance coincidences. These readings have been achieved with strictly adhered methodology which is in full agreement with the history of writing, methods of decipherment, and historical linguistics, including the comparative study of Dravidian languages. The readings are based on reasonable identifications of the signs' pictorial shapes. Moreover, the results make good sense in the framework of ancient Indian cultural history and the Harappan context, and they keep within narrow limits: fertility cult connected with fig trees, a cen-

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tral Hindu myth associated with astronomy and time-reckoning, and chief deities of Hindu and Old Tamil religion.

For all these reasons, I am confident than an opening to the secrets of the Indus script has been achieved: we know that the underlying language was Proto-Dravidian and we know how the script functions. The confirmed interpretations and their wider contexts provide a lot of clues for progress, but there are some serious difficulties on the way. One is the schematic shape of many signs, which makes it difficult to recognize their pictorial meaning with certainty. Possibilities of proposing likely readings and their effective checking are severely limited by our defective knowledge of Proto-Dravidian vocabulary, compounds and phraseology.

I hope that at this stage scholars who speak Tamil and other Dravidian languages as their mother tongue will actively participate in this exercise and develop it further. The problem of the Indus script resembles to some extent that of the logo-syllabic Maya script, where advance was phenomenal once native Mayan speakers were trained in the methods of decipherment. Laymen, too, can make useful contributions in suggesting possible pictorial meanings for the Indus signs, and here there is no need to be a Dravidian speaker - but good acquaintance with the realities of Indian culture and South Asian nature is definitely an advantage. All such suggestions that hopefully will be forthcoming from Tamil people could perhaps be coordinated by the Indus Research Centre established by Dr Iravatham Mahadevan at the Roja Muthiah Research Library at Chennai. Perhaps the Centre might make them available in the internet.

What I have presented here, and many other aspects of the Indus script not mentioned here, including further interpretations based on the same premisses and supporting the above results, are available with full documentation, references and illustrations in my book Deciphering the Indus Script (1994) and in other publications by myself and my colleagues, detailed in the following bibliography. The paper which I present later in this conference deals with some very recent developments.

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He taught at the University of Wisconsin–Madison before joining the faculty at Berkeley. He has studied Latin and Greek as well as several modern European and Indian languages. He has been a Berkeley faculty member since 1973. He was promoted to full professor in 1981. A Harvard B.A. (1964), M.A. (1967) and Ph.D. (1970), Professor Hart is a graduate of the Department of Sanskrit and Indian Studies, where his studies included both Tamil and Sanskrit. At Berkeley Professor Hart has developed the

Tamil program of language, literature and cultural studies to be the most important of its kind in North America.

Professor Hart is the author of textbooks for both Tamil and Sanskrit, and of translations of classical Tamil poetry, and the Tamil Ramayana of Kampan. George Hart is married to Tamil lecturer Kausalya Hart who is also an author of several Tamil language textbooks. Hart is best-known for his translations of several Tamil works into English and for asserting that Tamil should be classified as a classical language. His list of publications include *A Tamil Primer* (1970), *The Poems of Ancient Tamil: Their Milieu and Their Sanskrit Counterparts* (1975), *Poets of the Tamil Anthologies: Ancient Poems of Love and War* (1979), *Beginning Tamil* (Co-author: Kausalya Hart) (1982), *A Rapid Sanskrit Method* (1984), *The Forest Book of the Rāmāyaṇā of Kampan* (With Hank Heifetz) (1988) and *The Puranāñūru, translated and annotated* (with Hank Heifetz) (1999). He has published a large number of research papers. He has also contributed reviews in several journals including the *Journal of Asian Studies*, *Journal of the American Oriental Society*, *The Indo-Iranian Journal*.

Presently he is involved in making annotated translations with extensive introductions of two important early Tamil anthologies dating from the first two centuries CE—the Akanāñūru and the Patiruppattu, as these are seminal works for those interested in the development of South Asian literatures and cultures and they are among the finest literature produced in South Asia (or anywhere).

In 2002, Hart, along with co-author Hank Heifetz, received the AAS South Asia Council (SAC) Ramanujan Book Prize for translation of *Puranāñūru*. The honours, prizes and awards he won include the following: 1977: a grant by the Office of Education to rewrite A Tamil Primer; 1980: a 3-year grant by the National Endowment

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for the Humanities to translate part of the Tamil Ramayana; 1980: Poets of the Tamil Anthologies nominated for the best translation, The American Book Award; 1985-86: computer grants from Apple Computer for the development of South Asian scripts for the Macintosh; 1996: Appointed holder of Chair in Tamil Studies; 2001: Reappointed holder of Chair in Tamil Studies; 2002 Winner, 2002 Ramanujan Prize for Translation; 2006 Iyal award for lifetime achievement in Tamil studies from the University of Toronto Published Writings and Writings in Press; 2010 Kural Peedam Award, Central Institute of Classical Tamil, Ministry of Human Resources Development, Government of India. It is noteworthy that he is the first recipient of the Kural Peedam Award.

The Uniqueness of Classical Tamil

GEORGE HART

I want to speak today about why Tamil is a classical language and what makes it unique and critically important for the study of South Asian and world literature. While all here know that Tamil is a true classical language, there are many outside Tamil Nadu, both in India and the West, who have questioned this fact. As many of you are aware, quite some time ago, I wrote a letter setting forth reasons why Tamil is classical. This letter, which was quite short and hardly ground-breaking, nonetheless had a small role in the Indian government's decision to grant Tamil classical status. I would like to take this opportunity to expand on what I said in that letter, to describe not only why Tamil is a classical language, but why it is both important and unique in world literature.

The languages of South Asia, with one exception, derive their traditions from Sanskrit or Persian/Arabic. Their oldest literatures are based on the literatures of these languages and when they want to coin new words, it is to those languages that they turn. The exception to this pattern is Tamil. In the beginning, Tamil, like most other classical literatures, developed from an oral culture. We can see many traces of oral provenance in Sangam literature, as the poets who wrote it clearly copied the works of oral bards (Pāṇaiyans, Kīṇaiyans and the like). While the Sangam poets were aware of the Sanskrit epics, they did not imitate them and only referred to them a few times. They made no attempt whatsoever to mine Sanskrit for conventions or ideas; the literary world of the Sangam poets was shaped by the oral heritage of Tamil and also by elements that took shape as the poetry was created. As a result, Sangam literature is entirely independent of Sanskrit and follows its own rules and traditions. In this, it contrasts with all other South Asian literatures except Sanskrit. This situation is reflected in the vocabulary used by the classical Tamil poets. It has been estimated that only 2% of its words are of Indo-Aryan, often Prakrit, origin. This is comparable to the percentage as Dravidian words in the *Rig Veda*. The next-oldest South

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Asian literature, Kannada, uses well over 50% Sanskrit words in its earliest inscriptions, and its oldest work of literature, the *Kavirājamārga*, bases itself entirely on Dandin's *Kāvyādarśa* and takes the great preponderance of its vocabulary unchanged from Sanskrit.

In addition to having the only independent literary tradition in South Asia, Tamil also has the oldest literature of any language except Sanskrit. In dating Sangam literature, we can rely on many complementary methods and derive a time period that is, I believe, unassailable. This is not the place to present the evidence in detail, but a short list includes historical material described in the poems, the famous Gajabāhu synchronism, the language (grammatical forms and syntax) of the poems, the nature of Indo-Aryan borrowings, the names in the poems and the relative chronology of the poets and kings, the description of customs (such as inscribing the *naṭu kal*) that have been confirmed by archeology, and finally the clear position of the poems as preceding other works like the *Cilappatikāram*. This evidence points conclusively to the first to the third century of the common era as the time when the bulk of the Sangam poems was written. This is at least 600 years before literature developed in Kannada.

While other South Asian traditions look to Sanskrit, Tamil has always looked to its own literary tradition as crystallized in the Sangam anthologies. It is true that in later times, Sanskrit began to exert considerable influence on Tamil, yet I would argue that in spite of this, Tamil literature has always been indebted to its beginnings. The anthologies of classical Tamil form a sort of template for expression, feeling, and the use of language for later writers, just as the Vedas and Upaniṣads did for later Sanskrit writers. The “classical” status of both Tamil and Sanskrit is due to their age, their independent traditions, and to the richness and extent of their literatures, which mirror both their age and their independence. Because of their separate beginnings and histories, the two literatures are radically different in their focus and in the ways they conceive the world, though as time went on, each influenced the other and each took many elements from the other. In the rest of this paper, I will consider how the earliest literature of each of these two classical languages has shaped their development and given them different trajectories. It is sometimes said that Sanskrit and Tamil are the two eyes of Siva. As we will see, this notion is based not merely on the fact that the two languages are different, but on the fact that they have very different and complementary ways of viewing the world. In order to understand the perspective that old Tamil takes on the world, it is useful—and, given the subsequent history of contact between the northern and

southern traditions necessary—to devote some space to Sanskrit and its development.

The oldest literature we have in South Asia that we can read is the *Rig Veda*, a compendium of 1028 magical hymns that were composed over a period of centuries beginning perhaps as early as the 14th century BCE. The people who created these hymns (they were not written down until much later) were concerned with controlling their environment. As is common with archaic peoples, they used magical means to do so. Magic, of course, involves the use of a simulacrum—controlling something one has power over in order to influence something over which one does not. The Vedic people saw natural forces as the manifestation of certain gods and attempted to control them with ritual, a central part of which was the powerful words of the hymns they devised. The Rig Veda reveals how complex and intricate this sacred geography was. One famous hymn is addressed to Indra, the Vedic god of war. From it, we can gain some insight into how its creators saw the world. Here are some of the stanzas of this hymn.

RV 1.32

1. índrasya nú vīrīyāṇi prá vocaṇi yāni cakāra prathamāni vajrī
áhann áhim ánu apás tatarda prá vakṣáṇā abhinat párvatānām

Now I will speak of Indra's strong acts that he did at the beginning of time, he who holds the thunder.

He killed the snake, he let the waters loose, he split apart the bellies of mountains.

4. yád indrāhan prathamajām áhīnām ān māyīnām ámināḥ protá māyāḥ
āt sūriyam janáyan dyām uśāsam tādītnā sátrum ná kílā vivitse

When you killed that snake, Indra, who was the first to be born of all snakes, just then you defeated the tricks of dishonest creatures.

Just then you made the sun appear, the day, the dawn, for there was no one to conquer you.

8. nadám ná bhinnám amuyā śáyānam máno rúhāṇā áti yanti āpah
yāś cid vṛtró mahinā paryátishat tāsām áhiḥ patsutahśīr babhūva

He lies like a broken reed. The waters that climb the heart flow by him.

Those waters that Vātra had surrounded when he was strong, he, the snake, lay at their feet.

13. nāsmai vidyún ná tanyatúḥ siṣedha ná yām míham ákirad dhrādúnim

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ca

índraś ca yád yuyudhāte áhiś ca utāparībhyo maghávā ví jīgye

The lightning and thunder were no use to him, the mist and hail he scattered were useless.

When Indra and the snake fought each other, then for all futures he who rewards attained victory.

There are several things to note here. First, the hymn seems to be intended to accompany a reenactment of the myth of Indra killing the demon Vṛtra and releasing the waters that make the earth fertile. As such, it references—and, I believe, enters—primordial time, a time that takes place outside of ordinary time. That is why the word “*prathamāni*,” “first,” is used in the first stanza, why the snake is said to be the first-born of all snakes in stanza 4 and why the victory of Indra is said to be operative “in all futures.” We also see a tendency of the Vedic people to see their gods present in all of nature—the waters that climb the heart (or mind).

As time went on, the Vedic people settled and began to speculate on the mechanisms of their belief system. Why and how did the rituals and magical incantations of the Vedas influence nature? What was the connection? Understanding this would surely help in performing efficacious rituals and, perhaps, devising new ones. As this speculation proceeded, people naturally began to think in more and more abstract terms, culminating toward the end of the Vedic period (900 BCE?) in hymns like the famous creation hymn, the *Nāsadiya Sūkta* (RV 10.129).

1. nāsad āśin nó sád āśit tadānīm nāśid rájo nó víomā paró yát
kím āvarīvaḥ kúha kásya śármann ámbhaḥ kím āśid gáhanam gabhīrám
Then there was no existence, no non-existence.

There was no air then, no heavens beyond the air.

What covered it over? Where was it? Who kept it?

Was their cosmic water then, with unmeasurable depths?

6. kó addhā veda ká ihá prá vocat kúta ājātā kúta iyám vísr̥ṣṭih
arvāg devā asyá visárjanena áthā kó veda yáta ābabhūva
But who really knows, who can say where it all
came from, how creation came about. The gods themselves
are after creation; who knows really

where it all came from?

7. iyám vísr̄stir yáta ābabhūva yádi vā dadhé yádi vā ná
yó asyādhyakṣah paramé vioman só aṅgá veda yádi vā ná véda
Where creation came from, whether it was
made or it was not, only He knows who
looks over it from the highest heaven, unless
even he does not know.

It is notable that the composer of this hymn can say something as abstract and unfathomable as “there was no existence, no non-existence.” It is impossible not to wonder at the ability to think abstractly of these archaic people; but at the same time, one notes the way in which abstraction distances the poet from normal, concrete reality.

As time went on, another current came into Indian thought, carried by the Buddhists, Jains and the Upaniṣads. If the Vedas see the ordinary world as a playground of all the gods and many other sacred forces, the new thought saw human activity as something that leads to rebirth and misery and sought ways to avoid acting in order to escape *samsāra*. For the Vedic people, ordinary, concrete life was overlaid by gods and myth, and they tended to see the natural, concrete world through their belief system. For the new thought, concerned with escaping the world, all human action was binding and one's concern should be with entering some interior space that is eternal, unchanging, and not affected by the outer world. This is beautifully expressed by Bharṭhari (4th century CE?) in a poem from his *Vairāgya Śataka*.

dhanyānām girikandareṣu vasatām jyotiḥ param dhyāyatām
ānandāśrukaṇān pibanti śakunā niḥśāṇkam ar̄keśayāḥ
asmākam tu manorathoparicitaprāsādavāpītata-
krīḍākānanakelikautukajusām āyuh param kṣiyate.
Meditating on the supreme light in their mountain
caves, men sit who are truly rich
and Śakuna birds resting on their thighs without
fear drink their tears of joy
but we pass away our whole lives, enjoying our
hunger for amusement,

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for the pleasure groves and shores of ponds
and the palaces our wishes build.

Here, we see the poet dismissing ordinary, everyday reality as something false and leading to misery, while he elevates the man who sits by himself and is entirely uninvolved in the world.

Finally, let us look at how the last of the great Sanskrit *alarikārikas*, Jagannātha (17th century), begins his major work, the *Rasagarīgādhara*.

ramanīyārthapratipādakah śabdaḥ kāvyam.
ramanīyatā ca lokottarāhlādajanakajñānagocaratā.
lokottaratvam cāhlādagataś camatkāratvāparaparyāyo 'nubhavasākṣiko
jātivīśeṣah.

Poetry (*kāvya*) is sound that produces a beautiful meaning.

And beauty is something that is part of knowledge that gives rise to other-worldly delight.

And other-worldliness is a kind of thing (*jāti*) that is known when one experiences it and that goes with delight and is also called charmingness (*camatkāratvā*).

This tells us quite clearly that the Sanskrit poet is concerned with transporting the reader into an imaginary, fanciful world that produces happiness or bliss. Certainly, when we look at the major works of Sanskrit *kāvya*, virtually all involve a mythological or fanciful setting. Even in the Sanskrit plays that appear to concern real people, as in Kālidāsa's *Mālavikāgnimitram* or Śūdraka's *Mṛccatikam*, the subject matter is elevated (concerning the royal court) and imaginary. But by far the great majority of Sanskrit literary works, whether *kāvya* or plays, concern mythological subjects. It's worth noting that the state of bliss one achieves through literature was transferred to the experience of God by such important writers as Abhinavagupta.

Many will contend that it is impossible to characterize a literature as vast and inclusive as Sanskrit in such a short scope. Certainly, it is not my intention to describe everything in that language. Nonetheless, I would argue that a concern with the fanciful and other-worldly distinguishes the major works of the language, as it characterizes its writing about esthetics. The aim of a Sanskrit writer is not to connect his reader with ordinary life, but rather to lift him out of the morass of everyday existence into a world in which things are esthetically refined, perfect, and unreal. Even *rasas* like *kāruṇyam* or *bhayānakam* exist in a sort of alternate reality in which their negative qualities are transformed into

delight. It is worth noting that the refined nature of Sanskrit literature reflects the language itself, whose name means “refined” and which contrasts with Prakrit, “common.” An elitist bias runs through much of Sanskrit literature, as Kosambe pointed out in his introduction to the *Subhāṣitaratnakōśa*. While Kosambe sees this in a negative light, I would suggest that the best of the Sanskrit writers created a rarified and beautiful ambiance with consummate skill. However one feels about the matter, it cannot be denied that the otherworldly and imaginary are almost omnipresent in Sanskrit literary works.

When we come to Tamil Sangam literature, we encounter a radically different situation. Let us first look at some *akam* poems. It is possible to argue that these poems are fanciful, as their characters are conventional, not real people. Yet the *akam* poems describe village life in great detail and with enormous sensitivity. The descriptions of flora and fauna are often so concrete that one can visualize flowers or animals in full detail. And, as we will see below, *akam* poems often tie themselves to real people and historical events. Let us begin by looking at *Akanāñūru* 140, a *neytal* poem that invokes the seashore.

பெருங் கடல் வேட்டத்துச் சிறுகுடிப் பரதவர்
 இருங் கழிச் செறுவின் உழானது செய்த
 வெண் கல் உப்பின் கொள்ளை சாற்றி
 என்றாழ் விடர குன்றம் போகும்
 கதழ் கோல் உமணைர் காதல் மடமகள்
 சில் கோல் எல் வளை தெளிர்ப்ப வீசி
 “நெல்லின் நேர் ஏ வெண் கல் உப்பு” என
 சேரி விலைமாறு கூறுவின், மனைய
 விளி அறி ஞுமலி குரைப்ப, வெர்ணிய
 மதர் கயல் மலைப்பின் அன்ன கண் எமக்கு.
 இதை முயல் புனவன் புகை நிழல் கடுக்கும்
 மா முது அள்ளல் அமுந்திய சாகாட்டு
 எவ்வும் தீர வார்க்கும் தந்தை
 கை பூண் பகட்டின் வருந்தி,
 வெய்ய உயிர்க்கும் நோய் ஆகின்றே

- அம்முவனார் 140 Neytal

The hero who has joined with he heroine in the first meeting brought about by fate [*iyarkaip punarcci*] speaks to his charioteer.

The fishermen from the village who hunt the great sea
 get white rock salt without plowing from the mud of the large backwater.

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Shouting out the price, salt merchants use sticks
 to drive their oxen over hills cracked in the hot sun
 and their young daughter, walking and jingling her few bangles,
 glistening and decorated with lines, cries out the price in the town—
 “Equal measure of white rock salt for rice!”
 The dog of one of the houses, not knowing her voice, barks,
 and her eyes, like two proud kayal fish fighting together,
 are afraid. It is those eyes that have given me this pain,
 made me sigh hard, suffering like the oxen
 at the hands of her father as they pull the cart
 sunken in the congealed mud that is as black
 as the shadow of the smoke when a hill man
 tries to make a field by burning it clear.

- Ammūvanār

There is nothing otherworldly or rarified in this poem. It describes the ordinary life of villagers and of the merchants who collect salt from salt pans and take it inland by oxen cart. One can easily imagine seeing the village dog barking because it doesn't recognize the voice of the salt-merchant's daughter, or the smoke rising as a hill man tries to clear-burn some forest. The images in the poem—the kayal fish, the oxen, the mud as black as the shadow of smoke from a process of clear burning—are not merely conventional or imaginary, but things from everyday village life. In Sangam poems, descriptions of village life and the landscape often correspond to the mood of the characters, a process that A.K. Ramanujan referred to when he called his second book of Sangam translations “The Interior Landscape.” Here, the hero's suffering is compared to the struggling of the oxen as they try to pull the immobilized cart.

Each longer Sangam poem reveals a complex web of relationships from real life. The reader travels through a landscape—and through the various facets of the relationships revealed in the poem—as she reads. Each poem is like a journey through the real world. In the poem above, we move (in the Tamil version) from the fishermen and the sea to hills as salt merchants drive their wagons inland, to a village, to the dog in the village, to the heroine's eyes, to the shadow of the smoke of clear-burning, to the wagon and the oxen and finally to the hero and the pain he feels. The poem reflects with almost clinical precision

the way in which we experience reality. Our minds and our eyes do not simply stay anchored on one thing, but move around, jumping from one thing to another and imbuing each with our feelings. These poems not only describe a village reality, they also unerringly reflect psychic reality.

The *akam* poems are often anchored to—and, in a sense, legitimatized by—references to real people, events or places. An example is Akam 135.

திதலை மாமை தளிர் வனப்பு அழுங்க,
புதல் இவர் பீரின் எதிர் மலர் கடுப்ப
பசலை பாய்ந்த நுதலேன் ஆகி,
எழுது எழில் மழைக் கண் கலுழு, நோய் கூர்ந்து
ஆதிமந்தியின் அறிவு பிறது ஆகி,
பேதுற்றிசீனே-காதல் அம் தோழி!
காய் கதிர் திருக்கிளன் கணைந்து கால் கடுகி,
ஆடு தளிர் இருப்பைக் கூடு குவி வான் பூ,
கோடு கடை கழங்கின், அறை மிசைத் தானம்
காடு இறந்தனரே, காதலர்: அடு போர்
வீயா விழுப் புகழ், விண் தோய் வியன் குடை,
ஸர்-எழு வேளிர் இயைந்து ஒருங்கு ஏற்ந்த
கழுவள் காலூர் போலக்
கலங்கின்று மாது, அவர் தெளிந்த என் நெஞ்சே.

- பரணர் 35 Pālai

The hero, who has changed [become thin and pale] in separation from the hero, speaks to her friend.

My blackness, with its tiny marks, lovely as a growing shoot,
is spoiled, my forehead, afflicted with pallor,
is pale like a fresh pīr flower spreading on its bush,
my lovely, cool eyes, painted with collyrium,
are filled with tears and I grieve in pain, distraught like Ātimanti,
O loving friend. My lover has crossed into the forest
where the curved white flowers of iruppai, its shoots
swaying as the hot rays take hold of them,
spread on the rocky hills like kalānku fruits mashed
by the tusks of an elephant, and my heart
that believed him is fearful and distressed
like the town of Kāmūr, ruled by Kaluvu!
of undying fame whose broad umbrella touches the sky,

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when the twice seven Vēlirs made common cause and attacked.

- Paraṇar

The first historical reference in this poem is to Ātimanti, whose story is given in the UVS edition. Ātimanti was married to a dancer, Āṭṭanatti. Once when he was playing in the water, the Kāviri took him away. She looked everywhere but could not find him. She wandered distraught, the ocean brought him back and deposited him in front of her. She embraced him and returned joyfully. The second historical reference is to a place, Kāmūr, a king, Kaluvul, and an event—the attack on Kaluvul by the fourteen Vēlir, which is compared to the state of the hero's heart. The effect of this is to anchor the poem to something real, to give it a sort of legitimacy by invoking something that actually happened. The immediacy of this figure, involving as it does a bloody attack on a town that the hearers of the poem must have known about, lends a vitality and force to the image that could not be achieved by merely using a standard figure. More than that, it connects the poem with historical reality by relating it to something that actually happened.

Like many of the *akam* poets, Paraṇar here loads his comparisons with suggestion. It is when she is playing *kaḷaṇku* with her friends that the heroine usually first sees the hero. The mashing of the *kaḷaṇku* fruits suggests that the love she began to feel then has not been fulfilled. There is also, apparently, irony implied in the comparison of the heroine's pain to that of Ātimanti, who had to be content with retrieving her lover's body. This sort of suggestion came into Sanskrit much later as *dhvani*.

Let us move on to *puram* poetry and examine some poems from the *Puranāṇūru*, a work I have spent many years reading and translating. It is a text redolent with the feelings and events of everyday life, treating the joy and pain of human existence without recourse to divine intervention or rationalization. The *Puranāṇūru* shows human beings as they really are—corrupt, cruel, self-denying, compassionate, loving. Each poem of this great work is direct and powerful, whether it concerns the stature of a king or his death, war or peace. Its perspective is not imaginary but historical. The *Puranāṇūru* is a book for readers to spend their lives with. When the *Puranāṇūru* moves away from history, it centers not on gods and the other world, but on moral issues. The most prominent religious influences—and perhaps some of the impetus to moral imperative—seem to be from Jainism, Buddhism and the Ājīvikas, yet in spite of the presence of these three religious movements in Tamil Nadu in Sangam times, the poems never center themselves around otherworldly notions of

mokṣa or *nirvāna*. In fact, there are two poems about ascetics in the *Puranāñjūru* and each suggests something terrible must have happened to make them adopt such an unnatural lifestyle.

Let us now look at two poems from the cycle about Pāri, the great patron of the poet Kapilar. Everyone knows his story—how he was a small king, was besieged by the three great kings, eventually was defeated and killed leaving behind his two daughters, and how the poet Kapilar vainly took the daughters around to other kings to get them married. One of the finest poems of this cycle is Puram 116.

தீம் நீர்ப் பெருங் குண்டு சுனைப் பூத்த குவளைக்
கூம்பு அவிழ் முழு நெறி புரள் வரும் அல்குல்,
ஏந்து எழில் மழை கண், இன் நகை, மகளிர்
புல் மூசு கவலைய முள் மிடை வேவி,
பஞ்சி முன்றில், சிற்றில் ஆங்கண்,
பீரை நாறிய சுரை இவர் மருங்கின்,
ஈத்து இலைக் குப்பை ஏறி, உமணைர்
உப்பு ஒய் ஒழுகை எண்ணுப மாதோ;
நோகோ யானே; தேய்க்மா காலை!—
பயில் பூஞ் சோலை மயில் எழுந்து ஆலவும்,
பயில் இருஞ் சிலம்பில் கலை பாய்ந்து உகளவும்,
கலையும் கொள்ளாவாகப், பலவும்
காலம் அன்றி உம் மரம் பயம் பகரும்
யாணர் அறானி வியல் மலை அற்றே
அண்ணல் நெடு வரை ஏறி, தந்தை
பெரிய நறவின், கூர் வேல் பாரியது
அருமை அறியார், போர் எதிர்ந்து வந்த
வலம் படு தானை வேந்தர்
பொலம் படைக் கலி மா எண்ணுவோரே

- கபிலர் Puram 116

Skirts of waterlilies sway across their thighs, made of full-blown blossoms that grew in large, deep springs where the water is sweet. With their cool and beautiful eyes, their light laughter, the girls climb up on a heap covered with dwarf datepalm, where sponge gourd has rooted and calabash has spread, near a hut that has cotton growing in the front yard, and there is a fence of thorns and near it are twisting paths choked up with grass, and standing there on the mound, they count the wagons that carry the salt for the salt merchants. I feel pain and how I wish that my life were over! There was a time

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when they would climb the highest peak on the wide mountain where prosperity was unending and the peacocks would rise up and dance in gardens of cultivated flowers while on the great slopes planted with crops, there were monkeys that were swinging and leaping, and trees gave fruit in and out of season, so many that the monkeys could not take them all; and as the kings with their great armies came against the hill in war, ignorant of how difficult it would be to prevail against their father Pāri, he who wielded a sharp spear, he who was the master of abundant toddy, from the peak the girls would count the proud horses bearing the iron weapons of kings!

Kapilar sings Vēl Pāri. *Tīnai: potuviyal. Turai: kaiyarunilai.*

Here the reality is enhanced by the situation. We are not merely hearing a telling of the story of Pāri's daughters, we are actually overhearing Kapilar as he takes them around after their father's death. One might compare this to the technique we saw in the *Rig Veda* poem to Indra above, in which primordial time was invoked and recreated—but here, the time recreated is not primordial but real. Beyond this, the poem makes the scene extremely realistic by elaborate description of the plants and surroundings in which the girls now find themselves. And it adds to that sense by describing their laughter, making us realize they are too young to fully understand their plight. The contrast between the salt wagons and the horses with iron weapons is ironic: the wagons are harmless, while the beautiful horses and their iron weapons led to Pari's death and the exile of the daughters. It is worth remarking in passing that the salt wagon is the Tamil ship of state—another example of how the culture tends to use everyday objects.

We end with the great poem attributed to Pari's daughters.

அற்றைத் திங்கள் அவ் வெண் நிலவின்,
எந்தையும் உடையேம், எம் குன்றும் பிறர் கொளார்;
இற்றைத் திங்கள் இவ் வெண் நிலவின்,
வென்று ஏறி முரசின் வேந்தர் எம்
குன்றும் கொண்டார்; யாம் எந்தையும் இலமே!
பாரி மகளிர்

- Puram 112

On that day, under the white light of that moon,
we had our father and no enemies had taken the hill.
On this day, under the white light of this moon, the kings,
royal drums beating out the victory,

have taken the hill. And we! we have no father.

The song of Pāri's daughters. *Tinai: potuviyal. Turai: kaiyaru nilai.*

Like the preceding poem (and many poems in the *Purānāñūru*), this turns on a contrast, here between two different times. There is a famous poem by Bertolt Brecht in which he thinks back on a time many years before when he kissed a woman under a plum tree. He remembers that as he kissed her, there was a cloud overhead, and then in a few moments, the cloud had disappeared—but, he says, while he can still picture the cloud, he cannot even remember what the woman looked like. In the poem of Pari's daughters, the events are likewise tied to something external—the moon, which looks exactly the same as it did a month before, is contrasted to the situation of the two girls, which has changed disastrously. The same words (except for the deictic prefixes *a-* and *i-*) are used to invoke the moon at the two times, and this heightens our feeling that the moon is identical. Between the two invocations of the moon, the poet skillfully inserts a formulaic expression, “*venreri muracij vēntar*” (“the kings, royal drums beating out victory”) that is found elsewhere in the literature and was most likely used by the oral bards on whose songs the Sangam poems were modeled. This formula breaks the sameness of the rhythm in a violent way, introducing an external force that unexpectedly intrudes and destroys everything except the moon. The violence is further heightened by the sense of the words “in victory,” “royal drums” and “beating.” The royal drums were frightening objects, filled with ominous power, and in some sense they empowered the king to rule over his land—we realize that they have now given title of Pāri's kingdom to the new kings. Then the sound of violence modulates back to the repetition of the beginning rhythms in the last line, which emphasizes the sense of tragedy by using “m” sounds that elsewhere are used for mourning or sadness. This short poem demonstrates compellingly how the poets of the Tamil anthologies used not only real events, but real psychic feelings and apprehensions to craft their poems. I know of no poem in Sanskrit that has the directness of this short poem, coupled with its evocation of reality and human mental process.

I should like to end by discussing some other ways in which Tamil differs from Sanskrit and some of the consequences of that fact. Daniel Ingalls, who taught me Sanskrit, pointed out that Sanskrit is different from other languages because it has perfect synonyms. *Nṛpa, bhūpāla* and *rājā* all mean exactly the same thing. This is not the case in natural languages—for example, in English, “monarch,” “king” and “sovereign” have slightly different connotations. In Sanskrit the ability to take any word for “men” or “earth” and suffix it with another

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word meaning “protector” and thereby to derive a word that can be used interchangeably with all the other words for king helps make the language distant from natural language, rarified, otherworldly. Because Sanskrit words can be perfect synonyms, they lack the broad connotations of words in natural speech—a fact that also leads to artificiality and distance. These qualities of indirectness and artificiality, I would argue, also pertain to the older works of those languages that derived their literary techniques, conventions, and vocabulary from Sanskrit. If we look at early works in Telugu, Kannada and Malayalam, we find that as many as 70 or 80 percent of the words are taken unchanged from Sanskrit, while native words that have greater power and connotative ability are avoided. Since early Tamil avoided Sanskrit, its words have full connotative power—which many of them retain to this day, almost two millennia years later.

One of the peculiarities of South Asia is that outside of Tamil Nadu Sanskrit was thought to have higher status than other languages. As a result, Sanskrit words rarely refer to languages other than the Prakrits, which I contend are not truly different languages. This has led to a tendency to see Sanskrit as somehow disconnected from other languages, as a source but rarely as a receptive vessel. Naturally, the truth is quite different. I have written extensively on how Sanskrit borrowed southern poetic conventions—the same conventions found in Sangam literature—probably through Māhārāṣṭrī Prakrit and folk sources. Examples include such motifs as separation during the monsoon and the messenger poem. One can surmise that all over the Deccan, there was a highly evolved oral poetic tradition in the Dravidian languages that ultimately developed into a sophisticated written literature in the Tamil anthologies and was also the source for many conventions in the southern Prakrits. Many of the important intellectual developments in Sanskrit literature can be traced to this southern Prakrit literature. Among them is certainly the concept of *dhvani*, or suggestion, which took a major place in Sanskrit esthetics with Ānandavardhana’s *Dhvanyāloka*. It is notable that Sangam poems contain true *dhvani* far more often than poems in Sanskrit and that the commentators generally cite Māhārāṣṭrī Prakrit poems as examples of this phenomenon. One can suppose that the sort of suggestion found in Sangam poems also entered southern Prakrits from the Dravidian oral tradition and from there became part of Sanskrit esthetic literature.

The place of the real and concrete in Tamil did not disappear as the literature developed and borrowed elements from Sanskrit. If we look at Tamil *bhakti* literature, we find that it, like Sangam literature, is deeply concerned with his-

torical place and events. This concern for the concrete appears in the *Bhāgavatapurāṇa*, a work written by a Tamil Vaiṣṇava in perhaps the 12th century that helped spread devotion all over India. It is also worth noting that the Kannada Vacanas—works that, like Sangam literature, arose from the folk literature and beliefs of the Dravidian countryside—are notable for their emphasis on concrete, everyday things. Even modern Tamil is heir to the Sangam connection with the concrete and real. In reading modern Tamil novels, I have often been impressed by the ability of the language to describe things with almost uncanny accuracy and realism, using pure Tamil words, many of which are found also in Sangam literature.

I would end by concluding that the classical status of Tamil is obvious to anyone who knows anything at all of the development and character of its literature. It began with one of the great bodies of writing that the world has produced, Sangam literature, and based itself not on anything it had borrowed but rather on ideas, conventions, techniques and meters that it developed as it evolved from an oral literature. The subsequent history not only of Tamil but of all of South Asia was deeply influenced by this literature and its traditions, which live in Tamil and other languages to this day.

