



**A CRITICAL STUDY OF EARLY TAMIL ŚAIVA BHAKTI LITERATURE  
WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO TĒVĀRAM**

by

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**Thesis submitted for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy  
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ABSTRACT

This thesis is a critical study of early Tamil Śaiva bhakti literature: Paripāṭal, Tirumurukārruppāṭai and the Tēvāram.

The thesis begins with a brief survey of the extant sources for the study of these works.

This is followed in the Second Chapter by a detailed analysis of Pari. and TMP. Here a general assessment of the extent of the influence of the 'Aryan' god Skanda on the 'Tamil' god Murukan is made. Some important references to Murukan which are found in caṅkam literature are also used in this analysis.

Special reference is made to Tēvāram, and this is discussed in Chapters Three to Seven. In Chapter Three, an attempt is made to enumerate Śiva shrines and estimate the extent of Śiva worship in the Tamil country during the Tēvāram period. This is followed by the analysis of akam hymns in the Tēvāram in Chapter Four based on the conventions observed in early love poetry. The significance of the common hymns in the Sixth Chapter and the critical analysis of the 'last verses' in Chapter Seven help to a great extent in making a comparative study of the work of the three saints, and exploring salient features of Śaivism. The Fifth Chapter deals with allusions to purāṇic stories.

Many of the detailed conclusions of this thesis are contained in the chapter on Pari. and TMP., and the ones on Tēvāram; the last chapter consists of general conclusions about these works.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

|                  |  |
|------------------|--|
| <u>Akat.</u>     | <u>Akattipaiyiyal.</u> ( <u>Tol.</u> , <u>Poruḷ</u> )  |
| <u>AN</u>        | <u>Akanānūru.</u>  |
| <u>App, Tev.</u> | Appar's <u>Tēvāram.</u>  |
| <u>APT</u>       | <u>Aḷṭaiya Piḷḷaiyār tiruttokai.</u>   |
| <u>APTM</u>      | <u>Aḷṭaiya Piḷḷaiyār tiruvulāmālai.</u>  |
| <u>ARE</u>       | Annual Report, Madras Epigraphy.   |
| <u>ATT</u>       | <u>Akattiyar tēvārat tirattu.</u>  |
| <u>Cam, Tev.</u> | Campanar's <u>Tēvāram.</u>   |
| <u>CET</u>       | K.N.Sivaraja Pillai, <u>Chronology of the Early Tamils.</u>  |
| <u>Cil.</u>      | <u>Cilappatikāram.</u>   |
| <u>Cū.</u>       | <u>Cūttiram</u> (aphorism).  |
| <u>Cun, Tev.</u> | Cuntarar's <u>Tēvāram.</u>   |
| <u>CVV</u>       | Aḷumuka Nāvalar, <u>Caiva viṇāviṭai.</u>   |
| <u>DED</u>       | T.Burrow and M.B.Emeneau,<br><u>A Dravidian Etymological Dictionary.</u>                                       |
| <u>Eluttu.</u>   | <u>Eluttatikāram</u> ( <u>Tol.</u> ).  |
| <u>ETA</u>       | J.R.Marr, 'The Eight Tamil Anthologies with special reference to <u>Puranānūru</u> and <u>Patirruppattu</u> '. |
| <u>FTI</u>       | 'Five Tamil Idylls of <u>Paththuppattu</u> being studies and translations'.                                    |
| <u>HTL</u>       | C.Jesudasan, <u>A History of Tamil Literature.</u>   |
| <u>HTLL</u>      | S.Vaiyapuri Pillai,<br><u>History of Tamil Language and Literature.</u>  |

|               |   |
|---------------|---|
| <u>IAP</u>    | <u>Iraiyānār akapporuḷ.</u>   |
| <u>Kali.</u>  | <u>Kalittokai.</u>  |
| <u>KP</u>     | <u>Kantapurāṇam.</u>  |
| <u>IG</u>     | Mariasusai Dhavamony,<br><u>Love of God according to Śaiva Siddhānta.</u>         |
| <u>MS</u>     | Manuscript.   |
| <u>MTL</u>    | <u>Tamil Lexicon, Madras University.</u>  |
| <u>Nampi.</u> | <u>Nampiyakapporuḷ.</u>   |
| <u>NT</u>     | <u>Narrinai.</u>  |
| <u>NTP</u>    | <u>Nālāyira tivviyaprapantam.</u>   |
| <u>OEHS</u>   | C.V.Narayana Ayyar,<br><u>Origin and Early History of Śaivism in South India.</u> |
| <u>Pari.</u>  | <u>Paripāṭal.</u>   |
| <u>PKN</u>    | <u>Pinkala nikaṇṭu.</u>   |
| <u>PN</u>     | <u>Puranānūru.</u>  |
| <u>Poruḷ.</u> | <u>Poruḷatikāram (Tol.).</u>  |
| <u>PP</u>     | <u>Periya purāṇam.</u>  |
| <u>PPCPN</u>  | <u>Periya purāṇam, Cēramāṇ Perumāḷ Nāyaṇār purāṇam.</u>                           |
| <u>PPEKN</u>  | <u>Periya purāṇam, Eyarkōṇ Kalikkāma Nāyaṇār purāṇam.</u>                         |
| <u>PPTC</u>   | <u>Periya purāṇam, Tiruṇānacampanta Nāyaṇār purāṇam.</u>                          |
| <u>PPTK</u>   | <u>Periya purāṇam, Taṭuttāṭ koṇṭa purāṇam.</u>                                    |
| <u>PPTMC</u>  | <u>Periya purāṇam, Tirumalaic carukkam.</u>                                       |
| <u>PPTN</u>   | <u>Periya purāṇam, Tirunāvukkaracu Nāyaṇār purāṇam.</u>                           |
| <u>PPVC</u>   | <u>Periya purāṇam, Vellāṇaic carukkam.</u>  |

|                |  |
|----------------|--|
| <u>PrP</u>     | <u>Patirruppattu.</u>  |
| <u>PTM</u>     | <u>Panniru tirumurai.</u>  |
| <u>PTV</u>     | <u>K.Vellaivárāṇaṇ, Panniru tirumurai varalāru.</u>                                |
| <u>Purat.</u>  | <u>Purattinaiyiyal (Tol.).</u>   |
| <u>PVM</u>     | <u>Purapporuḷ veṇṇā mālai.</u>   |
| <u>RPT</u>     | M.A.Dorai Rangaswamy,<br><u>The Religion and philosophy of Tēvāram.</u>            |
| <u>SII</u>     | <u>South Indian Inscriptions, Madras.</u>  |
| <u>SM</u>      | Kamil Zvelebil,<br><u>The Smile of Murugaṇ on Tamil literature of South India.</u> |
| <u>SSH</u>     | S.Sivapadasundaram, <u>The Śaiva School of Hinduism.</u>                           |
| <u>SSTK</u>    | V.Ponniah,<br><u>The Śaiva Siddhānta Theory of Knowledge.</u>                      |
| <u>TED</u>     | S.Visvanatha Pillai, <u>Tamil-English Dictionary.</u>                              |
| <u>THP</u>     | K.Kailasapathy, <u>Tamil heroic poetry.</u>  |
| <u>TK</u>      | <u>Tirukkuraḷ.</u>   |
| <u>TKK</u>     | <u>Tirukkataikkāppu.</u>   |
| <u>TKP</u>     | <u>Tirumurai kaṇṭa purāṇam.</u>  |
| <u>TL</u>      | M.S.Purnalingam Pillai, <u>Tamil Literature.</u>                                   |
| <u>TMP</u>     | <u>Tirumurukāruppaṭai.</u>   |
| <u>TMT</u>     | <u>Tirumuraiṭ tiraiṭṭu.</u>  |
| <u>TO.App.</u> | <u>Tēvāra oḷineri (Appar).</u>   |
| <u>TO.Cam.</u> | <u>Tēvāra oḷineri (Campantar).</u>   |
| <u>TO.Cun.</u> | <u>Tēvāra oḷineri (Cuntarar).</u>  |

|             |   |
|-------------|---|
| <u>Tol.</u> | <u>Tolkāppiyam.</u>   |
| <u>TPK</u>  | <u>Tiruppatikakkōvai.</u>   |
| <u>TPT</u>  | <u>Tēvārat tiruppatikaṅkaḷ</u> published by Tarumaiyātīṇam.                 |
| <u>TSS</u>  | Tirunelveli, Śaiva Siddhanta works Publishing Society.                      |
| <u>TTA</u>  | <u>Tiruttonṭar tiruvantāti.</u>   |
| <u>TTPC</u> | <u>Tiruttonṭar purāṇam,</u><br><u>Cuppiramaniya Mutaliyār's commentary.</u> |
| <u>TV</u>   | <u>Tiruvilaiyāṭal.</u>  |
| <u>TVP</u>  | <u>Tiruvilaiyāṭar purāṇam.</u>  |
| <u>VC</u>   | <u>Vellāṇaic carukkam.</u>  |

## A NOTE ON THE TAMIL TRANSLITERATION

## VOWELS

|   |      |
|---|------|
| அ | - a  |
| ஆ | - ā  |
| இ | - i  |
| ஈ | - ī  |
| உ | - u  |
| ஊ | - ū  |
| எ | - e  |
| ஏ | - ē  |
| ஐ | - ai |
| ஒ | - o  |
| ஔ | - ō  |
| ஔ | - au |

## CONSONANTS

|    |     |
|----|-----|
| க  | - k |
| ச  | - c |
| த  | - t |
| து | - t |
| ப  | - p |
| பு | - p |
| ர  | - r |
| ர  | - r |
| ல  | - ṅ |
| ல  | - ṅ |
| ண் | - ṇ |
| ன் | - ṇ |
| ந  | - n |
| ந  | - n |
| ம  | - m |
| ய  | - y |
| ல  | - l |
| ல  | - l |
| ழ  | - ḷ |
| வ  | - v |

## Chapter One

### INTRODUCTION

#### AND

### SURVEY OF THE SOURCES

The early Tamil Śaiva bhakti literature may be divided into two main groups. One group consists of the devotional poetry present in the early anthologies entitled Eṭṭuttokai, 'Eight Collections' and Pattuppāṭṭu, 'Ten Songs'. Of the 22 extant poems of Paripāṭal, one of the Eṭṭuttokai, eight are purely Śaiva and devotional in being addressed to Murugaṅ, and another six, Vaiṣṇava. Tirumurukāṅruppaṭai, which as a whole is exclusively in praise of Murugaṅ, is one of Pattuppāṭṭu. The other group consists of the works of the Camayakuravar - Campantar, Appar, Cuntarar and Māṅikkavācakar. The collections of the first three Camayakuravar go by the name Tēvāram and that of the other by Tiruvācakam and Tirukkōvaiyār - all the works being in praise of Śiva. In the present study we have taken the eight poems of the Pari. in praise of Cevvēl (Murugaṅ), the TMP, and the Tēvāram.

The two groups, Eṭṭuttokai and Pattuppāṭṭu have been designated by many writers as 'Caṅkam poetry' and are regarded as unique and of a very high order in Tamil Literature. They are the only works referred to as cāṅrōr ceyyul, 'poetry of the noble ones' and are assigned to the earliest period of Tamil literary history, the

'Sangam Age' or 'Sangam Period'.<sup>1</sup> Several modern critics, however, consider the Pari. and the TMP as being of a later date. On the other hand, the Tēvāram are compiled into seven Tirumurai. The hymns of Campantar make up the first three Tirumurai, those of Appar the next three, and those of Cuntarar the seventh. These Tirumurai are the first seven of the Pannirutirumurai, 'Twelve Tirumurai' and also go by the name of Aṭaṅkanmurai. Perhaps these hymns were first collected as the first seven Tirumurai<sup>2</sup> and thus are given place of first importance in the PTM by the compiler, Nampiyāṅṭār Nampi.

#### PARIPĀṬAL

The Pari. is grouped as the fifth anthology under the 'Eight Collections', the anthology itself being named after the particular metre employed in it. The significance of this work is highlighted by the reference ōṅku paripāṭal, 'Paripāṭal of ever-increasing fame' in the veppā, which is of unknown date and authorship, and enumerates the eight collections of the earliest works of Tamil literature. According to cū. 464 in Tolkāppiyam, Paripāṭal poems contained a minimum of 25 lines and a maximum of 400. The commentaries to Iraiyānār akapporuḷ<sup>3</sup> and to Tolkāppiyam<sup>4</sup> state that the work Pari.

- 
1. HTL, pp.8-36; Celvanāyakam, V., Tamil ilakkiya varalāru, pp.1-36.
  2. Infra, p.14.
  3. IAP, cū., I (See the commentary), p.5.
  4. Tol., ceyuliyal, cū., 149 (See the commentary of Naccinārkkiniyar).

consisted of seventy poems. This fact is substantiated by a veppā of unknown date and authorship, which describes the complete Pari as eight poems in praise of Tirumāl (Viṣṇu), thirty-one in praise of Cevvēl (Murukan), one in praise of Kāṭukilāl (Durgā) or according to another reading Kārkōl (sea), twenty-six in praise of the river Vaiyai, and four in praise of the city of Maturai.<sup>1</sup> The extant anthology is, however, fragmentary, containing only twenty-two poems, six on Tirumāl, eight on Cevvēl and the remaining eight on the river Vaiyai.

These poems are numbered 1 to 22 in the book edited by Dr.U.V. Cāminātaiyar but there is no evidence that they occupied this serial order in the original complete anthology.<sup>2</sup> Cāminātaiyar, in his introduction to the second edition of the anthology, states that the 14 poems, six in praise of Tirumāl and eight in praise of Cevvēl, are the invocatory ones.<sup>3</sup> The colophons to these poems state the subject matter, the devotional verses being referred to as kaṭavuḷ vālttu.

It has been already mentioned that some modern critics consider this anthology a later work though it is grouped under the Eight Collections. Vaiyapuri Pillai, basing his conclusions on the authors, the Sanskrit material, the purānic legends, the social

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1. Tirumār kirunāṅku cevvēṭku muppat torupāṭṭuk kārkkōḷuk konru-maruviniya vaiyai yirupattāru māaturai nāṅkenna ceyyapari pāṭar riraṅ.

2. ETA, p.13.

3. Paripāṭal, ed. U.V.Cāminātaiyar, 3rd edition, p.VII.

institutions and the manner of composition, assigns it to a later date and finally, on the basis of the astronomical data in the eleventh poem goes to the extent of ascribing the work to a date about the middle of the seventh century A.D.<sup>1</sup> Marr sums up thus:

"Of the thirteen poets named in the Pari. colophons, only two, Nallantuvaṅār and Iḷamperuvalutiyār, figure in any other anthology. Nallantuvaṅār, given as the author of Pari. 6, 8, 11 and 20, has just been noted as the author of Kali., Neytarkali, and is also credited with two other akam poems (AN, 43 and NT, 88). The author of Pari. 15 Iḷamperuvalutiyār is identified with the author of Puram. 182 by Samājam editors. The fact that no other Pari. author appears as author of any other anthology poem marks Pari. off from other anthologies, and lends support to the view of Pillai that, like Kali. it was a work of later origin".<sup>2</sup>

He further states that by reason of their elaborate structure, the poems of Kali., and Pari. may have been of later origin.<sup>3</sup>

The most notable phenomenon in the anthology of Pari. is that each poem is accompanied by colophons stating the subject of the poem, the name of its author, the name of the composer of the music to which it was sung, and the name of the paṇ to which this music was set. The hymns of the three saints are also similar in this respect, as each of the hymns contains colophons that give the name of the hymn and the name of the paṇ to which it is to be sung. There are only three paṇ mentioned in the Pari. colophons, the paṇ

- 
1. HTLL, p.56.
  2. ETA, pp.391-3.
  3. Ibid., p.410.