References

- 1 See Hart, G. L. (1975). *The Poems of Ancient Tamil, Their Milieu and their Sanskrit Counterparts*. Berkeley, University of California Press, p. 148.
- 2 When I refer to Sanskrit in this paper, I mean to include also Pali and the Prakrits, which are to Sanskrit much as modern spoken Tamil is to its written equivalent.
- 3 Chelliah, J. V. (1962). *Pattupattu; ten Tamil idylls*. Tirunelveli, South India Saiva Siddhanta Works Pub. Society, p. 337.
- 4 All translations are mine unless noted.
- 5 Translated by Hank Heifetz, from his thesis. See Heifetz, Henry, "Issues of literary translation from Sanskrit and Tamil." (PhD diss, University of California, Berkeley, 1983).
- 6 Vidyakara, D. D. Kosambi, et al. (1957). *The Subhasitaratnakosa*. Edited by D.D. Kosambi and V.V. Gokhale, with an introd. by D.D. Kosambi. Cambridge, Harvard University Press.
- 7 Ramanujan, A. K. (1967). *The interior landscape; love poems from a classical Tamil anthol*

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ogy. Bloomington, Indiana University Press.

8 Akanāñūru, Kalirriyāñai Nirai. (1990). Patippāciriya Mayilam Vē. Civacuppiramāñyan. Chennai, Tāktar U. Vē. Cāminataiyar Nūl Nilaiyam, p. 151-2.

9 Puranāñūru 251, 252.

10 See Puranāñūru 185.

11 Bertold Brecht

Erinnerung an die Marie A.

An jenem Tag im blauen Mond September
Still unter einem jungen Pflaumenbaum
Da hielt ich sie, die stille bleiche Liebe
In meinem Arm wie einen holden Traum.
Und über uns im schönen Sommerhimmel
War eine Wolke, die ich lange sah.
Sie war sehr weiß und ungeheuer oben
Und als ich aufsah, war sie nimmer da.

Seit jenem Tag sind viele, viele Monde
Geschwommen still hinunter und vorbei
Die Pflaumenbäume sind wohl abgehauen
Und fragst du mich, was mit der Liebe sei?
So sag ich dir: Ich kann mich nicht erinnern.
Und doch, gewiß, ich weiss schon, was du meinst
Doch ihr Gesicht, das weiß ich wirklich nimmer
Ich weiß nur mehr: Ich küßte es dereinst.

Und auch den Kuss, ich hätt' ihn längst vergessen
Wenn nicht die Wolke da gewesen wär
Die weiß ich noch und werd ich immer wissen
Sie war sehr weiss und kam von oben her.
Die Pflaumenbäume blühn vielleicht noch immer
Und jene Frau hat jetzt vielleicht das siebte Kind
Doch jene Wolke blühte nur Minuten
Und als ich aufsah, schwand sie schon im Wind.

12 See Akam 137.5 Puram 351.5, Kuruntokai 380.2.

13 For an example of this usage of "m," cf. Kuruntokai 234:

சுடர் செல் வானம் சேப்ப, படர் கூர்ந்து.
எல்லறு பொழுதின் முல்லை மலரும்

மாலை என்மனார் மயங்கியோரே;
 குடுமிக் கோழி வந்து நகர் இயம்பும்
 பெரும் புறர் விழயலும் மாலை;
 பகலும் மாலை-துறை இலோர்க்கே

மினைப்பெருங் கந்தன்

The sun goes down and the sky reddens, pain grows sharp,
 light dwindle. Then is evening

The sun goes down and the sky reddens, pain grows sharp,

light dwindle. Then is evening

when jasmine flowers open, the deluded say.

But evening is the great brightening dawn

when crested cocks crow all through the tall city

and evening is the whole day

for those without their lovers.

Milaipperuñ Kantan

This poem is notable for its alliteration. "M" sounds fill the second two lines as evening is described, then they are replaced by harsh "k" and "p" sounds when morning is the subject, and finally there is a modulation back to "m" sounds in the last line and a half.

14 See Hart, op. cit., Part II.

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Alexander M. Dubyanskiy (born on April 27, 1941 in Moscow (USSR)) entered a secondary school at the age of 7 and graduated from it in 1958. Simultaneously with a general education he studied at a musical school. In 1958 he entered a musical college and practiced piano-playing for 4 years. Then he was called up and served for 3 years in the army as a private. On completing the service in 1965 he joined the Institute of Oriental Languages at Moscow State University where he received his graduate degree in 1970 in Tamil language and literature. His final research paper (a

diploma work) was devoted to ancient Tamil poetry. He wanted to continue the research work and joined post-graduate studies at the Institute of Oriental Languages (by that time renamed as the Institute of Asian and African Studies). The subject of Alexander Dubyanskiy's post-graduate work was ancient Tamil lyrics, in particular the situation of separation in love poetry. He treated this poetical situation from the point of view of mythology and ritual and closely analyzed the process of growing of poetical forms from specific ritual activity and mythological situations. In 1974 he earned his Ph.D. degree. A year earlier he was invited as a research scholar to the same Institute and since that time he has been working there teaching Tamil language and Tamil Literature along with Indian literature and religion in general.

In 1978 Dr. Dubyanskiy for the first time went to India and stayed there for 9 months at Madras University for refreshing Tamil language and doing some research work. Up to now he has made 14 visits to India with different purposes and different terms but mainly for gaining new experience needed for teaching and research. In 1995 he participated in the 8th International Conference-seminar of Tamil Studies in Tanjavur, in 1997 he was invited as a visiting professor to the International Institute of Tamil Studies in Madras (for 3 months), and in 1998 took part in the conference on Skanda-Murugan organized by the Institute of Asian Studies (Madras). He participated in conferences in European countries: in 1994 he visited France where the 13-th European Conference on Modern South Asia Studies was held (in Tolouse). In 1998 he took part in the 14th Conference in Prague. In 1995 he was invited to a workshop in Uppsala University, specially devoted to Tamil Studies (to Buddhism and the medieval Tamil poem "Manimekhalai"). He also participated in conferences in Prague (Czech Rep.), Milano (Italy), Zakopane (Poland), in Winter School for Classical Tamil (Pondicherry), in World Congress of Orientalists in Moscow, Russia (August,

2004). In 1999 he was invited to work at the Netherlands Institute of Advanced Studies for Humanities in Wassenaar (the Netherlands), where he stayed for 4 months.

Dr. Dubyanskiy has more than 100 publications to his credit. Among them: a book of translations into Russian of classical Tamil poetry ("Poems on palm-leaves". Moscow 1979), "A history of Tamil literature"(together with another Tamil scholar Mrs. L.Bytchikhina). Moscow, 1987. In 1989 his book on Tamil poetry appeared: "Mythological and ritual background of Ancient Tamil Lyrics" (in Russian). English variant of the book was published in the Netherlands: Alexander M. Dubianski "Ritual and Mythological Sources of the Early Tamil Poetry." Groningen, 2000.

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Tolkāppiyam:

ALEXANDER M. DUBYANSKIY

Tamil language has a long and glorious literary history. Tamil people claim to possess a literary heritage which has roots in distant past. If the origin of the poetry which came down to us in the form of two famous collections eṭṭuttokai and pattuppāṭṭu, is ascribed by the majority of scholars to, roughly, the first half of the first century of our era, the poetic tradition which generated the poems must have been much earlier and developed, at least, for some centuries B.C. What we have now under the title of the so called caṅkam poetry is a great cultural achievement, a refined, sophisticated, aesthetically significant literature. Its existence along with other factors allows Tamil language to bear the status of "classical language", chemmolī. Among these other factors I shall mention one. It is a common thing that any classical language sooner or later realizes its status, recognizes its own importance and tries to present it in a fixed verbal form, that is in the form of a certain kind of a treatise, a text describing and analyzing a structure and specific features of a given language or literature, prescribing rules and regulations for them. Such texts are known in Greek, Latin, Sanskrit languages. They are known in Tamil language also. During more than two thousand years of its development Tamil tradition produced a great quantity of such texts. Many of them are very famous, like naṇṇūl, vīracōliyam, yāpparuṅkalam, iraiyanāar akapporul, purapporul veṇpāmālai and others. Together with commentaries they make a vast section of literature of a special kind, very important and interesting. In the beginning of this theoretical tradition stands Tolkāppiyam, the treatise connected with the Tamil classical poetry.

The authority of this text is undeniable, it is a literary and cultural monument of great importance. Unfortunately we do not know how the text functioned in the beginning of its history. It seems that it was fully recognized only many centuries after its composition., when commentaries began to appear (in between 11th – 15th centuries). There is no doubt that commentators which were many (the most famous among them Ilampūraṇar, Naccinārkkīriyar, Cēnāvaraiyar), contributed much to propagating Tolkāppiyam among the learned people. To what extant they helped to

understand the text, remains a question because of the time-break and possible cultural differences between them and the author. Besides, in this connection we should take into consideration the peculiarity of such texts in Indian tradition. They are composed in the form of sutras (or, rather, a chain of sutras), more or less brief sayings, formulating ideas in a compressed, sometimes enigmatic way. It is the task of a commentator to make them comprehensible, which he does according to his own ideas and understanding. This is a problem by itself which may be noted here as one of other different problems of research connected with Tolkāppiyam.

Tolkāppiyam, whose author named Tolkāppiyanar, is exactly this kind of a text, composed in sutras, which may be very brief (one or two lines) or rather long (the longest – 59 lines). Though the term *sutra* is used in Tolkāppiyam in several places, it is not applied to the text itself. Traditionally the sayings go under the name *nūrpā*, produced from the Tamil word *nūl* “a thread”, actually a calque of the initial meaning of the Sanskrit word *sūtra*, and *pā* poetical form. The structure and the style of Tolkāppiyam’s sutras also constitute a problem worth investigating (let me point out the recent paper by Eva Welden “The Sūtra style in the Tolkāppiyam” in *South-Indian Horizons: Felicitation volume for Francois Gros*. Pondichery, 2004).

It is well known that Tolkāppiyam consists of three parts (atikāram, Sanskr. *adhi-karana*): eluttatikāram, collatikāram, poruṭatikāram. The first part describes different types of speech-sounds, the phones of Tamil Language, their positions, the quality of sounds, their coalscence and compounding (the rules of sandhi) and the like. Generally speaking this part is devoted to problems of phonology. The second part is devoted to the problems of morphology, or, rather, speaking in modern terms, morphophonemic system of Tamil, and to the Tamil syntax. Here we meet with the system of cases, parts of speech, the structure of a Tamil sentence, with some semantic problems. The title of the third part presupposes that it is devoted to the contents or the meaning of poetry (such is the meaning of the word *poruṭ*), but in effect it treats many problems connected with poetical form also.

This is a very brief outline of the general contents of the treatise Tolkāppiyam. It is clear that it describes the whole system of old Tamil poetry, starting with the description of the language. Let us note that though Tolkāppiyanār recognizes the existence of conversational Tamil language and the dialects, his main concern is the normative language of Tamil poetry. I agree with Dr. G. Vijayavenugopal who expressed the idea that Tolkāppiyanār was much more interested in the structure of Tamil poetical language than of the language itself (Tolkāppiyam: A Treatise on the Semiotics of Ancient Tamil Poetry. In: *Between Preservation and Recreation: Tamil Traditions of Commentary*. Pondichery, 2009, p. 138). That is why problems of syntax occupy more place in the 2nd chapter than the morphology problems (the structure of a syllable, for example). However, we may say that two first chapters abound

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in vast material which has already attracted and, certainly, will attract students of linguistics of different affiliations, who can find in the text of Tolkāppiyam insights and statements that clearly lead them to such contemporary methods of research as descriptive, generative, transformation grammar, structuralism, semiotics. Not being a linguist I won't dwell on these matters, but I shall make a couple of notes in this connection.

Many scholars pointed out that Tolkāppiyam is dependant on Sanskrit sources. For the grammatical parts usually Panini's Ashtadhyai, Yaska's Nirukta, Rigveda Pratishashtra, some other texts are mentioned. In the pāyiram to Tolkāppiyam it is said that its author, Tolkāppiyañār followed the Aindra school of linguistics (to be precise, the Katantra school). Subrahmanya Sastri, one of the first scholars who studied Tolkāppiyam, even stated that some parts of Tolkāppiyam were translations of some portions of the above-mentioned texts. The last statement is certainly biased and, I think, is not correct, because at those times the process of interaction of texts was connected not with translating but with rendering and, speaking generally, there was nothing unusual in borrowing or using ideas from other sources. It was a common practice in old and medieval times. In our case it shows that the author of Tolkāppiyam was a well educated person and knew well that instead of inventing a bicycle (as we say in such situations) he could make use of texts which, on the one hand, would help him to build a construction of his own and, on the other hand, place his book in the mainstream of Indian theoretical linguistic thought, which was definitely advantageous for him. It is known that he did not try to conceal his indebtedness to his predecessors and often used (around 150 times) expressions which clearly signified them (enpa, molipa, eñmañār pulavar etc.). Besides, one should not forget that Tolkāppiyañār described not an Indo-Aryan, but Tamil language, a language of a different family with its own phonetics and grammatical structure and he could not copy the sources blindly. I am sure that Tolkāppiyam is a work which demanded not only vast knowledge and a lot of thinking but a considerable creative skill from its composer. In spite of the fact that some research has already been done on the matter, that is some sources of borrowings, their measure and nature were pointed out, there is still a lot to be done in this respect. Interestingly enough, there are cases when Tolkāppiyañār himself shows his independence of the Sanskrit tradition. For instance, in the end of the part pirappu iyal devoted to generation of sounds (I, 3, 102 – the enumeration given after *Tolkāppiyam in English* by Dr. V. Murugan, Institute of Asian Studies, 2001) he states that measuring of sounds is peculiar to sacred books of brahmanas (alapin kōṭal antaṇar maraittu), but he did it "not speaking about it here" (atu ivai nuvalātu).

As to the most famous Tolkāppiyar's predecessor – Panini, there is an opinion expressed by one linguist, that his grammar is a machine generating Sanskrit. It

might be very true and witty, but I would never apply this definition to the Tolkāppiyam. I perceive me his grammar more as a living creature, breathing and contemplating, whereas its author, though we know nothing about him, seems to be a person of great intellect, deep thought and open mind. I like and highly estimate some of his sayings. For example, there is a set of formulations concerning the so called uri-c-col (indeclinable adjectives and adverbs). After stating that their meaning depends on the words surrounding them, he goes on to say:

kūriya kīlavi poruļ nilai alla
vēru pīra tōnriṇum avarrotu koṭalē (II, 8, 873).

The meaning of the words mentioned is not permanent,
If other [surrounding words] appear, they take [a new meaning] according to them.

poruṭkup poruļ teriyiṇ atu varampu iṇrē (874).

If the meaning of meaning is understood, this [meaning] has no limit.

poruṭkut tiripu illai uṇartta valliṇ (875).

If one has an ability to explain, there is no deviation from [the right] meaning.

uṇarcci vāyil uṇarvōr valittē (876)

The possibility of understanding lies in the ability of a perceptor.

These lines are in fact a good example of Tolkāppiyaṇār's insight into a theory of meaning. In a few very brief and precise expressions he indicates a conventional character of the meaning of words, which can vary depending on a context. He also insists on the depth of words stating that for a pensive listener (or a reader for that matter) there is no limit of understanding their meaning. Such profound thoughts expressed in such a compressed way can be found in other parts of Tolkāppiyam also. Take for one more instance the definition of a verb:

.viṇai eṇappaṭuvatu vērrumai kollātu
niṇaiyum kālai kālamotu tōṇrum (II, 6, 683)
What is called verb does not take declension,
It appears with time, if you think of it.

How simply, precisely and beautifully it is expressed!

Now, let me come to the third part of the treatise named Poruṭatikāram. It is indeed an enormous effort to give a comprehensible picture of the early Tamil poetry. It comprises a huge and diverse material which sometimes can look even ill-assorted. Practically all important aspects of poetry are discussed in this part beginning with the contents of poems and their heroes and ending with descriptions of the system

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of prosody, poetical devices, traditional usage of words, forms of literary compositions. This part also has borrowings from Sanskrit sources (The Laws of Manu, Nātyasāstra, Kāmasūtra, Arthasāstra). I shall mention two special divisions – about bodily manifestations (meyppāṭṭiyal, III,), that is the exposition of the famous theory of rasa, and the list of utti (yukti, III, 6, 1602), methods of composition. Both fragments produce an impression of something alien and arbitrary within this chapter, but I shall comment on it later. The most important thing, concerning this chapter, is that in spite of all borrowings, terms and notions taken from Indo-Aryan sources, it reflects the indigenous Tamil material, that is the Tamil poetical tradition. But here we come across a bunch of serious problems. It is clearly impossible to analyze or even delineate all. I shall talk only to some of them.

One of the most important poetical devices worked out by Tolkāppiyañār is, without doubt, a classification of the contents of the poetry (poru!) by several categories: puram and akam (literally “the outer” – “the inner”, which practically presupposes the heroic poetry and love poetry) and the system of tiṇai, poetical themes. This system covers both puram and akam divisions, but it is more consistent with akam poetry where the given theme-tiṇai represents a unity of three elements: mutal (time and place), karu (details of the surrounding), uri (a poetic situation, connected with a stage of love-relations). There is no need to go into the details here. Suffice it to say that the major aspect of this system is a definite correspondence between human situations and natural background. Such correspondence takes place to a certain extant in Indo-Aryan poetry too, but in the Tamil tradition the system of tiṇai is one of the most powerful poetic devices. Let us see how this system is treated in Tolkāppiyam.

According to Tolkāppiyam (III, 1; 947 in V. Murugan’s edition) the total number of tiṇais is seven: “As it was said earlier, there are considered to be seven tiṇais: starting with the peruntiṇai and ending in the kaikkilai”. Then follows a remark: “From these only the middle five, with the exception of the central one from these five, possess the nature of the parts of the earth surrounded by the waters of the ocean” (III, 2; 948). Thus from the system of tiṇais three themes seem to be excluded based on the assumption that they do not correspond to the principle on which the system is based , that is the division of the territory of ancient Tamilakam into regions or types of landscapes named by the author “parts of the earth” or “worlds” in sutra III,5; 951:

The world of forests where Māyōn (Visnu) dwells,
 The world of dark mountains where the Red one (Murukan) dwells,
 The world of sweet waters where Indra dwells,
 The world of spacious sea sands where Varuna dwells

Are named accordingly: mullai, kurjñci, marutam and neytal.

"The middle of the five" is the theme pālai which the author excluded from his geography, the reason being that it lacks a "world" of its own (cf. the following extract from cilappatikāram: "the season in which you are travelling with your wife [during the heat of summer] is one when mountains and forests have lost their life and colour and seem a desert waste" Cil. XI, 64-66). The pālai landscape is clearly seasonal. This is emphasised by the strict temporal boundaries of the theme referred to in Tolkāppiyam III, 11-12; 957-958: midday, the summer season or the season of the early dews. It seems strange that Tolkāppiyañār did not include the pālai-landscape in his picture. Even if we cannot speak of the concrete geographical localization of the pālai landscape (though it is traceable in the route of the hero who is away from home: judging by the poems it follows through the lands along the northern frontier of Tamilakam, in the Vēṅkaṭa mountains), its depiction in poetry is so expressive, that there is enough ground to treat it as a certain natural entity (let us note by passing that the landscapes of mullai and marutam are also geographically diffused). Besides, as we know, the pālai-region has its own presiding deity, the goddess Korraivai, whose place in Tamil culture is much more important than that of Varuna (who never appears in poetry of neytal). However, in connection with the pālai-t-tiṇai Tolkāppiyañār demonstrated his understanding of the essence of things. He treated it from the structural point of view. As I tried to prove in my works devoted to Tamil classical poetry, the situation of separation of the heroes (pirivu) has a structure of a ritual of passage which is divided into three stages. Its middle stage, pirivu in a proper sense of the word, is connected with ideas of danger and death. It appears that the pālai-landscape provides a sympathetic background for that middle stage. I am sure that the author of Tolkāppiyam understood well the mediating structural position of the pālai-t-tiṇai. He says: "Tiṇai in the middle has as its attribute the path that is thought of as belonging to a region characterized by the end state (muṭīvu nilai) plus midday and heat (III, 11; 957). So, we know that the middle tiṇai here is pālai. By placing it in this position Tolkāppiyañār stressed its neutrality towards specific geographical characteristics, or, otherwise, its universal character, and after that described its main attributes connected with the hot season and its characteristics. Let me note by passing that I understand the expression muṭīvu nilai, which the translators S. Ilakkuvanār and V. Murugan failed to translate, as meaning "the end state" in the sense of "a destruction, death".

So far as the peruntiṇai and the kaikkilai are concerned, they deal with certain situations (for example an affair of a young man with an old woman or with a young girl who has not attained puberty, a situation of "unrequited love" or "ill-matched love", excesses of passion etc.) which go beyond the rigid framework of harmonious love union fixed in Tolkāppiyam. Therefore although these themes are present in the

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treatise as a fact of poetry, they are nonetheless not included into the main system of the poetic canon which had been structured as “the system of five *tiṇais*”. By and large, the patterns of behaviour corresponding to these two themes are labelled in Tolkāppiyam as undignified: “It is not forbidden to represent slaves and servants as secondary characters outside [the system of five *tiṇais*], the learned poets say” (III, 25; 971). According to the commentator Ilampūraṇar this remark refers specifically to the *peruntiṇai* and *kaikkilai*.

It is interesting to note how Tolkāppiyānār from time to time mixes indigenous Tamil situations with notions borrowed from Northern sources. This theme deserves special attention and profound research, so here I point out only one example. One of the division of Tamil love-poetry is devoted to the premarital secret meetings of lovers (*kalavu*). This stage of love, to which the third chapter of the treatise is devoted, is defined in Tolkāppiyam as one of the eight [forms of marriage] belonging to the tradition of Vedic people (*maraiyōr*), brahmanas. It is specified as the Gandharva marriage (III, 3, 1; 1035), because it is undoubtedly gandharvas that are meant under the definition *nalyāl tuṇaimaiyōr* – “those who are dependent on *yāl*”(a string musical instrument). Medieval commentators on Tolkāppiyam, like Naccinārkkiṇiyar and Ilampūraṇar followed suit. This interpretation obviously was influenced by traditional Hindu shastric speculations.

As a matter of fact, within the *kalavu* division there is a situation specific only for Tamil poetry, termed *uṭanpōkku*. It means the elopement of lovers, or, better, their running away from the village to wilderness. This situation appears to be of a double subordination, so to say. On the one hand it belongs to the *kuriñci* theme, exclusively devoted to the *kalavu* stage. On the other hand the natural background of the situation is represented by the *palai* landscape. Putting aside the situation of the premarital love in general, I'd like to express the opinion that the *uṭanpōkku* episode, to which Tolkāppiyānār devotes a number of sutras, has nothing to do with a Gandharva marriage. The situation in which lovers run from their village and stay for some time in the middle of a wild landscape during summer heat, represents a sort of a premarital initiation rite and as such it is known to different cultures. For instance it has parallels in the life of some Indian tribes, such as *uralis*, *mudugars*, *santals* (Thurston 1906, p. 64; Thurston 1909, p. 91).

A major question arises: does the author of Tolkāppiyam describe Tamil poetical tradition correctly? As far as I know a full and detailed answer to this question is still in need. But many scholars, myself included, had a chance to notice a number of discrepancies between the text of Tolkāppiyam and the poetry of the anthologies. Some examples: Tolkāppiyam does not speak of *nocci* as a *tiṇai*. While discussing *ulīñai-t-tiṇai* it mentions *nocci* only once as its subdivision (*purattitaiyiyal* III, 2, 69; 1015). However a later poetical treatise *purapporuļvenpāmālai* devotes separate

sections to both nocci (*paṭalam* 5) and *uljñai* (*paṭalam* 6). It is worth noting in this connection that Swāminathaiyar in his edition of *Puranāṇūru* mentions nocci in the list of *tiṇai*.

In the sutra III, 1, 25; 973 the reasons for separation are given: *ōtal*, *pakaiyē*, *tūtu* (education, enemy, messenger-duty). However, the poems specify only two such reasons: wealth (*poruḷ*) and war (that is enemy in the sutra). Education and messenger-duty are never mentioned. Likewise, according to III, 1, 34; 983 the sea-voyage is not undertaken with a woman, but it is not undertaken at all. Or: III, 3, 104; 1047 mentions twelve activities of the hero's friend to organize a love-meeting, but in the poetry they practically do not exist.

Such discrepancies and many others can be explained if we take the point of view that not all poetry came down to us or that there were different strands within old Tamil poetical tradition and Tolkāppiyāṇār could not cover all of them and paid attention to those that escaped the attention of the compilers of the anthologies. These arguments can be sound, but, unfortunately, can't be proved. I propose a different explanation taking into consideration a general character of the text as I see it. Though Tolkāppiyam is certainly based on Tamil poetic tradition and its author had in mind the more or less true description of the linguistic and poetic aspects of this tradition, he also had a super-task of constructing an ideal model of a poetic universe, using all the layers of poetic compositions including the language, as a foundation for his model, and possibly all aspects of poetry and poetics. When fulfilling this theoretical task he used assumptions issued from the needs of the system he was creating and in many cases utilized the material which he felt was necessary for it. Perhaps, he rejected what he thought did not fit the system. From this point of view the differences between his sutras and the real poetry became to a certain extant immaterial. On the other hand he included material which at first sight looks unnecessary and odd, but in fact is quite consistent with the major task of his work (like the *rasa* and *yukti* fragments).

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கலந்தாய்வரங்கம்

SYMPOSIUM

தொல்காப்பியர் அரங்கு
Tolkāppiyar Araṅku

அய்வரங்கச் சிறப்பு மற்றும் போன்ற விஷயங்களை விவரிப்பதற்காக நடைபெற்ற ஒரு நாள்தேர்தல்.

மொழி நோக்கு

பொன். கோதண்டராமன்

மொழிநடை

சங்க இலக்கிய மொழிநடை செறிவு மிக்கதாக இருக்கிறது. மிகுதியான தொகைகளும் குறிப்பு வினைகளும் பயின்று வந்திருக்கின்றன. காலப்போக்கில் செறிவுநடை விரிவுபெற்று நெகிழ்ச்சி அடைந்திருக்கிறது. எடுத்துக்காட்டாக,

சிற்றில் நற்றான் பற்றி நின்மகன்
யான்டுளோனோன வினவுதி யாயின்

என்னும் புறநானூற்றுப் பாட்பகுதியில் செறிவு மிக்கதாக மொழிநடை அமைந்திருப்பதை ‘எனிதல் உணரலாம். இதுவே பிற்கால மொழிநடையில் எழுதப்பட்டிருந்தால் ‘சிறிய இல்லின் நல்ல தூணைப் பற்றி நின்னுடைய மகன் யான்டு உளனோ என வினவுகிறாய்’ என்று அமைந்திருக்கும். சங்கத் தமிழின் மொழிநடையில் உருபுகள் மறைந்திருக்கின்றன. தொகைகள் பயின்று வந்திருக்கின்றன. இத்தகைய மொழிநடை சங்கால மொழிநடைக்கு மட்டுமே உரியதாகத் தெரிகிறது.

தன்மை ஒருமை வழக்கு

யான், நான் ஆகிய கிரு சொற்களும் தமிழில் தன்மை ஒருமை நிலையில் உள்ளன. சங்க கால வழக்கில் யான் என்பதே பெருவழக்கு. படிப்படியாக நிலைமை மாறிப் பிற்காலத் தமிழில் நான் என்பதே பெருவழக்காயிற்று.

அளவிப்பை ஆட்சி

சிறானிர், மகானிர் எனவும், தழீனி, குழீனி எனவும் பெயர்களும் வினைகளும் அளவிப்பை பெற்று வருதல் சங்கத் தமிழில் மிகவும் இயல்பு நிலையில் பயின்று வரக் காண்கிறோம். இடைக்காலத் தமிழிலும் பிற்காலத் தமிழிலும் அளவிப்பை ஆட்சி குறைந்துவிட்டது.

தன்மைப் பன்மைச் சொல்லாட்சி

சங்கத் தமிழில் யாம், நாம் ஆகிய சொற்கள் தன்மைப் பன்மையில் பயின்று வந்திருக்கின்றன. நாம் என்பது முன்னிலையையும் உளப்படுத்திய உளப்பாடுத்

தன்மைப் பன்மை. ஆனால் யாம் என்பது முன்னிலையை மட்டும் விலக்கிய விலக்குத் தன்மைப் பன்மை. சங்க இலக்கியம் முழுதும் யாம், நாம் முதலிய சொற்கள் இந்த நிலையிலேயே ஆளப்பட்டிருக்கின்றன. நாம் என்ற சொல் இன்றுவரை உளப்பாட்டுத் தன்மைப் பன்மையாகவே இருக்கிறது. ஆனால் யாம் என்ற சொல்லாட்சி மாறிவிட்டது. முன்னிலையை விலக்கப் பயன்பட்ட யாம் என்பது மறைந்துவிட்டது. அந்த இடத்தில் நாங்கள் என்ற சொல் இடம்பெற்றுவிட்டது.

முன்னிலை ஒருமை வழங்கிய முறைமை

நீ என்ற சொல் முன்னிலை ஒருமையைக் குறிக்க வந்தது. சங்கத் தமிழில் அதில் மரியாதைக் குறைபாடு ஒன்று இல்லை. தலைவனைத் தலைவி நீ என்று கூட்டுவார். புலவர் அரசனை நீ என்று கூட்டுவார். இடைக்காலத் தமிழிலும் பிற்காலத் தமிழிலும் இந்த நிலைமை மாறிவிடுகிறது.

பட்ர்க்கை ஆண்பாற்பெயர் சொல்லாட்சி

யாரும் இல்லை தானே கள்வன்

தானது பொய்ப்பின் யானெவன் செய்கோ

மேற்கண்ட குறுந்தொகைப் பாடவில் தலைவன் ஆண்பால் ஒருமையில் சூடப்படுகிறான். அவன் என்பதற்குப் பதிலாகத் தான் என்ற சொல் ஆளப்பட்டிருக்கிறது. இடைக்காலத் தமிழிலும் பிற்காலத் தமிழிலும் இந்த நிலைமை மாறிவிடுகிறது. திருவள்ளுவர் காலத்திலேயே தலைவனைத் தலைவி அவர் என்ற சொல்லால் சூடத் தொடர்கிவிடுகிறான்.

அவர்நெஞ் சவர்க்காதல் கண்டும் எவன்நெஞ்சே!

நீஸமக் காகா தது?

என்கிறான். அவர் என்ற உயர்பால் வழக்கு சங்கத் தமிழில் மிகமிக அருகியே காணப் படுகிறது. அரசனையும் தலைவனையும் அவன் என்று சொல்வது பெருவழக்காக இருந்திருக்கிறது. அரசனை அவன் என்று கூடியதற்குச் சான்றாக.

சுடுமாண் தோன்றல் நெடுமாண் அஞ்சி

தன்னாறி யலன்கொல் என்னாறி யலன்கொல்

என வரும் அடிகளைக் காட்டலாம்.

செல்வக் காலை நிற்பினும் அல்லற் காலை நில்லலன்

என்று கோப்பெருஞ்சோழன் தனது நண்பர் பிசிராந்தையாறைப் பற்றிக் குறிப்பிடுகிறான். அதில் மரியாதைக் குறைபாடு ஒன்றும் இல்லை.

செய்யா என்னும் வாய்பாட்டுச் சொல்

செய்யா என்னும் வாய்பாட்டல் பெயரெச்சமும் அமைந்திருக்கிறது; வினையெச்சமும் அமைந்திருக்கிறது. செய்யா என்னும் வாய்பாட்டுச் சொல் பெயரெச்சமாக வரும்பொழுது எதிர்மறைப் பொருளில் மட்டுமே வந்திருக்கிறது.

ஆய்வரங்கச் சிறப்பு மலர்

ஆனால் செய்யா என்னும் வாய்பாட்டில் அமைந்த பிறிதொரு சொல் தொகுதி விணையெச்சமாக வரும்பொழுது உடன்பாட்டிலும் வரும்; எதிர்மறையிலும் வரும்.

கேட்பினும் கேளாவிடல்

என்ற தொடரில் கேளா என்பது கேளாமல் விடல் என்ற பொருளில் எதிர்மறை விணை யெச்சமாக வந்தது.

சென்ற விடத்தார் செலவிடா தீதொரீ

என்ற தொடரில் விடா என்பது விடாது அல்லது விடாமல் என்ற பொருளில் எதிர்மறை விணையெச்சமாக வந்தது.

கைபிசையா வாய்மடியா கண்சிவவா

என்ற தொடரில் பிசையா, மடியா, சிவவா ஆகிய கிளாவிகள் பிசைந்து, மழந்து, சிவந்து என்று உடன்பாட்டுப் பொருளில் வந்திருக்கின்றன. செய்யா என்னும் வாய்பாடு விணையெச்சத்தில் அமைந்திருக்கும்பொழுது உடன்பாட்டில் வந்ததா எதிர்மறையில் வந்ததா என்று ஊன்றிக் கவனித்து உணரவேண்டும். இந்தக் குழப்பம் இருந்ததால்தானோ என்னவோ பிற்காலத் தமிழில் செய்யா என்னும் வாய்பாட்டு விணையெச்ச வழக்கு அழிந்துவிட்டது. பெயரெச்சத்தில் மட்டுமே தொடர்ந்து ஆளப்பட்டு வருகிறது.

சங்கத் தமிழில் மக்கடபெயர்கள்

இவர் இன்ன பெயரினர் என்ற குறிப்பில் அமைந்த மக்கடபெயர்கள் சங்க காலத் தமிழில் சங்கத் தமிழ்ப் பெயர்கள் என்று எளிதில் அடையாளம் காணத்தக்கனவாக உள்ளன. அந்தப் பெயர்களுக்குரிய சந்தி விதிகள்கூடத் தொல்காப்பியர் கூறிய விதிகளில் அடங்காதனவாக அவருக்கு முந்திய மொழிநடையை உணர்த்துவனவாக அமைந்திருக்கின்றன. சில பெயர்களை இங்கே கட்டுவது பொருந்தும். நக்கீரர், நப்பசலையார், நப்புதனார், நத்தத்தனார், பிசிராந்தையார் முதலான பெயர்களில் செயல்படும் சந்திவிதிகளை எண்ணிப் பார்க்க.

எவன் என்ற விணாக்சொல்

இன்சொல் இனிநீன்றல் காண்பான் எவன்கொலோ

வன்சொல் வழங்கு வது.

எவன் என்பது என்ன என்ற பொருளில் வந்தது. பழந்தமிழில் காணும் எவன் என்பதும் என் என்பதும் இக்கால வழக்கில் நாம் ஆளும் என்ன என்ற சொல்லுக்கு நிகரானவை. என்ன என்ற சொல் இந்தப் பொருளில் அக்கால வழக்கில் இல்லை.

திசைப்பெயர்கள்

தெற்கு, வடக்கு, கிழக்கு, மேற்கு ஆகிய சொற்களில் தெற்கு, வடக்கு மட்டுமே யிக்கப் பழங்காலத்திலிருந்து தொடர்ந்து தமிழில் பயன்பட்டு வந்திருக்கின்றன. ஆனால் கிழக்கு மேற்கு அப்படி இல்லை. கிழக்கு என்பதற்குப் பதிலாகக் குணக்கு

என்ற சொல்லும் மேற்கு என்ற சொல்லுக்குப் பதிலாகக் குடக்கு என்ற சொல்லும் பெருவழக்காக இருந்திருக்கின்றன. அதனால்தான் தொல்காப்பியத்தில்கூடத் திசைப்பெயர்களுக்கு விதி சொன்னபொழுது தொல்காப்பிர் தெற்கு, வடக்கு, குணக்கு, குடக்கு ஆகிய சொற்களுக்கு மட்டுமே விதிவகுத்திருக்கிறார்; கிழக்கு மேற்கு என்ற சொற்களுக்கு விதி வகுக்கவில்லை. இந்த உண்மை புலப்படா நிலையில் உரையாசிரியர் கிழக்கு மேற்கை அங்கே பொருத்திப் பார்த்து இற்பபட்டிருக்கின்றனர்.

தாமரை, ஆம்பல், வெள்ளம் முதலான எண்ணுப்பெயர்களும் கழுஞ்சூ, தொடி, கஃசை முதலான அளவைப் பெயர்களும் சங்கத் தமிழில் பயின்று வந்திருக்கின்றன. இடைக்காலத்திலும் பிற்காலத்திலும் மௌலிகை மௌலிகை மறைந்துவிட்டன.

தொண்டு என்ற எண்ணுப்பெயர்

தொல்காப்பியத்தில் தொண்டு என்ற எண்ணுப்பெயர் சுட்டப்படுகிறது. ஆனால் ஒன்பது என்ற எண்ணுப்பெயர்தான் பெருவழக்காக ஆளப்பட்டிருக்கிறது. ஒன்று, இரண்டு, மூன்று, நான்கு, ஐந்து, ஆறு, ஏழு, எட்டு, தொண்டு, பத்து என்பதுதான் தொல்தமிழில் இருந்த எண்ணுமறை வரிசை என்று தெரிகிறது. இங்கே உள்ள தொண்டு என்ற சொல்லின் இடத்தை ஒன்பது வந்து பிடித்துக் கொள்கிறது. அதன்பிறகு வரிசையாக தொண்ணாறு. தொள்ளாயிரம் ஆகிய சொற்களில் வழக்கு மாற்றம் ஏற்பட்டு விடுகிறது. இந்த உண்மைகளையெல்லாம் மனத்தில் கொண்டு பார்த்தால் தொண்டு என்பது தொல்காப்பியருக்கு முந்தைய தொல்தமிழ் வாடவும் என்பது விளாங்குகிறது.

மொழியியல் நோக்கில் அண்மைக்கால ஆய்வுகளில் இப்படிப்பட்ட செய்திகள் ஏராளமாக எடுத்துப் பேசப்பட்டிருக்கின்றன.

ஆய்வரங்கச் சிறப்பு மலர்

தொல்காப்பியப் பொருளதிகாரக் காலமும் கருத்தும்

அ. அ. மணவாளன்

சங்க இலக்கியக் கால ஆராய்ச்சி குறித்த கலந்தாய்வரங்கமாதலின், தொல்காப்பியத்தின் காலம் பற்றியும், பொருளதிகாரப் பொருள்மையினால் புலனாகும் காலம் பற்றியும் புலப்படும் சில கருத்துகளை அறிஞர் பெருமக்களோடு பகிர்ந்து கொள்ள விரும்புகிறேன்.

தொல்காப்பியத்தின் வாயிலாக விளங்கும் பனம்பாரனாரின் சிறப்புப் பாயிரத்தில் இடம் பெற்றுள்ள சில குறிப்புகள், தொல்காப்பியத்தின் காலம் மற்றும் பொருளதிகாரத்தின் இலக்கண அமைப்புகள் பற்றி அறிந்து கொள்ளத் துணைசெய்வனவாக அமைந்திருக்கக் காண்கிறோம்.

அவையாவன:

“வடவேங்கடந் தென்குமரி” எனத் தொடங்கும் சிறப்புப் பாயிரத்தை இயற்றிய பனம்பாரனார் தொல்காப்பியரோடு ஒருங்கு கற்றவர் என்று இளம்பூரணர், நச்சினார்க்கினியர் போன்ற உரையாசிரியர்கள் கூறுகின்றனர். இவரைக் குறித்து இளம்பூரணரும் நச்சினார்க்கினியரும் வேறொதுவும் கூறவில்லை. யாப்பருங்கல விருத்தியுரைகாரர் (11ஆம் நூற்.)

அகத்திணை யல்வழி ஆங்கதன் மருங்கின்
வகுத்த சொற்சீர் வஞ்சியொடு மயங்கும் (கு.29)

என்றார் பனம்பாரனார் என்னும் ஆசிரியர்” எனக் கூறுகிறார் (யாப்பருங்கல விருத்தியுரை ப. 131). மயிலைநாதர் தம்முடைய நன்னூல் உரையில் 52, 53 ஆகிய இரு நூற்பாக்கஞம் பனம்பாரம் என்னும் நாலுக்கு உரியன என்று கூறுகிறார் (நன்னூல் மூலமும் விருத்தியுரையும் ப. 140, அடிக். 44)

மேற்கூடிய தரவுகளால் தொல்காப்பியச் சிறப்புப்பாயிரத்தை இயற்றிய பனம்பாரனார் அவரோடு ஒருங்கு கற்ற மாணவர் என்பதும், அவரும் பனம்பாரம் எனப் பெயரியதோர் இலக்கண நூலின் (பொருளிலக்கணம்) ஆசிரியர் என்பதும்

பெறப்படுகின்றன. எனினும் பனம்பாரம் என்னும் இலக்கண நூல் இன்று வழக்கில் இல்லை.

வடவேங்கடம் தென்குமரி, ஆயிடைத்
தமிழ்கூறு (ம்) நல்லுலகம்

எனத்தொல்காப்பியச் சிறப்புப் பாயிரம் தமிழகத்தின் வட எல்லையாக வடவேங்கடத்தையும் தென் எல்லையாகத் தென்குமரியையும் கூறுகிறது.
‘தென்குமரி’ என்னும் தொடருக்குத்.

தெற்கின்கண் உளதாகிய குமரி யாறு

என்று நச்சினார்க்கினியரும் விளக்கம் தருகின்றனர். “கடல்காள்வதன் முன்பு பிறநாடும் உண்மையின்” என்று இளம்பூரணர் கூறுவதனால் தொல்காப்பியர் காலத் தமிழ்நாடு குமரியாற்றினைத் தெற்கெல்லையாகக் கொண்டிருந்தது என்பது தெளிவாகிறது.

வடத்திசை மருங்கின் வடுகுவரம் பாகத்
தென்றிசை யுள்ளிட டெஞ்சிய மூன்றும்
வரைமருள் புணரியொடு பொழுது கிடந்த நாடு

என்று தொல்காப்பியர்க்குப் பின்னர்த் தோன்றிய சிறுகாக்கை பாடினியார் (தற்சிறப்புப் பாயிரம்) தமிழகத்தின் தெற்கெல்லையாகக் கடலைக் கூறுகிறார்: இந்நால் (யாபு) குமரியாறு கடல் கொண்ட பிற்காலத்துச் செய்ததனவறிக என்று சிவஞான முனிவர் தம் பாயிரவிருத்தியில் விளக்குகிறார். எனவே பனம்பாரனார்க்குப் பின்னர் மற்றுமொரு கடல்கோள் நேர்ந்தது எனவும், அதனால் தெற்கில் குமரியாறு மறைந்து தற்போதுள்ள குமரிமுனை நின்றதனவும் அறிகிறோம்.

நெடியோன் குன்றமுந் தொடியோள் பெளவழும்
தமிழ்வரம் பறுத்த தண்புனல் நன்னாட்டு... (வேணிற்காதை = 1-2)

எனவரும் சிலப்பதிகாரக் குறிப்பிற்குரிய உரை, “குமரியாறின்னாது குமரிப் பெளவும் என்றது, குமரியாறு முன் நிகழ்ந்ததோர் கடல்கோளால் வெளப்பெற்று அதனுட் கரந்தமையின் என்க” எனக் கூறுவதும் இக்கருத்தை வலுப்படுத்துகிறது.

இதுகாறும் கண்டவற்றால், தொல்காப்பியச் சிறப்புப்பாயிரம் கூறும் குமரி என்பது குமரியாற்றைக் குறிப்பதாகச் சிறுகாக்கை பாடினியார், இளம்பூரணர், நச்சினார்க்கினியர், சிவஞான முனிவர் ஆகிய தமிழ்ப்புலவர்களும் உரையாசிரியர்களும் கொள்கின்றனர் என அறிகிறோம். இக்கருத்து உறுதிப்படுமானால் தொல்காப்பியரின் காலம் குமரிமுனை கண்ட கடல்கோளுக்கு ஆய்வரங்கச் சிறப்பு மலர்

முந்தியதா, அதாவது குறைந்தது கி.மு. எட்டாம் நாற்றாண்டிற்கு முந்தியதாக அமையலாம் எனக் கொள்ள நேரிடுகிறது.

இக்குறுத்து ஆழ்கடல் ஆய்வுகளின் துணையால் மேலும் உறுதிப்படுமானால், சங்க இலக்கியக் காலம் பற்றிய முடிகளும் வேறுபட்டு முன்னோக்கிச் செல்ல நேரிடும் என்பது தெளிவாகிறது.

தொல்காப்பியப் பொருளாதிகாரம்

தம் காலத்து வழக்கிலிருந்து பெறப்பட்ட உலகியல் மரபு மற்றும் இலக்கிய மரபு இரண்டையும் அடிப்படையாகக் கொண்டு எழுத்து, சொல், பொருள் என்னும் முத்திறப்பட்ட தமிழிலக்கண நூலைத் தொல்காப்பியர் இயற்றினார் எனப் பாயிரம் கூறுகிறது.

‘எழுத்தும் சொல்லும் பொருஞம்’ என்னும் தொடரில் வரும் ‘பொருள்’ என்பதற்கு இளம்பூரணர் ‘பொருளிலக்கணம்’ என்று உரைக்கிறார்.

“எண்டுப் பொருளென்றது அகம், புறமென்னும் இருக்கற்றுப் பதினாற்றினைப் பகுதியவாயிச் செய்யுளிற் பாடுதற்குரிய இன்பம் முதலிய உலகியற் பொருளை... எண்டுக் கூறும் பொருட்பாகுபாடுகள் பொதுவாகாது தமிழிற்கே சிறந்து, வேறான்றாற் பெறப்படாமையின்’ வேறான்றாற் பெறப்படாமையின்” என்பர் தமிழ்சூழ்மையும் வடமொழியையும் நிலைகண்டுணர்ந்த மாதவச் சிவஞான முனிவர் (பாயிர விருத்தி).

சிவஞான முனிவரின், “செய்யுளிற் பாடுதற்குரிய இன்ப முதலிய உலகியற் பொருள்” என்னும் விளக்கம் சிற்றிக்கத்தக்கது. எழுத்திலக்கணமும், சொல்லிலக்கணமும் எல்லா மொழிகளிலும் இருப்பினும் “பொருளிலக்கணம்” என்னும் அமைப்பு தமிழழுத் தவிரப் பிறமொழிகளில் இல்லை என்னும் சிவஞான முனிவரின் கூற்று முற்றிலும் ஏற்கத் தக்கதே யாகும்.

இனி, “எழுத்திகாரமும், சொல்லதிகாரமும் வல்லாரைத் தலைப்பட்டோம்... பொருளாதிகாரம் வல்லாரை எங்குந் தலைப்பட்டிலேம்” என்னுஞ் செய்தியைக் கேட்ட பாண்டிய அரசன், ‘என்னை, எழுத்துஞ் சொல்லும் ஆராய்வது பொருளாதிகாரத்தின் பொருட்டன்றே! பொருளாதிகாரம் பெற்றெனின் இவை பெற்றும் பெற்றிலேம்’ என்று கூறி வருந்தினான் என்றும், அவனுடைய கவர்சியைத் தீர்ப்பதற்காக ஆவவாயில் அழல்நிறக் கடவுளே பொருளிலக்கணம் தொடர்பான அறுபது சுத்திரத்தையும் செய்தருளினார் என்றும் குறிப்பிடும் இறையனார் களவியலுரையும் பொருளிலக்கணத்தின் இன்றியமையாமையை எடுத்துரைக்கக் காண்கிறோம்.

பொருளிலக்கணத்தின் தனித்தன்மை.

பொருளிலக்கண மரபு பிற மொழிகளில் காணப்பெறவில்லை; தமிழில் மட்டுமே காணப்பெறுகிறது என்னும் கூற்றினைச் சுருக்கமாக ஒராயலாம். பொருளிலக்கணம் தமிழின் தனித்தன்மையைக் குறிக்கிறது என்று கூறுமிடத்து அகப்பொருளிலக்கணந்தான் சுடப்படுகிறது. புறப்பொருளின் பாடுபொருளும் பொதுவான பாடல்முறைமையும் பிற இலக்கியங்களிலும் காணப்படுகின்றன. எனவே அவை தமிழகே உரியனவல்ல.

குறிக்கோளியக் காதற்பொருண்மை

அகப்பொருள் இலக்கண மரபைப் பொறுத்தவரையில் பாடுபொருள், பாடன்முறைமை இரண்டுமே தனித்தன்மையுடையன. அகப்பொருள் மரபு மானுடக் காதலைப் பாடுகிறது. காதற்பொருண்மை என்பது எல்லா இலக்கியங்கட்கும் பொதுவானது. காதலைப் பாடாத இலக்கியம் எந்த மொழியிலும் இல்லை. நாட்டுப்புறப் பாடல்களிலும் இடம்பெறும் பாடுபொருள்தான் காதல். ஒனால் தமிழ் அகப்பொருளுக்கு உரியதாகக் கொள்ளப்பெறும் காதற்பொருண்மை பல்வேறு வரையறைகட்டு உட்பட்டதாகும்.

நாடக வழக்கு, உலகியல் வழக்கு என்னும் இருவகைப் பண்பும் உடையதாக அமையும் இலக்கிய மரபுதான் அகம் எனக் கூறப்படும். நாடக வழக்காவது குறிக்கோள் பார்வை யினை உடைய காதல்; எனினும் உலக வழக்கில் காணப்பெறுவது; ஒவ்வொருவராலும் உணரப்படுவது. இத்தகைய வரையறையினை உடையது தமிழ் அகப்பொருள் மரபாகும். அகப்பொருள் துறைகளாற் கூறப்படும் செய்திகள் கற்பனை யானவையல்ல; பெரும் பாலானாவ இன்றும் உணரப்படுவன. கழலும், நாகரிக முறைகளும் மாறினும் தமிழ் அகப்பொருள் கருதும் துறைப்பொருண்மைகள் மாறுமாட்டா. நலம் பாராட்டல், குறியிடம் கூறல், வழியினது அருமை, இற்செறிப்பு, நாணிக்கண் புதைத்தல் போன்ற பல துறைகள் இன்றைக்கும் பொருந்துவன. தமிழ் அகப்பொருட் பொருண்மை காலம் கண்ணியதன்று; காலம் கடந்தது /என்பது வெளிப்படை.

பாடன்முறைமைகள் ; விக்கலாகா விதிகள்

அகப்பாடல்கள் தலைவன் அல்லது தலைவியரைப் பற்றியதாக மட்டுமே அமையும். பிற பாத்திரங்கள் உலவினும் அவர்களைப் பற்றியதாக அகப்பாடல் அமையாது.

பாடலில் தலைவன், தலைவியரது இயற்பெயர்கள் சுடப்படமாட்டா (சுடி ஒருவர்ப் பெயர் கொள்ப்பெறார்).

பாடலமைப்பு நாடக முன்னிலையாக/அமையும் (dramatic monologue).

ஒய்வரங்கச் சிறப்பு மற்றும்

உரையாடலாக அமைவது இல்லை. கலித்தொகையில் மட்டும் ஓரிரு விதிவிலக்குகள் காணப்பெறுகின்றன.

பருவமடைந்த இளையவர்களைப் பற்றியதாகவே பாடல்கள் அமையும்; தலைவன் தலைவியரது முதுமை, நோய், இறப்பு போன்ற நிலைகள் பாடல்பெற்றாடா.

களவியற் பருவத்தில் தோன்றும் காதல் திருமணத்தில் நிறைவேறியே தீரும். நிறைவேறாத காதலைத் தமிழ் அகப்பாடல்களிற் காணவியலாது.

(unrequited love, rivalry, befrayal of love, cross-love, cuckoldry, etc. are not breafeed in Tamil Akam poetry: no seamy side of love: only rosy side of live will be celebrated).

தமிழ்/அகப்பாடல்கள் வழிக்கும் காதல் உணர்வுகள் அறிவுறுத்தும் வாழ்க்கைச் செயற்பாடுகள் எல்லா நாட்டு மக்களுக்கும் எப்போதும் பொருந்துவனவாகவே அமையும். தமிழ் அகப்பாடற் பொருண்மையில் இன்பமான மனநிலையே போற்றப்பெறும். இன்பமே எந்நாளும் துண்பமில்லை என்னும் உணர்வை குறிஞ்சி, மூல்லை, பாலை, மருதம், நெய்தல் என்னும் எல்லாத் திணைப் பாடல்களிலும் காணலாம்; களவு, கற்பு என்னும் இருவகைக் கைகோளிலும் உணரலாம். அதாவது, The sun of delight never sets in Akam empire. எனக் கூறலாம் (அகப்பொருட் காதற் சூரியன் அஸ்தமிப்பதே இல்லை).

பொருளத்தொரம் ஓர் அமைப்பியல்சார் கவிதையில்

பெர்டினான் டி சகுரின் அமைப்பியல் கோட்பாடுகளின் அடிப்படையில் ஓர் அமைப்பியல் சார் கவிதையியலை உருவாக்க நார்த்தராப் ப்ரை, ஜனாதன் கல்லர், தொடொரோவ், ஜெனாட், பார்த் போன்ற ஐரோப்பிய அமைப்பியல்சார் இலக்கியத் திறனாய்வாளர்கள் முயன்று வருகின்றனர். இதுவரையில் எந்த மொழிக்கும் இப்படியோர் அமைப்பியல்சார் கவிதையில் (structuralist poe-
ties) உருவானதாகத் தெரியவில்லை.

சகுரின் அகவாறவும் (langue) -புறவாறவும் (parole), தனிவாறவும் (idiolect) என்னும் கோட்பாட்டு அடிப்பையில் மொழிய்யலார் அமைப்பியல்சார் மொழிநூலைக் கண்டறிந்தது போல, இலக்கியத் திறனாய்வாளர்களும் கவிதையியல் ஒன்றை அமைக்கலாம் எனக் கருதினர்.

தொல்காப்பியப் பொருளத்தொரம் ஓர் அமைப்பியல்சார் கவிதையியலாகவே அமைந்திருப்பது மிகவும் வியப்பளிப்பதாக உள்ளது. பொருளத்தொர அகத்திணையிற்கூறப்படும் திணை சார்ந்த கூற்றுகள் எல்லாம் அகவாறவ மகாவும் (langue) சங்க அகப்பாடல்கள் எல்லாம் தொழிற்படு புறவாறவமாகவும் (parole-

idiolects) அமைந்திருப்பதைக் காணுமிடத்துத் தமிழ் இலக்கிய மரபு பல ஆயிரமாண்டுக்கு முன்னரே - ஓர் இலக்கியக் கவிதையிலை இலக்கணப்படுத்தியிருக்கும் பாங்கினை அறிந்து வியப்பும் மகிழ்ச்சியும் அடைகிறோம். ‘என்ப’, ‘என்மனார் புலவர்’ என்னும் தொல்காப்பியத் தொடர்கள் அவர் காலத்துக்கு முன்னரே பொருளிலக்கண மரபு தமிழில் தோண்றியிருந்தது என் அறிகிறோம். மேலை நாட்டு அமைப்பியல் அறிஞர்கள் வகுக்க விஷையும் கவிதையிலை அவர்கள், literary system, General science of literature, grammar of literature, manual of reading, language of literary paroles எனப் பல்வேறு தொடர்களால் அழைக்கின்றனர். இவ் எல்லாத் தொடர்களும் கருதும் இலக்கண அமைப்பினைத்தான் தொல்காப்பியப் பொருளதிகாரம் பெற்றுள்ளது என்பதில் ஐயமே இல்லை.

பொருளதிகாரத்தில் சில பாடச்சிக்கல்கள்

தொல்காப்பியத்தின் மூன்று அதிகாரங்களில், எழுத்து, சொல் கிரண்டிலும் ஓரிரு பாட வேறுபாடுகள் காணப்பட்டனும் இலக்கணப்பொருள் காணப்பதில் சிக்கல் மிகுதியாக ஏற்படவில்லை. ஆனால் பொருளதிகாரத்தைப் பொறுத்த வரையில் பல திறப்பட்ட சிக்கல்கள் காணப்படுகின்றன.

**கைக்கிணை முதலாப் பெருந்தினை யிறுவாய்
முற்படக் கிளந்த எழுதினை யென்ப.**

என்னும் பொருளதிகாரத்தின் தொடக்கத்திற் காணப்படும் நூற்பாவினை இளம்பூரணர் முதலானோர் அகத்தினையியலின் தலைச் சூத்திரமாகக் கொள்ளுகின்றனர். முதலிரண்டு அதிகாரங்களின் முதற்கூத்திரங்களை நோக்க இது தான் பொருளதிகாரத்தின் முதற்கூத்திரமா என்னும் ஐயம் தோன்றுகிறது. எழுத்து இத்தனையென்றும், சொல் இத் தினைகளின்மேற்செல்லும் என்றும் முதலிரண்டு அதிகாரங்கள் தொடங்காறிற்க, பொருள் அகம், புறம் என இருவகைப்படும் என்னும் அடிப்படைக் கருத்தமைந்த நூற்பாவும், அகத்தினை ஏழுவகைப்படும் எனக் கூறும் நூற்பாவும் இந்த அதிகாரத்தின் தொடக்கமாகக் காணப்படாதது ஏன் என்னும் ஐயம் எழுகிறது. நாவலர் சோமசுந்தர பாரதியார் பல ஆண்டுகளுக்கு முன்னரே இக் கருத்தை வெளியிட்டிருப்பதும் சிந்திக்கத்தக்கது. இதேபோன்றே புறத்தினையியல் முதல் நூற்பாவும் சிதைந்து இருப்பதைப் பி.சா.சு. சாஸ்திரியார் குறிப்பிட்டுள்ளார்.

அகத்தினையியலில் கூறியது போலப் புறத்தினையியலின் தொடக்கத்தில்,

**வெட்சி முதலாக் காஞ்சி யிறுவாய்
பற்படக் கிளந்த எழுதினை என்ப.**

ஆய்வரங்கச் சிறப்பு மலர்

என்று கூறியிருத்தல் வேண்டும் எனத் தொல்காப்பிய உரைவள ஆசிரியராகிய சிவிலங்களனாரும் கூறுகிறார். இவ்வாறு அகத்திணையியல், புறத்திணையியல் இரண்டின் தொடக்கத்திலும் காணப்பெறும் நூற்பாக்கள் சிதைவுற்றிருப்பனவாகத் தோன்றுகின்றன.

கி.பி.10ஆம் நூற்றாண்டிற்குரியதாகக் கருதப்படும் தமிழ்நெறி விளக்கம் என்னும் அகப்பொருள் இலக்கண நூல் தொல்காப்பிய மரபுக்குரியது. இதனுடைய முதல் நூற்பா.

**அகத்ததும் புறத்ததும் ஆயிரு பகுதியின்
மிகுந்ததும் ஆகி விரிந்தது பொருளே (1)**

என்பது நிறுத்த முறையானே பொருளிலக்கணம் ஆமாறு உணர்த்துதல் நுதலிற்று. எனவே இவ்வோத்து பொருளியல் என்பதாயிற்று, என்னும் நுதற்பொருள் குறிப்போடு முடிகிறது. பொருள் இலக்கணம் அகம், புறம் என்னும் இரு கூற்றது என்னும் தலைப்புச் செய்தியை இந்நூல் கூறுவதுபோலத் தொல்காப்பியப் பொருளதிகாரமும் கொண்டிருக்க வேண்டும். ஆனால் நமக்கு அப்பகுதி கிடைக்கவில்லை.

தமிழிலக்கண நூல்கள் இறுதியில் புறனடைக் கருத்துகள் அமைந்த புறனடைசை சூத்திரங்கள் பெற்றிருப்பது யெல்பு. ஆனால் எழுத்தும் சொல்லும் பெற்றிருப்பது போன்று பொருளதிகார இறுதியில் புறனடைச் சூத்திரம் காணவில்லை. இவ்வாறு ஆதியும் அந்தமுமாக இருக்கவேண்டிய நூற்பாக்கள் பொருளதிகாரத்தில் காணப்பெறவில்லை. எழுத்தும் சொல்லும் சிதையாமல் கிடைத்திருக்க, பொருளதிகாரம் மட்டும் இவ்வாறு சிதைந்து இருப்பதன் காரணத்தை அறிஞர்கள் ஆராயவேண்டும் என்று வேண்டிக் கொள்கிறேன்.

இனி, பொருளதிகார நூலின் கிடையிலேயும் சில நூற்பாக்கள் விடுபட்டிருக்கக் காணகிறோம். சான்றாக அகத்திணையியலில் தலைவி கூற்றுக்கான நூற்பா காணப் பெறவில்லை. ‘தலைமகள் கூற்று உணர்த்தியசூத்திரம் காலப் பழமையாற் பெயர்த் தெழுதுவார் விழ எழுதினார் போலும் என்னும் இளம்புரணரின் விளக்கம் (அகத். 45) இத்தகை சிதைவுகளை உறுதிப்படுத்துகிறது.

சூத்திரங்களின் விடுபோடுகள் ஒருபுறமிருக்க, சில கிடைச் செருகல்களும் நிகழ்ந்திருக்கலாமோ என்னும் ஜயம் தோன்றுகிறது. சான்றாக,

தாதப்பக்கம், தாபதநிலை, முதானந்தம், தபுதாரநிலை போன்ற சொற்றொடர்களைக் கூறலாம். இவையெல்லாம் தமிழ்ச்சொல்லும் வடசொல்லும் சேர்ந்த

கூட்டுப்பெயர்கள். தொல்காப்பிய இலக்கணப்படி இருமொழிக் கூட்டுச் சொற்கள் (hybrid compounds) அமைவது தொல்காப்பியக் காலத் தமிழ்மரபில் இல்லை. தாபதம்+பக்கம்; தாபதம்+நிலை; முதுமை+ஆனந்தம்; தபு+தாரம்+நிலை.

இத்தகைய இருமொழித் தொடரமைப்புகள் பதினெண்கீழ்க்கணக்கு காலத்தே காணப்படுகின்றன. சான்றாக, ஆசாரக்கோவை, திரிகடுகம், சிறுபஞ்சமூலம், ஏலாதி போன்ற நூற்பெயர்களைக் கூறலாம்.

இவ்வாறு தமிழ் இலக்கிய இலக்கண மரபிற்குரிய அடிப்படை நூலாகிய தொல்காப்பியப் பொருளத்திகாரத்தில் காணப்பெறும் பாடச்சிக்கலை நீக்கிச் செம்மையானதொரு ஏட்டை உருவாக்கும் பணியில் தமிழ் அறிஞர்களும் ஆய்வாளர்களும் மேலும் முயலவேண்டும்.

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The Age of Sangam Classics From Literary Perspective

S. N. KANDASWAMY

1. Introduction

It is the general view that the Ten Idyls and Super Eight Anthologies constituted the main Corpus of Cañkam Classics. The early commentators of Tolkāppiyam and other ancient texts termed the Cañkam Classics, Cāñrōr ceyyu¹ which means the poems of those perfected persons equipped with virtuous and noble qualities. Even Kamban, [1000 A.D] the emperor among medieval poets extolled the Cañkam poetry, Cāñrōr kavi² which he delightfully compared to the majestic flow of the River Godāvari.

Since Ilampūraṇar has noted the Tirukkural, as Cāñrōr ceyyu³, it is to be treated along with the aforesaid literary works. It seems that Tirukkural was sufficiently studied at least by some poets of Cañkam period, as evidenced by their usage of the phrases and sometimes the lines of the Tirukkural.

Normally, Cañkam Classics are assigned by many scholars to a vast period commencing at least from 500 B.C. to 300 A.D. However, some scholars expressed contrary views. Even among them, many scholars accepted the date 300 B.C. to 300 A.D. to be the period of Cañkam literature. It is to be borne in mind that it would be a great blunder if one proposed that all the poems were indited in a century or two. In the Cañkam anthology, various layers of thought, historical references, linguistic peculiarities etc. are noticed leading to the conclusion that the poems should have been written at different points of time.

2. Historicity of Cañkam

Some people doubted whether there was a Cañkam, since this word did not find a place in the entire corpus of Cañkam literature. To such scholars, it is to be reminded that the word Testament in its technical sense of a division of the Bible does not occur in the Bible⁴, and hence is it wise to conclude that the Bible is not the Testament. Similarly, the word Piṭaka was not used in the *Vinaya*, *Sutta* and *Abhidharma Piṭakas* to denote the canonical texts of the Theravāda Buddhists.⁵ On this stand, would it be right to conclude that the aforesaid three collections are not the

canonical works of the Theravāda Buddhists. We have to think over similar points before coming to a conclusion with regard to the usage of Cañkam. In the entire text of Cañkam literature, the words ammā- mother, and appā-father are not found. Is it not unwise to determine that during the Cañkam period, there were no mother and father! One should find out equivalents to ammā and appā in the said classics. Happily one finds tāy-mother and tantai-father in them. So also, if one goes deep into the Cañkam poems references to the academy of poets are sufficiently noticed. Let us consider some of them.

2.1. Māñkuṭi Marutanār - the Chief of Cañkam (- Academy)

Pāñṭiyān Netuñceliyān considered it a rare privilege and prestige to be sung by renowned poets, headed by Māñkuṭi Marutanār [Puram 72.13-16]. This poet extolled the glory of the Pāñṭiya and his capital Maturai in the Maturaikkāñci, the lengthiest of the Cañkam poems, running to 782 metrical lines, composed in the composite form of vañci and āciriyan. Since the Māñkuṭam inscription⁶ [200 B.C.] refers to Netuñceliyān, whose officer Kaṭalan Valuti caused to carve an abode in the hill of Māñkuṭam for the Buddhist (-Jain?) monk Kaṇinanti āciriyan, it is suggested that the Maturaikkāñci [461-471; 475-487], which also described the existence of Buddhist and Jain monasteries in the vicinity of Maturai, may be dated to 200 B.C. The inscription under reference is found in Kalukumalai hill at Māñkuṭam Village in the Pāñṭyanāṭu. It is inferred that Māñkuṭi, the native place of the poet Marutanār, was in the course of time turned to be Māñkuṭam.

The second inscription of Māñkuṭam also refers to an abode dedicated to Kaṇinanta Sirikuvan, chiselled by another person Caṭikan, the father of Ilañceliyān who is the co-brother (Sakalañ) of Netuñceliyān. Therefore, our hypothesis that the Maturaikkāñci was composed in 200 B.C. gets strengthened and the period of the remaining poems with historical allusions are to be settled in the light of such recorded history. In this connection one more point deserves our attention. The royal smith Nakkañ, who composed the panegyric poem (-meykkirtti i.e. praśasti) on Parāntaka Virapāñṭiyān (859 A.D. - 907 A.D.), commenced his composition with the line oñikutirai vyan̄ parappiñ, being the first line of Maturaikkāñci, enumerating the achievements of the hallowed predecessors of Parāntakan Virapāñṭiyān, going back to the Cañkam period.

2.2. Atiyamān Neṭumān Añci

Jambai⁸, where the inscription is found, is at present a small village on the north bank of South Penñāru river, adjacent to Tirukkōyilūr, which was conquered by Atiyamān Neṭumān Añci [Puram. 99. 13-14]. The inscription refers to the dedication of the abode in the Āluruttimalai hill of Jambai, by Atiyamān Neṭumān Añci, the Sati-yaputa. Since the Rock Edict of Aœoka, the great Mauryan emperor of Magadha

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deœa who ascended the throne in or about 273 B.C. mentioned Satiyaputa along with the Cholas, Pandiyas and Ceras (-Keralaputra), being his neighbours, it was suggested by Dr. R. Nagaswamy that a new link between Ásoka and Tamilnadu was identified. Hence, it is proper to conclude that Atiyamāñ Neṭumāñ Añci and his court poetess Avvaiyār should have lived in the third century B.C. Consequently, the poems of other poets associated with the chieftain Añci and Avvaiyār should be placed in the third century B.C. Since the Nandas and Mauryas are mentioned in the poems of Akanāñūru⁹ and Puranāñūru¹⁰, these poems, according to R. Sathiyanatha Aiyar¹¹ should be placed during 400 B.C. to 300 B.C. being the period of the aforesaid two dynasties who ruled the major part of India, the then subcontinent.

2.3. The Cēra King

The Pugalur inscriptions throw sufficient light on three kings of Cēra dynasty, celebrated in the Patiruppattu. It denotes the ancient Pukalijūr, situated on the southern bank of Cauvery, about 15 km northwest of Karūr, the capital city of ancient Cēras. In the southern slope of the hill of Ārunāttar malai of Pugalūr, the two inscriptions were engraved in two separate caves in Tamil-Brahmi script which related the gift of the abode to the Jain or Buddhist monk Ceñkāyapan̄ of Yārrūr. The rock abode was carved when Ilañkaṭuṇkō the son of Peruñkaṭuṇkō, the son of King Ātañ, Cel Irumporai became the heir apparent.

In the two inscriptions which are nearly identical in form and content are assigned to second century A.D. The three kings of Cēra dynasty were Kō Ātañ Cēral Irumporai, Peruñkaṭuṇkō and Ilañkaṭuṇkō who were respectively equated with Celvakkātuṇkō Vālyātañ, Peruñcēral Irumporai and Ilañcēral Irumporai who were eulogized respectively by Kapilar, Aricikilār and Peruñkuñrūrkilār in the 7th, 8th and 9th tens of the Patiruppattu. This historical identification of the Ceral Kings mentioned in the epigraph and Patiruppattu was first made by R. Panneerselvam (1968) and after him by I. Mahedevan (1971).¹² However, the dates of the epigraphs seem to be assigned by the latter. It is to be understood that in the name of a poet, king or chieftain, there should have been more than one person in the Cañkam age, as understood for example from the British history which revealed more than one Charles, Edward, George, Richard, Henry and others.

Also, dating of the epigraphs should not be arbitrary. It should be done, taking into consideration all the historical elements found in them and making a feasible chronology, accommodating the royal persons in the proper sequence of time. For the time being it may be considered that the lower limit of the Patiruppattu may be assigned to second century A.D.