Pālaiyāl is given for eleven poems (Pari. 2-12), Nōtiram is mentioned for five poems (Pari. 13-17) and Kāntāram for four poems (Pari. 18-21).<sup>1</sup> On the basis of the names of the paṇ in Pari. colophons, Cāminātaiyar asserts that the poems in Pari. were sung to paṇ in ancient time in the same way as Tēvāram were sung to their paṇ. To support this fact he cites the reference, eḷutturuvokkum pakutiyaṅ vanta pāṭakar pilaippum in the pēyiram in praise of the commentary of the work. Marr's suggestion in this connexion may be taken as conclusive:

"It is, however, possible that the way of interpreting any given paṇ varied from place to place, and that 'schools' of music existed as in our own day. It is also possible that any lapse of time between the period of Pari. and that of Tēvāram would bring about a change in the interpretation of paṇs. On the basis of Nikāṇṭu evidence, Vipulānanta states that Pālaiyāl was one of the four main paṇs and Nōtiram and Kāntāram were tiram, minor paṇs comparable to the auḍava rāgas".<sup>2</sup>

The extant Pari. poems were first edited by Dr. U. V. Cāminātaiyar in 1918; the second and the third editions appeared in 1935 and 1948 respectively. The third edition contains a free rendering of each poem, a commentary, notes on grammar etc. The commentary on this collection is attributed to Parimēlaḷakar by Cāminātaiyar, but it is fragmentary.

- 
1. The other two poems, Pari. 1 and 22, being without colophons, have no indication of the paṇ to which they are to be sung.
  2. ETA, p. 393.

The 14 poems, six in praise of Tirumāl and eight in praise of Cēvvēḷ, are exclusively religious. In the remaining eight poems, love is the prominent theme introduced against the background of the river Vaiyai. The present study, as mentioned earlier, will cover only the eight poems in praise of Cēvvēḷ. The poems, their authors, the names of the composers of music, and the paṅ are as follows:

| <u>No.</u> | <u>Author</u>       | <u>composer of music</u> | <u>Paṅ</u> |
|------------|---------------------|--------------------------|------------|
| 5.         | Kaṭuvanilaveyinaṅār | Kaṅṅakaṅār               | Pālaiyāl   |
| 8.         | Nallantuvaṅār       | Maruttuvaṅ Nallaccutaṅār | "          |
| 9.         | Kuṅṅampūtaṅār       | " "                      | "          |
| 14.        | Kēcavaṅār           | Kēcavaṅār                | Nōtiṅam    |
| 17.        | Nallaḷiciyār        | Nallaccutaṅār            | "          |
| 18.        | Kuṅṅampūtaṅār       | "                        | Kāntāram   |
| 19.        | Nappaṅṅaṅār         | Maruttuvaṅ Nallaccutaṅār | "          |
| 21.        | Nallaccutaṅār       | Kaṅṅakaṅār               | Kāntāram   |

The predominant theme Śaivism and the treatment of bhakti in these poems in praise of Cēvvēḷ will be examined in the second chapter.

From the above table it may be observed that Kuṅṅampūtaṅār composed two poems in praise of Cēvvēḷ and the other poets each composed only a single poem on Cēvvēḷ. Apart from the poem on Cēvvēḷ, Nallantuvaṅār composed three other poems in praise of river Vaiyai<sup>1</sup> and Kaṭuvanilaveyinaṅār two other poems in praise of Tirumāl.<sup>2</sup>

1. Pari., poem Nos. 6, 11 and 20.  
2. Pari., poem Nos. 3 and 4.

Besides the poem itself, Kēcavaṅṅār composed the music as well, while Nallaccutaṅṅār composed the music for three other poems, two of Nallaḷiciyār and one of Kuṅṅrampūtaṅṅār.<sup>1</sup>

The above analysis clearly demonstrates three facts: one is that the poets who composed poems in praise of Cevvēḷ are the devoted bhaktas of the god Murukaṅ. Kaṅṅuvaṅṅilaveyiṅṅaṅṅār however is a bhakta both of Murukaṅ as well as Tirumāl. It is therefore obvious that there were devotees during the period of the work, Pari., who worshipped both Murukaṅ and Tirumāl without any apparent distinction. In addition, the anthology itself is evidence of the religious literary themes that run through two distinct channels - Śaivism and Vaiṅṅnavism. Marr rightly concludes:

"The religious poems suggest the beginnings of the division into Vaiṅṅnava and Śaiva that has been predominant in the history of Hinduism in the Tamil country. While no poems to Śiva in Pari., are extant, and there is no tradition that there were any, it is apparent that the Śiva mythology was prominent in the mind of Skanda's hymnists".<sup>2</sup>

The second is that the two poets, Kēcavaṅṅār and Nallaccutaṅṅār, were not only great poets but also eminent musicians. This is clear evidence of the rare blend of the twin gift of literary and musical genius possessed by some of the poets of this anthology. Moreover,

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1. Nallaḷiciyār's poem 16 in praise of Tirumāl and 17 in praise of Cevvēḷ; Kuṅṅrampūtaṅṅār's poem 18.

2. ETA., p.409.

one is inclined to think that Nallaccutaṅṅār was more of a musician than a poet, since he composed the music for three poems while his extant authorship is limited to just one poem. The third fact that emerges is that Nallantuvaṅṅār is not only a religious poet but also a poet of love themes and a lover of nature. The poet's bhakti permeates his poem on Cevvēḷ (poem No.8) and his sense of the infinity of nature, and the love themes dominate his poems on the river Vaiyai (poem Nos. 6, 11 & 20). There were, therefore, poets who were able to compose both mystic and secular poems during this literary period.

#### TIRUMURUKARRUPPATAI

The work TMP, according to tradition, is attributed to Nakkīrar, a celebrated bard of the early period. But the authorship of this work is now disputed by modern critics who also consider it as a later work. Vaiyapuri Pillai cites some of the literary usages in this work to prove that the author was not the Nakkīrar of the early period, and lived far later than him.<sup>1</sup> On the other hand, Sivaraja Pillai, examining the name Tirumurukārruppaṭai along with the other ārruppaṭi of the early period, concludes that it is a later work.<sup>2</sup> Kailasapathy suggests:

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1. HTLL, p.36.
  2. CET, p.257.

"Perhaps the strongest argument in favour of such a view is the fusion in the lay of the brahminic god, Skanda, with the essentially south Indian ritualistic god, Murukan".<sup>1</sup>

There are, however, several factors which tend to make us attribute the work to an author of a period earlier than the period of the Tēvāram. The most striking feature is the grammatical peculiarities in this work which are quite similar to those of some of the other early Tamil literature. Moreover, the treatment of the theme, though it is essentially religious, is similar to that of the other Āruppaṭai especially to that of Neṭunalvāṭai.

Kailasapathy rightly suggests:

"It is a classic illustration of theocrasia. At the same time it seems to contain old material such as that pertaining to cult sites specifically associated with Murukan. Also the relationship of Murukan to Koravai, the old mother-goddess of the Tamils, mentioned in the poem, points to an early religious tradition being embodied in it. The metre, too, is typically bardic. Considering all these factors the TMP may truly be called an accretion of centuries".<sup>2</sup>

Jesudasan, comparing it with Neṭunalvāṭai, concludes that "both poems begin on the same note, and, in both, the use of simile is sparing considering the rest of Caṅkam literature".<sup>3</sup>

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1. THP, pp.35-6.
  2. Ibid., p.36.
  3. HTL, p.29.

It is interesting to study the legend which describes the context in which Nakkīrar composed this poem: Nakkīrar was ordered by Śiva to make a pilgrimage to atone for his presumption after the dispute with Śiva at the Tamil literary academy in the city of Maturai. He was caught by a demon on his way while performing his daily pūjā on the bank of the river in the forest. He was later confined in a cave along with 999 other men in order to make a huge sacrifice. When the demon was preparing himself to consume all the 1000 prisoners in the sacrifice, the poet invoked the help of the god Murukan to save him and chanted this poem in his honour. At the end of the chanting of the poem, the god Murukan appeared and killed the demon. Thus Nakkīrar and the others were saved.<sup>1</sup> Many Śaivites believe even at present, with good reason that the chanting of the TMP still has the same saving power. This legend is undoubtedly a creation of a later date to make the work a popular and inspiring one among the people.

This purānic legend is celebrated with great religious significance at Tirupparāṅkunram on the fourth day of the annual religious festival in the month of paṅkuni. Besides this, the statue of Nakkīrar has been installed by the side of the god Muttukkumārācuvāmi in the shrine; and is taken in procession round the shrine on festive occasions. In addition to the importance

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1. For a detailed account see 'Nakkīrar carukkam' in the Cikāḷattippurāṅgam.

given to Nakkīrar at the shrine there is also a separate temple which has been built in honour of Nakkīrar in the city of Maturai, and which is popularly known as caṅkattār kōyil, 'shrine of the members of the academy'.

The TMP, along with other āruppaṭai, was first edited by Dr. U.V.Cāminātaiyar in 1889 with the commentary of Naccinārkkiniyar and its second edition appeared in 1918. The second edition contains a commentary consisting of the interpretation of words and phrases, notes on grammar with reference to Tol., appropriate notes on purānic references, and varying interpretations of certain lines. Subsequently, a large number of editions containing only TMP have been published; the latest is the third reprint in 1969 of the first edition of 1955 by TSS with the commentary of P.V.Cōmacuntaram. This poem was first rendered into English by J.V.Chelliah in 1946. The translation is poetic in form and hence there are variations from the original and it bristles with errors. Another, under the title Studies and Translations was published by J.M.Somasundaram Pillai in 1947. The TMP in this book has been translated only in parts and the spirit and the meaning of the original has suffered an eclipse in translation.

Regarding the name, Tirumurukāruppaṭai, a suggestion is generally made by critics. The original name of this work according to their view was Murukāruppaṭai, tiru was perhaps a later addition

due to the influence of strong Śaivite activities. As a matter of fact, tiru, which denotes sanctity, has been attached not only to some of the sacred books of the Śaiva religion such as Tirumantiram, Tiruvācakam, and Tirukkural, etc., but also to all the sacred things associated with the Hindu deities and their shrines.

Arruppatai is a kind of poetic composition, generally in akaval metre, in which a poet who has been rewarded with generous gifts from kings or chiefs directs another to the presence of these benefactors so that he may also receive similar rewards. Among the 'Ten songs' five are ārruppatai namely Tirumurukarruppatai, Porunarārruppatai, Perumpānārruppatai, Cirupānārruppatai and Malaipaṭukaṭām otherwise called Kūttarārruppatai. But the TMP differs from them in two respects: firstly the bhakta who has received spiritual blessings from Murukan directs other devotees to visit the god in his six shrines and worship him in order to gain spiritual benefits instead of seeking the patronage of kings and chiefs. Secondly, the TMP is named after the god Murukan while the other four are named after the recipients of the rewards, namely Porunar, Pānar (Cirupānār and Perumpānar) and Kūttar. Referring to the former, Sivaraaja Pillai states: "This undoubtedly involves a departure from the established literary usages - a departure which none of the old poets would have perpetuated".<sup>1</sup>

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1. CET, p.257.

It may be suggested that the naming of this Āruppaṭai is probably devised to make it distinctly different from the other four since it is exclusively in praise of a god.

It is worth observing at this stage the similarities between TMP and the Tēvāram. The former is the daily liturgy of the devotees of Murukaṅ, while the latter is sung daily by ardent devotees of Śiva. The TMP is the earliest and perhaps the best work in praise of Murukaṅ, and therefore it is included along with the other works of the Eleventh Tirumuṟai. The hymns of the three saints occupy a pre-eminent position in the Śaivite world and therefore made up the first seven of the PTM. In fact, TMP, which appears to be the invocatory poem for the 'Ten songs' extols Murukaṅ while the Tēvāram, which are placed on a par with the Vedas themselves, praise Lord Śiva.

The TMP is a poem of 317 lines in praise of Murukaṅ; 77 lines are in praise of Tirupparāṅkuṅṟam, the next 48 lines are in praise of Tiruccīralaivāy or Tiruccentūr, the next 51 lines are in praise of Tiruāviṅṅkuṭi, the next thirteen lines are in praise of Tiruvērakam, the next 28 lines are in praise of Kuṅṅutōṅṅāṭal, and the remaining lines are in praise of Paḷamutircōlai. In the poem, one who had received the grace of Murukaṅ meets another, and tells him that if he wishes salvation he should go to the above-mentioned six shrines, worship the god, and receive his grace.

TEVARAM HYMNS

Tirumurai, which essentially means 'sacred order or system' refers especially to the first seven Tirumurai or Aṭaṅkamurai. The authors of this work, Campantar, Appar and Cuntarar, occupy a position of paramount importance in the Śaivite world and are therefore widely called Mūvar mutalikal, 'the three great Lords of Śaivism'. Perhaps it is their hymns that were compiled into the first seven Tirumurai. Many modern Śaivite scholars and commentators are of the opinion, perhaps because of stanza No.23 in TKP, that the works of the three saints were divided into seven parts or seven Tirumurai by Nampiyāṅṭār Nampi at the same time as he composed the PTM. However, in the clear reference elinmuraiyai muppōla vakukka venni, 'to divide as it was in the past' in the above mentioned stanza in TKP, it is made explicit that the seven Tirumurai were already in existence when Nampiyāṅṭār Nampi began to compile the PTM. It is reasonable to conclude from this that the name Tirumurai itself was originally confined to the work of the Tēvāram hymnists. In support of this we can mention that the Tirumurait tiraiṭṭu was compiled by Umāpativācāriyār the author of the TKP.<sup>1</sup> The collection must have been called Tirumurait tiraiṭṭu because it contains only Tēvāram hymns selected from the works of the three saints. It seems therefore to be the case that the last five of

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1. Infra, pp.64-5.

the PTM were compiled by Nampiyāṅṭār Nampi and that the Aṭaṅkamurai must be the work of another.

The hymns of the three saints, Tiruñāṅcampan̄tar (Campan̄tar), Tirunāvukkaracar (Appar) and Cuntaramūrtti (Cuntarar), are today collectively called Tēvāram. The saints, however, do not refer to their hymns by the name Tēvāram in any of their verses. It is not clear when and by whom the term Tēvāram was used as a common name for all the hymns of these three saints. Dorai Rangaswamy suggests that the Irattaiyar ulā might have been responsible for this usage gaining currency because it connects the 'mūvar mutalikaḷ' with the word Tēvāram, though in a different sense.<sup>1</sup> Cēkkiḷār himself does not use the term Tēvāram in the PP but he always refers to the hymns of the three saints by the name Tiruppatikaṁ<sup>2</sup> and Tirumurai.<sup>3</sup>

Regarding the usage of the term Tēvāram, only two theories appear so far to have been put forward; one by Dorai Rangaswamy and the other by Vellaivāraṅgaṅ. The former states that so far as he is aware, the word Tēvāram is the first used in the modern sense in a verse of Tattuvappirakācar in the Tamil nāvalar caritai.<sup>4</sup> The latter is of the opinion that the term Tēvāram is first clearly used by Caiva Ellappanāvalar in his work called Tiruvaruṅgaik kalampakaṁ

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1. RPT, I, p.33.
  2. PPTC, 76, PPTN, 70, PPTK, 74, etc.
  3. PP, Kaṇaṅṭar purāṇam, 3.
  4. RPT, I, p.34.

to refer to the hymns of the three saints.<sup>1</sup> Dorai Rangaswamy finally concludes:

"An inscription belonging to the 10th year of Ativira Rāma Pāṅṭiya Tēvar appoints one Tiruvannāmalai palavaṅ Citampara Nāṭaṅ, alias, Tirumūla Nāṭa Mutali, for singing Tēvāram at Campur Vaṭakarai in Travancore state. This is dated Śaka 1494, i.e., 1572 A.D. Therefore, by the 16th Century, this special usage of Tēvāram in the sense of the hymns of the saints must have begun. A commentary on Sivaprakācam called Cintanai urai, 'Meditation or thought on Sivaprakācam' in the form of a commentary by Maturai Sivaprakācar said to be of the 18th Century refers to the hymns of all the three saints as Tēvāram. Cittampara Cuvāmikaḷ also refers, as already stated, to the hymns as Tēvāram in his commentary on Kolai maruttal. Therefore, by the 18th and possibly by the 17th Century the usage must have become universal".<sup>2</sup>

The meaning of the term Tēvāram is usually interpreted in two ways; Tēva + Arām, 'the garland of god' and Tē + vāram,<sup>3</sup> 'create love towards God'. Different views are also expressed about these hymns. Penniah states that the works of these poets are also referred to as 'Tamil Veda'; for they resemble the Vedic hymns, being but praises and prayers offered to the Deity.<sup>4</sup> The Madras Tamil Lexicon defines Tēvāram as "A collection of devotional songs in honour of Śiva, composed by Appar, Campantar and Cuntarar, otherwise

1. PTV, p.29.

2. RET, I, p.35.

3. Cuntarar uses the word, vāram in the meaning 'deep love'.  
Cu, Tev, 5:8.

4. SSTK, p.43.

known as Tamil-vētam".<sup>1</sup> Dorai Rangaswamy remarks,

"The Tirumurai are placed on a par with the Vedas themselves. Being poetry of a very high order, they are naturally more popular and authoritative than the other collection (Fourteen Sāstrās) which attempts but to systematize the philosophical thought, running through the sacred literature of these hymns."<sup>2</sup>

The sacred hymns, however, appear to differ from the Sanskrit Vedas in structure as well as in meaning. The Tēvāram hymns are transfused with intense bhakti and portray the struggle of the saints for union with the Almighty. This aspect is wanting in the Vedic hymns, and therefore no proper comparison with the Vedas is possible. Nevertheless they are very popular as they are an essential feature of all the religious and ceremonial exercises both in the homes and temples of the Śaivites in the Tamil country.