3. Reference in the Kalittokai

There is an interesting reference in the Pālai-k-kali [35.17-20] to the existence of Cañkam in Maturai, the capital city of the Pandyas who evinced special interest in extending patronage to the Tamil Academy and its poets. The poem under reference is composed by Pālai Pāṇṭiya Peruṅkaṭuṅkō. The hero departed his spouse to amass wealth in far-off place. The spouse was unable to bear the pangs of separation. However, the confidante consoled her reminding the hero's promise before departure to return home after accumulating the opulence in the spring season to celebrate the fresh literary feast, offered by the erudite poets of Maturai with impressive fortress whose fame was uttered by the people of the land.

There is one more reference in the Kalittokai to the existence of the Academy of poets at Maturai. Maturai Marutāṇḍilāṇḍakanār, who composed the Marutam genre of Kalittokai provides additional information of the poets, associated with the Tamil Academy. He compares the poets to the cabinet ministers of the emperors, who wielded their sovereignty in the entire land, adhering their sane words to administer the country (68. 1-5). The hero of the poem seems to be a royal person, perhaps the Pāṇṭiya prince. He is the resident of the city, fortified by the castle and encircling waters (of River Vaiyai). The commentator Naccinār-k-kiṇiyar giving due recognition to the fort of the city, identified that it was Maturai which was written as Matirai [-Matil → Matir + ai → Matirai] in the ancient Tamil-Brahmi epigraphs and also in the inscriptions of the Imperial Colas.¹³

The poets are praised as experts (-Vallavar) in creating poems. The hero of the poem (68) has been portrayed as one whose ears do not allow evil words to enter. His ears are personified as the field which was originally cultivated by the poets with their tongue as plough and irrigated by the water of sane and sober words. The hero used to enjoy heartily the newly created poems of such great poets, marked by freshness in substance, rhetorics and style [68. 1-5].

Therefore, an impartial researcher is required to give weight to the aforesaid references, authenticating the existence of Cañkam, as academic body of creative literature and the participation of art connoisseurs to experience aesthetic pleasure through interesting deliberations and reflection.

4. Reference in the Cīrupāṇārruppaṭai

The Cīrupāṇārruppaṭai glorifies the achievements and greatness of Nalliyakkōṭan, one of the chieftains of Cañkam period. It is composed by the poet Nattattanār of Nallūr with epic grandeur. The poet endeavours to project the excellence of Nalliyakkōṭan who in his estimate stands supreme to Cēraṇ, Pāṇṭiyan, and Cōlaṇ, leave alone a host of seven philanthropic chieftains like Pēkaṇ, Pāri and others. He never belittles the greatness of these kings and chieftains, but describes their great-

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ness and munificence. When he speaks of the Pāṇṭhiya king, he extols the glory of his capital Maturai which is famous on three counts. Firstly, Maturai possessed Tamilnilai i.e. the establishment of Tamil Caṅkam. The word 'Nilai' denotes the institution or shelter, as in the case of āñilai [ā + nilai] (the shelter of the cows). Secondly, the city was famous for hospitality, as noted in the phrase, 'tāñkaru marapin'. Thirdly, it possessed large streets, overflowing with happiness: 'makilnañai marukin'. Let us quote the whole passage:

Celiyan, tamilnilai perra tāñkaru marapin
makilnañai marukin maturai" [65-67].

Among the three attributes that glorified Maturai, Tamilnilai i.e., Caṅkam stands supreme.

Such references are to be studied with historical sense to validate the existence of Caṅkam. It is to be noted that Kūṭal, another name for Maturai has been associated with Tamil. Hence, the city has been hailed, Tamil keļu kūṭal [Puṇam. 58.13] and the river Vaiyai, flowing around the city was praised Tamil vaiyai [Pari. 6.63]. No other cities and rivers of other two kings viz., Cēra and Cōla were so named with the attribute Tamil, suggesting that the Pāṇṭiyas evinced exorbitant interest in the development of Tamil.

5. Avai-y-aṭakkiyal

The native word avai denoted a gathering or assembly. It should not be taken an alternant form of Sanskrit SabhĀ. It is derived from the native root avi - to control, subdue, humble, extinguish etc. In this context the passage, 'āñru avintu aṭañkiya kolkaic cāñrōr' occurring in the Puranāñūru [191. 6-7] merits special mention. Tolkaappiyar refers to avaiyam or avaiyakam in Purattinaiyiyal meaning an academy or assembly [Tol. Porul. 75.17]. He mentions that the members of the academy should be endowed with eightfold qualities which are explicated by the commentator Ilampūraṇar. They are: 1. pedigree 2. learning 3. character 4. truthfulness 5. purity 6. rectitude 7. absence of jealousy and 8. absence of greed. These are the requisite qualifications of a member - let him be a poet, king or others who participated in the literary discussion. In support of his commentary, he quoted a poem from an ancient text Āciriyamālai. It is to be noted that the poets who guided the king and society were endowed with high values and noble traits, besides erudition and creative skill.

In the Ceyyuliyal [415-419], Tolkaappiyar stated fourfold literary genres with specific themes, to be composed in a metre other than Kali-p-pā and Vañci-p-pā. One of them is known as Avai-y-aṭakkiyal. This genre denotes the polite expression of a poet submitting himself before the august academic body to accept in a way his words which are uttered without any deliberation. Though the poets were full

fledged and well equipped writers, out of humility they used to speak in a low tone to win the support of the audience. This kind of expression was known as Avaiyaṭakkiyal.

In the prefatory poem of Tolkāppiyam known as Pāyiram, composed by the author's class-mate Paṇampāraṇar, there is a reference to the Academy of poets and grammarians, patronized by the king Nilantaru tiruviṛ Pāṇṭiyāṇ. When Tolkāppiyar presented his treatise before the Academy for approval, there was heated discussion between Atarkōṭṭu Ācāṇ, and the author himself. After clearing all the queries, advanced by the Ācāṇ of Atarkōṭṭu, Tolkāppiyar was able to gain the approval of his text, as understood from the Pāyiram.

In the Maturaikkāñci, the same Pāṇṭiya king is said to be one of the forbears of Pāṇṭiyāṇ Netūñceliyan. He was celebrated as a lover of poetry, enjoying the company of the consummate poets of commanding respect [761-763].

In the Pāyiram of Akanāñūru, a reference to the existence of Caṇkam is found. The academy and its poets are noted in the opening part of the said Payiram:

niṇṛa nīti veṇṛa nēmi
 Paluṭil koḷkai valutiyār avaikkaṇ
 arivu vīrrirunta cerivutai maṇattu
 vāṇṭoy nallicai-c- cāṇrōr kūlī

Its substance is as follows:

"The Pandyas, who were judicious and victorious endowed with immaculate policy, patronized the academy, valutiyar avai. The members, who assembled there, were erudite scholars with subdued mind and great reputation, touching the sky."

Further, the Pāyiram continues to convey the method of collecting, organizing and arranging the 400 poems of Netuntokai, the old name for Akanāñūru into three divisions viz., kalirri yāṇai nirai, maṇimitai pavalam aṇṭt nittilakkōvai. Also, it communicates that there was a rich metrical commentary on the anthology Netuntokai, written in Akaval form by a chieftain of Maṇakkutti in the Itaiyalanāṭu.

In the Paripāṭal, Nappaṇṇāṇār extols Madurai, famous for the people, excelling others in knowledge and heroism [pulattiṇum pōriṇum pōr ṭōlāk kūṭal 19.8]. In another poem, competitions in the arts of dance, music etc. are mentioned [9. 72-75]. They held on the Hill of Tirupparaṇkuṇram, adjacent to Maturai.

Therefore, it is proper to conclude that the Pāṇṭiyas patronized the Tamil academy for a long and continued period. Then, the question arises with regard to the first usage of the word Caṇkam to denote the ancient /Avai/or Tamīlñilai/. Let us peep into this matter.

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6. The usage of the word Caṅkam

The word Caṅkam is mentioned in the ancient commentary of Iraiyanār Kalaviyal also known as Iraiyanār Akapporul.¹⁴ The original commentary of this text by Nak-kīrar had undergone sufficient changes through ten generations. It is in its present form attributed to 7th Century A.D. The details of the existence of first Caṅkam, which existed in the original Maturai which was engulfed, are clothed with some mythological account since Lord Śiva, Muruka, and Kubera were also said to be members of the Caṅkam, which lasted for 4,440 years. The second Caṅkam was held at Kapāṭapuram which was also devoured by the hungry sea. This Caṅkam with Akattiyanār, Tolkāppiyaṇār and others lasted for 3,700 years. The third Caṅkam existed in the present Maturai for 1,850 years and the poets produced the Super Eight Anthologies (eṭṭuttokai) and other works.

Some historians, who did not accept the reality of the very long period of the academies and other accounts of some fabulous nature, never attempted to winnow the chaff of myth from the grains of truth. However, V. Kanakasabai Pillai¹⁴ and K. N. Sivaraja Pillai¹⁵ upheld the first two centuries of the Christian Era to be the period of Caṅkam Literature taking into account the contact of the Greeks and Romans with the Tamils through maritime trade. S. Vaiyapuri Pillai accepted the third Caṅkam which produced the available poems of the anthologies. It is to be noted that Mayilai Seeni Venkataswami established the reality of the three Caṅkams in the light of fresh materials in his thought provoking book Caṅka Ilakkiyac Ceytikal containing his special lectures on Caṅkam literature, delivered at the Annamalai University in the early seventies of last century. Professor K. Subramaniya Pillai also endorsed the historicity of the three Caṅkams, patronized by the Pandya kings, in his Ilakkiya Varalāru, Vol. I. Be that as it may.

When Sanskrit was glorified to be a divine language, the Tamils also aspired to attach divinity to their unique language and hence attributed the gods to be the members of the first Caṅkam. This tradition is also noticed in the hymn of Appar [650 A.D.] who hailed Lord Īśava to be a Pulava, of good poetry and appeared in the hall of Caṅkam in order to win the Pōrkili (- the gold, covered in a piece of cloth) with the intention of delivering the same to his ardent devotee Tarumi [Tēvāram 6. 76.3]. However, one has to differentiate the mythical from the historical in the details of Caṅkam, provided in the commentary of Iraiyanār Kalaviyal and also in the hymn of Saint Appar.

7. Caṅkam in Maṇimēkalai

In the Buddhist epic Maṇimēkalai (500 A.D.), Cāttanār refers to the worship of Maōim^{1/4}kalai, the heroine of the epic, to the Triple gems viz., Buddha, Dhamma and Sangha at KĀḍci [Maṇi. 30. 3-4]. However, when he describes the dawn at

Kavirippūmpattīnam, the port city of the Cola kings, he refers to the existence of a Caṇkam. The passage under reference is as follows:

valampuri-c- Caṇkam Varitelunt(u) ārppa

pulampuri-c- Caṇkam porulotu mulanka

(Maṇi. 7.113-114]

The word Caṇkam has two meanings: 1. Conch and 2. Academy of poets or learned men. The Conches with right-curling [-valampuri-c-caṇkam] made empty noise [in the sea], while the learned academy [-pulampuri-c-caṇkam] roared meaningful sound. It is understood that it was established on the sea shore. These two lines project a contrasting picture in which one Caṇkam (-Conch) produced meaningless sound (in the sea) while another Caṇkam [-Sangha, learned body] produced meaningful sound [on the shore], indicating the vibrant voice of the scholars, engaging in meaningful discussion and exposition.

In the 5th century A.D. there was one Sangha at Maturai with the Jain teacher Vajranandi as its chief, propagating Jainism through writing ethical works also in Tamil. In the same century, there was one Sangha at Kāvirippūmpattīnam, with the Buddhist teacher Buddhadatta [450 A.D.] as its chief, spreading Buddhism through inditing significant works in Tamil. According to Dr. B.C. Law, this Sangha was patronized by Kanhadāsa,¹⁶ a native of Kāvirippūmpattīnam.

In the Suttavibhāṅga of Vinayapiṭika, the Sangha is defined as a body of learned men who could effectively explain the doctrines of the (Buddhist) religion to layman and defend and uphold them in disputation. Dr. B.C. Law, a great authority in Pali texts established in his monumental History of Pali Literature that there were commentaries on the Tripitakas, written in Tamil.¹⁷ Since Cāttanār referred to the Sangha under reference in the present tense, it is presumed that he should have been a member of the academy, along with Aravaṇa Atikal, equated with Dharmapāla (500 A.D.) and other reputed scholars.¹⁸

Therefore, it may be concluded that the institution of Tamil poets, which was originally called Avai or Tamilnilai, got its name Caṇkam during 550-650 A.D. in conformity with the trend of Jainism and Buddhism which called their learned body of monks as Sangha. According to S. Kuppuswamy Sastri, Dramida Sanghāta noted in the commentary of Taruōavacaspati on Dandin's Kāvyādarśa denoted the Tamil anthology of Caṇkam poems.¹⁹

After having understood the historicity of Caṇkam, let us move on to highlight the essential features earmarking the antiquity of Caṇkam Classics. Since Herman Tieken²⁰ and Sheldon Pollock²¹ knowingly or unknowingly stated that 9th or 10th cen-

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tury to be the period of Cañkam Classics, we have to commence our study from that period.

The major parts of Tirumurai and Nālāyiram, collectively called the Bhakti literature, were composed during 600 A.D. to 900 A.D. The Kūlkaṇakku, Cilappatikāram and Maṇimēkalai were considered by many literary historians to belong to 300 A.D. to 600 A.D. Hence, it is proposed to underscore the novel features in the spheres of theme, metre and genre in the aforesaid works, which were totally absent in the Cañkam poems, suggesting the relative antiquity of the latter. First of all, let us commence with the thematic aspects.

8. Thematic aspects

The dominant themes in the Cañkam corpus are the Akam and Purām. Within the Purām, the devotional poems Tirumurukārruppaṭai and 14 poems of Paripāṭal are to be subsumed. These poems differ in form, content, diction, style and other aspects from those of the poems of Bhakti literature. They are to be treated as the early precursors of the devotional poems of the Pallava period.

In the Cañkam poems, the human love was the predominant theme with well-defined norms to be indited by the poet. But, in the Bhakti literature the human love was sublimated to divine love and the Ālvārs and Nāyañmārs indulged in Bridal mysticism in which the devotee becomes the heroine and the Lord, the Supreme hero.

In the Cañkam poems only very few shrines of Śiva and Tirumāl are celebrated. Ālamurram [Akam. 181. 14-22], Maturai (Maturai 453-460), Imayam (Kali. 38. 1-6) and Naviram (Malai 81-83, 225-233) are the specific spots where the shrine of Siva existed. However, in the Saiva Bhakti literature hundreds of Siva's temples with graphic description of natural surroundings, which are distributed not only in Tamilnadu but stretched over a vast area from Jaffna in the south and Himalayas in the north, are fervently extolled. These temples, based on their locality are classified into Cōlanāṭṭuttalam of the northern banks of Cauvery which are 63 in number, and of the southern banks of Cauvery 128, Īlanāṭṭuttalam 2, Pāṇṭiyānāṭṭuttalam 14, Malaināṭṭuttalam 1, Koṅkunāṭṭuttalam ³², Tuļunāṭṭuttalam 1 and Vaṭanāṭṭuttalam 5 which are solemnized by the hymns of Campantar, Appar and Cuntarar [600 A.D. 800 A.D.]. In The Tiruvācakam and Tiruviçaippā, some more shrines are celebrated respectively by Mānickavācakar and others [800 A.D. to 1000 A.D.]. Cuntarar reveals his knowledge of Cañkam poems by referring to the philanthropists PĀri [VII 34.2] and Kumanan [VII 33.9].

In the Cañkam poems, the popular shrines of Tirumāl existed in Tirumāliruñcōlaimalai [Pari 15. 17-45], Iruntaiyür [Pari. Tirattu. 1. 3-5], Uraiyyür [Tiruvarañkam? Akam 137. 6-11], Tiruvañatapuram [Pati. 31. 7-9] and Vekkā, near Kāñci [Perumpāṇ. 372-373]. However, in the Vaishnava Bhakti literature i.e. Nālāyira-t-

tivviya-p-pirapantam 108 shrines were immortalized by the hymns of twelve Ālvārs who lived during 600 A.D. to 900 A.D. According to Pillai Perumāl Aiyangar, 40 shrines belonged to Cōlanāṭu, 18 shrines to Pāṇṭināṭu 13 to Malaināṭu, 2 to Naṭunāṭu, 22 to Tonṭāṭu and 12 to Vaṭanāṭu. The last and final shrine is known as Tirunāṭu i.e. the eternal abode of Tirumāl [Vide, his text Nūrrettu-t-Tiruppati Antāti].

Due to the Bhakti poems, the temple architecture, sculpture, painting and other related arts reached their zenith, during the Pallava and Cola periods, unknown to Caṅkam period.

9. The metrical aspects

In the Caṅkam Classics, only the primary metres Āciriyan, Vañci, Venpā and Kali with their sub-members were effectively and aesthetically employed by the poets. However, coming to the Bhakti literature, many innovative metrical forms which were labeled by the later prosodists as Pāvīnam i.e. supplementary metres with a variety of structural excellence were beautifully created by the Saiva and Vaishnava devotional poets. There are many types of Turai, Tālīcī and Viruttam which formed the staple source materials for the later prosodists like Kākkaipāṭīniyār II, Avinayañār, Mayēccurar and Amitacākarar to formulate rules, governing the structure of the fresh metrical forms. Among them the protomodels of Vencenturai, Venturai, Āciriya viruttam, Āciriyyattālīcī, Kaliviruttam, Kalitturai, Kalittālīcī, Vañciviruttam, Vañci-t-turai and Vañci-t-tālīcī are noteworthy. A detailed study on the fresh metres, as noticed in the devotional lyrics of Saiva and Vaishnava hymnists, has already been carried out by the present author.²² Since these new metres did not originate in the Caṅkam period, it becomes evident that the Caṅkam Classics preceded the Bhakti literature by many centuries.

10. The fresh genres

Every epoch in the history of Tamil literature is earmarked by not only fresh metres but also fresh and innovative genres which provided sufficient data for the authors of Pāṭṭiyal treatises who gave approval to them by formulating the vital regulations to such creations to be adopted by the subsequent poets. Let us project some of the new genres, created by the poets of Bhakti poetry.

In the Saiva Bhakti literature²³, Akaval, Icaippā, Orupā orupaktu, Kalivenpā, Kuruntokai [which is different from the Caṅkam anthology], Tāṇṭakam, Nēricai, Peruntevapāṇi, Viruttam, Venpā, Viṇṇappam and Antāti, are the significant literary genres, named after the specific metre, used in them. Among them, though the last one i.e. antāti was known to some of the Caṅkam poets who, however, did not name them so. However, it is pertinent to record that it was a productive genre in the Saiva and Vaishnava Bhakti poetry.

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Ulā, Kalampakam, Kōpa-p-piracātam, Cīt̄-k-kavi, Pallāṇṭu, Pāṭāṭikēcam, Pulampal, Maram and Viṇā-v-urai got their names on their dominant contents. Ammāṇai, Unti, Ūcal, Kōttumpi, Cālal, Cuṇṇappāṭṭu, Tellēṇam, Tōlōṇokkam, Pāvai-p-pāṭṭu and Pūvalli are the literary genres which are named after the folk games especially of the rustic girls.

Arikanālai, Āṇantamālai, Iraṭṭaimaṇimālai, Ekātacamālai, Nāṇāmaṇimālai, Varukka-mālai, Tirumantiramālai and Pirapantamālai belonged to the category of Mālai (-garland) genre. Kōvai and Mummaṇikkōvai are the illustrations of Kōvai genre. Ettu, Pattu, Elupatu, Catakam and Tacāṇkam are some genres based on numerical significance.

Though most of the aforesaid literary genres are also found in the Vaishnava Bhakti poetry i.e., Nālāyirattiviya-p-pirapantam, some more additional genres of fresh types are found in them. Let us point out some of them. Tālāṭṭu,²⁴ Cantakkali,²⁵ Kōltumpi,²⁶ Poṇkattam Poṇkō,²⁷ Kulamaṇitūram,²⁸ Kuruntāṇṭakam,²⁹ and Matal³⁰ are peculiar to the Vaishnava Bhakti literature.

From the brief study, carried out in the foregoing pages it is needless to say that the Caṇkam poems, from the thematic, metrical and generic points of view, preceded the Tirumurai and Nālāyiram being the Bhakti poetry by many centuries.

Next, let us take up the native epics Cilappatikāram and Maṇimēkalai [300 A.D. 500 A.D] to point out some of the significant aspects, which determine the antiquity of Caṇkam Classics.

11. Fresh features of Maṇimēkalai

The Cilappatikāram and Maṇimēkalai are related epics as far as the story is concerned. Among them, Maṇimēkalai is a Buddhist epic. Its author Cāttanār mastered Caṇkam Classics. As a result, he used some of their phrases and sentences in his epic. Let us quote some examples:

1. mūppuṭai mutumaiya tākkāṇaṇku uṭaiya 3.57
mūppuṭai mutumaiya tākkāṇaṇku utaiya *Akam.* 7.4
2. Veyilnūlaip(u) ariyā-k-kuyilnuļai potumpar 4.5
Veyilnūlaip(u) ariyā-k-kuyilnuļai *Perumpāṇ.* 374
3. taṇakkeṇa vālā-p- piṛarkkuriyāļaṇ 5.73
taṇakkeṇa vālā-p- piṛarkkuriyāļaṇ *Akam.* 54.13
4. uṇti koṭuttōr uyirkotut tōrē 11.96
uṇti koṭuttōr uyirkotut tōrē *Puram.* 18

5. matimaruḷ veṇkuṭai4.27

matimaruḷ veṇkuṭai *Puram*. 174

It seems that mastery over the Caṅkam poems was regarded a must for an epic poet.

The genre epic itself is a new feature, not available in the Caṅkam anthologies. Though some rudimentary aspects of epic are to be traced in the Ten Idyls (-Pattuppāṭṭu) and some poems in Puranāñūru, Akanāñūru and Kalittokai, it attained its fruition and perfection only at the hands of Ilankō Atikal and Cāttanār. Though Cāttanār handled the ancient metre āciriyaṁ to be the medium of his epic, he introduced many novel features in his creation to accommodate the fresh themes of epistemological and philosophical significance. His deep knowledge not only in the Tamil Classics but also in the Pāli and Sanskrit texts enabled him to introduce fresh thoughts, unknown to the Caṅkam poets. He revealed his erudition in the Buddhist texts of Theravāda and Mahāyāna in his epic. He presented a compendium of various systems of Indian philosophy in the 27th Kātai of the epic Maṇimēkalai. Among the different manuals on the subject, written by different scholars of Indian languages, this portion of the Tamil Epic is considered to be the earliest. In the 29th Kātai of the same epic, a detailed exposition of Buddhist epistemology has been made. In the 30th Kātai, the basic principles of Buddhist philosophy are expounded. It is to be noted that the 6th Kātai contained an interesting description of Buddhist Cosmology. All these aspects, which are unknown to Caṅkam poets, are to be rightly treated to be later developments in the thematic elements introduced by Cāttanār. In the Caṅkam period, Maturai was the centre for the literary activities. However in the period of Maṇimēkalai, Kāñci was a great centre for philosophical discussion and debate. This centre produced great luminaries like Dignāga, Bodhidharma, Paramārtha, Dharmapāla and a host of others who were great masters in the various branches of Buddhism.

Since Maṇimēkalai belonged to 500 A.D., naturally the Caṅkam classics for the aforesaid reasons should have preceded the epic by many centuries.

11. Fresh features of Cilappatikāram

Ilankō Atikal exhibited his deep knowledge of Paṭṭinappālai and Porunarārruppaṭai while writing the first part of his immortal epic Cilappatikāram viz. Pukārkkāṇṭam and his knowledge in Maturaikkāñci in writing the second portion viz. Maturaikkāṇṭam. Similarly his close study of Patirruppattu is revealed in his creation of the third section which goes by the name Vañci-k-kāṇṭam. Like Cāttanār he too enriched his vocabulary by his study of Caṅkam literature. He used in his epic some interesting phrases and sentences of Caṅkam poems. Only a few illustrations are given hereunder.

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1. patiyelu variyā-p-palañkutī kelīya 1.15
patiyelal ariyā-p-palañkutī kelī *Malai*.479
2. vaṭamalai-p-piranta vāñkēl vaṭtam 4.37
vaṭavarai tanta vāñkēl vaṭtam *Akam*. 340.16
3. nāvotu navilā nakaipatū kilaviyum 14.139
nāvotu navilā nakaipatū tīñcol *Akam*.16.4
4. valivali-c-cirrakkanīñ valampatu korram 25.92
valivali-c-cirrakkanīñ valampatu korram *Maturai*.194
5. akiluna viritta ammenkuntal 28.17
akiluna viritta ammenkuntalin *Cirupāṇi*.263

In some contexts Ilāñkō used the synonyms of the Cañkam words, and in other places he modified the original in his own way.

The melodious lyrics of Kāñal vari, Vēt̄tuva vari, Ācciyar kuravai, Kuñrakkuravai and Vāltukkātai were the earliest specimens from which the supplementary metres were evolved in the periods of the Pallavas and Imperial Colas. They are essentially the developed folk art forms which are in all respects to be deemed to belong to the post-Cañkam period.

In this epic also the references to Jainism, Buddhism and Ajivaka sect are noticed. However, Ilāñkō did not mention other systems of Indian philosophy. The worship of Muruka, , Korravai and Tirumāl transformed into separate cults, indicating a development from some theistic thoughts of Cañkam literature.

Let us proceed to study the position of Kīlkkañakku in relation to the Cañkam poems.

12. Fresh features in Kīlkkañakku

Except the Tirukkural, all the other works in the collection of Kīlkkañakku belonged to a period of 300 A.D. to 600 A.D. If the Cañkam classics possessed the dominant themes of Akam and Puram, these mini texts predominantly occupied with ethical thoughts. Nālañiyār contains 400 poems in Veñpā metre, composed by several poets whose names are unknown. It is fundamentally a Jain text. The remaining works of Kīlkkañakku were composed by individual authors. Palamoli nāñūru, indited by Muñururai Araiyāñār is also a Jain work. In each of the 400 Veñpās of this text, a proverb has been explicated and hence the name. Tirikaṭukam, Cirupañcamūlam and Elāti are also written by Jain poets, who named them after the medicinal ingredients. These are metaphorical names. Just like the combination of the ingredients of a medicine cure the physical ills, the cluster of ethical sayings, enshrined in each of

the poems of these texts cure the ills of life, prompting the people to lead a righteous and virtuous way of life.

Nāñmaṇikkaṭikai, Ācārakkōvai, Iṇṇā nāṛpatu, Iṇiyavai nāṛpatu and Mutumolikkāñci were composed by non-Jain poets, elucidating the morals and values to be adopted in routine life.

All in all, there are 11 texts on ethical themes including Tirukkural. Since the poets of these ethical manuals are clearly influenced by the thoughts of Tiruvalluvar, it is better to suggest that they lived long after Tiruvalluvar. Among the remaining seven texts, six are devoted to delineate love themes. Kār nāṛpatu, Kainnilai, Tiṇaimālai nūrraimpatu, Aintiṇai Elupatu, Aintiṇai Aimpatu and Tiṇaimolji aimpatu are solely devoted to depict love themes in a limited canvas. If one goes through the Caṇkam Akam poems and these six texts, he will easily be convinced that the latter belonged to very late period with regard to the description of nature portrayal of characters, delineation of emotions and feelings, diction, language and style, leave alone the thoughts, peculiar to the Caṇkam Akam poems. Also, they are free from historical allusions which are abundantly found in the Caṇkam Akam poems.

Kaṭalavali nāṛpatu is the solitary illustration of Puram genre in the Kilkkanakku. This work was composed by Poykaiyār describing the battlefield (-Kaṭam) where the Cōla king rooted out his enemies. According to tradition the Cōla king denoted Kō-ceṇkaṇāŋ, while the inimical king was Cēraŋ Kaṇaikkālirumporai. Poykaiyār who was patronized by the latter composed the Kaṭalavali nāṛpatu in order to release his patron Kaṇaikkālirumporai from the imprisonment of Kōcceṇkaṇāŋ. Some scholars attributed this work to Caṇkam period, while some others never accepted it on the grounds of some linguistic and metrical peculiarities. So far, sufficient evidences from thematic, metrical and generic aspects of the aforesaid literary works have been produced to establish that the Caṇkam Classics preceded them in chronology by many centuries. Next, let us proceed to briefly deal with the Caṇkam Akam poems Vs. the Prakrit Gāthāsattasai, attributed to Hāla (100 A.D.) so that their relative chronology may be inferred.

13. Caṇkam Akam poems vs. The Gāthāsattasai

The dominant themes of Sangam poems are love and war. Even among the two the love poems are predominant exhibiting the importance given to conjugal life and earthly existence. In the Sanskrit literary tradition the erotic śatakas of Bhartrhari and Amaru are the earliest known works. Bhartrhari lived in the middle of seventh century A.D. and his Srngāra śataka in various metres was significant. A.B. Keith opined that Amaru came after Bhartrhari and he should have written his śataka in the later part of seventh century A.D. He has also used different metrical forms to elegantly express the love themes. Before the advent of these poets, in the Prākrit

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language wonderful love poems were created and they were compiled by the Sātvāhana king Hāla in the form of an anthology with the name Gātha Sattasai. Hāla lived in the first or second century A.D. The word Sattasai is derived from the Sanskrit Saptasati, meaning a collection of seven hundred poems. Saptasatam 7x100 = 700. That which contains 700 poems is called Saptasati which becomes Sattasai to meet the requirements of the phonetics of Prakrit language.

The poems or Sattasai are written in Ārya metre and in Maharāṣṭri Prākrit. The specialists are of the opinion that in the original anthology, only 430 poems were found and in the course of time many poems were appended.³¹ The additions took place upto 7th century A.D. as evidenced by the poems of Harṣa, who ruled in the Kanyākubja in the 7th century and wrote three dramas in Sanskrit. They are excellent pieces on love themes. Gāthāsattasai has been commented by Gangādhara, Kulānātha, Kulapati, Pitāmbara, Bhuvanapāla and others. Among the poets of the text, the names Kāliṅka, Sāliyavāhana, Hāla, Vaṭuka and °Āndhralakshmi suggest that the Prakrit love literature was the creation of Āndhradēśa. Since the Vaṭukars who existed beyond the V $\frac{1}{4}$ ōkaÇam Hills and their territory with the appellative *molipeyar tēyam* are frequently mentioned in the Caṅkam Akam poems, the closeness between the Tamils and the Prakrit people may be inferred. In the anthology, some poems were written by K $\frac{1}{4}$ oeava and Brahmachāri. These names are also found in the Caṅkam poetry. In the Paripāṭal, the 14th poem was composed by Kēcavaṇār and the 34th poem of the Narriṇai by Piramaccāri. It may be presumed that these poets were well versed both in Tamil and Prakrit, just like Harṣa who was proficient in Sanskrit and Prakrit.

13.2. Commoness between the two

Some common futures are noticed between the Caṅkam Akam poems and the Gāthāsattasai.³² The Akanāñūru is prefixed with an invocatory poem on Śiva. So also, the Gāthāsattasai also commences with a poem on 'Śiva' written by Hāla, who compiled the anthology. Another striking feature is found in the poems through which the heroine outbursts her feelings addressed to the trees, birds, river and the like. Tokāppiyar named such utterances as "pālkilāvi" which in the western literary tradition was called *pathetic fallacy*. One example may be quoted.

13.3. The Puṇṇai tree

The poem 103 whose authorship is unknown is uttered by the heroine. On the bank side of the river Godāvari, there stands the Puṇṇai tree with full of flowers. The hero promised to meet her beneath the tree. But, he delayed. She stood there as if to pluck the flowers and addressed the tree thus: "Oh puṇṇai with bent branches and innumerable blooms! Please listen a little of my words. Drop your flowers one by one."

That is all the poetry. The suggestive sense is beautiful. Even after the tree dropped all at once its flowers and they were gathered, if the heroine happened to stand there without any purpose, the passers-by would doubt her waiting, leading to gossip. In order to avoid such hurdles, the heroine entreated the Punṇai tree to drop the flowers one by one so that the time would be prolonged till the arrival of the hero.

In the Caṅkam akam poems, the waiting of the lovers and their speech are emotionally and aesthetically depicted. One illustration may be given. In the tender age the heroine along with her lady companions used to play pressing a seed of Punṇai by their fingers on the heaps of sand in the vicinity of her hamlet. Since the seed was left without search, in due course it grew up into a plant for which the heroine poured ghee and sweet milk (instead of water) to grow. The mother used to extol its glory, stating that it was her excelled sister. The confidante informed the hero expressing the sense of shyness to discourse with him in the presence of their beloved sister, the Punṇai tree, suggesting the rejection for his clandestine love to enable him for the open wedding at an early time in order to avoid gossips (Nar. 172.1-6).

13.4. The Hidden Sense [-Ullurai]

The ninety second poem of Gāthāsattasai criticises the extra-marital life of the hero in a veiled language. When he returned after his stay at the harlot's house and was prevented by his strong sense of misconduct from entering into his own residence, he stood beside it. On seeing his plight the confidante addressed a beetle, so as to be heard by him in the following manner: "Oh beetle! you enjoyed tasting the honey and pollen dust of the flower of the Mālati creeper. You never searched for a flower of a different creeper when you indulged in the Mālati flower. Nevertheless, presently even without paying a little care for the same creeper have you left? Is it your stand?" The suggestive sense of the discourse of the confidante may be presented in the light of the literary technique Ullurai Uvamam framed by Tolkāppiyar.

Karu-p-poru	Ullurai
1. Beetle	Hero
2. Mālati	Heroine
3. The Honey	The pleasure given by the
heroine	
4. The burden of furits borne by Mālati	The conceivement of the hero- ine

Innumerable examples may be cited from the Caṅkam Akam poems to illustrate this type of suggestive expressions. For want of space only one example is presented below.

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On learning that the heroine rebuked the harlot for accommodating the hero, the harlot expressed her rebuttal through the description of the hero's village where the mango fruit of the field used to fall in the pond, to be seized by the sword fish. Applying the technique of *Ullurai Uvamam*, the hidden sense may be inferred through the *karu-p-poru!*, i.e., the objects of nature.

Karu-p-poru!	Ullurai
1. Kalani (field)	Heroine
2. Mango tree	Hero
3. The Mango fruit	The hero's love
4. Pond	The residence of the harlot
5. Sword fish	Harlot

Just like the mango tree that stands in the field does not give its fruit to the field, but to the sword fish in the distant pond, the hero who is legally wedded to the heroine does not give his pleasure to her, but to the remote harlot. It is to be borne in mind that just like the sword fish does not climb the tree and pluck out the fruit, the harlot does not reach the residence of the hero to derive his pleasure. In the same way just like the fruit which falls on its own accord into the mouth of the sword fish, the hero on his own urge hastened to the harlot to indulge in erotic pleasure. Thus indicating the hero's weakness, the harlot defended herself.

An in-depth study on the structure, substance and techniques of Cañkam Akam poems and those of the Prakrit Gāthāsattasai is indispensable to comprehend the impact of the former on the latter. Tentatively, the following aspects may be suggested for our hypothesis:

13.5. The Unique Aspects

1. There is no perennial literary tradition for the composition of Akam anthology in the Prakrit language as opposed to the Cañkam Akam tradition for which the anthologies of love themes are quite enough, besides the tradition continued its existence in the kōvai literary genre and similar works.
2. Each of the poems of the Prakrit anthology has only four metrical lines. But, the love poems of Cañkam anthology encompass a wide range of short and long metrical forms with the minimum of three lines as found in the Aiñkurunūru and the maximum of 301 metrical lines, as in the case of *Patṭina-p-pālai*.
3. In the Gāthāsattasai, not only love poems but also *puram* poems are also sufficiently mingled. It is not so in the Cañkam Akam literature.

4. The principles of poetics involving the creation of love poems and also puram poems are elaborately legislated by Tolkāppiyar based on the data, collected from the literary works of Pre-Tolkāppiyam period, also taking into account his contemporary creations. The classification of mutal, karu and uri-p-porul, the main and supplementary characters, their characteristics and functions, the situations of their discourses in the premarital (kaļavu) and marital (karpu) life, the proper metres to accommodate the theme, the literary techniques such as ullurai, iraicci, meyppātu etc., all go to prove the indigenous character of Caṅkam Akam literature.

On the above grounds, it is concluded that the Prakrit poets who lived in the °ndhrad½œa should have cultural and commercial contact with the Tamils, learnt the ancient Tamil poems and imitated them with originality and freshness. In this context, it is proper to mention that George Hart has made an interesting study on the subject, establishing the influence of the Caṅkam tiōai poetry on the GĀthĀsattasai.³⁰ He has also sensed the impact of Caṅkam emissary poems on the Meghadūta of Kalidasa.

14. Conclusion

The upper limit of the Caṅkam poems may be placed in 400 B.C. since references to Nanda and Maurya dynasties are noticed in them. The poems, related to Satiyaputo Atiyamāṇ Neṭumāṇ Añci of Jambai inscription and his contemporaries should be taken to the period of third century B.C. since the Rock Edicts of Asoka also referred the same chieftain. The poem in which the River Pakruṇi is noted and its related poems in Puranāṇūru [9. 10-11] many be assigned to an earlier period when the river was not engulfed by the sea.

Kēceava and Brahmachāri, the Prakrit poets of Gāthāsattasai may be taken respectively to have composed the 14th poem of Paripāṭal and 34th poem Narrinai. If that is so, then these poems and their related ones deserved to be reckoned to be contemporaneous with Hāla [i.e. 100 A.D.-200 A.D.]. The lower limit may be assigned to 200 A.D.

One has to work out the geographical, historical and mythological data from the poems in order to interpret their relative chronology. Also materials from epigraphical, archaeological, numismatic, historical and linguistic sources should be collated with the literary data to find out a more reasonable conclusion as to the age of the Caṅkam Classics. At present, the salient and significant points, noted in the foregoing pages, are sufficient to refute the maverick and mischievous conclusion of Herman Tieken and Sheldon Pollock with regard to the Caṅkam period and to reinforce the view that 300 B.C. to 300 A.D. may be taken to be the period of Caṅkam Classics.

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The Chronology of the Sangam Texts: A Historian's Approach

R. CHAMBAKALAKSHMI

The Sangam texts/classics represent a rich corpus of literature, which is the oldest among the literatures of the Dravidian group of languages. There can be no dispute over its historical value, despite the fact that it has been one of the most difficult corpus to be dated with absolute certainty, especially in view of the fact that there are at least three stages in the evolution of the Sangam textual tradition, the first, its composition, second its collection/compilation and redaction as a literary canon and third, commentaries on the texts, starting from the early historical period to the medieval times, with a revived interest in the 19th-early 20th centuries, representing a "Tamil renaissance", with the help of the print medium. The evolution of such a textual tradition itself has a historical significance, which any historian needs to take into serious consideration, while using the texts as sources for the reconstruction of the history of the Tamils in the early centuries before and after the Christian era and its impact on later historical developments.

Requiring, as it does, a rigorous methodology (Semiotics) and critical approach, the historian necessarily turns to other contemporary sources and later commentaries to make a relative assessment of its value as sources of history. Linguists and Literary historians have made significant contributions to build up a relative chronology of the texts, which have shown that it is unhistorical to ignore the stages of its collection and anthologisation and commentarial texts. Briefly, these stages may be recognized as the first compilation of the poems by Pulavar at the behest of the Sangam rulers themselves at the close of the early historical period (3rd century BC to 3rd century AD), the early medieval anthologisation of the *Ettuttokai* and *Pattuppattu* as revealed by the *Iraiyanar Akapporul Urai* in the 8th century AD under the Pandyas and the commentaries of the 12th–14th centuries AD. The historicisation of the textual tradition has been of tremendous significance to researches on early socio-political formations, socio-economic and religious history with corroborative evidence from archaeology and epigraphy.

Conventional histories have mainly focused on the political aspects of the evidence

from the Sangam texts and tried to build up a chronology for the texts , assigning them generally to the pre- Pallava period (pre- 6th century AD) , on the basis of a clear “disjunction” between the polity of the “Sangam Age” as it is called in the conventional writings and the Pallava-Pandya period marking a different socio-political order, influenced by the Brahmanical tradition with a highly Sanskritised ruling elite and priestly organization. Such a view presents an unchanging, static Tamil society for a period of well over 600 years from the beginning of the Christian era. This long period for the Sangam and post- Sangam age pays scant regard to the different phases marked by the main anthologies of the Sangam, followed by the twin epics (*Cilappatikaram* and *Manimekalai*) and the 18 minor didactic works (*Patinenkilkkanakku*), which were mostly authored by Buddhist and Jain poets, with the exception of the *Tirukkural*, which is of universal value, not assignable to any particular sectarian affiliation. Somewhat more scientific was the approach of K.A. Nilakanta Sastri, who narrowed the period of the Sangam classics down to the first three centuries of the Christian era on the basis of the number of generations (succession) of the Mu Vendar or major ruling families (Cera, Cola and Pandya) known to them and the Cenguttuvan-Gajabahu synchronism and was inclined to date the 18 didactic works and the epics to the post- Sangam on the basis of their literary style, conventions and contents. The decline of the Sangam polities was attributed by conventional history to the Kalabhra invasion and subversion of the Sangam socio-political order and thus a Kalabhra inter-regnum was located in the post-Sangam or 4th-6th centuries AD., till the rise of the Brahmanical polities of the Pallavas and Pandyas. To a large extent Sastri was influenced by the views of S Vaiyapuri Pillai, who was the first Tamil scholar to assign these dates to the Sangam works, the epics and the 18 didactic works. Yet, the conventional periodisation and focus on political history seem to have ignored other considerations like the Asokan edicts referring to the Cera, Cola, Pandya trinity and also the Satiyaputa (Atiyaman) as contemporaries and hence have not accounted for the 300 years before the Christian era.

The relationship between the Megalithic archaeological culture of the iron age (the proto-historic) and the early historic Sangam Tamils was also not a serious concern in their approach, although it is now possible to locate the end phases of the Megalithic culture with the early historical period, coinciding with the Sangam polities and Sangam heroic poetry. The nomenclature Sangam Age for the long period from 3rd century BC to 3rd century AD would not be appropriate as different phases may be recognized within the early historical period in the development of a tribal society towards a state society. The term post- Sangam for the period of transition (4th –6th centuries AD) also needs to be understood more correctly as one of transition towards a state society.

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Here I would like to present three areas, wherein researches have been fruitful and historically viable. The first is the nature of social formation revealed by the texts, the changes which occurred during the long period of six centuries (300 BC to AD 300) of the early historical period, the second the nature of urbanization and third, the transformations in the Brahmanical and Sramanical religious traditions and their impact on the developments of the period of transition (4th-6th centuries AD, and in the early medieval period when the texts were anthologized in the 8th century AD, into the *Ettuttokai* and *Pattuppattu*.

Recent researches on early historical Tamilakam have further demonstrated that the texts and their colophons and invocatory verses need to be situated in the contexts in which they were composed and compiled and redacted into a literary canon and anthologized, marking the transformation of a tribal (pre-state) society to a state society, the change from tribal forms of worship i.e., the intensely humanistic and anthropocentric forms of worship into a formalized system of beliefs and practices, with claims to universalism and the change from a tribal/egalitarian social organization into a stratified caste based society under the influence of the Brahmanical socio-religious traditions and institutions.

Moreover, recent epigraphic studies, especially the re-deciphering and re-reading of the Tamil Brahmi inscriptions, have considerably altered the picture, by providing corroborative evidence of the patronage of the ruling families to the Sramanic religions, apart from the archaeological and numismatic discoveries pointing to the direct involvement of the ruling families in long distance /maritime trade, for which the Graeco-Roman (Classical) accounts of the 1st century BC to 2nd century AD and later, have so far been the major source of information.

Conventional history glorified the Sangam age as one of great kingdoms with well organized administrative structures and territorial control. Such descriptions are not borne out by the texts themselves, which are significantly devoid of any references to an officialdom or territory or permanently recruited army, not to speak of an organized taxation system. Since the nineteen seventies, a significant historiographical advance has been made in the study of the Sangam texts, which questions the validity of the conventional views on the nature of Sangam polity, with the focus shifting from political history to social formation and emergence of state societies in the early historical period (300 BC- AD 300) in peninsular India in the post-Mauryan period. This period was one of intensive trade and commerce in the whole of the sub-continent, marking the second urbanization of the Ganga valley and the first urbanization of South India. Mauryan impact, which was more direct in the Deccan and Andhra regions, led to early state formation under the Satavahanas, while it was minimal in Tamilakam and had no visible impact over the Tamil polities, which remained at the level of chiefdoms with claims to strong lineage connections, typical of

pre-state societies. This is significant for Tamil historiography as it marks a major departure to show that the socio-economic and political organization of the region was largely undifferentiated and non-stratified, characteristic of a pre-state social formation.

The concept of *tinai* or eco-zone is highly significant in understanding the nature of Sangam society and economy. The *aintinai* concept is not a mere poetic convention but is the reflection of a physiographical reality and points to clear perceptions of man-environment relationship, an understanding of human adaptation to environment and the most relevant from the historian's point of view. It represents a distinctive pattern of economic activities in the *tinai-s* different forms of production (uneven socio-economic milieux) ranging from hunting – gathering and swidden agriculture in the eco-types of hilly backwoods (*kurinji*), agro-pastoral subsistence in the grasslands (*mulla*), plough agriculture in the wetlands (*marutam*), fishing and salt making in the littoral (*neytal*) and predatory dependence in the parched zones (*pala*). Forces of change can be recognized only in the *Marutam*, where brahmana households emerged as controllers of land with cultivating service groups under them, thus representing the beginnings of a new stratification, gradually crystallizing into castes and classes at a later stage. The change from a tribal to a peasant society would thus become evident in the *Marutam*, where vast tracts of agricultural land were controlled by the ruling families, who depended on peasant tribute and also paid attention to irrigation and wet cultivation towards the latter part of this period. Subsistence agriculture was common to all the *tinai-s*, while within *Marutam* the wet and dry land were distinguished as *men pulam* and *van pulam*, plough agriculture yet to become dominant. Evidence from literature and early Tamil Brahmi inscriptions as also from archaeological excavations point to craft specialization and manufacture of goods, in response to local exchange as well as inter-regional and long distance trade. Interaction among the peoples of the different eco-zones (*tinai-s*) was established through formal and informal means of exchange and predatory activities. Despite the unevenness of the socio-economic milieux, they were largely undifferentiated economies of reciprocity and redistribution. Such economically diverse peoples were linguistically and culturally homogeneous due to their common language (old Tamil) and a variety of shared beliefs and practices.

The emergence of brahmana households in the *marutam* marked the beginnings of a hierarchy, a stratification in production relations along with the brahmanical tradition of social differentiation. Despite the references to specialization of crafts and hereditary occupations in the coastal towns, marketing centres and chiefly centers, i.e. in the urban context, the poems do not contain pointers to a clearly stratified society. Social differentiation was confined to the binary division between *uyarntor / Canror* (the highborn), which included the brahmanas and *ilipirappalar* (the

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lowborn), the people. The latter comprised of all people suggesting a flexible kind of social division, with no indication of the existence of intermediary positions. The differentiation between *puraavalar* (those who redistribute) and *iravalar* (who seek patronage/ redistribution). It is significant that the impact of the *Varna* ideology in social stratification is hardly visible in the Tamil region except in its nascent stage and in a restricted zone, viz., the eco-zone of *marutam*. (plains/river valleys).

The political structure was characterised by chiefdoms of different levels, the Ventar, Velir and Kilar, the last one particularly visible in the self-sustaining settlement called *Ur*, the basic unit of production with varying degrees of development in the plains. The heroic poems depict an active situation of co-existence and interaction (matrimonial relations) among these unevenly evolved chiefly systems. There was no notion of precisely demarcated territory and apart from references to core areas of each, the poems give us no clues to the actual spheres of control. The poems, however, clearly point to their core areas in Karur, Madurai and Uraiur respectively for the Cera, Pandya and Cola, their strategic coastal towns Muciri, Korkai and Puhar respectively. The Ventar and Velir were lineage polities with claims to high pedigree as seen in the Solar and Lunar connections of the Colas and Pandyas, while the Velir claims linked them with the lineage of the Yadavas (Kodumbalur- Irukkuvvel). Socio-political dominance was shared by the three ruling families (Muvendar).

The Cera region was a mixture of diverse ecological zones with the predominance of hills and forests. [hill products (*malaittaram*), sea products (*kat-arraram*) of Ceran Cenkuttuvan] The Pandya also had a mixed ecological region dominated by pastoral and coastal tracts. A Pandya chieftain calls himself the head of the land of numerous new resources, '*yanar maiyar komari*'. The Cola who is well known as '*kaviri kilavor*' in the poems had his land in the Kaveri delta, rich in paddy and sugarcane. The Velir chieftains held sway over large tracts of land in all the *tinais*, the *Marutam*, the *Kurinji* and *Mullai*, i.e., riverine (agricultural), hills (hunting), forest (pastoral) and also *Neital* (littoral) and dry land (*Palai*- predators).

The Ventar category of chieftains appropriated the resources through prestation and gift, the mechanism of appropriation being predatory (*iraivan* which means he who exacts).. However, there is no evidence of any regular periodic exaction in fixed measure or quantity i.e., taxation. They had a large body of dependents such as their kinsmen (*kilainar*) scholarly bards (*pulavar*) warriors (*maravar*, *kilar* and *mannar*), bards (*panar* and *porunar*) magico-religious functionaries and so on. The poetic flower symbolism of *vetci* (cattle raid) *karantai* (cattle recovery) *vanji* (chieftain's raid) *kanji* (chieftain's resistance of a raid) and *tumpai* (preparation for raid) show how institutionalised and common plunder was. Predatory appropriation of resources and the dominance of the ideology of war and booty redistribution posed adverse conditions for the development of agriculture even in the *Marutam* zones and hence

not conducive to the expansion of plough agriculture. Tribal warfare, endemic to such early societies, is also corroborated by archaeology, which shows a predominance of war weapons among the Megalithic burials. More important is the evidence of the ideology of war and heroism that dominates the Sangam poetry, especially the *Puram* collections.

Gift (kodai) was the chief means of redistribution- based on kinship and interpersonal relationship e.g. pulavar or poets receiving gifts from the chief or patron. The institution of gifting was particularly important as a source of legitimization for the ruling lineages and chiefs. - prestigious items like gold coins, gems, muslin and even horses and elephants were gifted by the Vendar and Velir to poets or Pulavar. Such prestigious items are known to have "ideo-technic" or "socio-technic" value. Thus at the higher levels of exchange.(Vendar and Velir), plundered resources and luxury items of trade entered the gift exchange. .

The poets eulogized the *muvendar* as the three "crowned kings" of ancient Tamilakam. The *Ventar* are often praised as the performers of *velvi* (Vedic sacrifices), though, at the same time, they are also described as devotees of Korravai, the war goddess and Murukan. It would appear that the Brahmanical tradition was handed down to south India as a composite package, consisting of the Vedic rituals, the Itihasa- (*Ramayana* and *Mahabharata*) Puranic tradition and the Dharma Sastric norms. In Tamilakam under Brahmanical influence, the folk/popular forms of worship of the deities of the *tinais* were gradually transformed into a formalized system due to the incorporation and assimilation of some of the major *tinai* deities into the Brahmanical or Puranic pantheon. Hence the poems equate the Ventar with the Vedic gods such as *Surya*, *Agni*, *Marut*, the *Pancabhutas*, the constellations and the *navagrahas*, suggesting the beginnings of the Itihasa-Purana tradition. While the performance of Vedic sacrifices is known, *yajna* was not intrinsic to their legitimization. Also important is the fact that no claims were made by the Tamil chiefs/rulers to be protectors of the Varnasrama dharma. The colophons to the *Puram* and *Akam* poems would seem to have been composed at the end of the period i.e. 3rd century AD for a new form of legitimization through brahmadeya grants and Vedic sacrifices, the Cera-Cola – Pandya lineage polities also claiming descent from the Surya and Candra vamsas. (*Patiruppattu* and *Purananuru*). The Sangam polities were more akin to the *janapada* polities of the Ganga valley with the potential of evolving as monarchies, but never attained the status of full fledged states. Their decline was mainly brought about by their dependence on plunder mechanism and lack of resources like regular land revenue, especially when the western trade declined, virtually denying them access to trade as a major resource.

Transition towards social stratification and state formation.

In the transition of the 5th – 6th centuries the agrarian society of Tamilakam was ஆய்வரங்கச் சிறப்பு மறை

perceptibly becoming stratified on the basis of entitlements to land and differential land rights. A new socio-political order evolved in the following centuries with the expansion of the new relations of production and the spread of wet-rice agriculture in the early medieval period (6th – 9th centuries). The birth of a new political structure different from that of the chiefdom was simultaneous with the development and expansion of wet-rice agriculture. The process of change involved the transition from kin-labour to non-kin labour, multiple functionaries to hereditary occupation groups, kinship based clans to castes, simple clan settlements to structured agrarian villages (*Ur*) and agrarian regions (*Nadus*), and chiefdom to monarchy, i.e., the development of the state-system and authority structures, at the apex of which stood the Brahmana and Ksatriya and institutional forces such as the Brahmadeya and the temple. The early medieval *nadu* was fundamentally different from the *nadu* that figures in the heroic poems. As agrarian localities with hierarchically structured social relations, the *nadus* subsequently acquired great political significance in the monarchical system. The Pallava-Pandya monarchical polities adopted the composite package of the Brahmanical tradition- the vedic, Itihasa-Puranic and Dharma Sastric – as their legitimating ideology.

Urbanization

Urbanization and the emergence of towns and cities was a sub-continental phenomenon in the early historical period, which in Tamilakam was the result mainly of external stimulus and hence political processes and territorial expansion were not functionally related to urban genesis. Thus urbanization was not at the core of the transformation of a non-state society into a state society i.e. had no relation to state formation. No evidence of a centralizing power or development of new social institutions cutting across kinship and clan based organization exists.

Maritime trade, the crucial and determinant factor in early urbanization , brought the much needed luxury items for socio-political dominance and patronage. The Sangam rulers showed a distinct concern with maritime trade and its control, by actively participating in it as major consumers of luxury goods, by consciously developing ports of trade, by levying tolls and customs at the ports (*Pattinappalai*) and by issuing coins, as indicated by the recent discoveries of local coinage, especially of the Ceras and Pandyas and even lesser chiefs like Nannan of Chengam (*Malaiyatukatam*) (Andippatti hoard). Hence we see the emergence of dual centers of power, centers of political and commercial activity in the interior and on the coast respectively (Uraiur and Kaverippumpattinam/Puhar of the Colas; Madurai and Korkai of the Pandyas and Karuvur (Vanci) and Muciri of the Ceras; Kacci and Nirppeyarru;(Palar valley) of the lesser chiefs (Tiraiyar); Mavilankai (Tindivanam) and Virai (Arikamedu/Virampattinam, the Poduca of Ptolemy in the contiguous South Arcot district and Pondicherry of the Oviyar). Thus emerged urban forms in two eco-

zones the Marutam and Neital, while craft production developed in areas rich in mineral resources and raw materials as in the Kongu region. (Coimbatore and Erode). The routes that connected these zones were the major trade routes and the Tamil Brahmi inscriptions occur not only near the political centers but significantly on these trade routes. They refer to individual donors belong to the trading and artisan communities, while members of the Pandya and Cera ruling families are important donors.

Different levels of exchange prevailed and the absence of a market system is notable. Coins functioned less as money but more as a category of valuables. Day to day barter and the kind of people in such activities (Vilainar, pakarnar, vambalar, vanikar, paratavar and umanar etc.); the diversification of commerce, people dealing in the markets of Puhar, and Madurai (Angadis , Avanams- more in the epics and *Pattinappalai, Maduraikkanci*) as well as those dealing in high value goods and items of everyday consumption and skilled workers are clearly distinguished by the way they are referred to. Occasional caravans (*cattu*) (umanaccattu etc.); The Paratavar, the most distinctive among the native traders, were people of the *neital*, started with fishing , manufacturing salt etc., initially as simple fishermen but later (poems of the *Pattppattu*) their involvement in long distance trade by diving for pearls(pearly fishery) and organized trade in pearls, chank bangles, gems and horses, which were exported to distant countries,

In the later poems (at Nirppeyaru- *Perumbananarruppadai*) they are represented as living in fine mansions and sporting silk garments and gold jewellery. Later epics refer to their affluent life-styles. Trade is glorified as one of the two 'esteemed pursuits', the other being agriculture. Tamil merchants engaged in import-export activities were among the wealthier sections of the urban community. Tamil merchants are known to have journeyed to distant countries i.e., the Red Sea coast and later in the Southeast Asian regions like Savakam (Java) and other islands including Sri Lanka for which the epics make clear allusions.

Ports and towns , which emerged as a result of the expanding commerce, are classified by the Graeco-Roman accounts as marts or market towns, The *Periplus Maris Erythrae* of the 1st century AD,- Naura (Cannanore or Mangalore?, Tyndis (Tondi), Nelcynda=Kottayam, Bacare= Porakad all on the west coast; Camara, Poduce and Sopatma (Marakkanam), all on the east coast , while subsequently Ptolemy in his *Geographia* (2nd century AD) introduced a hierarchy and elevated some of these centers to the status of emporia- Muziris on the west coast (now identifies with the excavated site of Pattanam) , Kolkhoi (Korkai), Khaberis (Kavarippumpattinam), Sabouras (Cuddalore), Podouke (Arikamedu) and Melange (Mamallapuram) all on the east coast. Manarpha (Mayilappur) and Salour (Saliyur near Alagankulam) as marts. The *Pattinappalai* establishes Puhar's status as an emporium , the Colas pro-

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moting it as an anchoring point or an entry port to south Indian commerce.

South India- Peripheral markets, which are important for those engaged in export and import especially foreign traders and the intermediaries. Hence a more permanent presence of Yavanas in such market centers and ports. Yavanas established separate quarters in important commercial centers especially ports. Like Puhar, Muciri, (temple of Augustus ?)etc. Their activities were generally confined to the major commercial centers. The Vienna Papyrus recording an agreement between a Tamil merchant and an Alexandrian Greek (?) regarding large cargo goods to be sent to Alexandria shows that Tamils traded on an equal footing with the foreign traders., which is confirmed by the presence of Tamil merchants, whose names occur on potsherds found on the Red Sea coast. .

Numismatic evidence supporting the conclusion that two levels of exchange were prevalent, one at the largescale exchange of goods for goods and goods for coins (money?) at the big emporia of trade and the other, at the purely local subsistence level exchange. Distribution of Roman coins along trade routes mostly in hoards and in negligible quantity an stratified levels, both in trade centers and in the megalithic context.

The use of the Roman coins as money is highly debatable, while their use as jewellery is of little doubt. No single explanation for the occurrence of Roman coins in hoards, as protection money to ensure safe passage of goods from one coast to the other or investments in further trade by visiting traders and as deposits or sureties (as shown by countermarks). The Tamil classics refer to gifts of gold to poets (Pulavar), who were patronized by the rulers. This was one form of redistribution, in which prestige items such as horses, elephants and gold figured. Finds of early Republican issues are confined to the Kerala region and sites near the Palghat gap. Roman coins of the pre- Christian era are unknown in coastal Tamil nadu and Andhra Pradesh. They appear in the 1st –2nd centuries AD with an intensification of trade activities on the east coast. Byznatine coins of the 4th-5th centuries are also mostly confined to coastal Tamil nadu (also Madurai, Karur and Sri Lanka. Roman Rouletted ware is more widespread though in fewer sites, travelling from the coast up the rivers. Amphora is found in selected sites meant for elite clientile in wine, foodstuffs, olive oil preserved in such jars., such as Vasavasmudram, Kancipuram. Kodumanal and Pattanam, where excavations confirm trading patterns from the west to the east coasts through the Kongu region. Dynastic coinage of the Ceras, Colas and Pandya, few in excavated sites and more from private collections and surface finds (Amaravati river bed), the Portrait coins of the Ceras (Makkotai), coins with Cera symbols (bow and arrow, with double fish and tiger) and the legend Kutuvan Kotai and Kollippurai further confirm the direct involvement of the rulers in trade. Sangam references to *Pon*, *Kasu* and *Kanam* (used in early medieval inscrip-

tions) refer to gold and copper coins.. Punch-marked coins, which have a wider distribution (all India) found in hoards and also in stratified level in worn out condition. (unlike Roman coins in mint condition)(Bodinaickanur hoard – Pandya(double carp) point to their use, however limited, in exchange, as they are mainly issues of merchant guilds like the Nigama.

Religion

Researches on the religion of the early Tamils have added important insights into the nature of Sangam religion. The concept of the *Tinai* provides a clue to the nature of Tamil worship as “anthropocentric”, with a predominant folk component, intensely sensual and “humanistic. The deities of the different *tinais* were invoked for success in love and war. The tribal basis of these deities is reflected in their description or verbal imagery and their close association with the ecological/environmental background. The transformation of the deities of the *tinais* through a process of acculturation and assimilation into the Puranic-Brahmanic pantheon seems to have been a major development, though it is not easy to trace the stages of such change. Notable among them are Ceyon/Murukan, Mal/Mayon and Korravai transformed as Subrahmany, Visnu-Krsna and Durga of the Puranic pantheon. Evidence from the poems, however, indicate multiplicity of religious influences in which neither the Brahmanic nor the Sramanic religion had gained dominance over the others.

The spread of Jainism and Buddhism coincided with the increase in trade and commercial activity and introduced an element of heterogeneity in the urban centres. (Buddhism largely visible in coastal towns and Jainism in the interior centers, mainly on trade routes. Urban population –people of different ethnic origins, different occupational background and belonging to various religions aggregated in towns, where brahmanical and folk cults were equally well represented. The ascendancy of the Buddhist and Jain religions is clearly established by the epics (*Cilappatikaram* and *Manimekala*) as also by the 18 didactic works, most of which were authored by Buddhists and Jains. The kalabhras may well have been patrons of the Sramanic religions, when the Brahmanical tradition suffered a temporary eclipse , emerging as the mainstream tradition in the 6th -7th centuries AD, under the Pallavas and Pandyas. The heroic poetry of the Sangam gave place to a new genre viz., religious poetry of the Saiva and Vaisnava bhakti exponents. Thus formal religious systems and dominant traditions developed only in the early medieval period, when the concept of Bhakti and the temple emerged as the innovative focus of socio-cultural organization, transforming a basically tribal folk religion into a formal, universalized brahmancial religious system. The anthologisation of the Sangam texts belongs to this context, when the invocatory verses were added , evidently to Puranise the manifestly non- religious *Akam* and *Puram* verses.

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Thus in various spheres the Sangam texts represent a society and polity in the process of change from a purely tribal , non-state, non-stratified society to a stratified society, although the full fledged state and class and caste based society appeared only in gradual stages by the early medieval period.

Hence the following tentative chronology of the Sangam texts, their colophons, and the changing contexts in which their canonization as a literary corpus and as anthologies with a Puranic orientation is offered from the historian's approach to the texts.

I-- The composition of the heroic poems by individual poets over a long period – the 2nd century BC to 2nd century AD.

II – The colophons to the *Akam* and *Puram* collections and the *Patiruppattu* at the end of the period (2nd-3rd centuries AD) for purposes of legitimization of the ruling lineages. The *Tolkappiyam*, explaining the literary conventions and *tinai* and *turai* situations of the poems along with the first indication of the recognition of the Brahmanical varna order, as the Grammar for the language and the literary conventions, concepts and themes (*puram* and *akam*), which are crucial for understanding the corpus. This is also borne out by the tamil Brahmi inscriptions (Orthography). Single works like the *Pattinappalai* and *Maduraikkanci* on specific centers mainly urban.

III— Single works with a more unified theme such as the *Paripatal* (on Mal/Visnu and Ceyon/ Murukan), the *Cirupanarruppatai* and *Perumpanarruppatai* (guide to patrons and chiefs) and above all *Tirumurukarruppatai* (Guide to Murukan temples, Murukan as the patron and the sacred geography of the Murukan cult), *Kalittokai* and the epics *Cilappatikaram* and *Manimekalai* datable from the 4th to the 6th centuries AD.

IV—The *Iraiyanar Akapporul Urai* – The anthologisation of the *Ettuttokai* and *Pattupatru*

With invocatory verses to Puranise the non-religious Sangam texts under the influence of the dominant Brahmanical religious tradition, which was adopted as the ideology of the early medieval ruling families like the Pallavas and Pandyas.

V—The rich commentarial texts of the 12th-14th centuries reflecting the contemporary socio-economic and religious context, which influenced the commentators' views and interpretations of the texts, which in turn influenced the historian's understanding of the texts.

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Epigraphical Evidence on Dating Sangam Tamil Literature

R. NAGASWAMY

There are some two major schools of thought about the date of Sangam poems: (1) They were composed between 3rd cent BCE and 2nd Cent CE. and (2) they were composed in the 8th cent and 9th cent AD. Some are strong exponents of 9th C AD. They have made certain statements that are examined in this paper. Their main contention is that the Sangam poems were the Inventions of the Pandyas of the 8th- 9th cent, because they think that the language of the pandyan inscriptions and the Sangam poems are almost identical. They argue that the Sangam poems were influenced by Prakrit literary tradition. I am not going into this question here for want of time but would like to point out that such statements are purely subjective and are not borne out by factual comparison.

In this paper I will be focusing on three aspects.

1. Paleography of the script of early inscriptions
2. Language of the inscriptions and Sangam Classics
3. The recently found inscribed sherds and their relation to Sangam classics

My approach would be from known to Unknown and so I will be going back in point of time and not start from early period.

That is because there is Mr. Tieken who says "The cankam poetry presents a complex written literary tradition and that the poems were probably composed only at the moment of their completion into anthologies."

ஓங்கு திரை வியன் பரப்பில் உத்தி ஆயமாக
 தேங்குதமிழ் மலர் நெடுங்கீர்த்தி திசைமகளீர் மெய்காப்ப
 விண்ணன் பெயரோங்கிய மேகன்ஞானி விதானதில்
 துண் நிழற்கீழ் ஸஹஸ்ர பணமணி விளக்கிமைப்ப
 புஜங்க புரஸ்ஸரபோகி மன்னும் பொங்கணைமீசைச
 பயத்தரு தும்புரு நாரதனறபனுவரை பிசை செவி பிற புதலமகளோடு
 பாதஸ்பர்சனை செய்ம கண் படுத்த கார்வண்ணன்

ஆய்வரங்கச் சிறப்பு மலர்

நின் படையால் ஆதிபுருஷன் அமரநாயகன்
 ஆழகளம் நாபிமண்டலத்து சோதிபரகதத் துவளைத் தாட் சுடற்
 பொறுருனேரமலையிசை கணமகனிசமெலமன்.
 சின்னமனூர் பெரிய சாஸனம்
 “பஞ்சவன் என்னும் பெயர் நிறுவியும்
 வளமதுரை நகர் வகுத்தும் வளமிக்க
 மதிஅதனால் செந்தமழும் வட மொழியும்
 பழுதற்தனாவாய்து பண்டிதரில் மேல்தோன்றி
 மகாபாரதம் தமிழ் படுத்தும் மதுராபுரிச் சங்கம்
 ணைவத்தும்”
 வேள்விக்குடி சாஸனம்
 படுக்டல் முளைத்த பருதிபோல் பாண்டியாதி ராஜன்
 வெளிப்படுத்து
 அற்றமிடற் வேற்றானை அதிராஜன் அவனிசுளமனி
 எதிரத்துலகழிக்கும் மத்தயானை மாறவர்மன்

These examples show the Tamil sentences used in these pandyan records use more full Sanskrit word in between than Prakrit words. Sanskrit is being used liberally in the 9th 0th inscriptions all cited by Tieken.

As against this please note the following sanagam poems

*"Ongu malai Peru viáal pāmpu jnān kolii
 Oru kañai koñtu muveyil udaáái
 Peruviáal amararkku venái tanta
 Kataimidaááu aññal kāmar cenni
 Pirai nutal vilangkum oru kañ pola*

--Puram 55

This is a poem on Pandya Nanmaran by Marutan Ila Naganar. Another Pura nanuru poem (56) also on the same Pandya by Nakkirar reads

*Eááu valan uyariya eri marul avir catai
 Määáarum kañicci mañi midaááonum
 Katal valar purivalai puraiyum meni
 Adal ven Nãncil panai kotiyonum
 Maññuru thirumañi puraiyum meni
 Vinññyar putkoti viral veyyonum
 Mañimayil uyariya määarä venái
 Piñimuka Úrti on ceyyonum
 Enáu jnälam kâkkum kâlamunpil
 KÚrottiye määáarum ciááam
 Valiyottiye vâlyionai*

*Pukaz ottiye ikazunar atunana
Murukkottiye enniyatu mutittali*

Yet another poem on the King Thirumavalavan who died and a pooter was making a burial urn which is sung by port Aiyur mutavanar

*Kalam cey kove kalam cey kove
Irul tiñintanna kurÚ uttira parÚ uppukai
Akaliru vicumpin Únáum cÚlai
Nanantalai mutur kalam cey kove
Aliyai niye yāngahuvai kol
Nilavarai cÚttiya nil nedum tānai
Pulavar pukalnta poyyā nallicai
Virikatir jnāyiáu vicumpu ivarntenna
Cen vilangku ciáappil cempiyan marukan
Koti nutangku yānai thirumāvalavan
Tavar ulakam eytinan ātalín
Annor kavikkum kaññakan tāli
vanaital vettanai ayin enaiyatu um
iru nilam tikiriya perumalai
mannā vanaital ollumo ninakke*

See another poem from Poem by Avvaiyar on the chieftain Atiyaman netuman and

*Ciriya kat perine enakkiyumanne
Periya kat perine yam pāta
Tan makizntu unnum manne
Ciru corrālum nani pala kalattan manne
Peruncorralum nani pala kalattan manne
Enpotu tatipatu vali ellām emakkiyu manne
Ampotu vel nulai vali ellām tān nirku manne
Naranta nārum tan kaiyāl
pulavu nārum en taila tai varum manne
arum talai iru pānar akal mantai tulai niri
irappor kaiyulum pokī
purappor pun kai pāvai cora
amcol nun terccip pulavar nāvil
cenru vizntanru avan
aru nirattiyangkiya vele
ācākentai yāng ulan kollo
inip pātunaram illai
pātunarkku onru īhunaram illai*

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Natural evolution of Sanskrit

The flow of these poems are not stultified by the use of Sanskrit words anywhere in the poems . It is not because of their popularity they were evoked and sung nearly 500 years as Tieken claims, but because these were immortal poems they live for the past two thousand years. There is no comparison between the language of the Sangam poems and later Pandyan inscriptions. The two are too different. The former is fine Tamil mixed with some Prakrit words , the Prakrit words resembling Tamil, But Sangam classics do not use Sanskrit in their composition. But the Pandya records cited like the Dalavaypuram, Velvikkudi and larger Sinnamanur plates use more Sanskrit words in their compositions. A comparison between The Sangam poems and what Tieken says are closer to Sangam are so different that no one will agree with his contention.