At this stage the confusion surrounding the names of these three saints must be examined. The name Nānacampantaṅ is very often mentioned by the saint himself in the TKK of his hymns. In some TKK the name is referred to as Campantaṅ, in others Pantaṅ and in still others Ponṇināṅ and Maṅaiṅānacampantaṅ.<sup>3</sup> There is no mention of the names Nāvukkaracar or Cuntarar in their respective hymns. Cuntarar, however, refers to the names Nānacampantaṅ and

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1. MTL, Vol.IV, p.2069.

2. RPT, I, p.1.

3. Infra, Ch.VII, p.376.

Nāvukkaracar in some of the TKK of his hymns.<sup>1</sup> He mentions his own name as Tiruvārūraṅ, Nāvalārūraṅ, Vaṅṅoṅṅaṅ, Nāvalūrk kōmāṅ, etc.,<sup>2</sup> but not the name Cuntarar, by which he is at present known. Because it is not found in his hymns or in earlier works, the name Cuntarar presents a problem.

In the later period too, these saints were referred to by various names. In Cēkkiḷār's PP, published with the commentary of C.K.Cuppiramaṅiya Mutaliyār, the saints are referred to as Tiruñānacampantamūrtti Nāyaṅār, Tirunāvukkaracu Nāyaṅār and Nampiyārūrar. Citampara cuvāmikaḷ of the 18th century, in his commentary on the Avirōṭa untiyār, speaks of Tiruñānacampantamūrtti, Tirunāvukkaracar, and Cuntaramūrtti. A collection of the hymns of these three saints edited by Mayilai Caṅṅukam piḷḷai in 1917 has been named as Tēvārappatikaṅkaḷ and the saints' names are stated as Tiruñānacampantamūrtti Cuvāmikaḷ, Tirunāvukkaracu Cuvāmikaḷ and Cuntaramūrtti Cuvāmikaḷ. Arumuka Nāvalar appends nāyaṅār to the three saints' names in his publications. In the publications of the Tarumaiyāṭiṅam, each Tirumurai is named as Tēvārat tiruppatikaṅkaḷ and the names Campantar and Appar end with nāyaṅār, and Cuntarar with cuvāmikaḷ. It is not clear why the commentators refer in these different ways to these saints. In any case, modern writers have amputated the names to Campantar, Appar and Cuntarar.

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1. Cun.Tev, the TKK of hymn Nos. 55, 4, 67, 5, 78, 10, etc.  
2. TO.Cun, 156(1).

There is a Śaivite tradition that commentaries should not be written on the Tēvāram. This precluded Śaivite scholars and institutions for a long time from making any attempt to do so. The Tarumaiyātīṅgam was the first institution to break this tradition and publish all seven Tirumurai with commentaries. The first Tirumurai was published with a brief commentary by S.Taṅṅapāṇitēcīkar in 1953. The second and the fourth Tirumurai were published with commentaries by S.Māṅikkavācaka Mutaliyār in 1954 and 1957 respectively. A.Kantacāmippillai and V.S.Kurucāmitēcīkar have provided commentaries for the third and fifth Tirumurai, which were published in 1955 and 1961 respectively. The sixth and seventh Tirumurai were published with commentaries by S.Arunaivaṭivēl Mutaliyār in 1963 and 1964 respectively.

Most of these commentaries are brief and do not provide a critical examination of the text, especially the commentaries on the first three Tirumurai which generally contain word for word meanings with some explanatory notes. Apart from explanatory notes, the commentary on the fifth Tirumurai provides polippurai, 'the free rendering of the verses' for all the hymns. The commentaries on the fourth, sixth and seventh are, however, very detailed. In some cases, the commentaries contain appropriate references from early as well as later Tamil literature. In this study we have made cautious and critical use of these commentaries.

There are two kinds of arrangements of these hymns, the panmurai and the talamurai. In the former the hymns of Campantar,

Appar and Cuntarar are arranged according to their different paṅ into seven Tirumurai. In the letter the hymns of the three saints are arranged according to the order in which the shrines are presented in the TPK.<sup>1</sup> Since in all the ancient manuscripts as well as in most printed editions, the hymns are arranged according to paṅ, it seems reasonable to conclude that the paṅmurai is an older and more popular arrangement than the talamurai.

The meaning and the use of the word patikam or patiyam may be examined and explained at this stage. The meaning of patikam, according to the MTL, is a poem in praise of a deity, consisting generally of ten stanzas, and is derived from the Sanskrit word padya.<sup>2</sup> The exact derivation of this word is confusing because diverse interpretations are possible. Firstly, it may be a corruption of the word patiyam or pratika, 'preface' or 'summary'. Secondly, it may be derived from the word pathika, 'traveller' i.e., the pilgrim singing the hymns. Thirdly, its origin may be from the word pati, 'deity', i.e. the Lord in whose praise the poem is composed. Pavananti uses the word to signify introduction.<sup>3</sup> Fifthly, the hymns may be called patikam or patiyam because they generally consist of ten verses. These words are therefore said to have originated from the Tamil word pattu. This fifth interpretation

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1. A work consisting of 14 verses composed by Umāpaticivācāriyār.
  2. MTL, Vol.IV, p.2473.
  3. Nannūr kāṅṭikaiyurai, cū, 1.

seems illogical since many of the patikam consist of more than 10 verses. Campantar composed 65 hymns consisting of 11 verses, 30 hymns consisting of 12 verses and 12 hymns consisting of 14 verses. In the hymns of Appar, 55 hymns consist of 11 verses, 4 consist of 12 verses, and 2 consist of 20 and 30 verses respectively. In Cuntarar's hymns, 30 consist of 11 verses and 3 consist of 12 verses.

The introduction of the verse form patikam into Tamil took place earlier than the Tēvāram period. Kāraikkālammaiṅṅār, who probably lived in the sixth century A.D., composed two hymns in praise of the Lord of Tiruvālaṅkāṭṭu in this verse form. Though these two hymns are named Tiruvālaṅkāṭṭu mūṭṭa tiruppatikam in all recent editions, the first alone is called Mūṭṭa tiruppatikam by Cēkkiṅṅār<sup>1</sup> probably because it is composed earlier than the other. Māṅikkavācakar too, who is also ascribed by a few to an earlier period than the three Tēvāram saints, composed several patikam, namely Accōp patikam, Enṅap patikam, Kalukkunṅap patikam, Kōyil tiruppatikam, Kōyil mūṭṭa tiruppatikam and Pāṅṅip patikam. Since the prefix mūṭṭa means older it was probably attached to two of the above in later times in order to distinguish them not only from the other patikam composed by the same poets but also from the patikam composed in a later period by the Tēvāram saints. The Tēvāram

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1. PP, Kāraikkālammaiṅṅār purāṅam, 63, 64.

saints Campantar and Appar probably followed these two earlier saints in using the patikan verse form in their hymns.

From the description of Umāpaticivācāriyār in the TKP, some scholars are inclined to think that the paṅ given in the colophons of the Tēvāram were allocated by Nampiyāṅṭār Nampi with the help of a woman and were not the original ones set by the saints. Therefore, they conclude that the original paṅ must either have been lost or not mentioned. It can, however, be established from the references in the Tēvāram, that the saints intended their hymns to be sung to a particular paṅ or rāga and they themselves sang them in this way. In support of this, we can cite references from the hymns of Campantar.

Campantar claims that his hymns were composed and sung to paṅ or rāga.<sup>1</sup> The importance of tāḷa is also mentioned as cīrmali centamilkal,<sup>2</sup> 'the hymn composed in classical Tamil set to time-measure'. References such as paṅṅunai pāṭal,<sup>3</sup> paṅṅamar pāṭal,<sup>4</sup> paṅṅārtaru pāṭal,<sup>5</sup> paṅṅār pāṭal<sup>6</sup> and paṅṅārun tamil,<sup>7</sup> are clear evidence that the sacred hymns were not only composed to paṅ but also sung to paṅ. Campantar confirms this further in several of his stanzas where he promises freedom from bondage and the bestowal

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1. Cam. Tev. TKK of hymn Nos. 159, 181, 103, 360 & 32.
  2. Ibid., 333.
  3. Ibid., 315 & 318.
  4. Ibid., 319.
  5. Ibid., 384:8.
  6. Ibid., 64.
  7. Ibid., 323.

of divine bliss to those who recite his hymns to paṇ.<sup>1</sup> From this we conclude that the paṇ given in the colophons were possibly the original paṇ allocated by the hymnists themselves. What Umāpaticivācāriyār thus says in TKP is merely that the kaṭṭalaik kūrūpāṭu or paṇṇaṭaiṇu was developed, arranged and set to music by Nampiyāṇṭār Nampi. The most that can be said is that the original tunes set by the saints are now largely forgotten, and thus the melody of some of the hymns may not be fully known.

The akam hymns, in which love between God and the devotee is often expressed in terms of love between man and woman, are of paramount interest. There are 28 akam hymns in the Tēvāram as well as 32 other single akam verses. These are clear evidence that the saints adopt the tradition of the conventional early love poetry to express the mystic union between God and his beloved.<sup>2</sup> The mystic union has its best exposition as a living faith in these hymns. When it is remembered that the poetic pattern of these akam hymns is one way of expressing intense devotion, the importance of this study becomes clear.

The last stanzas in the Tēvāram deserve special mention. The last stanzas in the hymns of Campantar and Cuntarar are generally benedictory, stating the benefits of chanting, and bearing the name

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1. Cam, Tēv, the TKK of hymn Nos. 292, 149, 75 and 152.
  2. All the akam hymns are examined in detail in chapter four of this study, pp. 214-66.

of the hymnists. The last verses of Appar are not benedictory. Though they state the benefits of worship, they do not include the name of the saint. These concluding verses contain references revealing not only the history and inner personality of the respective composers but also some of the salient doctrines of Śaivism and require separate study.<sup>1</sup>

The common hymns in the Tēvāram are also very significant. Among the hymns of both Campantar and Cuntarar, seven of these occur, while thirty-seven are in the hymns of Appar. These hymns are not sung with reference to any particular shrine but are composed in praise of Śiva in general. They require detailed analysis from the points of view of the glorification of the divine grace of Śiva, the doctrines of Śaivism and the genuine spiritual experience of bhakti.<sup>2</sup>

Before we analyse the extant hymns of these saints any further, it is necessary to examine the period in which they were composed. The synchronism of Appar with the Pallava king Kuṅaparāṅ, of Campantar with Pāṅṭiyan Niṅṅa Cīr Neṅumāraṅ, and of Cuntarar with the Pallava king Kaḷarciṅkaṅ set up by the PP, is the sheet-anchor of the chronology of these three saints. Appar was a contemporary of the Pallava king Kuṅaparāṅ who persecuted Appar for his conversion from Jainism to Śaivism. Later, this Pallava king himself embraced Śaivism, demolished the Jain temple and the mutts

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1. All these verses are examined in chapter seven of this study, pp. 356-400.

2. All the common hymns are analysed in Chapter six of this study, pp. 310-55.

and built a Śiva temple called Kuṇaparaviṅcaram.<sup>1</sup> The Pallava king Mahendravarman I (600-630 A.D.) was referred to by the epithet Guṇabhara<sup>2</sup> 'rich in character' which appears in Tamil as Kuṇaparaṇ. Also, one of his inscriptions on the rock temple at Tiruccirāppalli confirms his conversion to Śaivism.<sup>3</sup> It is therefore reasonable to conclude that Kuṇaparaṇ and Mahendravarman I were one and the same person. It is therefore apparent that Appar lived during the time of this Mahendravarman.

Campan̄tar, according to PP, was a junior contemporary of Appar.<sup>4</sup> In the course of his itinerary, he met Ciṇṇuttoṅṇar at Tiruccen̄kāṅṇaṅkuṅṇi and referred to his devotion in a hymn.<sup>5</sup> Cēkkilār mentions that Ciṇṇuttoṅṇar was a commander-in-chief of a Pallava king and raided the city of Vātāpi, bringing back treasure.<sup>6</sup> There is an invasion of Vātāpi referred to in the Kuṅṇam plates of Parameśvaravarman I, which gives a detailed account of the battle in which Parameśvaravarman I defeated the Cālūkyā king.<sup>7</sup> This may also be substantiated by the inscriptions of Rājasin̄ha at Kāncīpuram.<sup>8</sup>

1. PPTN, 90-124 and 146.

2. ARE, 1900, p.5; Gopalan, R., Pallavas of Kanchi, p.88.

3. SII, Vol.II, p.511.

4. Appar and Campan̄tar have met thrice. See PPTN, 180-189, 231-289, and 392-401.

5. PPTC, 468-71.

6. PP, Ciṇṇuttoṅṇa nāyanār purāṇam, 6.

7. SII, Vol.I, p.154.

8. Ibid., pp.13-23.

This invasion, according to the view of many scholars, must have taken place between 674-680 A.D.<sup>1</sup> The PP makes clear that Ciruttoṅṅar, after his Vātāpi expedition, voluntarily retired from the post of commander-in-chief and spent his time worshipping Śiva and entertaining the devotees of Śiva at his native place Tiruccēnkāṭṭāṅkuṭi.<sup>2</sup> During this time he must have had the opportunity of entertaining Campantar.

Campan̄tar, according to PP, converted the Pāṇṭiya king Niṅṅacīr Neṅṅumāraṅ from Jainism to Śaivism.<sup>3</sup> This king has been identified with Arikēcari Pārāṅkuca Māṅavarmaṅ (670-700 A.D.).<sup>4</sup> The Vēlvikuṭi grant confirms this view and the victory in the battle at Nelvēli is assigned to Māṅavarmaṅ.<sup>5</sup> The descriptions in PP are amply supported by inscriptions and other historical records. As a result, we may conclude that Campantar lived in the later half of the 7th century A.D.

There is a great deal of controversy about the period in which Cuntarar lived. Ponniah assigned him to the latter part of the 7th

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1. Venkataramanayya, N., Did Paramesvaravarman I capture Vātāpi?, Madras Christian College Magazine, quarterly series, 1927.
  2. PP, Ciruttoṅṅa nāyaṅar purāṅam, 6-11.
  3. PPTC, 875-895.
  4. Nilakanta Sastri, K.A., The pandiyan Kingdom, pp.53-4.
  5. EP.Ind., Vol.XVII, p.300, ll.53-4.

and the early part of the 8th centuries during the reign of Narasimha Pallava II.<sup>1</sup> Purnalingam Pillai concludes, "The only internal evidence is the references to king Narasinha in hymn No.17, to the ancient patron of poets, Pāri's munificent gifts in hymn No.34, and to Pallava king Kadava and other Nāyanmār and it is surmised that he lived in the 9th century".<sup>2</sup> After a detailed analysis of various epigraphical, literary and other material evidence, Dorai Rangaswamy states that Cuntarar cannot be assigned to any period later than the 9th century A.D.<sup>3</sup> Since Cuntarar was the first to give the list of the 63 Nāyanmār, he must have lived after them. Cuntarar refers in the Tiruttonṭattokai to a Kāṭavarkōṅ, 'Kadava king', who protected the entire world surrounded by the sea. This characterisation of the Kādava king leads us to infer that he was a Pallava king. Scholars identify this king with Nantivarman III<sup>4</sup> (826-849 A.D.). The contemporaneity of Cēramāṅ Perumāḷ Nāyanār with Cuntarar also helps to assign Cuntarar to the period of Nantivarman III. From all these we may conclude that the later limit of the period of Cuntarar may be fixed as the 9th century A.D.