This trend is more in tune with the over all development of languages all over India for example all the Dramatic works in Sanskrit use more Prakrit than Sanskrit. The trend gradually changes through the centuries in the north as well. Therefore the claim that Sangam poems are closer to later Pandya records is totally invalid. We may also note in passing that the early Pallava records are also in Prakrit and not in Sanskrit..

Arikesari's copper plate – 7th cent

So far we have seen the case of Pandyan records of 8th -9th cent. But it must be understood the case was not different in the Pandyan records of 7th century. Two important records are relevant. One was a stone inscription discovered 50 years ago and the other was a copper plate record. The former was found in Madurai in the Vailai bed, discovered by Prof. K.V.Raman and edited by KG Krishnan and; revised by me 30 years ago. The second was in a private collection and edited by Dr.Subbarayalu recently. Both were issued by the Pandya Arikesari, Paramkusa Maravarman, a contemporary of Jnana-sambandar, in mid 7th cent. Both of them use chaste Sanskrit in the middle of the sentence frequently as in the case of 9th cent record. The Madurai record begins like this,

*Pandya kula mani pradipanay praturbhavanjceytu
Vikramangalal araisatakki, aparitamana
hiranyagarbhamum tulabahramum kali katintu*

Similar is the case with the other copper plates of the same ruler. In these 7th cent records also both Sanskrit language and the grantha script are employed and not as found in Sangam poems. This suggests that the Sangam poems are not only different from the later Pandyan records but also they can not be dated to 7th cent as they are not similar to Arikesari's record.

The use of not only the words in Sanskrit is seen prominently in later Pandya records but also the script employed for these words is the Grantha script to denote its individuality. The Sangam poems do not employ Grantha characters for the northern words.

Hero-stone evidence

Further many herostone inscriptions have come to light in recent times. They range from around fourth century to 10th or 11th cent and even later. Most of them are dated in the reigns of kings whose date have been decided by reference to acceptable data. For example many inscriptions of Mahendra varman of 7th cent and some of Simha Vishnu, and Simha varman of 6th cent have come to light. Some are even earlier and refer to Bana chieftains. All these record show gradual evolution of the Script. We have demonstrated that evolution of each and every letter could be demonstrated, That has given Paleographic evolution is a much more secure method than the so called internal similarities of diction often decided on subjective approach. Thus we can say the hero stones have given a large number of names which are decidedly later than Sangam, poems

Poolankuruchi evidence

Another important inscription that deserves the attention is the Poolankuruchi record of Koc Cendan kurran. This was also dated to 3rd cent by me while there are others who date it slightly later. Whatever the date assigned to it may be , it is much earlier to 7th cent. The language in this inscription is certainly earlier to 7th cent. So is the script. Unfortunately Tieken has not taken all these discoveries into consideration but has taken only the later Pandyan inscriptions. The Sangam classics is certainly earlier to the Poolankuruchi record. It is therefore evident that Sangam classics must be dated earlier than 3rd cent. This brings us to the large number of early Brahmi inscriptions found in caves on coins, pottery and other material. Sri.K.V.Subramanya Iyer was the first to declare that the some of these letters used in the cave records are unique to Tamil language especially L r n. This was followed by Mahadevan. More and more records are coming to light.

Evolution of script - vital

First and foremost point that one should recognize is that there is thus an indisputable evidence of the "evolution of script". This is most vital to the question of dating as it is perceptible and irrefutable. There may be some difference of opinion among scholars about absolute dating based on paleography and relative dating ranging from ± 100 years. But the fact remains that these records are earlier. There is no doubt about the evolution of letters these could be compared firmly with succeeding age.

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Asokan Evidence

Asoka has already mentioned specifically in his edicts, the Pandyas, the Cholas, the Kerala putras,(Cheramans) and the Satya putras. That there was a highly organized kingdom and society in Tamil nadu in the 3rd cent BCE is more than proved. Asokan Brahmi is well studied and all the early inscriptions found in Tamilnad are closer to the Asokan script and do show clear cut evolution. The Sangam poems could thus be dated within the time bracket of 3rd Cent BCE and 2nd Cent CE Many of the names found in the Sangam poems are found in the Cave records of Tamilnad. One can not brush them aside as accidental or that they were there earlier but the poets sang them later.

Verifiable data

There are three important coordinates that help us in determining the date of sangam on objective consideration.

Asokan records

Foreign data like Roman coins, pottery and seals found in Tamilnadu and Indian pottery with Brahmi script found in Egypt and Arabian coast. The inscribed coins giving the names of the kings who issued the coin.Relative stratigraphic chronology of inscribed sherds.

Before we examine these points it is necessary to note the content of the early inscriptions. The names of a number of kings and chiefs are found in these records whose names are mentioned in the Sangam works. Please note the names :

Pandyan kings: Neducheziyan: Valuti: Peruvaluti, Panavan

Chera Kings: Koatan ceral irumporai: Perumkatunkon: Ilam kadunkon: Kollippuraiyan:

Makkodai : kuttuvan kodai

Atiyans : Neduman: anci

Other names: Pittan: Korran: Nalli: Antuvan: Iango: Centan: Kurran: Matirai: Karuvur Uppu Vanikan: Aruvai vanikan, Pon Varuikan and more

These names are sufficient enough to show that the names found in the early inscriptions are found in the Sangam literature . The correlation of these names with those of the Sangam works can not be minimized. Some of these names are not of persons to be remembered after a gap of 700 years in the 9th cent, to be composed in classical poems. It is not acceptable when it is said they were "invented by Pandyas" just for the sake of composing poems to claim antiquity as claimed by Tieken.

Evidence of script on coins

Regarding their age it is known that Roman coins and potsherds were found in large numbers in Tamilnad. Several thousand gold and silver and bronze coins have been found which when compared with the account of classical geographers of the western world, attest to the fact that ancient Rome traded with the Tamils in the first 2nd centuries CE. The occurrence of Arretine ware, rouletted ware and amphora have given a closer dating. The Gold intaglio seals have also given a dating to these findings no different from the other sources. The coins of some Cera rulers like the issue of Kolliporaiyan, the conqueror of Kolli hills shows the king in Roman attire showing that he is identical with the kings with the same name and title in Sangam period. Makkodai, Kuttuvan kodai show the portraits of the kings who are represented in imitations of Roman Emperors who issued them when the Roman trade was in full swing. The coin of Peruvalluti coin to be discussed by Dr.R.Krishnamurti in his paper, is another fine example of the same age. (for a full discussion of their significance pl. see Dr.R.Krishnamurthi's paper) They attest to the fact that in the time when Roman contact was well established the coins bearing portraits like the Roman kings were issued, but subsequently no coin was issued bearing the portraits. The script employed in the coin of early kings with their names are the same as found in the cave inscriptions and found on the excavated of potsherds. There could be no doubt the Cheras, Pandya and others mentioned in the sangam poems were historic persons who actually lived here around the beginning of the first cent CE.

Stratigraphic Evidence

Our recent excavations at Karur and Algankulam have proved the occurrences of sherds with Brahmi script in the stratified level that yielded Roman pottery pointing to 2nd cent.CE as the date of the script. They are identical with the script found in the Pugalur inscription. For the first time we have also found in stratified excavations Roman coins, all the other ones being treasure trove finds or surface finds. This enable us to date the script on the potsherd that are now very securely dated. The inscriptions in these characters refer to many many personalities and kings and poets mentioned in Sangam classics. There could be no doubt that these inscriptions on rocks in Tamilnad are indisputably of the beginning of the current era, a few years earlier or later.

Conclusion

When one collates all the names of the poets of sangam age and also the names of the patrons sung by them, a time bracket of about 150 to two hundred years and not more. The overwhelming evidence of inscriptions, script, paleography, numismatic finds and inscribed sherds found in Egypt and the vast difference between the language of sangam poetry, and the inscriptional poetry of 8th cent - 9th cent, point to the 1st cent BCE to 2nd Cent. CE. as the date of the Sangam poems.

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Archeology and the Cankam Literature with special reference to inscribed pots and herostones

Y. SUBBARAYALU

!. Inscribed Pottery

The archaeological material relevant to the dating of the Cankam or early Tamil anthologies are 1) potsherds with Tamil-Brahmi inscriptions excavated from Arikamedu, Alagankulam, Kodumanal, and other ancient sites in Tamil Nadu and those from a couple of sites in Egypt; 2) Roman coins and other antiquities and 3) the recently discovered four memorial stones with Tamil-Brahmi inscriptions. The evidence of Roman coins is well known and has been discussed by several scholars till date in the light of the Classical Greek and Roman accounts of the maritime contacts of South India. Archaeological excavations at Arikamedu and Alagankulam have also clearly established the Roman maritime contacts with the Tamil country from the second century BCE to 2nd century CE. The recent excavations at Pattanam (near Parur) on the Kerala coast suggest that the site could be Muziris or Muchiri, the Chera port highly praised in the Cankam poems.

In this paper the light thrown by the inscribed sherds and hero stones on the age of the Cankam literature will be taken up for study. As the inscribed sherds¹ come mostly from archaeological excavations, the time of their currency can be dated on the basis of archaeological evidence. They provide a number of personal names which could be compared on the one hand with the names found in Tamil-Brahmi inscriptions from several ancient rock-shelters, studied in detail by Iravatham Mahadevan and on the other hand with the names in the Cankam collection.

Vimala Begley, who conducted the latest excavations in Arikamedu in 1990s, asserts that there is evidence to say that Arikamedu was occupied for a much longer period than the first two centuries CE assigned to it by Wheeler. According to her revised chronology (Begley 1996 & 2004), Arikamedu had a pre-Roman trade phase, starting from early second century BCE or a little earlier. She assigned therefore to the inscribed sherds dates ranging from the middle of the third century BCE to third or fourth century CE. For the dating she has used evidence from stratigraphy along with that obtained from a technical classification of the sherds themselves. These dates

tally more or less with the dates given on palaeographical basis by Mahadevan (1996B), who actually examined the inscribed pottery of Begley's excavations. Begley (2004) by a careful study of the rouletted pottery in Alagankulam in comparison with that in Arikamedu has concluded that Alagankulam and Arikamedu were nearly contemporary as far as the earlier phase of both the sites are concerned. For Kodumanal, the present writer has assigned c. 200 BCE to 50 CE to Period 1, which has yielded the bulk of the pottery writings, after considering all the relevant excavated evidence. Finally, a Tamil-Brahmi inscription, reading *kōrpuṇāṇ* (no. 267 of the Catalogue)², found inscribed on an amphora potsherd obtained at Berenike, a Red-Sea port in Egypt, is dated by the excavators of the site to 60-70 CE on the basis of stratigraphy (Mahadevan 2003: p. 49). This piece of evidence also reinforces the above dating.

The cumulative archaeological evidence from Arikamedu, Alagankulam, and Kodumanal would suggest that the earliest date for the Tamil-Brahmi pottery would be the beginning of the second century BCE or a few decades earlier and the latest date would be in the third century CE. In Arikamedu and Alagankulam the bulk of that pottery belonged to 100 BCE-100 CE. In Kodumanal and Uraiur the dates may range between 200 BCE – 100 CE. In these two sites, there is no second phase comparable to that of Arikamedu and Alagankulam. It may therefore be stated that a majority of the pottery inscriptions is more or less coeval with those found in the cave inscriptions of Mahadevan's (2003: pp. 93-95) early Tamil-Brahmi phase, ranging from early 2nd century BCE to the end of 1st century CE. Paleographically also they are quite similar. The second phase in Arikamedu and Alagankulam may be contemporaneous to Mahadevan's late Tamil-Brahmi phase (c. 2nd to 4th centuries CE). Nonetheless, the sherds belonging to the second phase are a few only.

The cave (or rock) Tamil-Brahmi inscriptions are dated mostly on palaeographical grounds and the earliest of them can be considered almost contemporary to Asokan Brahmi. Mahadevan who has made a comprehensive study of those inscriptions would take them to start from early second century BCE thinking that Tamil-Brahmi was formed from (Asokan) Brahmi not later than the end of the Mauryan Age, though some of the palaeographical features he recognized (Mahadevan 2003, p. 93 and 175) would put the starting point even from the time of Asoka (c. 269-232 BCE), i.e., half a century earlier than his dating. Mahadevan also took into consideration the dates of Sri Lankan cave Brahmi inscriptions as a corroborative evidence for dating the Tamil-Brahmi inscriptions (*Ibid*, p. 177). In Sri Lanka, the earliest inscriptions, which belong to king Uttiya, the successor of a Devanampiya Tissa, junior contemporary of Asoka, are dated in 207-197 BCE and several other inscriptions could be dated with an accuracy of a decade or two in the second and first centuries BCE (Paranavitana, 1970: p. xvii; Karunaratne 1984: pp. 2-4). A comparison of the

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palaeography of the pottery as well as the cave Tamil-Brahmi inscriptions on the one

NAME	OCCURRENCES	VARIANTS / RELATED NAMES
antavan <u>ŋ</u>	2 + 3 ⁶	antiya[n], ...tavan <u>ŋ</u> , pera- anta <u>ŋan</u>
atan <u>ŋ</u>	13 + 1	santata <u>ŋ</u>
campan <u>ŋ</u>	2 + 3	...mpan <u>ŋ</u> (3)
cātan <u>ŋ</u>	3 + 2	cāttan <u>ŋ</u> , sātan <u>ŋ</u>
kan <u>ŋan</u>	1 + 5	kan <u>ŋan</u> , ...n <u>ŋan</u> (2), ...n <u>ŋan</u> , ...kan <u>ŋan</u>
kuviran <u>ŋ</u>	1 + 3	kuvira-a <u>ŋ</u> , kuyira-a <u>ŋ</u> , muti- kuyiran <u>ŋ</u>
mulan <u>ŋ</u>	2	
...likan <u>ŋ</u>	2	034 ..[pa]la-śa
...n <u>ŋan</u>	2	170 [ta]n <u>ŋa</u> -sa
...van <u>ŋ</u>	4	173 ..ŋ suman[na]
hand and that of the Sri Lankan inscriptions on the other would show that a broad correspondence exists between them. Moreover, there are two letters, namely <i>ma</i> , and <i>/a</i> , whose forms are identical in pottery inscriptions as well as in Sri Lankan inscriptions (Karunaratne 1984: pp. 32-33) in the second and first centuries BCE ³ .		174 ŋ asu
All but a few of the pottery inscriptions are labels containing just one or two segments of personal names. The exceptional few have more than two segments and give, besides personal names, some term referring to the name of a vessel (like <i>akal</i> , <i>tatā pati</i> , <i>pāti</i>) ⁴ . Several of the names are fragmentary as they are found on broken sherds. However, the names can be reconstructed from the beginning and ending portions and in comparison with the full forms.		176 ..[pa]ya-sa_
A frequent clue in these inscriptions to recognize the end of a word is the occurrence of the alveolar <i>n</i> , which is a familiar termination for male names in Tamil. Generally the Tamil personal names are in two segments, the first segment standing for the father's name and the second one for the given name of the concerned person ⁵ , for example in		182 visakan atan <u>ŋ</u>
		188 rajhaga
		192 araha
		197 rakita-śa
		198 kuta-[śa]
		200 data-[śa]
		208 araha-sa
		210 camuta-ha
		215 yakhamitra-sa
		225 buta-śa
		227 yaṛavalabhuṭa-ya (pati)
		232 vanadika-sa

the name *antavan atan*, "atan" is the given name of the concerned person and "antavan" stands for his father's name. The term for son (*makan*) is understood and rarely mentioned explicitly. A few of the male names were more popular and therefore occur more than once, as shown in the following table.

In no. 170 of the above table, whose latter half only is available, the genitive case marker *sa* is added to the name "...*taŋ*", which with "*aŋ*" ending must definitely be a Tamil name like *Atan* or a Tamilized Prakrit name like *Visakan*⁷. In nos.173 and 174, the first segment, which normally stands for father's name, ends in *ŋ*, whereas the second segment, standing for ego's name is in Prakrit. Then there are names such as *Asaṭan*, *Visakan*, *Kuviran*, *Uttiran*, and a few others, which show further process of adaptation of Prakrit names into the Tamil society. Nearly one-fifth (50 out of 270) of the names on the pottery can be definitely recognized as Prakrit names, either in the original form or in partly Tamilized form from the use of the non-Tamil characters, and of the Prakrit genitive suffixes. There are some other names of Prakrit origin, which have been fully Tamilized avoiding non-Tamil letters, like *Kuviran* (from Kubira or Kubera). Some names cannot be decided either way. For instance, whether *Cātan* and *Kaṇan* (*Kaṇṇan*) are originally Tamil/Dravidian names adapted into Prakrit or *vice versa* is difficult to ascertain. Interestingly we have both *Cātan* and *Sātan*. In the case of *Cāmuta* (or Camuta), it is clearly a Tamilized form of the Prakrit name Samuda. Samuda meaning sea is a popular name in Sri Lankan inscriptions. Names based on star names, like *Asaṭan*, *Asālay(a)*, *Mulan*, *Visakan* and *Visākī*, *Tican* or *Tiyān* also may be treated as Prakrit names. If we put together both the pure Prakrit forms and Tamilized forms, they would make nearly fifty per cent of all the names found on the pottery.

There are only a few names of women that could be recognized in the pottery inscriptions: Tevvai-Tattai⁸ (219) and Kuttaiy (236) both in Arikamedu, *Visākī* (1) and *Vāruṇi-iy* (114) in Kodumanal. All these seem to be names of Prakrit origin. In the case of the latter two, it is quite obvious. *Visakan*, the male form of *Visākī*, is also met with in Kodumanal (no.182).

Names in the Cave Inscriptions

The inscriptions in the second group, numbering sixty-seven (Mahadevan 2003: Inscription Nos. 1-67), belong to Mahadevan's Early Tamil-Brahmi phase. They come from some twenty cave sites that were the abodes of the Jain monks. Most of them are either label or short inscriptions and relate to the making of the natural caves on hillocks habitable by cutting drip-ledges to divert rainwater and by providing with stone-carved beds. The inscriptions give the names of the Jain monks as well as their lay followers (Table 3)⁹ who caused the remodeling of the caves. The cave inscriptions have a few pure Prakrit forms and also two non-Tamil graphemes, *s* and *d̄h*. But there are a number of Tamilized Prakrit names. Mahadevan (2003: p. 104),

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after making an analysis of the stems of all the words found in these inscriptions, states that nearly 30 per cent of the stems can be assigned to Prakrit language for the period from second century BCE to first century CE. For arriving at this figure, he has taken into account all the lexical items, including place names¹⁰, verbs and grammatical particles. It should be noted that all place names and verbs in the cave inscriptions are in Tamil. If we consider only the proper names of persons, excluding other lexical items, the proportion of Prakrit names and Tamilized Prakrit names together comes to nearly fifty per cent in the cave inscriptions too.

The pottery inscriptions certainly have some common features with the cave ones. Some names are common to both. The names Atan, Kuviran, Antai, and Visakan (or Viyakan) are found in both groups though not in the same proportion¹¹. The term vē/ which in Cankam literature denoted a chief occurs in both. The names Korran, Korri, Tican or Tiyan, and a few others are found in both once or twice. The adjectival prefix "netu", meaning elder or senior occurs twice in pottery inscriptions (Catalogue: nos. 110, 260), whereas it occurs four times in the cave ones. Some names like Arat̄ta(n), Aritan, Kāsipan (variants Kasapan, Kāyapan) are peculiar to the cave inscriptions. Though there is equal proportion of Prakrit and Tamil names in both groups, there is more Tamilization in the cave group, even though both of them are almost contemporary. The latter feature may be due to the differences in the social sections represented in either group.

Comparison with Prakrit Names outside Tamil Area

For understanding the implications of the conspicuous presence of the Prakrit element in the Tamil-Brahmi inscriptions, a comparison with the names in the Prakrit records proper may be useful. A rich collection of names is available for study in Sri Lankan Brahmi inscriptions found in cave shelters ranging from about 200 BCE to 100 CE. The cave shelters in Sri Lanka are comparable to those in Tamilnadu as far as the basic location and architectural details are concerned. Nevertheless, the number of sites is quite large in Sri Lanka (269 sites yielding 1276 inscriptions compared to 30 sites with 89 inscriptions in Tamilnadu). Therefore, a large corpus of names is available in the Sri Lankan inscriptions, relating to gifting of the cave shelters to Buddhist Sangha and monks. All those names are in Prakrit. Even some persons who are referred to as Tamils (*damedā*) had only Prakrit names, like Viśaka, Tiśa, Kubira (Paranavitana 1970: p. lxxxix-xc)¹². There are several names that recall Buddhist connections. However, a majority of the names of the donors was of eclectic religious character as they are suggestive of other faiths too (Ibid, p. cxxii). There are names of all the major and minor Vedic and Puranic deities, which were later to become sectarian gods of the Vaishnavaite and Saivite communities in India. Another conspicuous feature is the occurrence of names based on lunar asterisms (Ibid. p. cxxiv), which is again to be traced to similar north Indian practice. Of course, all the

names come from north India. It is difficult to tell whether there are among them any indigenous names that had prevailed before the migration of Prakrit-speaking groups into the island country. Even if there are some, they are fully incorporated into the Prakrit milieu and so difficult of recognition.

The names in the pottery inscriptions are comparable to Sri Lankan names as far as the Prakrit features are concerned. The asterism-based names in the pottery corpus seem to be closer to Sri Lankan names. Thus the name Asālay(a) or (no. 56) Asālay (a) (no. 124), traced to the star Āśīśha, has parallels in Sri Lanka, like Aśaliya, Aśelaya (Paranavitana 1970, p. 103). The name Asaṭaṇ (no.38) is same as Aśada (from Āśāḍha). The name Asaṭaṇ is met with in Kasrawad (Diskalkar 1949), Bharhut (Luders 1963) and other north Indian sites too. The name Tiśa is very popular in Sri Lanka, while it occurs only rarely in Tamilnadu, in the form of Tica-aṇ or Tiyaṇ. Visaka is found in both. The name Puṇakaṇ (no. 246) seems to be related to Puṇa (Ibid., p. 115) and Ayamaraiy (no. 256) to Ayimara (Ibid., p.103). Apart from these names, the occurrence of the genitive suffix "śa" in as many as five names and of the genitive suffix "ha" in two of the pottery inscriptions is another significant piece of correspondence between the two areas. These two genitive suffixes are peculiar to Sri Lankan Prakrit (Paranavitana 1970, p. xl). The use of the palatal sibilant "ś" in the place of the dental sibilant "s" normally found in other Prakrits is a special feature of Sri Lankan Prakrit.

Though the Prakrit influence from Sri Lanka is clearly perceptible, Sri Lanka is not the only source. In fact, the impact of North Indian Prakrits is found more influential than that of Sri Lankan one. That is understood from the larger use of the dental "s" (standing for all the three sibilants) as in the case of all north Indian Prakrits. Sri Lankan Prakrit used the palatal "ś" instead, avoiding "s" altogether, in the earlier stage, i.e., during the second century BCE (Karunaratne 1984, p. 31). Secondly, the occurrence of similar names in the northern sites has been referred to above. Thirdly, there are two inscriptions at Arikamedu (nos. 215 and 232) written in the Kushan-period Brahmi script, i.e. datable to the first century CE. Mahadevan (1996A, 2003: p. 109) suggested that the non-doubling of consonants and also the absence of ligaturing of consonants in the Tamil-Brahmi inscriptions may be due to the influence of Sri Lankan Prakrit. This feature, however, cannot be attributed to the Sri Lankan Prakrit alone, as it is also noticed in North Indian Prakrits, for instance, in the case of the pottery inscriptions of Kasrawad in Madya Pradesh (Diskalkar 1949).

The Identity of the Prakrit-speakers

The occurrence of a large number of Prakrit names, in their original form or in the adapted form, certainly vouch for a considerable presence of immigrant Prakrit-speaking people in the particular sites. The foregoing evidence suggests that some ஆய்வரங்கச் சிறப்பு மலை்

of the Prakrit speakers hailed from Sri Lanka while the majority of them came from the northern parts of India. The purpose of the travel of these people over such long distances should be either for pilgrimage or for trade. The sites like Kodumanal, Arikamedu, and Alagankulam are not religious centres and they are not situated nearer to the known Jain centres of the day, namely the cave-shelters concentrated in Madurai area. The religious purpose is therefore out of question. The other purpose, trade and exchange, is the only possibility here. This point becomes clear from the archaeological studies of these sites. Kodumanal situated within a rich gemstone area and on a trade route that connected the west coast ports with the east coast ones, and running through the important towns Karur and Uraiur (present Tiruchirappalli), was an important centre for gemstone industry, using rock-crystal, beryl, and to some extent carnelian (Rajan 2004). It was a centre for iron production too. Naturally, it was an ideal centre for exchange and formed part of the peninsular exchange network. Arikamedu was an important east coast port having active trade contacts with the Roman world during the period under study (Wheeler, *et.al.* 1946; Begley, *et.al.* 1996). Alagankulam was another important port, further south at the mouth of the river Vaigai, almost contemporary to Arikamedu. Both were also centers for the manufacture of the rouletted ware, which figured in a wide exchange network, both inland and overseas (Begley 2004). Uraiur, Karur, Madurai, and Kanchipuram could also have been natural centres of exchange as they were important political centres. Due to limited excavations and due to some other peculiar reasons, some of these sites have not yielded so far a good number of pottery inscriptions.

There are some clues in the names themselves to suggest that the persons, both with Prakrit and Tamil names, were merchants. The name Kuviran and its Prakrit variant Kubira are to be traced to Kubēra, who is considered as one of the Yaksha guardian deities of the earth and also as the god of riches. It is the later aspect which is emphasized in the personal names. In medieval times, the members of Aiyyāvole merchant guild called themselves as belonging to the *vaiśrāvāṇa* (another name of Kubēra) caste¹³. The name component "antai" also may also be related to the merchants based on some medieval inscriptions and literature (Subbarayalu 2008). The name Ataŋ which occurs more frequently may also be related to the merchant group. A final clinching clue is the occurrence of the name *nikama* (no. 88) at Kodumanal. This term is obviously a variant of the Prakrit *nigama* which denoted a trade guild and by extension a commercial place. It also occurs in Mangalam cave inscriptions.

A significant implication of the above conclusions on the identity of the persons who put their names on the pottery would be that the Prakrit-speaking merchants were mainly instrumental in the beginning in introducing the Brahmi script into the Tamil

country. This must have happened soon after the Brahmi script in its full form was available in the Magadha region during the Mauryan rule, early in the third century BCE. There is good archaeological evidence to suggest that inter-regional trade contacts within and beyond peninsular India had already been there at least from the early phase of the Iron Age (Megalithic Age), that is from the early centuries of the first millennium BCE (Champakalakshmi 1996, pp.113ff). However, only from the time of the Mauryan empire, particularly during the time of Asoka, the contacts became more intense and frequent. The exploitation and control of mineral resources in peninsular India are said to have been important factors that were at the basis of the Mauryan expansion in the South. Romila Thapar (2000: p. 474) thinks that access to raw materials appear to have been the prime motivation for the conquest of the peninsula where timber and semi-precious stones – quartz, agate, carnelian – were easily available as also were elephants. Naturally, trade would have got great fillip under this political development. This would explain the large presence of the traders from the north in late Iron Age or early historical centres of craft production like Kodumanal. The spread of the knowledge of writing through the traders is an important consequence of this development¹⁴.

As the Tamil merchants first took the writing knowledge from the Prakrit-speaking merchants, the Tamil language found in the pottery inscriptions, which represents the first stage of the written Tamil, is naturally influenced by Prakrit as far as the orthography is concerned. More or less this Prakrit impact is the same as that found in the cave inscriptions. The features such as the occasional inconsistency in differentiating the short and long medial “a”, the non-occurrence of separate symbols to differentiate *e* and *ē* and *o* and *ō*, and the limited use of gemination, besides the large proportion of pure Prakrit names themselves, may be attributed to the Prakrit-speaking merchants among the local community.

It is possible that the Jain monks accompanied or followed the trading groups to South India. Unlike in Sri Lanka, there is very little evidence to infer the presence of the Buddhist monks in this company as far as the Tamil area is concerned¹⁵. In any case, unlike the cave inscriptions, the pottery inscriptions do not reveal any explicit evidence for the presence of the two religious groups in the excavated localities (Kodumanal, Arikamedu, etc.). That may suggest that in the early stage, i.e., during the third to first centuries BCE, the Jain monks were limited in number and took their abodes near some important political and cultural centres. Particularly they are found in a good concentration near about Madurai, the capital of the Pandyan rulers.

A second implication is that regarding the nature of literacy at this juncture. As pottery inscriptions are found in the habitations of several ancient sites in Tamilnadu and as they are found on pottery of everyday use, Mahadevan (2003: p.160) suggested that literacy was somewhat widespread in those days. It is difficult to concur

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with this proposition from the available evidence. In fact the inscriptions are found concentrated in certain sites only. Even otherwise, Mahadevan's suggestion would entail a fact that quite a cross-section of the contemporary society would be represented in these names. If so, we must concede that nearly fifty per cent of the Tamil people were able to read and write Prakrit. That is an indefensible position. Actually, taking together the evidence of pottery inscriptions and that of the cave inscriptions we can concede that in the two beginning centuries (2nd-1st centuries BCE) the literacy was confined to only the elite sections of the society, particularly the merchants, their craftsmen associates, the ruling people, besides the monks. The slow changes in the palaeography of the Tamil-Brahmi, both in the pottery and cave inscriptions, spread over nearly two centuries, must be due to this limited literacy only¹⁶.

Comparison with the Names in Cankam Literature

The exact chronology of the oldest Tamil Literature, otherwise known as the Cankam literature, which comprises eight anthologies and ten long poems, has been discussed by several scholars and the general consensus is that the bulk of the poems in the collection belongs broadly to the first two or three centuries of CE¹⁷. Proceeding on this received knowledge, the names found in the colophons of the individual poems, which relate to the names of the poets and their patrons are considered here. Though there may be some doubts as to the authenticity of some of the colophons, the names found in them are taken up here for comparative purpose on the premise that the colophons have generally followed an authentic literary tradition¹⁸. There are more than five hundred names in this collection, relating to the poets and their patrons. For convenience's sake the comparison is restricted to more frequent names (about seventy), which have a frequency of three and more (Table 4)¹⁹.

The names in Cankam literature show more standardization. One marked difference from the pottery and cave groups is the less number of Prakrit-related names. The proportion of Prakrit names decreases from the earlier fifty per cent to about a third of the total. Non-Tamil graphemes are completely dispensed with and thus all adopted Prakrit names are assimilated fully within the Tamil milieu. It may be mentioned here that this feature is in keeping with the rule prescribed by the earliest Tamil grammatical work, *Tolkāppiyam* (*sutra* 884), for Tamilizing the loan words taken from the "northern" language (*vāṭacōl*), which may here denote the Prakrits rather than Sanskrit. Unlike in the pottery and cave inscriptions, there is no ambiguity.

ity in the gemination of consonants, wherever it is required (for example *Cāttan* in the place of *Cātañ*). It may be seen from the table that some names were very popular. Of course we have to eliminate from the list the generic family names of ruling clans like *cēramāñ*, *cōlañ*, *pāñtiyañ*, which are bound to be found frequently. Of the remaining ones the name *kannan* is the most popular name followed by respectively *kīrañ*, *cāttan*, *korrañ*, *pūtañ*, *cēntañ*, and *tēvañ*. Except the last two names others occur in inscriptions, but not in the same proportion. Only *cāttan* shows similar tendency in both the inscriptions and literature, the others are found to become more familiar in the latter. The name *atañ* (or *ātañ*) shows decrease in its frequency. There are several other names (like *antai*, *antuvan*) found in both groups almost in equal proportion. It is however strange that the name *kuviran* is conspicuously missing in the literary group. A remarkable feature of the literary names is the prominent occurrence of names associated with the Brahman *gotra* attributes. There are about twenty such names (like *mōci*, *kapilañ*, *pālattan*, *pālāciriyañ*, etc.)²⁰. It is not certain whether to consider *kāsipan/kāyapan* and *āritan/aritan* that occur in the cave inscriptions as *gotra* names or just personal names. It was seen above that all the four or five names of women found in pottery inscriptions are Prakrit names. In the case of names in literature, only two names, *uttirai* and *pūti* can be recognized as Prakrit-based ones. Others can be local names.

From the foregoing analysis the inter-relations between the three groups of names may be understood to some extent. There are differences as well as common things among them. The differences may be explained as follows: Even though the pottery and cave inscriptions are contemporaneous, there is more Prakrit influence in the pottery inscriptions than in the latter. This should be explained due to the presence of mostly traders in the former whereas in the cave inscriptions we see additionally elite members of the local society like kings and chiefs and Jain monks and their disciples. Consequently, the difference between the Tamil language of the pottery inscriptions and that of the cave inscriptions, even though they are contemporaneous, may be attributed to the involvement of literate Jain monks in the latter, while in the former it is the merchants' *lingua franca*. The other possible reason would be in the writers of the respective inscriptions. While there is no possibility for the exis-

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tence of a professional writer or inscriber to write the short pottery inscriptions, we must look for some professional hand in the making of cave inscriptions, both in drafting and engraving, as the writings are comparatively longer with some grammatical structure, and as mostly the elite sections are involved in the making of the gift documents. Naturally there would be some conscious attempt to use some standard language soon.

As for the names in the Cankam literature, their remarkable difference from the names in inscriptions may be attributed to the time difference, besides other factors. It is about the first century CE the Tamil-Brahmi script becomes mature enough with the innovation of the diacritical *pulli* or dot to clearly distinguish the pure consonant from voalic consonant and to distinguish *ō* from *o* and *ē* from *e*. This innovation must have helped to write Tamil unambiguously, shorn of the earlier Prakrit influence and in turn must have laid the basis for the writing of poems, which were until them oral compositions. And this in turn would have led to the formation of the old anthologies. The standardization found in the personal names in the Cankam literature is a consequence of the conscious scholarly attempts in the making of the anthologies.