(a) Hymns of Campantar

The hymns of Campantar are compiled into three Tirumurai which

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1. SSTK, p.47.
  2. Purnalingam Pillai, M.S., Ten Tamil Saints, p.42.
  3. RPT, 1, pp.114-177.
  4. Rajamanikkam, M., Periyapurāṇa āraṅcci, pp.55-57.

consist of three hundred and eighty four hymns, 137 in the first Tirumurai, 122 in the second, and 125 in the third. The total number of verses in all the three Tirumurai is 4158. When the Tirumurai was compiled 384 hymns were available to the compiler, Nampiyāṅṅār Nampi;<sup>1</sup> but at present most of the editions contain 383 hymns only. Some editions have also included the Tiruvīṭaiṅkai tiruppatikam which was found in a stone inscription.<sup>2</sup> Doraiswami Pillai is of the opinion that as this hymn has not been set to paṇ or Rāga, it is difficult to say whether it is the missing hymn of the 384 hymns of the first three Tirumurai, or one of the 16,000 hymns attributed to Campantar.<sup>3</sup> If one accepts that the hymns of Campantar were set to paṇ during the time of Nampiyāṅṅār Nampi, then this hymn cannot possibly be one of the 384 hymns.

Six hymns in the Tēvāram of Campantar, which do not praise Lord Śiva in relation to one specific shrine, but in common to two or more shrines, deserve special mention. Four hymns each are sung about Śiva in relation to two shrines, No.4 about Pukali and Vīṅṅilalai, No.6 about Marukal and Čeṅkāṅṅankuṅṅi, No.7 about Nallāru and Alavāy and No.348 about Turutti and Vēlvikkuṅṅi. Of the other two hymns, No.331 is in praise of Śiva in relation to three shrines namely Paḷaiyārai, Maḷapāṅṅi, and Paṅṅiccam, and No.367 is in

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1. TKP, 25.

2. ARE, No.8 of 1918.

3. Nānavurai, published by Tarumaiyāṅṅam (1945), p.10.

relation to four shrines, Kayilāyam, Anaikkā, Mayēntiram and Arūr. Though hymn Nos. 4, 6 and 7 are in praise of two shrines each, according to PP, hymn No.4 was sung at Pukali,<sup>1</sup> hymn No.6 at Ceṅkāṭaṅkuṭi<sup>2</sup> and No.7 at Nallāru.<sup>3</sup> These hymns are regarded as hymns common to two shrines, and are composed in the form of questions and answers. Hymn No.348 portrays the maṇavāḷak kōlam of Śiva who dwells with his consort during the day at Tirutturutti and in the night at Tiruvēlvikkūṭi.<sup>4</sup> Hymn No.367 is a curiously-wrought poem sung at Tiruvānaikkā.<sup>5</sup> It praises Śiva in relation to four of his shrines. Hymn No.331, sung at Paṭṭiccaram,<sup>6</sup> is mainly in praise of the Lord of Tiruppaṭṭiccaram. Two other abodes of Śiva are referred to in only some of the verses of this hymn.<sup>7</sup>

In calculating the number of hymns of Campantar, Doraiswami Pillai is of the opinion that Campantar composed 16,000 hymns<sup>8</sup> and cites the references paṅgu tamilp patinārāyira narpaṅval<sup>9</sup> and paccaip patikattuṅṅaṅ patinārāyiram pā<sup>10</sup> in support of his contention. Further, he refers to the lines,

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1. PPTC, 556-7.
  2. Ibid., 486.
  3. Ibid., 901-2.
  4. Ibid., 291.
  5. Ibid., 346.
  6. Ibid., 396-7.
  7. Cam.Tev, 331:1, 3, 10 and 11.
  8. Doraiswami Pillai, S., A History of Tamil literature, Śiva Literature, pp.61-2.
  9. APTM, 60.
  10. APT, 42.

tōṭuṭaiya ceviyaṅ mutar kallūrennum toṭaimuṭivā.....  
pāṭinār patikaṅkaḷ pavilonrām patinārāyira muḷatā.....<sup>1</sup>

of Umāpaticivācāriyār, and says that it throws more light on the 16,000 hymns. On the other hand, Veḷḷaivāraṇaṅ, who also analyses this allusion, concludes that it refers to 16,000 verses and not to hymns.<sup>2</sup> In fact, the reference can be interpreted in two ways, one is that he sang 16,000 hymns beginning with the words tōṭuṭaiya ceviyaṅ and having the last verse beginning with the word kallūr, and the other is that he composed 16,000 verses beginning and ending in the same way. A careful study of the other two references given above will also reveal that Campantar had composed 1,600 hymns and not verses. The words pā (in the allusion patinārāyiram pā) and panuval (in the reference patinārāyiram narpanuval) clearly mean 'verse' and not patikaṅ. So from these allusions we can conclude that Campantar composed 16,000 verses or 1,600 hymns. However, we have no authentic evidence to prove that Campantar composed either 16,000 verses or 1,600 hymns at the early age of 16.

Close examination reveals several facts about the extant hymns of Campantar. In the first Tirumurai there are 15 hymns of which one verse each has been lost.<sup>3</sup> In one hymn, No.53, the seventh verse and the last two lines of the TKK are missing. Hymn No.106 contains

1. TKP, 14.

2. PTV, p.38.

3. First Tirumurai, hymn Nos. 5, 6, 9, 18, 55, 66, 68, 89, 102, 103, 105, 113, 114, 116 & 133.

only 9 verses, the other two verses No. 6 and 7 having been lost. There are only seven verses in hymn No.81, the remaining verses 4-7 having been lost. Except for a portion of the first line the rest are missing in the TKK of hymn No.115. In the second Tirumurai one verse has been lost in each of the 15 hymns.<sup>1</sup> There are two hymns, Nos. 9 and 96, in which the last two lines and the last three lines of the TKK respectively are missing. In hymn No.39, the last two lines of the 5th verse, the last line of the 7th verse, and the first line and a portion of the second line of the 8th verse are missing. In the third Tirumurai a verse has been lost in each of 10 hymns.<sup>2</sup> There are two hymns, Nos. 33 and 36, in which two verses, Nos. 5 and 6, and Nos. 6 and 7 respectively, have been lost. Verses Nos.5-7 have been lost in two hymns, Nos. 50 and 99. Hymn Nos. 100 and 124 contain only seven verses and six verses respectively and the remaining verses, Nos.4-7 and Nos.7-11, have been lost. The last line and a portion of the third line of verse No.10 are missing in hymn No.74.

The hymns of Campantar have been arranged into three Tirumurai based on paṇ. The first Tirumurai consists of 136 hymns of eight paṇ; the second consists of 122 hymns of six paṇ; the third consists of 125 hymns of nine paṇ. The hymns are therefore composed in 23

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1. Second Tirumurai, hymn Nos. 1, 11, 17, 23, 36, 45, 58, 64, 81, 83, 89, 95, 97, 108, and 122.
  2. Third Tirumurai, hymn Nos. 10, 23, 32, 46, 55, 63, 91, 94, 121 and 123.

paṅ. Campantar composed a greater number of hymns in the paṅ Intalaṃ, and only one hymn in Yālmuri. Ceṅkalvarāya Piḷḷai is of the opinion that hymn No.384, (Tiruvīṭṭaiṅkai) is composed in the paṅ Takkarākam or Intalaṃ because its metre is the same as that of hymn No.30 (Takkarākam) of the first Tirumurai and that of hymn No.36 (Intalaṃ) of the second Tirumurai.<sup>1</sup>

Let us examine the hymns and see how the poetic content or subject matter of each one is presented and arranged by the poet. Each hymn can be analysed under five sections; in other words, Campantar is singing the glories and greatness of Śiva, covering five aspects in each hymn. This is the general poetic pattern adopted by Campantar in all the hymns and it is designed beautifully from the beginning to the end.

In the first seven verses of most hymns Campantar generally describes the surroundings of the shrine, and the village or town where the shrine is situated. These descriptions are employed with the main intention of revealing the greatness of the Creator. Vellaivāraṇa's interpretation that the poet describes merely natural beauty in all the first seven verses of each hymn is not acceptable.<sup>2</sup> In fact, the poet adopts the method of describing natural beauty while he praises the glories and greatness of Śiva. Furthermore, he does not describe the natural beauty in all the seven

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1. TO.Cam, III, p.133.

2. PTV, p.492.

verses of all the hymns. The description occurs within the first seven verses of most hymns.

In the eighth verse of most hymns the purānic story of Irāvāṇa, the king of Lankā, trying to lift mount Kayilāyam is alluded to, but not in all the eighth verses of all the hymns as said by Vellāivāraṇa.<sup>1</sup> There are seventeen hymns in which the incident is referred to in the ninth verse;<sup>2</sup> two hymns (Nos. 371 and 18) in which it is in the tenth and eleventh verse respectively; and 27 hymns in which it is not referred to at all.<sup>3</sup>

Cēkkiḷār refers to the allusion in the eighth verse of the first hymn on Piramapuram of Campantar.<sup>4</sup> He says that Campantar alludes to this incident in order to emphasise the fact that Śiva always showers holy grace even on those who make mistakes out of their ignorance, but later realising their folly, approach him for salvation. Though Cēkkiḷār's interpretation refers only to the eighth verse of the first hymn, it can be taken as relevant to all verses of this category.

Now we examine the ninth verses of the hymns in the light of the references available in PP. The purānic story of Piramaṇ, the Creator, and Tirumāl, the Preserver who tried to find

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1. Ibid., p.494.

2. Cam.Tev, hymn Nos. 39, 45, 57, 78, 90, 117, 127, 138, 142, 156, 204, 209, 210, 253, 316, 330 and 368.

3. Ibid., 5, 25, 49, 56, 60, 73, 83, 87, 118, 119, 121, 157, 203, 213-215, 247, 248, 259, 311, 312, 321, 352, 360, 362, 370 and 382.

4. PPTC, 77.

respectively the top and the bottom of the pillar of light is alluded to in the ninth verse of most hymns. It is not alluded to in the ninth verse of all the hymns as claimed by Vellaivāraṇa.<sup>1</sup> There are 19 hymns in which the incident is referred to in the tenth verse,<sup>2</sup> one hymn (No.206) which mentions it in the seventh verse, three hymns which mention it in the eighth verse,<sup>3</sup> another three which mention it in the eleventh verse,<sup>4</sup> and twelve hymns which do not refer to it at all.<sup>5</sup>

Cēkkaḷār refers to the allusion in the ninth verse of the hymn on Piramapuram: "Śiva always blesses those who worship Him". Piramaṇ and Tirumāl, without realising this, thinking that they were Supreme, quarrelled between themselves and in the form of an annan and a boar respectively tried to reach the top and the bottom of the pillar of light without success. Later they chanted the five sacred letters and were showered with grace by Śiva.<sup>6</sup>

Campanṭar expresses his unrestrained contempt for Jains and Buddhists in the tenth verse of most of his hymns, and admonishes us not to follow these religions. In fact the reference is not in every tenth verse as mentioned by Vellaivāraṇa<sup>7</sup> but sometimes in the

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1. PTV, p.495.

2. Cam,Tev, hymn Nos. 45, 57, 78, 87, 90, 117, 127, 138, 142, 156, 203, 209, 210, 214, 215, 248, 253, 330 and 368.

3. Ibid., 147, 194 and 295.

4. Ibid., 63, 311 and 371.

5. Ibid., 5, 60, 179, 213, 247, 259, 312, 321, 352, 360, 370 and 382.

6. PPTC, 78, for the detail story see Aṭimuṭi tēṭiya paṭalam in KP.

7. PTV, p.496.

ninth<sup>1</sup> or eleventh,<sup>2</sup> and sometimes not at all.<sup>3</sup> The attack is directed at the external appearance of the Jains and the Buddhists, their names, their habits, and their ways of eating and living. Says V.Ponniah:

"The spirit of toleration and good-will for alien religions especially Jainism is entirely lacking in his songs; for he denounces these faiths wholesale; scarcely a patikam may be found without any explicit reference to the utter uselessness of these creeds."<sup>4</sup>

Though the facts are rightly analysed, a close study of the tenth verses will prove that Campantar's attack was directed equally towards Jainism and Buddhism. In fact he compares and contrasts the way of religious living and the habits of the Jains and Buddhists in several of his tenth verses. Their parading of empty words,<sup>5</sup> their lack of modesty at heart,<sup>6</sup> lack of wisdom, hiding themselves under the masks of ascetics, committing sins and speaking against the true path,<sup>7</sup> backbiting and ridiculing Lord Śiva and the Śaiva faith<sup>8</sup> and wandering about and discussing others faults<sup>9</sup> are some of the references of Campantar that can be cited as evidence of attacks on both the Jains and the Buddhists. Further he contrasts these sects in some of his verses. The Jains stand and eat; the Buddhists

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1. Cam, Tev, hymn Nos. 63, 206 and 295.
  2. Ibid., 45, 90, 142, 209, 210 and 368.
  3. Ibid., 56, 57, 60, 73, 78, 138, 156, 179, 203, 214, 215, 247, 248, 253, 316, 321, 330, 352, 370 and 382.
  4. SSTK, p.44.
  5. Cam, Tev, 24:10.
  6. Ibid., 288:10.
  7. Ibid., 242:10.
  8. Ibid., 262:10.
  9. Ibid., 28:10.

sit and eat;<sup>1</sup> the Jains wander about naked; the Buddhists cover their bodies with yellow robes;<sup>2</sup> the Jains and the Buddhists worship and safeguard the Aśoka tree and the bo-tree respectively;<sup>3</sup> rice porridge is the food of the Buddhists while ball rice is that of the Jains;<sup>4</sup> Jains say eating flesh is sin, the Buddhists say eating flesh is good.<sup>5</sup> These are some instances of the way Campantar contemptuously contrasts Jain and Buddhist beliefs and practices. In one of the verses, he goes to the extent of rebuking them as sinners and condemning their shaven heads and yellow robes.<sup>6</sup> Moreover, making use of Tiruvalluvar's saying that 'there is no use of a shaven head nor of tangled hair if a man abstains from those deeds which the wise have condemned,'<sup>7</sup> Campantar despises the Jains for their long hair and the Buddhists for their shaven heads.<sup>8</sup>

All these references unmistakably point to the fact of Campantar denouncing these religions totally. Referring to the tenth verse of the patikam on Piramapuram, Cēkkilār states:

"The Jains and the Buddhists because they are self-centred in their faith, do not understand the veracity of the Śaiva religion for salvation. Their blemished path will bring sins both in this world as well as in the others".<sup>9</sup>

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1. Ibid., 381:10.
  2. Ibid., 222:10.
  3. Ibid., 265:10.
  4. Ibid., 275:10.
  5. Ibid., 166:10.
  6. Ibid., 284:10.
  7. TK, 28:10.
  8. Cam, Tev, 111:10.
  9. PPTC, 78.

This interpretation of Cēkkiḷār can be taken as relevant for all the verses of this class. In fact Campantar denounces the Jains and the Buddhists in every hymn in order to make the Tamilians realise the truth of the Śaiva path (civaneri) and not listen to their futile claims.

Ponniah, referring to Campantar's hatred of Jains and Buddhists, states with some justification:

"Some persons find fault with Tiruñānacampantar for the hatred shown in his poems. These men forget that the poet is born of the age. Tiruñānacampantar could not have been the poet that he is, if he were not moved by the sight of his countrymen following a false religion. By the beginning of the Seventh Century A.D., the Tamil land was under the firm grip of Jainism and our poet as a Śaivite was touched to the quick and there was an outburst of his heart and poetry was the natural result. It is Tiruñānacampantar along with Tirunāvukkaracar who was at the bottom of the overthrow of the Jainistic religion that clouded the minds of the Tamilians of the Seventh Century".<sup>1</sup>

In this connection it is worth mentioning here the glaring point referred to by Cēkkiḷār in two of his stanzas on the life history of Campantar; in one he says Campantar cried (referring to the incident that took place at the tank at Piramapuram) for the purpose of propagating the Vedic religion and for invigorating the Śaiva faith;<sup>2</sup>

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1. SSTK, pp.44-5.  
2. PPTC, 1.

in the other he states that Campantar was born for the destruction of the false creed of Jainism,<sup>1</sup> the religion regarded as heterodox by the Śaivites.

From all these references and evidence we may conclude that Campantar's unrestrained contempt of the Jains and the Buddhists had two purposes; one was to break the firm grip Jainism and Buddhism had over the Tamil country, and the other was to safeguard and propagate the Śaiva religion. This religious bigotry and intolerance have diminished the universal appeal of the hymns. These attacks are not based on any logic but are the result of personal animosity.

The last verse of the hymns of Campantar is always a benedictory one bearing the name of the saint, and will be examined in chapter seven. The uniform arrangement of the subject matter is a special characteristic of the hymns of Campantar not found in the hymns of the other two saints except the purānic story of Śiva crushing Irāvaṇa which is the main ingredient of most of the last verses of Appar.

(b) Hymns of Appar

The hymns of Appar are also divided into three Tirumurai, in all 312 hymns of about ten verses each. There are 113 hymns in the fourth Tirumurai, 100 hymns in the fifth and 99 in the sixth. The

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1. Ibid., 26.

most striking feature in the hymns of Appar is the absence of the TKK which are a common phenomenon in the hymns of Campantar and Cuntarar.

The total number of hymns attributed to Appar is described ambiguously by Umāpaticivācāriyār. The allusion runs thus:

".....kurrāyina venna eṭuttuk kōtil  
orumāpait tarikkumoru varaiyūṅ kārum  
oru nārpat tonpati nāyiramatakap  
perunāmap pukalūrir patikaṅkūri....."<sup>1</sup>

This may be interpreted in two ways, one being that Appar sang hymns consisting of 49,000 verses beginning with kurrāyinaṅvāru and ending with oruvaraiyūṅ; and the other being that he composed 49,000 hymns, the first hymn beginning with the line kurrāyinaṅvāru and the last hymn beginning with oruvaraiyūṅ.

Cuntarar, who lived long before Umāpaticivācāriyār, specifically states that Tirunāvukkaracar had composed 4,900 panuval.

ipaikoḷ ēlelu nūrirum panuval  
inraṅṅaṅ tirunāvinukkaraiyaṅ<sup>2</sup>

"Tirunāvukkaracar composed seven times seven hundred incomparable panuval".

The word panuval in the allusion is probably used in the meaning 'hymn' and not 'verse'. This number is reasonable and most acceptable. The reference of Cuntarar can be taken as a reliable

1. TKP, 15.

2. Cun, Tev, 65:2.

and authoritative statement because Cuntarar refers to Appar with great reverence and love, not only in respect to this but in respect to several other facts as well.<sup>1</sup> The fact that Appar composed 4,900 hymns can be substantiated further by the comment of Cēkkilār on the verse composed by Cuntarar stating the total number of hymns sung by Appar. It runs thus:

".....pāṭiyavē leluṇūrum  
aru cirap pittaṅcor riruppatika maruḷ ceytār"<sup>2</sup>

"Cuntarar sang a hymn in beautiful words in praise of the seven times seven hundred hymns which were composed by Appar".

This total of 4,900 hymns is contradicted by Nampiyāṅṭār Nampi in his work Tirunāvukkaracutēvar tiruvēkātacamālai. In one verse it is stated as elunūru arum patikam,<sup>3</sup> 'the seven hundred rare hymns' and in another it is mentioned as patikam ēleluṇūru,<sup>4</sup> 'seven times seven hundred hymns'. The former is probably a textual corruption. Dorai Rangaswamy's interpretation of the allusion can be taken with some justification:

"The verse runs as itaya nekavē kacin titayam elunūru arum patika nitiyē polintaruḷu tirunāviṅ eṅkaḷ aracu. As in these lines there is a repetition of the word itayam, our sense of poetry drives us to omit the second itayam and insert the phrase, kacinta ēl elunūru to suit the metre on the basis of the oft repeated ēleluṇūru".<sup>5</sup>

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1. Cun.Tev, 88:8, 39:4, 67:5, 55:4, 78:10 & 46:7.
  2. PPEKN, 150.
  3. Tirunāvukkaracutēvar tiruvēkātacamālai, 3.
  4. Ibid., 7.
  5. RPT, I, p.38.

All these analyses clearly point to the fact that Appar composed 49,000 verses or 4,900 hymns.

A survey of the extant hymns of Appar reveals the following facts. There are two hymns, one in the fourth Tirumurai and the other in the sixth which contain a verse each.<sup>1</sup> Another five hymns, four in the fourth Tirumurai and one in the sixth, have only two verses each.<sup>2</sup> In the fourth Tirumurai, there are two hymns, Nos. 106 and 109, which contain only three verses each. In the fifth Tirumurai there are two hymns, Nos. 81 and 85, which have five verses and four verses respectively, and in the fourth there is a hymn, No.105, containing four verses. There are two hymns, No.15 in the fifth Tirumurai, and hymn No.26 in the sixth Tirumurai, each containing six verses. We have another three hymns, No.104 in the fourth Tirumurai, Nos. 67 and 78 in the fifth Tirumurai and No.40 in the sixth, containing seven verses each. Another four hymns contain eight verses each, No.110 in the fourth, Nos. 38 and 60 in the fifth, and No.81 in the sixth Tirumurai. In addition we have nine hymns, containing nine verses each, two hymns in the fourth, three in the fifth and four in the sixth Tirumurai.<sup>4</sup> The remaining verses of all these hymns have been lost. It is traditionally believed that they have been destroyed by white ants.

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1. App.Tev, 83 and 285.

2. Ibid., 46, 50, 98, 108, 305.

3. App.Tev, IV, 27; V, 9, 79, 91; VI, 57, 61, 86, 88.

4. App.Tev, 27, 103; 122, 192, 204; 270, 274, 299, 301.

Two characteristics have already been mentioned about the hymns of Appar - the hymns generally consist of ten verses, and never include TKK. There are, however, 55 hymns consisting of eleven verses,<sup>1</sup> four hymns consisting of twelve verses,<sup>2</sup> one hymn consisting of 20 verses<sup>3</sup> and another consisting of 30 verses.<sup>4</sup> The last two of these hymns are worth examining. The former, though it is in praise of the Lord of Tiruvaiyāru, has in some editions been split into two to form two patikam, one consisting of verses 1-10 and the other of verses 11-20. This was perhaps done on the assumption that a patikam should contain ten verses. At present, however, all these verses are included in one hymn by many editors and commentators. The latter is an exceptional hymn in the whole of Tēvāram as it consists of 30 verses. It is also called by the name patikam, perhaps because all the other hymns are composed in the verse-form patikam. The significant thing about this hymn is that it is beautifully designed, employing the 12 vowels, the letter ∴ (āytam), and 15 consonants each to stand in turn as the first letter in 28 verses, beginning with the second verse and ending with the 29th. It appears that there is no religious significance attached to this poetic pattern.

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1. Ibid., 3, 14, 15, 17, 19, 22, 61, 84, 86, 97, 111, 113, 114, 123, 125, 127, 129, 130, 132, 138, 143, 146, 150, 152, 157, 160, 162, 164, 176, 177, 178, 205, 207, 208, 215, 216, 217, 221, 227, 228, 231, 232, 235, 238, 241, 251, 259, 264, 266, 268, 283, 284, 288, 309 & 310.
  2. Ibid., 9, 120, 166 & 220.
  3. Ibid., 92.
  4. Ibid., 210.

In Appar's Tēvāram two hymns, Nos. 224 and 286, which describe Śiva in relation to two of his abodes, deserve special mention. The former, though it describes Puṅkūr and Niṭṭūr as the abodes of Śiva, is referred to in the PP as sung at Niṭṭūr.<sup>1</sup> The latter, though it describes Śiva in relation to Valaṅcuḷi and Kōṭiccaram, is referred to in PP as sung at Valaṅcuḷi.<sup>2</sup> These two hymns are quite similar to hymn Nos. 4, 6, 7 and 348 of Campantar and hymn No.74 of Cuntarar.

We can cite two hymns from the Tēvāram of Appar which throw light on three of the ninety-six works which are collectively called Cirupirapantam. There is a poetic pattern in Tamil literature which describes the principal members of the body (i.e. the eyes, face, breasts etc. of the female; and shoulders, arms, chest etc. of the male). The order of description must be from the feet to the hair of the head or from the hair of the head to the feet. The hymn aṅkamālai<sup>3</sup> of Appar describes the offering of the principal members of the body as garlands to Śiva. Here the order of description is from the head to the feet. There is another hymn about Kōyil<sup>4</sup> which though it is not named aṅkamālai, describes the principal members of the body of Śiva from the feet to the head. It may be suggested that these two hymns, since they are perhaps

- 
1. PPTN, 189.
  2. Ibid., 215.
  3. App.Tev, hymn No.9.
  4. Ibid., hymn No.80.

the earliest ones to employ this device in Tamil literature, prompted later poets to describe the principal members of the body when they composed poems on mysticism and love. Besides this, three of the Cirupirapantam, Ankamālai, Kēcātipātam and Pātātikēcam are probably influenced by these two hymns.

The analysis of the hymns of Appar on the basis of the paṇ and the verse-forms reveals how the saint sang the glories of Śiva in melodious language with a rare appeal to earnest souls seeking spiritual communion. Only hymn Nos. 1-21, in the fourth Tirumurai are set to music or paṇ. Hymn Nos. 22-79 and hymn Nos. 80-113 are composed in the verse-form nēricai and viruttam respectively. The other two, the fifth and the sixth Tirumurai, are composed on the basis of the verse-forms kuruntokai and tāṇṭakam respectively. There are ten paṇ mentioned in the colophons of the hymns in the fourth Tirumurai. The paṇ, Kolli, is, however, given to 93 hymns in some editions: hymn No.1, hymn Nos. 22 to 79 (composed in nēricai), and hymn Nos. 80 to 113 (composed in viruttam).<sup>1</sup> The hymns which have been composed in nēricai and viruttam are also traditionally sung in the paṇ, Kolli. Kāntāram is mentioned in the colophons of six hymns, Nos. 2 to 7. Three paṇ, namely Piyantaik kāntāram, Cātāri and Kuriñci, are given to only one hymn each - Nos. 8, 9 and 21 respectively. Another four paṇ, namely Kāntāra pañcamam, Paṇantakkarākam, Paṇam pañcuram and Cikāmaram

1. TPT, Tirumurai, IV, p.91.

are each allocated to two hymns, Nos. 10 and 11, 12 and 13, 14 and 15 and 19 and 20 respectively. The paṇ, Intalam, is given to three hymns, Nos. 16 to 18.<sup>1</sup>

The above analysis makes it quite clear that the number of paṇ, as well as the number of hymns allocated to each, are fewer than the corresponding numbers in the hymns of Campantar and Cuntarar. Only ten paṇ are used in the hymns of Appar while 23 paṇ are used in the hymns of Campantar and seventeen in those of Cuntarar. Appar, however, has introduced two new verse-forms, kuruntokai and tāṇṭakam which are collected into two separate Tirumurai. The kuruntokai have been composed in four cīr in kaliviruttam and consist of one hundred hymns. These are collected into the fifth Tirumurai, and numbered from 114 to 213. These hymns are traditionally sung in the rāga, Nādanāmakriyā. The Tiruttāṇṭakam which have been composed in eight cīr, consisting of 99 hymns in the sixth Tirumurai, are numbered from 214 to 312. These hymns are traditionally sung in the rāga, Harikāmbhoji.

Tāṇṭakam is a verse-form unique to the Tēvāram and Appar is acclaimed as the master of it. Hence, he is popularly known as tāṇṭaka vēntaṇ, 'the master of tāṇṭakam'. Jesudasan observes:

"In each of the tāṇṭakam, we observe the easy flow of accomplished prose; the cumulative effect achieved in some of the best poetry; genuine, simple feeling; and allusions to

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1. See the Table No.2.

several of the stories in purānic lore. All these, in combination with music, make admirable singing for the gathering of Śaivite devotees".<sup>1</sup>

Of course his hymns are noted for simplicity, freshness and spontaneity. "He is also alive to form, colour and music; especially his tiruttāṅṭakam are melodious and full of deep rich harmonies".<sup>2</sup> The references such as tamilākaran, 'the ocean of Tamil learning',<sup>3</sup> by Nampiyāṅṭār Nampi and nāvinukkaraiyan, 'the king of words',<sup>4</sup> by Cuntarar, describe aptly the ability of the saint to compose hymns in elegant sweet language with rare lyrical beauty.

(c) Hymns of Cuntarar

The hymns of Cuntarar are compiled into a single book, the seventh Tirumuṟai, which contains only one hundred hymns. It is also noteworthy that there is a variety of musical composition in these hymns and they were designed to inspire piety and devotion.

The total number of hymns attributed to Cuntarar is described ambiguously by Umāpativācāriyār, in verse No.16 of TKP. The reference runs thus:

.....pittā ennum  
inpa mutal tiruppatikam ūlitōrum Irāy nuppattēppā yiramataka  
muppu pukaravar.....

This can be interpreted in two ways. It can mean that Cuntarar

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1. HTL, p.77.
  2. SSTK, p.46.
  3. Aḷṭaiya Pillaiyār Tirukkalampakam, 33.
  4. Cun, Tev, 67:5, 55:4 & 78:10.

composed 38,000 hymns of which the first hymn begins with the word pittā and the last hymn with the word ūlitorum. Alternatively, it may mean that Cuntarar sang 38,000 verses in patikam from the verse beginning with the word pittā to the verse beginning with the word ūlitorum. We now have, however, only one hundred hymns of Cuntarar, and the rest, according to TKP, were eaten away by white ants before the remaining hymns were saved.<sup>1</sup>

We can cite evidence from the hymns of Cuntarar to prove his veneration and love for the other two saints. He addresses Campantar as nallicai nānacampantan, 'the sweet music-giving Campantan', and praises Appar as nāvinukkaraiyan, 'the king of words'. He refers to their hymns as narramil mālai, 'the excellent Tamil garlands'.<sup>2</sup> In the same verse he further states with great humility, that he is only repeating what Campantar and Appar have already sung. One therefore concludes that the hymns of Campantar and Appar must have been widely popular among, and greatly desired by, the people during the time of Cuntarar and that this statement must have been a reflection of contemporary popular feeling. In addition, it is clear that Cuntarar was very familiar with the hymns of Campantar and Appar. He has borrowed words, phrases, ideas and thoughts from the two saints.<sup>3</sup>

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1. TKP, 21.
  2. Cun.Tev, 67:5.
  3. Infra, Ch.VII, pp. 370-1.

We may now lend our minds to examine in a little more detail how Cuntarar shows his respect and reverence to his predecessors. Such expressions as uyar nāna campantaṅ, 'the great Nānacampantar',<sup>1</sup> nallicai nānacampantaṅ, 'the sweet music-giving Nānacampantar',<sup>2</sup> tamil nānacampantaṅ, 'the Tamil Campantar or he sang Tamil hymns',<sup>3</sup> narramil valla nānacampantaṅ, 'the eminent Tamil poet, Campantar',<sup>4</sup> tamil parappum nānacampantaṅ, 'Campantar who propagates Tamil',<sup>5</sup> and enpirān Campantaṅ, 'our Lord Campantar',<sup>6</sup> explicitly demonstrate the great respect and love of Cuntarar for Campantar, the greatness of his genius, his refined and cultured language, and melodious and elevated spirit.