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Foot Notes

¹The total number of sherds available to date are 469 from some twenty sites, but five of these sites have yielded the bulk of the written potsherds: Kodumanal (total 250), Alagankulam (73) Arikamedu (66), Uraiur (20), and Karur (15). A few sites have each less than ten sherds and others only a few. Two Red-sea port sites in Egypt have given four sherds and there are a few reported from some sites in the Jaffna peninsula of Sri Lanka. For the present study, a corpus of 270 inscriptions, which are legible to read and understand, has been selected from the entire collection.

²This and the subsequent numbers given to potsherd inscriptions refer to the serial numbers in the Catalogue of Pottery Inscriptions published in *Avanam* (Journal of Tamilnadu Archaeological Society), vol. 19, (2008), pp. 196-204.

³Rajan (2004) has argued for a date in the fourth century BCE for the beginning of Kodumanal site and consequently for the beginning of Tamil-Brahmi script on the basis of stratigraphy and of the relative position of sherds classifiable as Tamil-Brahmi-I or Tamil-Brahmi-II according to the orthographical classification of Mahadevan (2003). He also finds support for this from some archaeological evidence from Anuradhapura in Sri Lanka, which is said to prove the existence of the Brahmi writing before the Mauryan contacts. Mahadevan's Tamil-Brahmi-I/Tamil-Brahmi-II classification is unreliable for relative dating as the so-called Tamil-Brahmi-I and Tamil-Brahmi-II systems occur simultaneously and do not constitute successive stages. This point is discussed by me in another paper: "Pottery Inscriptions of Tamilnadu – A Comparative View", *Airāvati: Felicitation Volume in Honour of Iravatham Mahadevan*, Chennai, 2008, pp. 209-249. As the evidence from Anuradhapura excavations is only partially and selectively published, the veracity of that evidence cannot be checked. However, a few illustrations published by the excavators (Coningham, et. al. 1996 and Allchin, et.al., 1995, p.177) show that the Anuradhapura Brahmi writings which are considered to be pre-Mauryan are not different from Asokan script, if not post-Mauryan.

⁴ Using this and other pieces of evidence it is argued elsewhere (Subbarayalu 2008) that the primary purpose of these label inscriptions are to indicate the name of the owner of the concerned pot or vessel.

⁵ This characteristic feature of Tamil names is clear from the names found in medieval inscriptions. Noboru Karashima, et.al., *A Concordance of the Names in the Cola Inscriptions*, Madurai, 1978.

⁶ The number following plus sign gives the count of column 3.

⁷ Another similar instance is found in a cave inscription (Mahadevan 2003: no. 24, p. 351), which gives the word *utayana-sa*, "of Utayan".

⁸ Mahadevan (1973) took this as one name deriving it from Deva-tatta. More likely it stands for two names, Tevvai and Tattai.

⁹These names are taken from Inscription nos. 1 to 67 in Mahadevan, 2003. However, a few of these names are a little different in forms from those given in Mahadevan, due to difference in the splitting of the segments and also due to different readings in a few cases adopted by me. A few names with ambiguous reading have been omitted.

¹⁰ There is, however, one doubtful word read as *iva-kunram* (Mahadevan 2003: p. 403) and translated as elephant hill taking *iva* as a variant of the Prakrit *iha*. This word, however, can more appropriately be read as iv-*kunram* meaning "this hill". If so, this is not a loan word from Prakrit.

¹¹ Cāttāñ and Kāññāñ which occur early in pottery inscriptions are attested to in cave inscriptions at a later stage.

¹²There are certainly three widely occurring honorifics or titles of Tamil origin, namely *vē/a*, *barata*, *parumaka*. In spite of good grounds to hold these terms as of Tamil origin, Paranavitana (1970: p. xxiii-xxv, lxxii-lxxiv, civ-cv) would not accept the idea. He made a

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long and circuitous argument to prove them as of Prakrit origin. It has also been reported that there are some inscriptions on pottery obtained from some sites in Jaffna like Mannitalai, Paramankiray, and Vettukkadu in the Poonagari area and at Kantarodai, which are written in Tamil-Brahmi script (Mahadevan 1994), implying that they are in Tamil. At the same time there are some Prakrit inscriptions too from the same sites (Indrapala 2005, p. 320-22). This may suggest that a linguistic situation comparable to that of Tamilnadu existed in Jaffna region too. The exact proportion of the Tamil and Prakrit names in these sites and most plausibly in other major Buddhist sites like Anuradhapura and Tissamaharama can be decided only if an exhaustive and dispassionate study of the pottery inscriptions is undertaken. It is also necessary to sift evidence from them that would provide clues to some language that preceded both the Prakrit and Tamil languages.

¹³This equation is found in an inscription datable to circa 1150 CE at Budumuttawa in Sri Lanka (*Avanam*, 9, p. 39). Another inscription of about the 13th century from Avur in Tiruvannamalai District refers to the merchants as belonging to the *vai(s)rāvanya jati* or caste (*South Indian Inscriptions*, XII, no. 231). The name therefore need not just imply the prevalence of Yaksha cult, as suggested by Mahadevan (1996B: pp. 295-96).

¹⁴Incidentally, the four Tamil-Brahmi pottery inscriptions (nos. 267-270) found in two Egyptian port-sites, Qesir al-Qadim and Berenike, also support the role of merchants, in this case the Tamil merchants (cātañ, kañañ, pañai ori, korpuñāñ), in carrying their writing to distant lands.

¹⁵The non-mention of the term *sangha* in the cave inscriptions is a clinching evidence for excluding the Buddhists from the cave inscriptions. On the other hand, that term is prominently mentioned in Sri Lankan Brahmi inscriptions, which are specially devoted to the Buddhist religious community.

¹⁶The same trend is found in the evolution of the Sri Lankan Brahmi and that of the post-Asokan northern Brahmi too. Because of this limited palaeographical change, there is no unanimity of opinion in giving even approximate dates to the Brahmi writings in Barhut, Sanchi, and other such Buddhist sites. The slow development of north Indian Brahmi is clearly seen in the palaeographical Tables V and VI given in Dani, *Indian Palaeography*, 1986.

¹⁷A good summary of the latest knowledge on this may be found in Kamil Zvelebil, *Tamil Literature*, 1975.

¹⁸ Nilakanta Sastri (1932) has clearly established the authenticity of this colophon tradition with reference to the historical account of Karikala, the most famous Chola king spoken of frequently in the early literature.

¹⁹ If the same name is taken by two different persons, its frequency is considered as two. On the other hand, if the same person is repeatedly found in different contexts, his name is counted only once. For this list, the main sources are S. Vaiyapuri Pillai (ed.), *Canka Ilakkiyam*, Madras, 1967 and the Index in *Pāṭṭum Tokaiyum*, S. Rajam, Chennai, 1958.

²⁰Some *gotra* names are already recognized in Vaiyapuri Pillai 1967. Several other names can be identified using the *Gotra-pravara-manjari* of Purushottama-pandita (John Brough, *The Early Brahmanical System of Gotra and Pravara*, 1953).

Dating of Sangam Age: Important Numismatic Findings

R. KRISHNAMURTHY

In the year 1894, the great Tamil scholar Dr.U.V.Swaminatha Iyer, published the Sangam Age classic *Puranāñūru*. In his autobiography, he has observed that *Puranāñūru* has enough information for understanding different aspects of ancient history of Tamil Nadu.¹ Names of several unknown kings belonging to Chera, Chola and Pandya kingdoms belonging to the early centuries of the Christian era, referred to as the Sangam Age now, came to light. Historians raised doubts about the authenticity of the names of the kings mentioned in *Puranāñūru* since there was no sufficient evidence at that time to authenticate the veracity of the information found in *Puranāñūru*.

After nearly hundred years, in the year 1984, I had the good fortune to buy a few ancient copper coins from Mr. Mohamed Ismail, of Munichalai Road, Madurai. He used to buy ancient coins, that surface on the Vaigai river dry bed after annual floods.

SANGAM AGE PANDYA COINS

Out of the several coins I bought, one seemed to me different. The coin has a good coating of patina. On the obverse I could see a horse standing, facing left. Above the horse there is a legend in Tamil-Brahmi script which can be read as *Peruvuluthi*. On the reverse of the coin we could see a stylised fish symbol. I read a paper describing this coin at the conference of the Numismatic Society of India, held at Varanasi in 1984 and the article has appeared in the Societies journal published in 1985.²

Peruvuluthi coin of the Pandyas



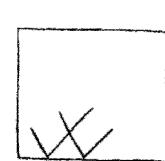
Obverse



Reverse



Eye copy

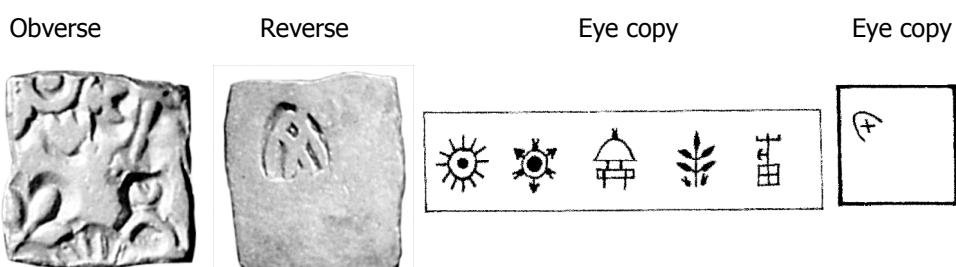


Eye copy

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In *Puranāñjūru*, we find the names of several *Peruvallathi* kings belonging to the Pandya dynasty. With this discovery, I came to the conclusion that the coins having the stylised fish symbol on the reverse belong to Sangam age Pandyas. In all the coins of the well known 'Bodinayakanur hoard' of silver punch marked coins, there is a solitary mark, stylised fish symbol on the reverse. Before the discovery of *Peruvalluthi* coin with stylised fish symbol on the reverse, the coins of the Bodinayakanur hoard were considered to be late Mauryan issues.³ But, I consider these coins are unique and they do not belong to the Karshapana standard and were issued by the Pandya kings of third or second century B.C. So far no silver punch marked coins issued by Sangam period Cheras or Cholas are found.

Silver Punch Marked Coin of the Pandyas



These two important discoveries indicate that the Sangam literature may belong to 3rd or 2nd century B.C. and the names mentioned in *Puranāñjūru* are not fictitious.

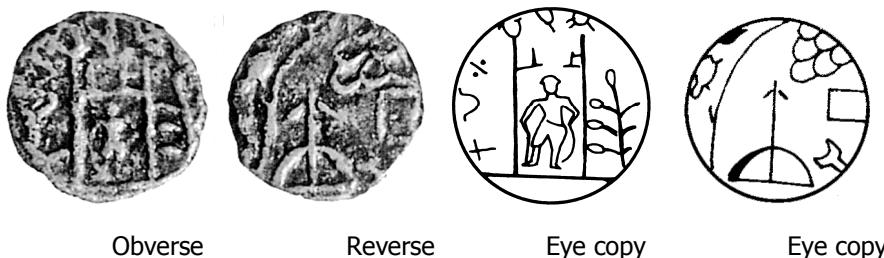
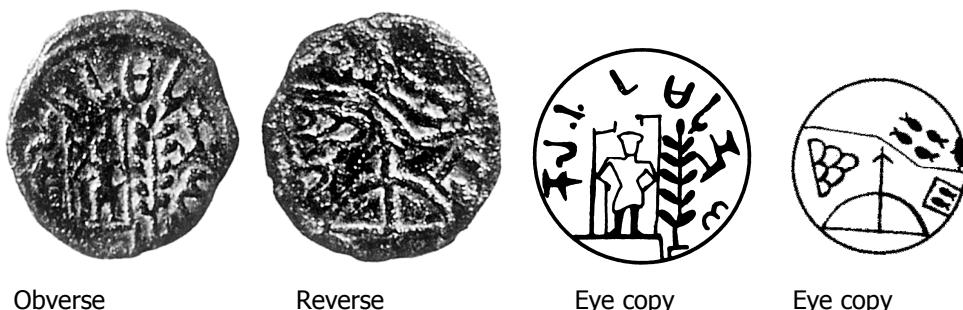
SANGAM AGE CHERA COINS

Next to the Pandyas, Sangam Age Cheras have issued several coin types and most of the coins have come from the Amaravathi river bed, Karur. Karur was the capital of the Sangam period Cheras. Cheras had trade contacts with Greeks and Romans from ancient times. The port of export and import of goods in ancient times was Muziris located on the west coast of South India.

A few coins issued by the Cheras have Roman influence. Let us take for our study the circular copper coins issued by *Kollip-purai* and *Kol-irum-puraiy* Kings.

On the obverse of *Kollip-purai* coin we see a warrior standing in front of a decorated gate; in his right arm, a sword with its point, planted on the ground; his left arm rests on his hip with a shield resting on the ground; he wears a cap; the dress worn by the warrior clearly shows Roman influence; there is a tree-in-railing on the right end, next to the gate; around the rim of the coin a legend, *Ko-l-i-p-purai*, in Tamil-Brahmi characters. On the reverse, we see bow and an arrow and other symbols.

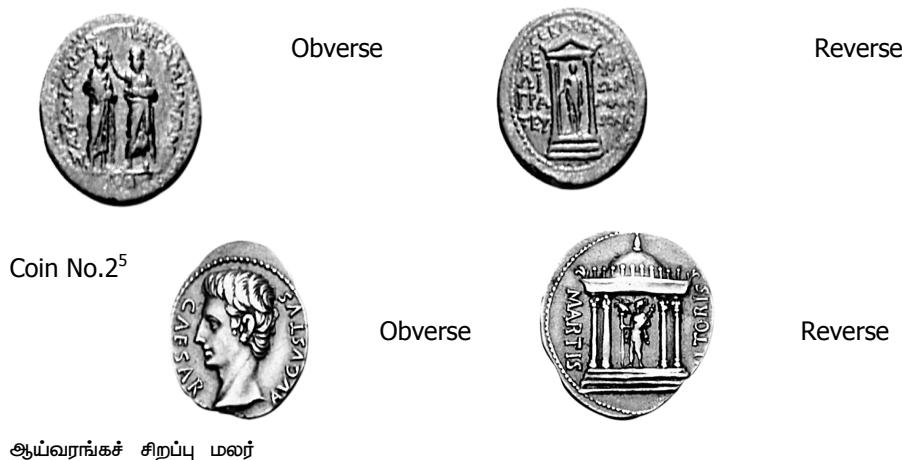
Similarly, if we take into consideration *Kol-irum-puraiy* coin, we see on the obverse a warrior standing in front of a decorated gate; in his right arm, a sword; his left arm rests on his hip; he wears a cap; Like the earlier coin, the dress worn by the warrior in this coin clearly shows Roman influence; along the periphery, there is a legend in Tamil-Brahmi script, reading left to right, *Ko-l-i-ru-m-pu-rai-y*. On the reverse bow and arrow symbol along with other symbols.

Kollip-purai coin of the Cheras*Kol-irum-puraiy coin of the Cheras.*

The obverse of the two coins described above with a warrior standing in front of a decorated gate is similar to the coins issued by Emperor Augustus and some of his successors.

Coin No.14

The coin described below is a copper coin minted at Pergamum (modern Turkey). The reverse of the coin is having a statue of Augustus, standing and holding a scepter, within a di-style (two pillared) temple facade. Issued by Emperor Augustus during his rule 27 B.C. - AD 14.



The above coin is a silver coin issued by Emperor Augustus, minted at a Spanish mint. On the obverse we see a portrait of Augustus facing left and on the reverse a statue of Mars, holding aquila (an eagle) standing left within a tetra-style (four pilastered) temple, with an ornate domed roof. Struck around circa 19 - 18 B.C.

Coin No.3⁶

Obverse



Reverse

The coin described above is a bronze coin, and minted at Pergamum. On the obverse we see the bust of Livia and Tiberius. On the reverse we see the statue of Divus Augustus, holding a scepter within a tetra-style temple. It was struck between AD 29-35.

Coin No.4⁷

Obverse



Reverse

The coin described above is a copper coin minted at Corinth. On the obverse laureate head of Nero facing left. On the reverse we see Emperor Nero standing within a tetra-style temple. The coin was minted, between AD 54 - 68.

Coin No.5⁸

Obverse



Reverse

The above coin was issued by Emperor Hadrian. It is a silver coin minted at Nicomedia (modern Turkey) struck after AD 128. On the obverse we see laureate and draped bust of emperor Hadrian facing right. On the reverse we see a tetrastyle temple set on a podium. Within the temple we see Hadrian standing right holding a scepter.

On the reverse of the coins issued by the Roman Emperors, Augustus, Tiberius, Nero and Hadrian, ranging from 27 B.C. to A.D., 128, we see two pillared or four pillared temple with a standing figure. On the most of them they have portrayed the figure of the Emperor. The Chera kings *Kolli-purai* and *Kol-irum-puraiy* appears to have copied the reverse of the Roman coins. Since two pillared building style has been used only by Emperor Augustus, and the reverse of Chera kings are having the same two pillared style, I consider *Kollip-purai* and *Kol-irum-puraiy* coins may belong to first century AD.

In Sangam literature, it is spelt *Poraiyan*, while on the coin legend it is spelt as *Puraiyan*. In Sangam literature we find the name of *Irum-purai* also.

MĀKKŌTAI AND KUṬUVAN KŌTAI COINS

Sangam Age Cheras issued portrait type silver coins also. I discovered the first such coin with the portrait of a Chera king, with a legend in Tamil-Brahmi script, which I read as *Māk-kōtai*. I presented a paper about this historic find at the Oriental Numismatic conference held at Nagpur on 29th October, 1990. Even though I have written that the king is portrayed with clean shaven head, I now consider that the king is wearing a Roman type helmet. The reverse is blank.



Obverse

Out of a few Mākkōtai coins in my collection, one aroused my curiosity. This specimen gave some clue to the source of the metal and approximate date of Mākkōtai coins. A particular coin showed on the obverse four markings, one followed by the other, above the periphery of the circular border. They seemed to be mutilated parts of Roman alphabets. On the reverse we see a thin outline, probably of two standing figures. After careful study I came to the conclusion that this coin was a counter struck coin. The original coin was a silver coin issued by the Emperor Augustus with his portrait on the obverse and on the reverse the figures of Gaius and Lucius, his grandsons. A detailed article about this study is published in the journal, Studies in South Indian Coins, Vol.VIII, 1998, pp.35-39.

Quite possibly the coin of Augustus was heated and the dotted border on it was cut

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when the coin was hot and then placed on an anvil with obverse facing up. Using a die having the portrait of Mākkōtai, the Augustus coin may have been counter-struck, creating a new portrait on the obverse. Normally, during such process, if the original coin was sufficiently hot and the force applied during striking was sufficient, the features on the original coin are bound to get flattened completely and the portrait and legend in the new die are automatically transferred to the original coin. However, if the original coin is not sufficiently hot or the force applied is not sufficient or uniform throughout the surface of the coin, some portion of the portrait or legend is likely to remain on the counter-struck coin.

The coin under discussion is one such specimen since a few letters of the legend on the obverse of the original coin are visible, partially in this coin. Out of two dies usually used in counter striking, one probably had the portrait of Mākkōtai with the legend to strike on the obverse and the other was obviously blank to strike on the reverse. The blank die had flattened the reverse of the Augustus coin, though we notice this outline of standing figures, probably of Gaius and Lucius mentioned earlier.

During the early part of India's trade with Roman Empire there was considerable demand in the market for Roman silver coins. There was also a distinct preference for two types of coins issued by Augustus and Tiberius. The Roman coin hoards found in southern part of the country confirm this. Consequently one such type of coin of Augustus (Gaius, Lucius type) appear to have been used for counterstriking local coins.

If the reason adduced above are sufficient to substantiate the inferences drawn, we may not be far wrong in considering that Mākkōtai coin discussed above was counter-struck on Gaius and Lucius type of Augustus coin (2 B.C. to A.D., 4). Finally, if the allowance of fifty years gap, between the date of the original coin and the date of counter-struck coin, is considered as sufficient period for this transformation, we may tentatively infer that the king Mākkōtai who issued this coin may have ruled the Chera kingdom during the early half of first century A.D., if not earlier.

Kuṭṭuvan Kōtai Coin



Obverse

A rare silver coin with a portrait of a king and legend in Tamil-Brahmi script was discovered from Amaravathi river bed near Karur and I had the opportunity to study in detail this coin and publish the photograph with my comments in The Hindu, on

22nd May, 1994.

On the obverse we see the portrait of a king with a protruding nose, wearing a Roman type helmet. Above the head is a legend Kutṭuvan-Kötai in Tamil - Brahmi script. Among the Sangam Age coins with Tamil - Brahmi legend on them this coin is the first one with puli or dot in the legend. The reverse is blank.

This coin also shows Roman influence and can be dated to later part of AD 100 or early AD 200.

SANGAM AGE CHERA SILVER COIN WITH A PORTRAIT AND ROMAN TYPE HELMET

This portrait type coin was also discovered from Amaravathi river bed Karur. This coin is highly corroded, but the portrait is clearly visible. This coin is more or less similar to the two Chera silver coins mentioned above.



Obverse



Reverse



Eye copy



Eye copy

On the obverse we see the portrait of a king, facing left, with Roman type helmet. There is no legend above or around the head.

On the reverse we see traces of bow and arrow symbol of the Chera dynasty.

This coin may be earlier to Mäkkötai or Kutṭuvan Kötai coins. It may belong to 1st c.B.C. A detailed article was published by me in *Studies in South Indian Coins*, Vol.XVIII, 2008, pp.43-45.

A GOLD-RING OF ATIAMAN

Atiyamāñ Nedumāñ Añci, the chieftain of Tagadur and the ruler of Kudirai Hills is one of the most illustrious of the chieftains of Sangam Age and the beautiful verses by the great poetess Avvai (*Puranāñūru*, 101) and the poet Parañar (*Puranāñūru*, 99) praising him testify to this fact. Some fifteen years back, an inscription was discovered by the Tamil Nadu State Department of Archaeology on a rock inside a cave, on the hillock in Jambai, a village in South Arcot District, Tamil Nadu. This epigraph in Tamil - Brahmi script, in Tamil language, is read as the abode given by "Atiyā Netumāñ Añci, the Satyaputra". The epigraph throws valuable light on the identification of Satiyaputras (Skt. *Satyaputras*) mentioned in Asokan rock edicts, II and XIII.

In view of this information from Jambai epigraph we are inclined to assume that Atiamāñ ruled a part of Tamil country during Asokan times. Twenty years back I had the good fortune to buy a gold ring from a jewellery merchant of Karur.

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The unbroken top oval portion contains five letters in Tamil - Brahmi script. The legend is in Tamil language and can be read as Ariamāṇ. Late K.G.Krishnan (Former Chief Epigraphist, Archaeological Survey of India) in a personal communication to me has suggested that the only possible restorable reading is Atiyamāṇ since the engraving contains some mistakes. This ring may belong to c 100 B.C. A detailed article about this ring written by me was published in the journal, Studies in South Indian Coins, Vol.VII, 1997, pp.41-45.

INFERENCES

All the evidences provided above indicate that the names mentioned in the Sangam literature are not fictitious and we have material evidences like coins and ring to prove that they are real. The Roman coins are correctly dated and by comparing the Roman coins we are able to fix the period of some of the Sangam Age Chera coins.

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அயல்நாட்டு ஆவண நோக்கு

ப. சண்முகம்

சங்க இலக்கியங்கள் தொன்மையானவை என்று கருதப்பட்டாலும் எந்தக் காலகட்டத்தில் அவை இயற்றப்பட்டன என்பது பற்றிய சர்ச்சை வெகு காலமாகவே அறிஞர்களிடம் நிலவி வந்துள்ளது. மிகத் தொன்மையான காலகட்டத்திலே (கி.மு.600) அவை இயற்றப்பட்டன என அறிஞர்கள் சிலர் கருதினாலும் மிகப் பிந்தைய காலத்திலே (கி.பி.800) ஆக்கப்பட்டன என வாதிப்பவர்களும் உண்டு. இவ்விரண்டு நெடுங்கால நிலைகளையும் ஏற்கவியலாத வரலாற்று ஆய்வாளர்கள் சுமார் கி.பி. 1-3 ஆம் நூற்றாண்டுகளில் சங்க இலக்கியம் இயற்றப்பட்டிருக்கலாம் எனக் கருதுவர். இக்கருதுகோளும் பலரால் ஏற்றுக்கொள்ளப்படுவதில்லை.

பொதுவாக இலக்கியங்களில் அவை இயற்றப்பட்ட காலக்குறிப்பு இருப்பின் எவ்விதச் சர்ச்சைக்கும் உட்பாடாமல் காலத்தை உறுதிசெய்திட இயலும். இலக்கியங்களின் காலத்தை நிர்ணயம் செய்வதில் அவ் இலக்கியத்தில் குறிப்பிடப்பெறும் மூலச் சான்றுகள் முதல் தரத்தை வகிக்கின்றன. இயற்றிய ஆசிரியரது காலம் அல்லது இலக்கியத்தில் காணப்படும் காலம் பற்றிய செய்திகள் ஆகியவற்றை ஆய்வுசெய்வதனால் அவ்விலக்கியத்தின் காலத்தை வரையரை செய்ய முடியும். அவ்வாறுல்லையெனில் இலக்கியத்தில் தரப்பட்டுள்ள சொற்கள், வரலாற்று நிகழ்வுகள் ஆகியவற்றை ஒப்பீடு செய்தும் காலத்தைக் கணிக்கலாம்.

சங்க இலக்கியத்தில் காணப்பட்ட வரலாற்று நிகழ்வுகளின் பிரதிபலிப்பாக உள்ள சில செய்திகளை ஆய்வுசெய்வதன் மூலம் சங்க இலக்கியங்களின் காலத்தை நிர்ணயிக்கலாம் என்ற கோணத்தில் இவ்வாய்வு அமைந்துள்ளது. அரசியல் சமூகப் பொருளாதார நிகழ்வுகளை மற்ற சான்றுகளுடன், முக்கியமாக தொல்லியல் சான்றுகளுடன் ஒப்பிடுக் காலக் கணிப்பு செய்ய முற்பட்டுள்ளது. சங்க இலக்கியங்களில் கடல் கடந்த அயல் நாட்டு வணிகம் மிகச் சிறப்பாகச் சொல்லப்பட்டுள்ளது. முக்கியமாக உரோமானிய நாட்டுடனான வணிக உறவுகள் பற்றிய செய்திகள் உள்ளன. உரோம நாட்டுக் கப்பல்கள் துறைமுகங்களில் நிறுத்தப் பட்டதையும், உரோம நாட்டு ஒதிம விளக்குகள் பற்றியும் சங்க இலக்கியங்களில் பல குறிப்புகள் உள்ளன. உரோமானியர்கள் பொன் கொண்டு வந்து மினகு பெற்றுச் சென்றது பற்றியும் இவ்விலக்கியங்களில் குறிப்புகள் உள்ளன. தமிழ்நாடு மற்றும் கேரளப் பகுதியில் செயல்பட்டுவேந்த துறைமுகங்கள் பலவும் இவ்விலக்கியங்களில் விவரிக்கப்பட்டுள்ளன. காவிரிப்பூம்பட்டினத்தில் உரோமானியர் இருக்கக இருந்ததற்கான குறிப்புகள் அவ் இலக்கியங்களில்

ஆய்வுரங்கச் சிறப்பு மற்றும் விவரிக்கப்பட்டுள்ளன.

உள்ளன. மேற்குக் கடற்கரைத் துறைமுகமான முசிறி பற்றியும் இவ் லெக்கியங்கள் தக்க சான்று தருகின்றன. தென்கிழக்கு ஆசிய நாடுகளுடன் ஏற்பட்ட வணிகத்தின் தாக்கமும் இவ்விலக்கியங்களில் மிகக் குறைவாகவே சொல்லப் பட்டுள்ளன.

மிகத் தொன்மையான காலமுதலே தமிழ் மக்கள் கடல் கடந்து வணிகம் செய்துள்ளனர். இவ்வணிகம் தோன்றிய காலகட்டத்தை அறுதியிட்டுச் சொல்வதற்கான தெளிவான சான்றுகள் கிடைத்தில. ஆயினும் கி.பி. முதல் நூற்றாண்டளவில் கடல் வாணிகத்தில் தமிழர்கள் ஈடுபட்டிருந்தனர் என்பதற்கு உறுதியான சான்றுகள் பல கிடைத்துள்ளன. தமிழர்கள் கிழக்கில், வங்காள விரிகுடாவைக் கடந்து சென்று தென் கிழக்கு ஆசிய நாடுகளுடன் வணிகம் மேற்கொண்டிருந்தனர். இலங்கையடினும் அவர்கள் கடல் வழி வணிகம் நடத்தியுள்ளனர். மேலைக் கடல் கடந்து சொங்கடல், மத்திய தரைக் கடல் நாடுகளுடனும் அவர்கள் வணிகம் மேற்கொண்டிருந்தனர். இப்பகுதிகளிலெல்லாம் தமிழ் வணிகர்கள் சென்றுவந்ததற்கான தடயங்கள் பல கிடையுள்ளன.

கிரேக்க-உரோமானிய நாடுகளுடன் வணிகம்

உரோமானியப் பேரரசு நாடுகளுடன் ஏற்பட்ட வணிக நடவடிக்கைகளைப் பற்றி மிக நன்கு அறியத்தக்க பல விவரங்கள் அயல் நாடுகளில் கிடையுள்ளன. இவற்றில் **உரோமானியக் கடலோடிகள்** எழுதிய லெக்கியங்கள் வாயிலாகத் தரப்பட்ட தகவல்களை மிகச் சிறப்பானவையாகக் கருதலாம். இவற்றுள் இயற்கை வரலாறு (Natural History), மற்றும் செங்கடல் பயண விவரம் (Periplus of the Erythraean Sea) ஆகிய இவ்விரண்டு பயண லெக்கியங்கள் உத்தேசமாக கி.பி. 75 இல் எழுதப்பட்டன என்று அனைவரும் ஏற்றுக்கொண்ட செய்தியாகும். இவற்றில் தமிழக, கேரளப் பகுதித் துறைமுகங்கள் பற்றிய பல செய்திகள் உள்ளன. முக்கியமாக மேற்குக் கடற்கரையில் அமைந்த சேர்களுடைய (Caelobothras) முசிறி துறைமுகம் பற்றிய விவரங்கள் பலவற்றை இயற்கை வரலாறு எழுதிய பிளினி தருகிறார்.1

செங்கடல் பயண விவரம் நூலை எழுதிய ஆசிரியர் யாரென அறிய இயலவில்லை. இந் நூல் மேற்குக் கடற்கரையில் அமைந்த நவுரா (கண்ணூர்), தொண்டி (பொன்னானி), முசிறி (பட்டணம்?), நெல்சிந்தா (கோட்டயம்?) ஆகிய துறைமுகங்களைக் குறிக்கின்றது. மேற்குக் கடல் பகுதியின் முதன்மைத் துறைமுகமாக விளங்கியது முசிறி. இந்நகரின் அமைவிடம் பற்றிய சர்ச்சை இருந்தபோதிலும், தற்காலத்தில் பட்டணம் என்ற ஊர் முசிறி ஆக இருக்கலாம் என அகழாய்வுகள் தெரிவிக்கின்றன. தமிழகத்தின் கிழக்குக் கடற் கரையில் அமைந்த குமரி (Comarai-கன்னியாகுமரி), கொல்சி (Colchi, கொற்கை), கமரா (Camarra -காவிரிப்பூம்படினம்), பொதுக (P o d u c a -புதுச்சேரி), சோபத்மா (Sopatma -மரக்காணம்) போன்ற துறைமுக நகரங்களையும் குறிக்கிறது. இத்துறைமுகங்கள் மூலம் ஏற்றுமதி செய்யப்பட்ட பொருள்களில் முக்கியமானவை மிளகு, முத்துக்கள், தந்தம் ஆகியன.2 எனவே இத்துறைமுகங்கள் யாவும் கி.பி.

முதல் நூற்றாண்டளவில் செயல் பாட்டில் இருந்துள்ளன எனக் கருதுவதில் தவறில்லை.

வியன்னா அரூங்காட்சியகச் சாலையில் உள்ள பாபிரஸ் பத்திரம், முசிறித் துறைமுகத்தின் முக்கியத்துவத்தையும், அக்காலத்தில் வணிகர்களிடையே நிலவிய வணிக ஓப்பந்தம் மற்றும் கடல்வாணிக முறைகளை ஓரளவு தெளிவாக்குகிறது.³ இப்பத்திரம் கி.பி. இரண்டாம் நூற்றாண்டின் இடைப்பகுதியில் கிரேக்க மொழியில் எழுதப்பட்டது. முசிறி துறைமுகத்திலிருந்து பொருள்களை அலைக்சாண்டிரியத் துறைமுகம் வரை எடுத்துச் செல்வதற்காக இரு வணிகர்களிடையே ஏற்பட்ட ஓப்பந்தம் பதிவாக்கப்பட்டுள்ளது. முசிறியிலிருந்து எடுத்துச் செல்லவேண்டிய பொருள்களின் படியலுடன், அப்பொருள்கள் மீது துறைமுகங்களில் செலுத்தவேண்டிய சுங்கத்தீர்வைகள், போன்றவைகள் மிக விவரமாகச் சொல்லப்பட்டுள்ளன. தந்தம், துணி மூட்டைகள் ஆகிய பொருள்கள் எடுத்துச் செல்லப்படவேண்டுமென்று இவ்வொப்பந்தத்தில் உள்ளது. இவற்றோடு கங்கைப்பகுதியில் கிடைக்கும் பொருள்களையும் (Gangetic nard) எடுத்துச் செல்லவேண்டும். இப்பொருள் எதுவெனத் தெளிவாக விளங்கவில்லை. இரண்டு வணிகர்களில் ஒருவர் முசிறி வணிகராக இருக்கலாமென்று கருதப்பட்டுள்ளது. இப்பத்திரத்தில் சில பகுதிகள் பின்னமடைந்துள்ளதால் அவ்வணிகரது பெயர் மற்ற விவரங்கள் சரியாகத் தெரியவில்லை. மேற்குக் கடற்கரையில் அமைந்துள்ள முசிறித் துறைமுகத்தில் இலக்கியங்களில் சொல்லப்பட்ட வணிக நடவடிக்கைகள் சிலவற்றுக்கு இப்பத்திரம் தக்க சான்று பகர்கின்றது.

அக்காலகட்டத்தில் மத்தியத் தரைக்கடல் பகுதிகளில் உள்ள கடல் வணிகர்கள் தென் இந்தியாவுடன் தொடர்புகொள்ளுவதற்கு சௌகடல் (Red sea) மற்றும் அராபியக் கடல் பகுதிகளைக் கடந்து வந்தனர். மேலும், சௌகடல் பகுதிகளிலிருந்து எகிப்தியப் பகுதிகளைத் தரைவழியே கடந்து சென்று மத்தியத் தரைக் கடலை அடைந்து தம் நாடுகளுக்குச் சென்றார்கள். இவ்வணிகத்தில் கிரேக்க, அராபிய வணிகர்களோடு தென்னிந்திய வணிகர்கள், முக்கியமாக தமிழ்நாட்டு வணிகர்கள் பலரும் ஈடுபடுள்ளது அண்மையில் தெரியவற்றுள்ளது. முக்கியமாகச் சௌகடல் பகுதியில் அமைந்த பழந்துறைமுகங்கள் சிலவற்றை அகழாய்வு செய்தபோது, தமிழ் வணிகர்களின் பெயர் பொறித்த பானைச் சில்லுகள் கிடைத்தன. இவை யாவும் கி.பி. முதல் நூற்றாண்டளவிலான பாள நிலைகளில் கண்ணடைக்கப்பட்டுள்ளன என அவ்வகழாய்வுகளைச் செய்தவர்கள் குறிப்பிட்டு உள்ளனர். அக்காலத் தமிழ்பிராமி எழுத்துப் பொறிப்புடன் இப் பானைச் சில்லுகள் உள்ளன. இவை அக்காலத் தமிழ் பிராமியின் சிறப்பான வரிவடிவ எழுத்துக்களில் ஒன்றான “ஞ” எழுத்தைப் பெற்றுள்ளது என்பது முக்கியமாகக் கருதப்படவேண்டிய ஒன்று.

குசேர் அல் கதிம் (Quseir el Qadim) என்ற இடத்தில் மூன்று பானைச் சில்லுகள் கிடைத்தன. இவற்றில் ஒன்றில் சாதன் என்றும், மற்றொன்றில் கணன் என்றும் பொறிப்புகள் உள்ளன.⁴ மூன்றாவதாக உள்ள ஒரு பானையில் பண ஒரி என்று இரண்டு இடங்களில் எழுதப்பட்டுள்ளது.⁵ சாதன் என்பது வணிகர்கள்

ஆய்வரங்கச் சிறப்பு மலர்

கூட்டுக்கொள்ளும் ஆள் பெயராகும். அக்காலத்தில் வணிகர்கள் வியாபாரத்திற்காகக் கூட்டம் கூட்டமாக அல்லது குழுக்களாகச் செல்வர். இக்கூட்டம் அல்லது குழவை சாத்து என வழங்கினர். எனவே சாதன் எனப்பட்ட பெயர், சாத்து எனப்பட்ட வணிகக் கூட்டத்தின் பெயரடியாகக் கூட இருக்கலாம். பனை ஒறி என்பது ஆள்பெயராக இருக்கலாம். ஜராவதம் மகாதேவன் ஆள் பெயராகக் கருதாமல், பானையின் பயன்பாட்டை ஒட்டி இடப்பட்ட பெயராகக் (உறி) கருதுகிறார். ஆயினும் சங்ககால இலக்கியங்களில் பனையோன், ஒறி (ஒரி) என்பவைகள் ஆள்பெயர்களாகவே வந்துள்ளது இங்கு குறிப்பிடப் படவேண்டும். பெரனிகை (Bernike) யில் கண்டெடுக்கப்பட்ட பானைச் சில்லு ஒன்றில் கொறபுமான் என்ற பெயர் உள்ளது. இப்பானைச் சில்லு உத்தேசமாக கி.பி. 60-70 ஆண்டுகளைச் சார்ந்ததாக அகழாய்வாளர்கள் கருதுகின்றனர். 6 இப்பானைகள் யாவும் தமிழகத்தில் செய்யப்பட்டவை என்பதும், அவற்றில் உள்ள பொறிப்புகளில் தமிழ் வணிகர்களின் பெயர்களே உள்ளன என்பதால் இவர்கள் யாவரும் தமிழ் நாட்டைச் சார்ந்தவர்கள் என்பது உறுதி செய்யப்பட்டதாகக் கருதலாம். எனவே மேலை நாடுகளுடனான வணிக நடவடிக்கைகள் கி.பி. முதல் நாற்றாண்டளவில் துவங்கின என்ற கருத்து தெளிவாகிறது.

தமிழ்நாடு, கேரளா பகுதிகளில் நடைபெற்ற அகழாய்வுகள் பலவற்றிலும் உரோமானியர்கள் பயன்படுத்திய பலபொருள்கள் கண்டெடுக்கப்பட்டுள்ளன. 7 முக்கியமாக அரிக்கமேடு (புதுச்சேரி), கரூர், கொடுமணை, காவிரிப்பூம்பட்டினம், அழகன்குளம் ஆகிய இடங்களில் இவை காணப்பட்டன. மன்ன குடுவைகள் (Arretine ware), மதுச்சாஷகள் (Amphorae), கண்ணாடிக் குவனைகள் ஆகியன இப்பொருள்களாவன. உரோமானிய அரசர்களால் வெளியிடப்பெற்ற பொன், வெள்ளி மற்றும் செம்பு நாணயங்கள் தமிழகம், கேரளா பகுதிகளில் எடுக்கப்பட்டுள்ளன. இவற்றில் மிகத் தொன்மையான காசுகளாக உரோமானியக் குடியரசு வெளியிட்ட காசுகளைக் கருதலாம். இக்காசுகள் கி.மு. முதல் நாற்றாண்டளவில் வெளியிடப்பெற்றன. இவைகள் வெள்ளிக் காசுகள். தமிழகத்தில், தருமபுரி, திருப்பூர், கல்லக்கிணர் ஆகிய ஊர்களில் இக்காசுகள் கிடைத்துள்ளன. 8 தமிழ்நாட்டில் முக்கியமாக, வெள்ளலூர், கரூர், உத்தமபாளையம் ஆகிய இடங்களிலும், கேரளத்தில் எய்யல், கோட்டயம், வாஞ்சவல் ஆகிய இடங்களிலும் கண்டெடுக்கப்பட்டுள்ளன. உரோமானியப் பேரரசு வெளியிட்ட தங்கம், வெள்ளிக் காசுகளும் பலவிடங்களில் கிடைத்துள்ளன. பிற்கால உரோமானிய அரசர்கள் வெளியிட்ட செப்புக் காசுகள் முக்கியமாக மதுரையில், வைகை ஆற்றுப்படிவுகளிலும், அழகன்குளம் அகழாய்வுகளில் இரண்டு காசுகளும் கண்டெடுக்கப்பட்டுள்ளன. இவை தவிற மத்திய தறைக் கடல் பகுதி, செங்கடல் பகுதிகளில் அமைந்த நாடுகள் வெளியிட்ட காசுகள் பலவும் கரூர், அமராவதி ஆற்றுப் படுகையில் கண்டெடுக்கப்பட்டுள்ளன. கிரேக்கம் (கி.மு. 338), திரேஸ் (கி.மு. 350), கிரேட் தீவு (கி.மு. 200-67), நெச்சாலி (கி.மு. 200), ரோட் (கி.மு. 166-88), பொனிசியா (கி.மு. 150) ஆகிய மத்தியதறைக் கடல் நாடுகளின் காசுகள் கிடைத்துள்ளன. பாரசீக வளைகுடாவில் அமைந்துள்ள செலூசிட் (கி.மு. 246-226) நாட்டுக் காசுகளும் கிடைத்துள்ளன.

மேலே குறிப்பிட்ட தொல்லியல் பொருள்கள் யாவும் அக்காலத் தமிழகம், கேரளப் பகுதிகள் கிரேக்கம், உரோம் நாடுகளுடன் ஏற்பட்ட வங்குக்கமான வணிக உறவுகளை உறுதி செய்யும் முக்கியச் சான்றுகளாவன. இவ்வணிக உறவுகள் கி.மு. முதல் நூற்றாண்டு அளவில் துவங்கின என்று இச்சான்றுகளின் அடிப்படையில் உறுதியாகக் கூற இயலும். செழிப்பான இவ்வணிக உறவுகள் கி.பி. 5 ஆம் நூற்றாண்டு வரை நிலவின. உரோம நாட்டு வணிகம் மிகச் சிறப்பாக சங்க இலக்கியத்தில் சொல்லப்பட்டுள்ளது. உரோம நாட்டுக் கப்பல்கள் துறைமுகங்களில் நிறுத்தப்பட்டதையும், உரோமநாட்டு ஒதிம விளக்குகள் பற்றியும் சங்க இலக்கியங்களில் பலவிடத்தும் குறிப்புகள் உள்ளன. உரோமானியர்கள் பொன் கொண்டுவந்து மினகு பெற்றுச்சென்றதைப் பற்றியும் இவ்விலக்கியங்களில் குறிப்புகள் உள்ளன. தமிழ்நாட்டு மற்றும் கேரளப் பகுதியில் செயல் பட்டு வந்த துறைமுகங்களில் காவிரிப்பூம்பட்டினாம், கொந்தை, முசிறி ஆகியவற்றின் சிறப்பான செயல்பாடுகள் பற்றிய விவரங்கள் உள்ளன. காவிரிப்பூம்பட்டினத்தில் உரோமானியர் இருக்கக இருந்ததற்கான குறிப்புகளும் உள்ளன. எனவே இந்தவடிக்கைகளை விவரிக்கும் சங்க இலக்கியமும் அக்காலகட்டத்தில்தான் இயற்றப்பட்டிருக்கவேண்டும் என்பது இதன்மூலம் நன்கு அறியலாம்.

தென்கிழக்கு ஆசிய நாடுகளுடன் வணிகம்

தென்கிழக்கு ஆசிய நாடுகளுடன் தென்னிந்தியா பன்னெடுங் காலமாகவே வணிகத் தொடர்புகளை மேற்கொண்டுள்ளது. இத்தொடர்புகள் ஏற்குறைய கி.மு.500 ஆண்டிலிருந்து நலவியதாகத் தற்கால ஆய்வுகள் குறிக்கின்றன. இருந்தபோதிலும் தமிழகத்துடனான தொடர்புகளை அறிந்துகொள்வதற்கான தொல்லியல் சான்றுகள் கிறிஸ்து சகாப்தத்தின் ஆரம்ப காலங்களிலிருந்து கிடைக்கின்றன. இத்தொல்லியல் பொருள்கள் பலவும் அண்மைக் காலங்களில் கண்டெடுக்கப்பட்டவையாகும். தாய்லாந்தின் தெற்குப்பகுதியில் அமைந்த பழும் துறைமுக நகரமான குவான் இக் பத் (Kuan Luk Pat) கிளாஸ் தோம் ஆற்றின் கரையில் அமைந்துள்ளது. இவ் ஆற்றின் ஒரு கரையில் அமைந்துள்ள தொன்மையான மேட்டை அப்பகுதி மக்கள் மணி மேடு (Bead moudai) என்று அழைக்கின்றனர். இம்மேட்டை அகழாய்வு செய்ததில் கி.மு. முதல் நூற்றாண்டைச் சார்ந்த மணி அடுக்கில் தமிழகப் பொன்வணிகர் ஒருவர் பயன் படுத்திய பொன் உரைகல் கிடைத்துள்ளது. இவ் உரைகல் அங்குள்ள வாட்கிளாஸ் தோம் (Bead moudai) எனப்பட்ட கோவில் அருங் காட்சியகத்தில் உள்ளது. இவ்வரைகல்லின் ஒருபக்கம் வழவழப்பாக உள்ளது. மறுபுறத்தில் பெரும் பதன் கல் என்ற இரு வரிப் பெயர் பொறப்பு உள்ளது. தமிழ் பிராபி எழுத்து வழவில் உள்ள இவ்வரைகல் கி.பி.முதல் நூற்றாண்டைச் சார்ந்தது. பெரும் பதன் என்ற பொன் வணிகரைச் சேர்ந்தது இவ்வரைகல். பதன் என்ற பின்னொட்டு பத்தர் எனப்படும் பொற்கொல்லர்களைக் குறித்தது. 9

இவ்வரைகல் தமிழ்நாட்டுப் பொன் வணிகரைச் சார்ந்தது என்று கருதுவதற்குச் சான்றுகள் உள்ளன. முக்கியமாக சங்க இலக்கியத்தில் பொன் வணிகர்கள் சொல்லப்பட்டுள்ளனர். பொன் அணிகலன்கள் சங்க இலக்கியங்களில்

ஆய்வரங்கச் சிறப்பு மலர்

குறிப்பிடப்பட்டுள்ளன.10 சங்க காலத்தில் பண்டமாற்றுப் பொருளாகப் பொன்னும் பயன்படுத்தப்பட்டுள்ளது.11 மதுரைக் காஞ்சியில் பொன் வணிகர்கள் குறிப்பிடப்பெற்றுள்ளனர்.12 கி.பி. முதல் நூற்றாண்டில் வெட்டப்பட்டது எனக் கருதப்படும் புகளூர் தமிழ் பிராமிக் கல்வெட்டுக்களில் கருவூர்ப் பொன் வணிகர் ஒருவர் குறிப்பிடப் பெறுகிறார்.13

தாய்-பிரான்ஸ் நாட்டு அகழாய்வாளர்கள் பு கொ தாங் (Phup Khao Thong) என்ற இடத்தில், கி.பி. 2ஆம் நூற்றாண்டைச் சார்ந்தாகக் கருதப்படும் ஒரு பானைச் சில்லை அகழாய்வில் கண்டெடுத்துள்ளனர். இச்சில்லில் மூன்று எழுத்துக்கள் உள்ளன. இவ் எழுத்துக்களில் "ந" தமிழ் பிராமி வரிவடிவத்தில் உள்ளதெனக் கருதியுள்ளனர். இவ் எழுத்துக்களைத் துறவோ என வாசித்துள்ளனர். இத்தன்னுப் பானைச்சில்லில் உள்ள எழுத்துக்கள் தமிழ் பிராமி வரிவடிவம் என்பது உறுதி செய்யப்படுமானால் இவ் எழுத்துக்கள் ஓர் ஆளிபயரின் பகுதியாக இருக்க வாய்ப்புண்டு. துறவியின் பெயரென்று ஜராவதம் மகாதேவன் கருதுகிறார். ஆனாலும் தமிழ் வணிகரின் பெயராக இருக்கவும் வாய்ப்புண்டு.

குவான் லுக் பத் தில் கண்டெடுக்கப்பட்ட சங்க காலச் சோழர் நாணயமும் அக்கால வணிகத்தை உறுதிசெய்வதாக உள்ளது. சதுர வடிவிலான இச் செப்புக் காசின் முன் பக்கத்தில் தேரேராடுள்ள குதிரையும், காசின் பின்புறத்தில் சங்க கால சோழ அரசர்களின் இலச்சினையான வாலை உயர்த்திய புலியும் உள்ளது.14 இப்புலிச் சின்னம் தமிழ்நாட்டில் கிடைத்த சோழர் நாணயங்களில் உள்ளது போலுள்ளது. எனவே இந் நாணயம் தமிழ் நாட்டிலிருந்து சென்றது என்பது உறுதி.

தமிழ்நாட்டில் உற்பத்தி செய்யப்பட்ட பொருள்கள் பல தென்கிழக்கு ஆசிய நாடுகளில் காணப்பட்டுள்ளன. அவற்றுள் முக்கியமானதாக சூதுபவளம் (Carnelian) எனப்பட மணிக்கல்லால் ஆன பாசிகள். தென்கிழக்கு ஆசிய நாடுகளில் குவான் லுக் பத் (தாய்லாந்து), புனி (மேற்கு ஜாவா), ஓகயோ (தென் வியத்நாம்) ஆகிய இடங்களில் அகழாய்வுகளில் கண்டெடுத்துள்ளனர். மேலும் தமிழ்நாட்டில் செய்யப்பட்ட கண்ணாடிப் பாசிகள் குவான் லுக் பத் (தாய்லாந்து), கோலா செவிச்சிங் (மலேசியா), ஓகயோ (தென் வியத்நாம்) ஆகிய இடங்களில் கண்டெடுக்கப்பட்டுள்ளன. இவ்வகைக் கண்ணாடிப் பாசிகள் அரிக்கமேட்டில் கி.மு. 3 - கி.பி. 3 ஆம் நூற்றாண்டு கால அளவில் உற்பத்தி செய்யப்பட்டாகக் கருதுகின்றனர். மேலும் தமிழகத்தின் பல இடங்களில் இவ்வகைக் கண்ணாடிப் பாசிகள் உற்பத்தி செய்யப்பட்டன.

இலங்கையுடன் வணிகம்

இலங்கையுடனான கடல் வணிகம் கி.பி. முதல் நூற்றாண்டுக்கு முன்பிருந்து துவங்குகிறது. அங்கு கி.பி. முதல் நூற்றாண்டளவில் தமிழ் வணிகர்கள் இருந்ததற்கான சான்றுகள் அக்கால பிராமிக் கல்வெட்டுகளில் உள்ளன. இப்பிராமிக் கல்வெட்டுக்கள் பிராகிருத மொழியில் உள்ளன என்றாலும் பிராகிருத

மொழிக் கல்வெட்டுக்களில் காணப்படாத பல சொற்கள் அவற்றில் இடம் பெற்றுள்ளன. இக்கல்வெட்டுகளில் உள்ள நவிக, தொட, படகே போன்றவை கடல் பயணங்களில் பயன்படுத்தப்படும் சாதனங்கள்.15 சங்க இலக்கியங்களில் இவை நாவாய், தோணி, படகு என குறிக்கப்பட்டுள்ளதாகக் கருதுகின்றனர். மேலும் இக்கல்வெட்டுக்களில் பருமகன் (பருமக), பருமகள் (பருமகள்), ஜயன் (அய), வேளன் (வேள) போன்ற தமிழ்ச் சொற்களின் பிராகிருதத் திரிபு வடிவங்கள் காணப்படுகின்றன.16

இக்கல்வெட்டுக்களில் தமிழ்நாட்டு மக்கள் தானமாக வழங்கிய செய்திகள் காணப்படு கின்றன. முக்கியமாக அநுராதபுரத்தில் உள்ள ஒரு கல்வெட்டு தமிழ்க்குழமகளை தமேட (Dameda) என்று அழைத்து அவன் அளித்த குகைத் தளத்தைக் குறிப்பிடுகிறது. பெரிய புலியங்களுத்தில் உள்ள இரண்டு கல்வெட்டுகள் விசாகன் எனப்பட்ட தமிழ்நாட்டு (தமேட) வணிகன் அளித்த தானங்களைக் குறிப்பிடுகிறது. குடுவில் என்ற இடத்திலுள்ள மற்றொரு கல்வெட்டும் தமிழ்நாட்டு வணிகன் அளித்த கொடையைக் குறிக்கிறது. இக் கல்வெட்டுக்களில் உள்ள தமேட என்ற சொல் தமிழ் என்பதன் பிராகிருதத் திரிபு ஆகும். இக்கல்வெட்டுகளின் காலம் சுமார் கி.பி. முதல் நூற்றாண்டுக்கு முன்னர் இருக்க வேண்டுமென்று கருதுகின்றனர்.17

தமிழ் பிராமி எழுத்துக் கீற்களைக் கொண்ட பானைச் சில்லுக்கணம் இலங்கையில் கிடைத்துள்ளன. இவை மண்ணித்தலை, வெட்டுக்காடு, பரமன்கிராய், ஈழார், வீரபாண்டியன் முனை ஆகிய இடங்களில் கள ஆய்வுகளில் கிடைத்தன. இக்கீற்களில் ஆள்பெயர்காளே பொறிக்கப்பட்டுள்ளன. குறிப்பாக பரமன்கிராயில் கிடைத்த மண்கலக் கீறவில் உள்ள மூன்று எழுத்துக்களை வேளான் என வாசிக்கின்றனர்.18

சங்ககாலத் தமிழ்நாட்டு அரசுகள் வெளியிடப் காசுகள் பல கிடைத்துள்ளன.19 யாழிப் பாணம், கந்தரோடை, வல்லிபுரம், மாந்தை, அநுராதபுரம் ஆகிய ஊர்களில் இக்காசுகள் கிடைத்தன. இவற்றில் சில சங்க காலப் பாண்டியர், சோழர் வெளியிடப் நாணயங்கள் ஆகும்.20 இக்காசுகளில் சிலவற்றில் தொன்மையான முத்திரைக் காசுகளில் உள்ள குறியீடுகள் உள்ளன. மும்மகடுள்ள குன்றம், வேவியிடப் பரம், மீன்கள் உள்ள தொட்டி ஆகிய உருவங்கள் இக்காசுகளின் ஒரு பக்கத்தில் உள்ளன. மற்றொரு காசில் யானை, மும்மகடுள்ள குன்றம், மற்றும் துண்களுள்ள கோவில் உள்ளன. இவற்றின் பின்பக்கத்தில் கோட்டுருவில் மீன் உள்ளது. தூண்களுள்ள கோவிலை சைத்தியம், அல்லது மண்டபம் எனவும் அடையாளப்படுத்துவர். வட இந்தியாவில் அவுதும்பரர்கள் (Audumbaras) வெளியிடப் காசுகளிலும் இக்கோவில் உருவம் உள்ளது.21 மேலும் சொக்களரா (Sohgaura) என்னுமிடத்தில் கண்ணட்டுக்கப்பட்ட பிராகிருதச் செப்பேட்டிலும் இவ் உருவம் உள்ளது குறிப்பிடத்தக்கது.22 இச்செப்பேட்டின் காலம் கி.மு. 3 ஆம் நூற்றாண்டாகக் கணிக்கப்பட்டுள்ளது. சதுர வடிவில் உள்ள பாண்டியர் காசுகளின் ஒருபக்கத்தில் நின்றவாறுள்ள குதிரையும், மற்றொரு பக்கத்தில் தமிழ்பிராமி எழுத்து வடிவில் ஆய்வரங்கச் சிறப்பு மற்றும் ஆகும்.

பெருவழுதி பெருவழுதி என்றும் உள்ளது. மேலும் இங்கே கிடைத்த சில காசுகளில் புலி உருவும் ஒருபக்கம் உள்ளது. எனவே இக்காசுகளைச் சங்க காலச் சோழர் வெளியிட்டுள்ளனர்.

அண்மைக் காலங்களில் அக்குறுகொட பகுதியில் நாணயங்கள் சில கண்ணடிக்கப்பட்டன. இவை யாவும் வட்ட வடிவான ஈயக் காசுகள். இவற்றில் நான்கு காசுகளில் தமிழ் பிராமி எழுத்துக்களில் ஆள் பெயர்கள் உள்ளன. அவை, உதிரன், மலசாதன், கபதி கடலன், திளை பிட்டன் என்ற பெயர்கள் ஆகும். இவையாவும் அக்காலத் தமிழ் வணிகர்களின் பெயர்கள் ஆவன. இக்காசுகள் யாவும் வணிகத்தின் பொருட்டு வணிகர்கள் விட்டுச்சென்ற காசுகளாகும். எனவே தமிழ்நாட்டு வணிகர்கள் இலங்கையில் இருந்ததை இக்காசுகள் அடையாளம் காட்டுகின்றன.

சங்க இலக்கியக் காலம்

தமிழ்நாட்டில் பிராமி எழுத்துவடிவம் பயன்பாட்டில் இருந்துள்ளது. உத்தேசமாக இவ் வரிவடிவம் வட இந்தியாவில் மௌரியப் பேரரசன் அசோகன் காலத்தில் கல்வெட்டுகளில் (கி.மு. 3 ஆம் நூற்றாண்டு) பயன்படுத்தப்பட்டது. இவன் காலத்துக்கு முன்பே இவ் வரிவடிவம் பயன்பாட்டில் இருந்து என ஊகிப்பதில் தவறேற்றுமில்லை. தமிழகத்தில் இவ்வடிவம் சற்று மாற்றப்பட்டு பயன்படுத்தப்பட்டுள்ளது. இவ்வாறு பயன்படுத்தப்பட்ட காலம் சுமார் முதல் நூற்றாண்டாகக் கருதப்பட்டாலும், கி.மு. 2ஆம் நூற்றாண்டளவிலேயே பயன்பாட்டில் இருந்திருக்க வாய்ப்புள்ளதாகக் கருதுகின்றனர். இவ் எழுத்துமுறை பற்றி சங்க இலக்கியங்களில் ஏதாரு குறிப்பும் இல்லை. ஆயினும் தமிழ் பிராமி எழுத்து வடிவிலான கல்வெட்டுகளும், பாணையோட்டில் எழுதப்பட்ட பொறிப்புகளும் தமிழகத்தில் கிடைத்துள்ளதை மறுக்கவியலாது. இவற்றை கி.பி. முதல் நூற்றாண்டு என்று கருதுவது சரியாகவே இருக்கும்.

எனவே சங்க இலக்கியத்தில் தமிழ்நாட்டில் கடல்கடற்ற வணிகம் நடைபெற்றுள்ளதற்குச் சிறந்த தொல்லியல் சான்றுகள் கிடையுள்ளன. தமிழ் நாட்டிலும், சொங்கடல் பகுதிகளிலும், தென்கிழக்கு ஆசிய நாடுகளிலும், இலங்கையிலும் தமிழ்நாட்டு வணிகர்கள் வணிகத்தில் ஈடுபட்டதற்கான சான்றுகள் கிடைத்துள்ளன. கிரேக்க-உரோமானிய நாட்டு வணிகத்தைப் பற்றி பல செய்திகள் இருந்தபோதும், தென்கிழக்கு ஆசிய நாடுகளுடன் மேற்கொண்ட கடல் வழி வணிகத்தைச் சங்க இலக்கியங்கள் விரிவாகக் குறிப்பிடவில்லை. அவ்வாறே இலங்கையுடனான வணிகத்தைப் பற்றியும் சங்க இலக்கியங்கள் விவரிக்கவில்லை. இக்குறைபாடுகள் உள்ளபோதும், கடல்வழி வணிகம் மிகச் சிறப்பாகச் சங்க இலக்கியங் களில் சொல்லப்பட்டுள்ளது. எனவே இவ்விவரங்களை உள்ளடக்கிய சங்க இலக்கியம் அக்கால அளவில் (உத்தேசமாக கி.பி. 1-கி.பி. 3ஆம் நூற்றாண்டுகள்) இயற்றப்பட்டது எனக் கருதலாம்.

இந்திலையில் மற்றுமொரு முக்கிய கருத்தை நாம் ஆராய வேண்டும். முற்கால

நினைவுகளை உள்ளடக்கிப் பிற்காலத்தில் இலக்கியங்களில் இச்செய்திகள் சேர்க்கப் பயிருக்கலாம் என்ற வாதம் முற்றிலும் தவறானது. கி.பி. எட்டாம் நூற்றாண்டளவில் உரோமானியப் பேரரசின் தன்மையே மாறுபட்டுவிட்டது. கி.பி. 5 ஆம் நூற்றாண்டளவில் இரண்டு பேரரசுகளாகப் பிரிந்து ஒரு பகுதி சைப்பாந்தியப் பேரரசு என்ற பெயரில் ஆடசிமாற்றம் பெறுகிறது. இக்காலகட்டத்தில் உரோமானியப் பொருள்கள் உருவாக்கு வதிலும் மாற்றம் பெற்றுள்ளன. இப்படிப்பட்ட நிலையில் சுமார் 800 ஆண்டுகள் தொன்மை வாய்ந்த நிலைகளை நினைவுறுத்தி, தற்கால நினைவுகளைப் பின்தள்ளி இலக்கியவாதிகள் தம் படைப்புகளைப் படைத்தனர் எனக் கருதுவது சரியாகத் தோன்றவில்லை.

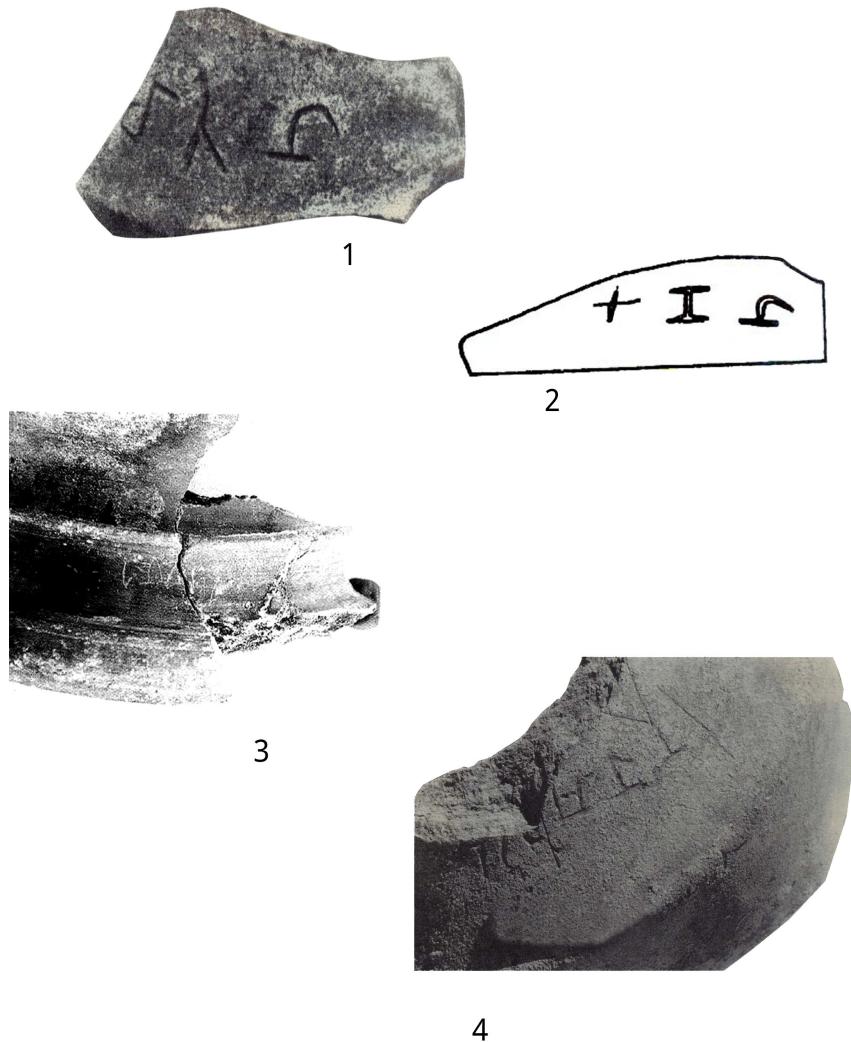
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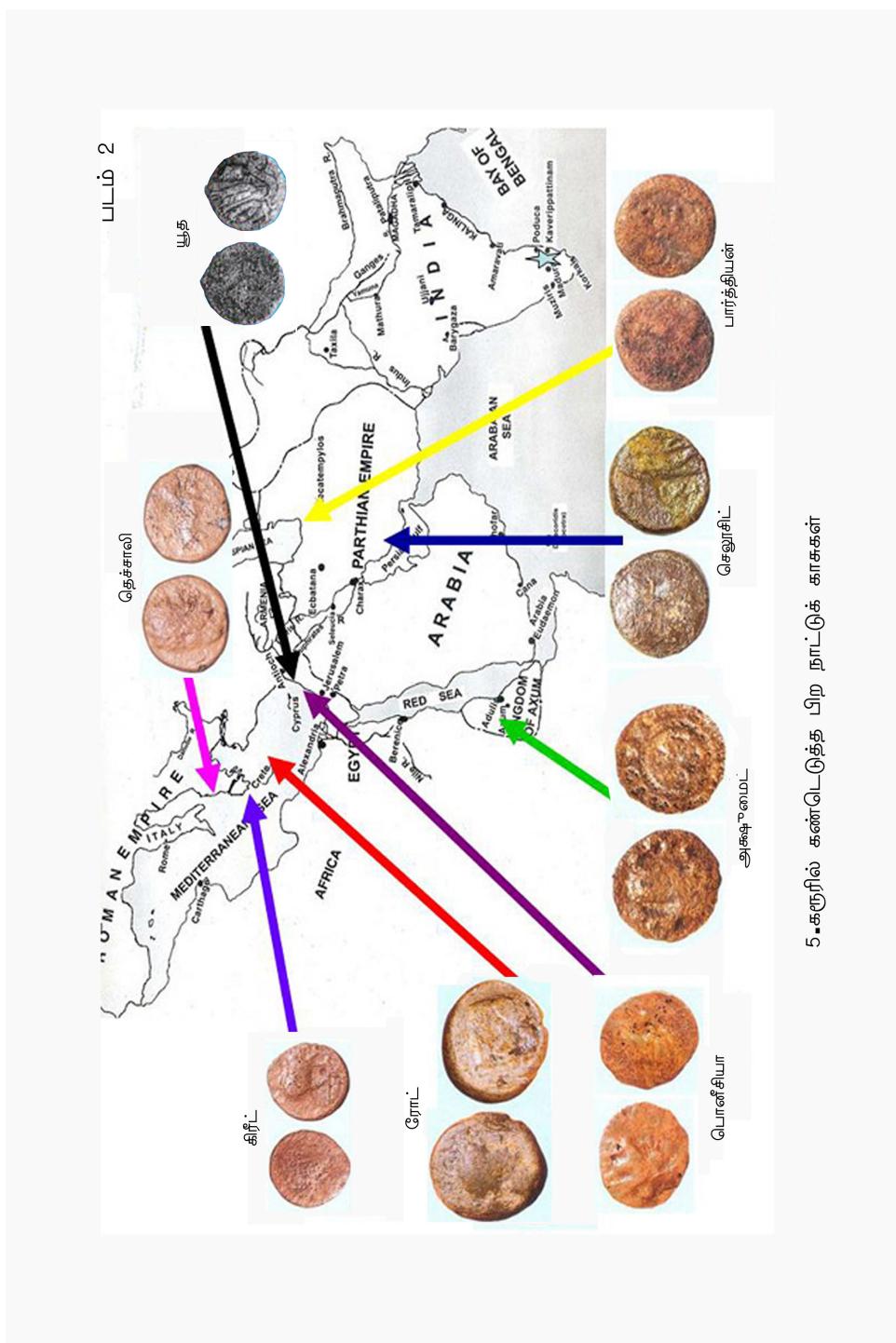
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படம் 1



செங்கடல் துறைமுகங்களில் கண்டெடுத்த தமிழ் பிராமி கீறல்களுடைய பானைச் சில்லுகள்
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இந்தியவராங்கச் சுறப்பு மற்றும்

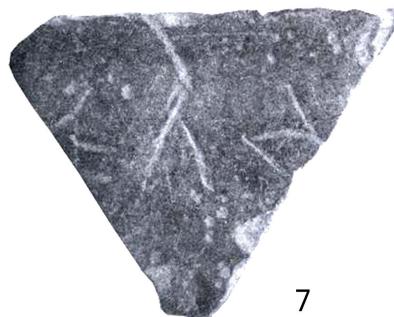


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படம் 3



6



7



8

தென்கிழக்கு ஆசிய நாடுகளில் கண்டெடுத்த அகழாய்வுப் பொருள்கள்
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இங்வரங்கச் சிறப்பு மற்றும்

அடிப்படை சுருக்கங்கள்

ABSTRACTS