References such as nāvinukkaraiyaṅ 'he is the king of the word',<sup>7</sup> ipaikoḷ.....panuval Inraṅ, 'he who composed.....unique hymns',<sup>8</sup> nāvinmicai araiyaṅ, 'the eloquent Nāvukkaracar',<sup>9</sup> and tiruniṅga cemmaiyē cemmaiyāyk koṭṭa tirunāvukkaraiyaṅ, 'Nāvukkaracar who pursued the path of sacred uprightness',<sup>10</sup> clearly portray the great respect Cuntarar had for Appar, his literary achievements and his peaceful, cheerful and serene life. It is also noticeable that

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1. Cun, Tev, 97:9.
  2. Ibid., 67:5.
  3. Ibid., 78:10.
  4. Ibid., 55:4.
  5. Ibid., 62:8.
  6. Ibid., 39:5.
  7. Ibid., 55:4.
  8. Ibid., 65:2.
  9. Ibid., 78:10.
  10. Ibid., 39:4.

there are more references to Campantar than to Appar in the hymns of Cuntarar. Moreover, the references to Campantar are clearly descriptive of the saint's sweet music, melodious compositions and refined language. It therefore appears that Cuntarar had greater admiration for Campantar and his hymns than he had for Appar and his.

The one hundred hymns of Cuntarar can be analysed as follows on the basis of the location of shrines. Four hymns, Nos. 92, 48, 49 and 42, are sung about Avināci, Pāṅṅikkotumūṭi, Murukanpūṅṅi and Veṅcamākkūṭai respectively in the Koṅkunāṭu. There are 57 hymns about 48 shrines in the Cōḷa country; eight hymns are about Arūr, two hymns each about Avaṭuturai and Niṅṅiyūr, and one each about another 45 shrines. The Toṅṅaināṭu has thirteen hymns sung about twelve shrines, two on Orṅṅiyūr and one each about the others. Twelve hymns are about ten shrines in Naṭunāṭu, three about Mutukunṅam and one each about the others. Five hymns are on five shrines in Pāṅṅināṭu, one for each shrine, while the North country has three hymns one for each of three shrines there. The Malaināṭu and Īlam have one hymn each about Aṅcaikkaḷam and Kēṭiccaram respectively.<sup>1</sup> Therefore the number of shrines sung of by Cuntarar is 84, the number of hymns being 96. We have another four hymns, Urttokai (47) Namakkaṭikalākiya aṭikai (33), Nāṅṅutokai (12) and Muṭippatu kaṅkai (44) which are generally accepted as common hymns. Three hymns - Tiruttoṅṅattokai (39), Nampiyenṅa tiruppatikam (63)

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1. For a detail account see TO.Cum, 206.

and Itaiyārgu itaimarutu (31) - are however, established as common hymns in our study.<sup>1</sup>

The hymn Nos. 31 and 74 deserve special mention as they are each, according to several editions, noted as being sung about two shrines. The former is mentioned as sung on Itaiyārgu and Itaimarutu, and the latter on Tirutturutti and Tiruvēlvikkuṭi. Hymn No.31, however, can be more appropriately regarded as a common hymn, as mentioned above. Hymn No.74, according to PP, was composed at Tirutturutti<sup>2</sup> although the hymn praises Śiva in relation to two shrines Tirutturutti and Tiruvēlvikkuṭi. This is clear evidence of Cuntarar composing hymns similar to hymn Nos. 4, 6, 7 and 348 of Campantar;<sup>3</sup> and hymn Nos. 224 and 286 of Appar.<sup>4</sup>

Further examination reveals several facts about the hymns of Cuntarar now available to us. There are 13 hymns in which the benefits of chanting are not stated in their TKK.<sup>5</sup> Hymn No.11 contains only eight verses because two verses, Nos. 8 and 9, have been lost. In hymn No.63, the last two lines and a portion of the second line are missing. There are only 7 verses extant of hymn No.65 since verses Nos. 8-10 have been lost. In hymn No.66, the first five verses are extant and the rest are missing. The missing verses must have been eaten away by white ants. Among the remaining

1. Infra, Ch.VI, pp. 345-8.

2. PPEKN, 300.

3. Supra, p.28.

4. Ibid., p.43.

5. Cun, Tev, hymn Nos. 1, 14, 30, 33, 37, 38, 44, 76, 77, 81, 90, 95, 100. (The TKK of hymn Nos. 63, 65 & 66 have been lost.)

hymns, 30 hymns contain eleven verses each, three hymns contain twelve verses each, and 64 hymns have ten verses each.<sup>1</sup> Another striking feature in some of the TKK of Cuntarar is his specific mention of the number 'ten' in 24 hymns. In most cases, he gives it as pattu, but in some cases it is mentioned as either ettōtirantu<sup>2</sup> (8+2), or aintōtaintu<sup>3</sup> (5+5).

Analysis reveals clearly that the poet intentionally adopts a pattern of employing the last lines of the verses to inspire piety and devotion. The following classification demonstrates this clearly:

In certain hymns, the pattern observed is that the last line of the verse is not repeated in each verse of each hymn. Out of one hundred hymns, only six hymns belong to this category.<sup>4</sup> In contrast, there are many more of a similar kind in the hymns of Campantar and Appar. There are fewer of this type than the ones we analyse below. The paucity of this number illustrates the poet's desire for repetition of the last line in order to inspire ecstasy of devotion in chanting.

In certain hymns, the pattern observed is that the last line of each verse is repeated but the line repeated in one hymn differs from that repeated in another. There are about 22 such hymns noted in our sources and we may cite some of them here to illustrate our point.

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1. See TO.Cun, p.573.

2. Cun.Tev, hymn No.44 etc.

3. Ibid., hymn No.55 etc.

4. Ibid., hymn Nos. 12, 45, 47, 76, 82 and 92.

.....añcalenraruḷāy āṛ enakkuravu amararkaḷ ērē<sup>1</sup>

"Oh Lion of the Devas! 'Bless me with the words, 'fear not'. Whom else do I have for comfort?"".

.....nyvakai aruḷāy iṭaimarutursai entaipirāṇē<sup>2</sup>

"O Lord of Iṭaimarutūr! show me the path of escape and redemption!"".

.....vāḷkōḷi puttūr māṇikkattai maranten ninaikkēṇē<sup>3</sup>

'What can I think of but the precious ruby of Tiruvāḷkōḷiputtūr'.

.....ninnaiyallāl inī yārai ninaikkēṇē<sup>4</sup>

'Whom shall I think of except yourself'.

In such hymns, the last lines are a vital part of the hymn, and generally reflect the thoughts of the saint.

The second half of the last line is repeated in all the verses of some hymns, though the half line repeated may differ from hymn to hymn. Nearly thirty-four such hymns are extant in the hymns of Cuntarar. The following will demonstrate our point:

.....aṭikēḷ umakkāṭ ceyya añcutumē<sup>5</sup>

'O Lord, we are afraid of serving you'.

.....avai aṭṭit tarappaṇiyē<sup>6</sup>

'.....to carry them there'.

- 
1. Ibid., hymn No.70.
  2. Ibid., hymn No.60.
  3. Ibid., hymn No.57.
  4. Ibid., hymn No.24.
  5. Ibid., hymn No.2.
  6. Ibid., hymn No.20.

.....enakkār tupai niyalatē<sup>1</sup>

'Except you, who is there to help me?'

These expressions do not appear to be more effective than the ones we analysed earlier. This type of ending however, occurs more frequently in the hymns of Cuntarar.

In certain hymns the verses end with the name of the abode of the Lord. Twenty such hymns can be cited. Some examples are:

.....orriyūrē (hymn No.91)

.....cōrrutturaiyē (hymn No.94)

.....naraiyūre citticcaramē (hymn No.93)

.....nāvalūrē (hymn No.17)

The other type of repetition is that of praising the Lord in relation to his abode. Eleven such hymns are noted in our sources and we may cite some of them:

.....añcaikkalattappanē<sup>2</sup>

.....O Lord of Añcaikkalam.

.....ārūr appanē añcinē<sup>3</sup>

.....O Lord of Ārūr I am afraid.

.....nāṭṭiyattānkuṭi nampī<sup>4</sup>

.....O Lord of Nāṭṭiyattānkuṭi

These expressions, though apparently similar to the ones we have examined above, are in fact quite different. In one, the emphasis is on the Lord, while in the other, the emphasis is on

1. Ibid., hymn No.28.

2. Ibid., hymn No.4.

3. Ibid., hymn No.8.

4. Ibid., hymn No.15.

the abodes. In other words, the saint extols the abode in the former, and praises the Lord in the latter.

From the analysis so far, it appears that all these patterns may have been adopted by the saint for two reasons. One is that it may have helped the saint in composing the hymns extempore. The other is that it may not only inspire piety and devotion but also facilitate collective chanting, especially in congregational worship.

The hymns of Cuntarar are arranged according to the 17 different paṇ. There are 17 hymns of Takkēci, 14 hymns of Naṭṭarākam, 12 hymns of Intaḷam, seven hymns each of Kolli and Palam pañcuram, five hymns each of Kāntāram, Naṭṭapāṭai, and Pañcamam, four hymns each of Kuriñci, Cikāmaram and Takkarākam, three hymns of Puṇanīrmai and one hymn each of Kāntāra pañcamam, Kaucikam, Centurutti and Piyantaik kāntāram. The remaining nine hymns are of Kollik kauvāṇam. The number of paṇ given to the hymns of Cuntarar, in proportion to the number of the hymns, is greater than that given to the hymns of Campantar and Appar.

Cuntarar states in some of the TKK that he himself sang those hymns according to paṇ, but the name of the paṇ is not mentioned: paṇ payilum pattumivai,<sup>1</sup> 'the ten verses composed to paṇ'; olikor innicaic centamil pattum,<sup>2</sup> 'the sweet musical composition of the ten

1. Cun, Tev, 16:11.

2. Ibid., 67:11.

classical Tamil verses'; ēlicai intamilāl icaintēttiya pattu,<sup>1</sup> 'the ten Tamil verses composed suitably in the seven tones; and cantam icaiyoṭum vallār,<sup>2</sup> 'those who are capable of chanting them to music'. All these references indicate that the hymns of Cuntarar were composed to paṇ. They were sung to paṇ by the saint himself, and requested by him to be chanted to paṇ by others. Cēkkiḷār, referring to Cuntarar's singing the first hymn beginning with the line pittā pirai cūṭi, clearly states in PP that the saint sang the hymn sweetly in the paṇ, Intaḷam.<sup>3</sup> This statement in the PP is clear evidence that the paṇ given in the hymns of the Seven Tirumurai are the originals and were not introduced later as claimed by some scholars, who cite some of the verses from the TKP in support of their argument.<sup>4</sup>

#### THE WORKS OF NAMPIYĀṆṬĀR NAMPI

The works of Nampiyāṅṭār Nampi which were a source used by Cēkkiḷār to gain full particulars about the Śaivite devotees, need special emphasis. It is generally accepted that Nampiyāṅṭār Nampi was the contemporary of Rājarāja I (985-1013 A.D.), who was

- 
1. Ibid., 100:10.
  2. Ibid., 73:11.
  3. PPTK, 74-5.
  4. PTV, p.12.

his patron.<sup>1</sup> The references in verse Nos. 50, 65 and 82 of TTA have also been cited in support of the view that he lived during the time of Atitta Cōlan (870-907 A.D.).<sup>2</sup>

The total number of works about the Śaivite devotees, especially the hymnists,<sup>3</sup> attributed to Nampiyāṅṭār Nampi is eight. One work (TTA) slightly elaborates the hymn Tiruttoṅṭattokai (hymn No. 39) of Cuntarar, narrating briefly the life-history of each devotee. Six works, enumerated in a succeeding paragraph, describe the life history of Campantar. Another work, Tirunāvukkaracutēvar tiruvēkātacamālai praises Appar and his hymns. All these works, along with Tēvāram hymns, must have provided the wealth of information which enabled Cēkkiḷār to narrate the life histories of the Śaivite devotees in PP. These works are included in the eleventh Tirumurai in the Śaiva canonical literature compiled by Nampiyāṅṭār Nampi himself.

The TTA is a very important work for two reasons. One is that the author elaborates Cuntarar's hymns Tiruttoṅṭattokai. The other is that Cēkkiḷār followed this work in great detail in composing his PP.<sup>4</sup> This work consists of 89 verses with a verse for each of the 58 saints besides 11 verses on Cuntarar,<sup>5</sup> two verses, Nos. 24 and 25,

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1. Nilakanta Sastri, K.A., The Colas, p.637.
  2. Venkataramanaiya, K.M., Varalāṅṅ munnurai in the Patiporān tirumurai, published by Tiruppanantāḷ Mutṭ (1963), p,XXIX.
  3. Six works on Campantar, one on Appar and 11 verses in the TTA on Cuntarar.
  4. PPPMC, 39.
  5. Verse Nos. 8, 16, 23, 32, 40, 48, 57, 63, 69, 77 and 86.

on Appar, two, Nos. 33 and 34, on Campantar, two, Nos. 44 and 45, on Cēramāṇ Perumāḷ Nāyaṇār, two, Nos. 81 and 82, on Kocceṅkaṭeōḷa Nāyaṇār, and one verse each on the nine groups of devotees. Of the remaining three verses, the first and the last verses are invocatory and benedictory respectively. The invocatory verse is suspected to be an interpolation.<sup>1</sup> The other verse, No. 88, is rather novel in that it is composed entirely of the first line of each of the verses of the hymn Tiruttonṭattokai.

The work Tiruvēkātacamālai 'the sacred garland of eleven verses' is as we have already mentioned the only work composed on Appar. This work is also considered as an important source of facts about Appar and his hymns.

The six works composed on Campantar are as follows. (1) Aluṭaiya pillaiyār tiruvantāti consists of 101 verses including the benedictory stanza composed in the verse form antāti, 'the last word of the first verse is the first word of the succeeding one'. The life history of Campantar is given in great detail in this work. (2) Aluṭaiya pillaiyār tiruccappai viruttam, consists of 11 verses. It is composed in the verse form viruttam and praises Campantar in relation to his native place Cappai, one of the names of Cikāḷi. (3) Aluṭaiya pillaiyār tiru mummaṅikkōvai consists of 30 verses composed in three different verse-forms āciriyam, veppā and kaṭṭalaik kalitturai which come one after another in that order. (4) Aluṭaiya

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1. Patinōrān tirumurai, published by Tiruppanantāḷ Mutt, see the footnotes, p.370.

pillaiyār tiruvulāmālai is a significant work as it describes the total number of verses composed by Campantar besides providing other information. (5) Aluṭaiya pillaiyār tirukkalampakam is in another kind of verse form kalampakam composed in various metres in praise of Campantar. The work consists of 49 verses. (6) Lastly, the Aluṭaiya pillaiyār tiruttokai consists of 65 lines which generally praise Campantar in relation to the miracles performed by him.

All these works on Campantar provided Cēkkiḷār with the necessary information to construct an elaborate life history of Campantar. It is thus no wonder that he has narrated the life history in more than one thousand verses. Besides this, the number of works on Campantar attributed to Nampiyāṅṭār Nampi clearly indicates that he was an ardent admirer of Campantar and his hymns. It is therefore not surprising that he gave first place to the hymns of Campantar and only second place to the hymns of Appar in his compilation PTM, though Campantar was only a junior contemporary of Appar. It may, however, be argued that Campantar was given first place because he had sung the greatest number of hymns and not because Nampiyāṅṭār Nampi had the greater admiration for him.

#### PERIYA PURĀṆAM

A study of the Periya purāṇam is indispensable for a full understanding of the life history of the three saints and of their

hymns. The references given regarding the hymns are of enormous importance in comprehending Tēvāram and its significance. This work is also called Tiruttoṅṭar purānam, 'the story of the holy Śaivite devotees', but it is popularly known as Periya purānam, 'great story'. The author of this work is Cēkkiḷār, a contemporary of the Cōla king Anapāyan who is identified with Kulōttuṅkaṅ II (1133-1150 A.D.).<sup>1</sup>

Cēkkiḷār himself modestly states that he composed the PP on the basis of Arūrar's hymn Tiruttoṅṭattokai, which gives the list of saints of Śaivism<sup>2</sup> and is considered by many to be of great importance. He also admits that he followed without any deviation the stories and details given by Nampiyāṅṭār Nampi,<sup>3</sup> probably referring to his Tiruttoṅṭar tiruvantāti. A close study will reveal, however, that the material used by Cēkkiḷār for composing the PP was mainly the Tēvāram hymns of the three saints, and the seven works of Nampiyāṅṭār Nampi, particularly the TTA. In addition, to construct the stories in greater detail, he must have relied not only on the traditional accounts of these saints conveyed through the generations but must have also made use of literary evidence and personal knowledge of the various religious centres where sculptural representations of these saints existed.

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1. Rajamanickanar, Periyapurāna ārac̣ci, p.43.
  2. PPTMC, 37.
  3. Ibid., 39.

Cēkkiḷār, though he lived in the 12th century A.D., attempted to a certain extent the avoiding of any reference to contemporary conditions but tried to narrate the stories in their historical perspective. However, it should not be forgotten that the poet lived three or four centuries after Arūrar. Therefore, it is not possible to assume that all the details in the PP formed the prevalent tradition even during the time of Nampi Arūrar. Furthermore, even though he states that he closely followed the details given by Nampiyāṅṭār Nampi, it must be remembered that Nampiyāṅṭār Nampi himself lived in the 10th century A.D., one century later than Arūrar.

Umāpaticivācāriyār in his work Cēkkiḷār purāṇam, 'story of Cēkkiḷār', describes the circumstances under which the PP was composed by Cēkkiḷār. The story goes that Cēkkiḷār, the Prime Minister, was perturbed by the great interest shown by the king Kulōttuṅkaṅ in the study of Jain literature especially the Cīvaka cintāmaṇi, a work dealing with worldly life and earthly pleasures. He narrated to the king the lives and the deeds of the Śaiva devotees. The king who was delighted to hear these inspiring stories, persuaded Cēkkiḷār to compose a Kāviyam on the saints. Cēkkiḷār went to Tillai. There, when a divine voice commanded him to begin the work with the word ulakelām he composed the great PP. Though this story was perhaps invented by the author or his adherents to give divine sanction to the PP, some facts are bound to be mixed with the fiction.

The PP is a collection of biographies of sixty-three devotees of Śiva who lived between the 4th and 9th century A.D. The simple and melodious verses, numbering a little over 4000, describe the mystic relationship between Śiva and his devotees, the study of which has been a perennial source of inspiration for the Śaivites and of great interest to many others. Jesudasan states that "the story of PP is that of the marriage of the deity Śiva with devotees whose beauty was the beauty of the soul".<sup>1</sup> Of the sixty-three life histories, that of Campantar is the longest, narrated in 1256 verses. Next comes Appar with 429 verses. The story of Arūrar is spread out in Taṭuttāṭkoṭṭa purāṇam, Eyarkōṅ kalikkāma nāyanār purāṇam, Cēramāṅ perumāl nāyanār purāṇam and Vellāṇaic carukkam. The PP is said to be an imitation of the epic Cīvaka cintāmaṇi but the structure is very loose. The story of Arūrar is narrated discontinuously. Jesudasan rightly points out that the history of Cuntarar, with which the work begins, is quite often forgotten in the course of the narrative though it is brought up later once or twice for serious consideration.<sup>2</sup>

Another striking aspect is that the bhakti rasa permeates the verses of this work even though it is composed not in praise of a deity but is a commentary on the hymns of the three saints. In fact, the PP is held to be bhakti literature par excellence. From the

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1. HTL, p.152.

2. HTL, p.153.

account of Cēkkiḷār's life given by Umāpaticivācāriyār in his Cēkkiḷār purāṇam and from the verses in PP we know that Cēkkiḷār led a life entirely dedicated to Śiva worship. The PP testifies that he was no ordinary mystic, for his intense devotion towards Śiva is expressed explicitly through the devotion and love of the saints. Purnalingam Pillai captures it thus:

"Apart from the flowing character of the verse, and from the bhakti rasa which flows in every line, PP is a running commentary on the Tēvāram hymns and elucidates the subtle truths and high dogmas embodied in them which are otherwise not easy to understand".<sup>1</sup>

It may be suggested that the verses on the three saints are held in great esteem because they constitute the most detailed, and to the Śaivites, the most reliable biography of the saints. Of course Cēkkiḷār has mixed up history with myths and legends, but such elements can easily be detected and eliminated in the process of a critical examination.

#### TWO NOTEWORTHY COLLECTIONS

We have two other compilations, the Akattiyar tēvarattiraṭṭu<sup>2</sup> and the Tirumugait tiraiṭṭu, which throw light on the fact that the theology of Tamil Śaivism was culled mainly from the Tēvāram. The former consists of 25 hymns and the latter consists of 99 single

1. TL, p.204.

2. A collection of 25 hymns from the Tēvāram, attributed to the Sage Agastya, MTL, supplement, parts, 1-3, p.6.

verses collected from the works of the Tēvāram hymnists.

The ATT was, according to the preface, collected by Akattiyar in response to the request of Civālaya Iruci who wanted to enjoy the essence of the whole Tēvāram in a nutshell. The preface further states that Akattiyar, after handing over the collection to the iruci, claimed that those who chant those hymns daily would receive the benefits of chanting the entire work Aṭaṅkanmurai.<sup>1</sup> Moreover, it is clear from the contents and the preface that the 25 hymns were collected and compiled in accord with the eight Śaiva Siddhānta doctrines, kuruvaruḷ, 'grace of guru', tiruveṇṇīru 'holy ashes', aṅceluttupmai 'truth of the five sacred letters', kōyirriṅgam 'constituents of temple' civaṇuruvam 'form of Civaṇ', tiruvaṭikal 'holy feet', aruccanai 'worship with offerings' and aṭimai nilai 'state of surrender'. A careful study of the preface reveals that it was the tradition of Śaivite scholars to analyse the Tēvāram through the prism of Śaiva Siddhānta philosophy. On the contrary, Śaiva Siddhānta philosophers have formulated the principles of their philosophy by analysing mainly the work of the hymnists.

This compilation must have been collected with the idea of inducing the Śaivites to chant regularly some, at least, of the hymns. There is no doubt that Akattiyar cannot be the compiler because the

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1. Akattiyar tēvarat tiraiṭṭu, see the preface (last two lines).

sage lived long before the Tēvāram hymnists.<sup>1</sup> It must be, therefore, the work of another who lived after the hymnists and who also had the name of Akattiyar. It may also be that the word 'Akattiyar' was added to the title perhaps because of the size of the anthology. It is indeed very small in size when compared to the entire Aṭaṅkaṁmurai, and Akattiyar is reputed to have been a short or small man.<sup>2</sup> The compiler could have purposely left out his own name and concocted a story in his preface, connecting Akattiyar and Civālayamuṇi in order to make the collection a popular one. In addition, several collections of this kind, compiled and published for the purpose of chanting in temples as well as in the homes of the Śaivites, can be cited.<sup>3</sup> In fact, recently there have arisen a number of collections both from the Aṭaṅkaṁmurai and the PTM. The hymns in most of these have been selected at the whim of the compiler and fall far below the standard of the classical collection already analysed.

The other book TMT, was compiled probably in 1307 A.D. by Umāpaticivācāriyār. The verses are collected in such a way as to

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1. Histories assign Tolkāppiyar, the author of Tolkāppiyam to about the first century A.D. and is said to be one of the 12 disciples of Akattiyar.
  2. kurumunivan, 'dwarfish sage', MTL, Vol.II, p.1057.
  3. For example, The Panniru tirumurai tirattu. ed. V.Ramanatha Pillai, published by TSS, (1961).

form a body of literature which formulates the ten-fold theology of Tamil Śaivism. The TMT was compiled by Umāpaticivācāriyār as the source-work for his Śaiva Siddhānta treatises, especially Tiruvaruṭṭpayaṅ. This is obvious from the arrangement of the verses into ten chapters under the captions:

1. patimutu nilai, 'state of the Supreme'
2. uyiravai nilai, 'state of soul'.
3. irumala nilai, 'state of āṇavam'
4. aruḷatu nilai, 'state of Divine grace'
5. aruḷuru nilai, 'state of the guru or grace incarnate'
6. ariyumneri, 'self-realization'
7. uyir viḷakkam, 'self-purification'
8. inpuru nilai, 'state of bliss'
9. aṅceluttaruḷ nilai, 'state of grace of the five letters' and
10. apaintōr taṅmai, 'nature of the state of the civanmutter.'

These ten captions are also the names of the chapters in the Tiruvaruṭṭpayaṅ, one of the Śaiva Siddhānta treatises of Umāpaticivācāriyār. It is therefore beyond dispute that the TMT is a small body of literature from which Umāpaticivācāriyār must have deduced the rules governing the theology of Tamil Śaivism in his Tiruvaruṭṭpayaṅ. This tends to suggest that the ATT must also have been compiled by one of the authors of the Meykaṅṅa cāttiram in order to formulate the principles of their work.

Chapter Two

ŚAIVISM AS REFLECTED IN THE PARIPĀṬAL AND THE  
TIRUMURUKARRUPPĀṬAI

The eight poems in the Parī., which are exclusively in praise of Cevvāl,<sup>1</sup> and the TMP, which is devoted entirely to the extolling of Murukan, are the earliest and perhaps the best works available which enable us to make a study of the cult and worship of Murukan, and the religious life of the early Tamils. In fact, no other literature in praise of Murukan had been produced until the advent of devotional hymns in praise of Śiva and Viṣṇu about A.D.600, after which he virtually disappears from the extant Tamil literature, reappearing only in the post-Cōla period (circa A.D.1500), when there occurred a tremendous revival of the Muruka cult.<sup>2</sup> This fact is, however, expressed penetratingly by Vithiananthan in the following words:

"In the Tamil country, as the worship of Śiva gradually gained ground, the worship of Murukan faded into the background and Skanda took his place. In the age of the Pattu., Murukan was the popular deity of the people and was worshipped universally.

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1. Supra, Ch.I, p.6.

2. THP, p.36.

But after this period his place was taken by Śiva and Viṣṇu".<sup>1</sup>

Besides the two works mentioned above, a number of references are made in the oldest Tamil grammar Tolkāppiyam and in other early Tamil literature. Tol. says that the mountain region is dear to Cēyōṅ,<sup>2</sup> There is also a reference in cū. 60 in Poruḷ. to veriyāṭal, 'to dance in frenzy' - the dance of invocation to the god Murukaṅ, which is conducted by a person called vēlaṅ, so called because he holds a spear in his hand while he dances. We may also cite some references from early Tamil literature. In seven poems in the NT, this deity is described as causing distress to sweethearts and it is to avoid this that pali or offerings are made by the vēlaṅ to this God.<sup>3</sup> In three poems in AN, the references run thus:

"The mother, without knowing the real cause for her daughter's distress, called the vēlaṅ of ancient wisdom, who danced in frenzy and said, 'this disease has been caused by the will of our deity; I know its cause.'<sup>4</sup>

"The women foretellers of ancient wisdom, who are capable of telling lies, spread the various cereals on the winnowing fan, and said, 'this distress has been caused by Murukaṅ'.<sup>5</sup>

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1. Vithiananthan, S.; 'The Pattuppāṭṭu - a historical, social and linguistic study', p.114.
  2. cēyōṅ nēya maivarai ulakamum. Tol., poruḷ., cū, 5.
  3. NT, 34, 47, 173, 273, 282, 351 and 376.
  4. AN, 388:18-21.
  5. Ibid., 98:8-10.

"The suffering of this sweetheart will be remedied if Murukan, who with his renowned broad hands destroyed those who would not heed his behests, is placated'. The women of ancient wisdom said this as truth. So, the place of sacrifice was well prepared; the spear was garlanded; the offerings were made with loud singing which echoed all over the town; the beautiful millet mixed with blood was sprinkled and Murukan was invoked at fearful midnight".<sup>1</sup>

Maturaikkāñci also contains a reference to this practice:

"The women wearing kāñci flowers adore with zeal the god Murukan who wears the blooms of the kaṭampu tree. To strident sounds of instruments, they tread measures in the temple courts, joining hands and indulging much in noisy cries and songs and embrace one another".<sup>2</sup>

All these passages either describe or suggest Murukan as causing trouble to young girls, or causing leanness and greenishness of complexion through love-sickness. A close study will reveal that Murukan is introduced as the god of the mountain region in order to describe the love theme of the kuriñcittinai, 'the love behaviour of the mountain region' with which puṇartal 'sexual union' is associated. Though they are employed to emphasize the love themes, these passages, according to Akapporuḷ, make quite clear the modes of worship of Murukan and the nature of the religious life of the people during the time of early Tamil literature. The leanness

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1. Ibid., 22:5-11.

2. Maturaikkāñci, 611-15.

and the distress of the sweetheart due to her separation from her secret lover had been wrongly identified as caused by the will of the god Murukan. To remedy this illness, people joined together and conducted ritualistic worship of Murukan, in which sacred utterances were made, sacrifices offered, and Murukan invoked. When such ceremonies were held, God was believed to manifest Himself in one of the worshippers, who danced in frenzy and suggested the appropriate remedy, namely sacrifice to Murukan. Murukan is thus always associated with ritualistic worship and sacrifice. In most places where the worship of Murukan is mentioned, we find descriptions of the ritual dances, which must have played a prominent role in the religious life of the people. This practice probably gained greater currency though in a different form (i.e. dancing in spiritual joy) in the shrines of Śiva during the time of the Tēvāraṃ hymnists and has subsequently been included as one of the sacred duties called Ānantakkūttu by the famous Śaiva reformer, Āṇaṅka Nāvalar.<sup>1</sup>

The review of references in early Tamil literature, points to the conclusion that the cult and worship of Murukan is very ancient among the Tamils, and is considered indigenous to the Tamil country. Kailasapathy concludes that in later times it survived as a cult in mountainous areas, as Druidism did in Roman Britain.<sup>2</sup> The views of

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1. CVV, II, p.71.

2. THP, p.63.

Narayana Ayyar that the poets are very fond of comparing the leanness in the sweetheart caused by separation from her lover to the changes effected in the physical features of a Murukan-possessed person, and that such a conception of Murukan is in no way better than conceiving of him as a demon or a ghost,<sup>1</sup> also deserve our attention. The belief among the people that Lord Murukan causes distress and illness to people is detrimental to the true doctrine of the Śaiva religion. The essence of Śaiva Siddhānta philosophy is that the power of God works for the uplift of all souls to the condition of God Himself.<sup>2</sup> Since He leads all souls to perfection He must be an all-loving being, and not one who causes harm and illness. On the other hand, "the contemplation of God and of His perfection brings home to one's mind one's own significance, lifts one's thoughts to high ideals, and directs one's love to the ultimate reality".<sup>3</sup>

One thing that emerges from the study of Tol. is the omission of Śiva as a regional deity. In early Tamil literature also there are only incidental references to Śiva. The destruction of the three castles, the blue neck, the moon on the head, and the eye on the forehead are mentioned in one of the poems in PN.<sup>4</sup> Poems No. 6, 91,

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1. OEHS, p.106.
  2. Tiruvārūṭṭpayan, 1:2.
  3. SSH, p.53.
  4. PN, 55:1-5.

166 and 198 of PN allude to Śiva but nowhere is he mentioned as the god of any geographical region or described as being worshipped popularly by people as Murukan was worshipped. On the other hand, no literature is known to have been produced in Tamil in praise of Śiva until the rise of the devotional literature of the Śaiva Nāyanmār. All these facts indicate strongly that only a small group of people, who had perhaps studied the Sanskrit purānas, could have had knowledge of Śiva at that time, the majority of the population being ignorant of him. In other words, Śiva was not worshipped by the early Tamils. The worship of Śiva gradually gained ground in the Tamil country with the influx of the Aryans and became prominent only during the time of the Śaiva saints. Until that time, only the cult and worship of Murukan was universally present.

#### Dravidian and Aryan aspects

We may now pass on to examine in detail the works, Pari. and TMP, as it is from these alone that a vivid sketch of the development of the cult and worship of Murukan and the religious conditions of the Tamils can be drawn. In fact, an analysis of the various names of Murukan and the Aryan elements in these works helps enormously to present a clear and striking picture of this deity known by the pure Tamil name Murukan, 'the tender child', he is

represented in legend, sculpture, and paintings as a beautiful child or youth.<sup>1</sup> This is the name by which this most popular deity is generally described in early Tamil literature, including the Pari. and the TMP, both of which are, of course, regarded by many scholars as belonging to a later date.<sup>2</sup> The other names, Cevvēl, Viralvēl, Velvēl, Neṭuvēl, Ceyyōṅ and Cēyōṅ, are also used in certain of these works to describe this deity. Murukaṅ is the original name of the god and all the other names are descriptive. The poems in praise of this deity in the Pari. edited by Cāminātaiyar, are, however, each given under the name Cevvēl, which in fact appears only in one place in the fifth poem.<sup>3</sup> Most noticeable is the absence of the names Subrahmanya, Kārttikēya, Ṣaṅmukha and Skanda by which this deity was popularly worshipped during the vigorous revival of the Murukaṅ cult about 1500 A.D. There are, however, descriptions of Murukaṅ in Pari. and TMP identifying him with these names. This is clear evidence of the fact that these works were composed at a time when the Dravidian and Aryan cultures already tended to

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1. FTI, p.2.

2. HTLL, pp.56-58.

3. Pari. 5:13. The naming of these poems in Pari. may be the work of the editor who would possibly have been guided in this by the venpā of unknown date and authorship, which refers to the poems in praise of Murukaṅ in Pari. as referring to Cevvēl.

commingle.<sup>1</sup> The name Subrahmanya appears in the Taittiriya Aranyaka in which Agni and Vāyu are described as the servants or attendants of Indra, called Subrahmanya. On the other hand, there are allusions to the birth of Kārttikēya or Subrahmanya in the Epics, in which he is described as the son of Rudra or Agni.<sup>2</sup> From all this we may legitimately conclude that the worship of Subrahmanya is a consequence of the development of the worship of Rudra or Śiva. At the influx of the Aryans, the Tamils were attracted by the newly introduced movement and as a result identified their own god Murukan with Subrahmanya or Kārttikēya. So the Murukan worshipped by the people during this period is a blend of the Dravidian and Aryan gods, and this is naturally reflected in the contemporary literature. The nature of the Pari. and TMP, the Aryan elements in them, and the expressions used, are all characteristic of this period. The poets describe the Dravidian form of worship of Murukan in these works but simultaneously identify Murukan with the six-faced Kārttikēya, the Aryan god. The names of the Aryan god, 'Subrahmanya', 'Kārttikēya'

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1. Kamil Zvelebil referring only to TMP states thus: "The whole poem shows in fact the fusion of the Brahmanic god Skanda with the pre-Aryan, South Indian Murukan. The poem contains much old, traditional material (like the relationship of Murukan to Korravai, the old mother-goddess of the Tamils). It is typically a poem of transition, marking the end of an epoch, the end of pre-Aryan Tamilnad, the end of the classical age; and the beginning of an entirely different age which is heralded by the rise of devotional literature. It is perhaps significant that the first truly religious, devotional poem in Tamil is dedicated to Murukan, the Tamil deity par excellence." - SM, pp.129-30.
  2. OEHS, p.102 and Vithiananthan, op.cit., p.114.

and 'Skanda', however, are apparently used by the Tamil poets only during the period of the tremendous revival of the Murukan cult.

The description of Murukan as having six faces and twelve arms in the section 'Tirucciralaivāy' in the TMP reveals clearly the Aryan conception of Kārttikēya. The Dravidian god has no association with the brahmins or their sacrifices as described in it. The sacred functions of the six faces are described thus:

"One face sheds rays of light and removes the dense darkness shrouding the world; one face with gracious look lovingly showers boons on his devotees who praise him with love and joy; one face watches over the sacrifices of the brahmins who perform them without deviating from the strict Vedic tradition; one face like the full-moon which brightens all the quarters of the world, lights the sages' minds to enable them to search for hidden truths; one face with a raging heart performs the battle-sacrifice destroying his enemies, and one face smiles lovingly on his young consort, the pretty daughter of the hunting tribes".<sup>1</sup>

Two important aspects may be pointed out in the above description. The brahmins perform sacrifices according to strict Vedic tradition, and the sixth face loves to enjoy itself with his consort. In early Tamil literature we do not find any such descriptions of the function of the officiating brahmin priest, or of the elaborate rules laid down according to Vedic tradition regarding the manner in which

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1. TMP, 91-102.

sacrifices had to be conducted. The above description shows that during the time of this work the brahmans played a prominent role as officiating priests by performing sacrificial ceremonies in the strict sense of the Vedic tradition. In addition, the whole section 'Tiruvērakam' is devoted to describing the brahmans.

"At Tiruvērakam are the twice-born men who never fail in their prescribed six duties. Their parentage on both sides is famed and of noble lineage. They are of diverse ancient stocks. They spend their blameless youth of forty-eight years in the prescribed path, teaching moral or religious duty. They earn the wealth of tending sacred fires of three different forms. They wear a wet cloth and a sacred thread composed of triple strands and clasp their palms over their heads. With hands raised in adoration they praise the Lord, reciting inaudibly the mystic formula of six letters and offering fragrant flowers to him".<sup>1</sup>

We may also quote a passage from Pari.:

"O Lord Murukan who dwells at Tirupparankuṅgam! you are well pleased with the sacrificial ceremonies of the brahmans, the twice-born men, who bear two names because of this, and who are kind hearted and esteemed with incomparable fame and glory."<sup>2</sup>

A review of these passages helps us to draw a complete picture of the brahmans as well as their duties as officiating priests in the shrines of Murukan. The brahmans are regarded as belonging to diverse ancient stocks and as 'twice-born men'. They are respected for never

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1. Ibid., 177-188.  
2. Pari., 14:27-28.

swerving from practising the rites which the four Vedas ordain. The contexts of the poems also make it obvious that they lived a wholly religious life, wearing sacred threads, tending the three sacred fires, and performing the six duties prescribed for them, namely reciting and teaching the Vedas, performing sacrifices and getting them performed, giving and accepting charity. They are in the habit of always performing the religious ceremonies after taking a bath and while wearing wet clothes. Singing hymns in praise of Murukan, chanting the mystic formula of six letters and offering flowers in worship are the other significant duties ascribed to them. These passages are, therefore, conclusive evidence of the fact that, during the period of these works, the cult of Murukan was officiated at and perpetuated by brahman priests.

The TMP contains a beautiful passage which describes young girls worshipping the deity with songs and dances.<sup>1</sup> Kailasapathy cites this passage as conclusive evidence for establishing that the cult of Murukan was officiated at and perpetuated by priestesses.<sup>2</sup> There is, however, no clue whatsoever in the description to surmise that the young girls functioned as officiating priestesses in the shrine at Tirupparankunram. What the poet describes is how the young girls beautified themselves prior to their dance, how by singing and

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1. TMP, 32-41.

2. THP, p.63.

dancing they blessed and wished eternal success to the banner of the god Murukan, and how the sound of the singing and dancing resounded on the beautiful mountain slopes. Women worshipping gods with songs and dances were in vogue even during the period of the Tēvāram saints and this practice survives even today both in the shrines of Murukan as well as in the shrines of Śiva. The young girls referred to in the passage are dancers, their singing and dancing is one of the modes of worship, and it is extremely unlikely that these girls were regarded as priestesses. What the poet describes is one of the modes of worshipping Murukan at the shrine of Tirupparāṅkunram; there is no mention of the dancers conducting ritualistic rites. It is more appropriate to suggest that this worship of the deity with song and dance is a Dravidian form of worship of Murukan while the worship conducted through the ritualistic rites of brahmins is the Aryan form of worship.

The descriptions of the birth of Murukan in the Pari. and the TMP identify him with Subrahmanya. TMP describes him as the 'offspring of the god who sits beneath the banyan tree'<sup>1</sup> and also speaks of him as 'the son of the daughter born of the king of mountains'.<sup>2</sup> His mother is described in the Pari. as 'the unblemished Umā, the wife of the Lord who has the azure-coloured neck, and who gave birth to the

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1. Ālkelu kaṭavul putalva. TMP, 256.

2. malai makaḷ makaṇē. Ibid., 257.

Lord who sits under the kaṭampu tree'.<sup>1</sup> He is also mentioned as the six-faced god born to the six presiding deities of the constellation Pleiades both in the Pari.<sup>2</sup> and in the TMP.<sup>3</sup> This story is elaborately narrated in the major portion of poem No.5 in the Pari.:

"He accepted the offering in the immortals' sacrifice and he, the pale-eyed Lord (Śiva) united in marital bliss with Umā. Insatiable was their union. Begging them to desist, he who was the Lord of the celestials' sacrifice craved a boon of the god in whose forehead was the unwinking eye. Since the latter was truthful, for him it was hard to go back on what he had already vouchsafed the Lord who was bedecked with flashing gems. But he took a bright hatchet and cut the embryo into pieces, changing its shape to confuse the world. But since they foresaw what would happen, the seven great sages in their wisdom took the embryo and hid it in the destroyed body of Cē. Those who were great in penance well recognised what it was that the Lord had cut. Saying 'Let the fire hold it' they cast it in together with the oblation, since they realised it would be unsupportable for the morsels to be given to their wives to make them conceive. The oblation fire blazed and the three-fold prancing flames protected the pieces of embryo. Except for one of the seven wives who was in the north shrine, save her who was divinely chaste, the six others at that time ate the ashes from that fire. Of spotless chastity, the wives of the sages conceived you without deviating from the path of right.

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1. maruṁiṭṭaru anṇarku mācīlōl tanta... Pari., 8:127-128.
  2. Ibid., 9:1-7.
  3. TMP, 255.

It is said that, in the heights of the Himalaya, in the deep green lake, they gave you birth on a lotus raft. When they, Murukan, gave birth to you, he who was held in supreme honour among the gods took up his fiery thunderbolt and in wrath came. When he hurled it, the six pieces became one person, and o Cēyi, you it is who are that valorous one".<sup>1</sup>

This account of the birth of Skanda, though it differs slightly from that in the Skandapurāna, the Sívarahasya from which it was adopted into Tamil by Kacciyappa Civācāriyar as the Kantapurānam,<sup>2</sup> and the other descriptions of his birth in the TMP and the Pari., are unmistakable evidence that the poets portray an Aryan god. "The child of Korravai"—the goddess of Victory,<sup>3</sup> "the child of the Ancient one",<sup>4</sup> "the captain of the heavenly hosts",<sup>5</sup> "the Lord of the mountain region",<sup>6</sup> "the Red God",<sup>7</sup> "one who fights in war",<sup>8</sup> "the lion among the warriors",<sup>9</sup> "the Lord who holds the spear",<sup>10</sup> "he is the god of death to the enemies",<sup>11</sup> etc., in the TMP; and "the heroic Lord with the victorious banner gained in war",<sup>12</sup> "the

1. Pari., 5:25-54. Cf. Marr's translation. ETA, p.405.

2. For a detailed account see ETA, pp.400-3.

3. verri velpōrk korravai ciruva. TMP, 258.

4. palaiyōl kulavi. Ibid., 259.

5. vānōr vānankuvil tānait talaiva. Ibid., 260.

6. kuruncik kilava. Ibid., 267.

7. cevvēr cēey. Ibid., 61.

8. ceruvil oruva. Ibid., 262.

9. maintar ērē. Ibid., 264.

10. Ibid., 265.

11. mārrōr kūrre. Ibid., 257.

12. venruyartta koṭi virāl cānraivai. Pari., 9:80.

Lord who gained victories over his enemies riding on an elephant",<sup>1</sup> "the Lord who holds the victorious spear",<sup>2</sup> "the Lord whose garments and garlands are red in colour, whose spear is like the pavalakkoti, whose holy appearance is like the flame and whose holy face is like the morning sun",<sup>3</sup> "the Lord holds the spear which destroyed the enemies",<sup>4</sup> "the red god",<sup>5</sup> etc., in the Pari., are descriptions which portray the Dravidian war-god.

### Sacred trees

In early Tamil literature, the poets not only portray Murukan as a wrathful deity, but also compare the wrath of several heroes to that of Murukan. Kumattūr Kaṇṇaṅār describes him as "the victorious hero of terrible wrath"<sup>6</sup> and Marutaṅṅaṅākaṅ portrays him as "wrathful Murukan".<sup>7</sup> On the other hand, in the Porunarāruppatai, the wrath of Karikālaṅ is compared to that of Murukan:

"He is the son of Iḷaiyōṅ, famed for his beautiful chariots.

A dreaded chief (he is), whose wrath is like Murukan's ire."<sup>8</sup>

In the AN, the anger of the father of the sweetheart is compared to that of Murukan:

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1. pinimuka mūrnta velpōr iraiya. Ibid., 17:49.
  2. ceru vēṅ rāṅaic colva. Ibid., 18:54.
  3. Ibid., 19:97-100.
  4. Ibid., 21:66.
  5. Ibid., 5:13.
  6. kaṅṅaiṅa viṅal vēl. PrP, 11:6.
  7. cinamiku murukan. AN, 59:11.
  8. Porunarāruppatai, 130-131.

"The terrible wrathful father (he is) whose anger is like Murukan's ire".<sup>1</sup>

A similar comparison may also be cited from the PN:

"O Perunarkilli! you are like Murukan in your wrath as you have entered this country of your enemies and destroyed it by setting fire....."<sup>2</sup>

Kailasapathy concludes that by comparing the king's anger with that of Murukan, the martial god par excellence, the bards heightened the emotional impact of the song. He also cites references from the PrP and compares the anger and destructiveness of the king to that of the god Murukan thus:

"In the PrP, Neṅūncēralātan is likened to Murukan, and certain parallels between their respective earthly and heavenly wraths are well drawn. As the mighty and wrathful god, riding on his elephant, destroyed dreaded Avunar, 'Titans', and cut down their well-guarded (totem) tree, so the king of dangerous wrath and might destroyed his enemies and cut down their guardian tree of kaṭampu".<sup>3</sup>

We may also cite references both in the TMP and the Pari. to Murukan cutting down the mango tree and killing the king of the Acurar in battle.<sup>4</sup> This incident is referred to several times in the Pari.; but referred to only once in TMP.

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1. AN, 158:16-17.

2. PN, 16:7-12.

3. THP, p.244.

4. TMP, 60 and Pari., 5:4; 21:28, 18:4, etc.

A review of these passages makes the following facts clear. The poets of the TMP and the Pari. employ the same phrases to describe Murukan as a wrathful deity; the descriptions portraying the Dravidian war-god cited in the TMP and the Pari. are also to a certain extent similar to those cited from the other early Tamil literature. Therefore, in this context, the god described in these two works is primarily a Dravidian deity though blended with Aryan elements. Another fact is that the descriptions of destroying the enemies and cutting down the kaṭampu tree in PrP are obvious evidence showing that the kaṭampu tree was planted and well-guarded in ancient times as a symbol of sovereign power or dominion. This tends to suggest two alternatives. One is that for the above-mentioned reason, people must have chosen to instal the statue of their god under the kaṭampu tree for their worship; and the other is that the kaṭampu tree is regarded as a guardian tree because the deity was worshipped in its shade. Moreover, the comparison of the wrath and might of the kings and heroes to that of Murukan, and the comparison of the king cutting down the kaṭampu guardian tree to Murukan cutting down the mango tree of Cūrapaṇman, tend to suggest that this god is not an imaginary being, but a war-like king, who was defied, as was often the case with heroes of the period of early Tamil literature. Finally the repeated references to Murukan cutting down the Mango tree proves that the Pari. belongs to an earlier period than TMP, as the king cutting down the guardian tree and destroying his enemies is a significant theme in other early Tamil puram works.

The term kaṭimaram, 'guardian tree' is employed five times in early Tamil literature, four times in the PN,<sup>1</sup> and once in the PrP.<sup>2</sup> In all these instances it is either implied or described as a symbol of the sovereignty or dominion of the king. This term kaṭimaram appears in the Pari. too, but is employed there with a religious connotation. It is described as vēlan kaṭimaram 'the guardian tree of Vēlan'.<sup>3</sup> The poet also describes how the devotees worship this guardian tree with songs of praise carrying various offerings such as flowers, leaves, silk, gems and spears, followed by several others carrying various other offerings which are dear to Murukan.<sup>4</sup> This is obvious evidence of how the kaṭimaram, which was in fact regarded during the period of early Tamil literature as the symbol of the sovereignty of the kings, was used with religious significance during the period of Pari. From this, it may be concluded that the martial elements in early Tamil purāṇ poetry were used with a religious connotation in a later period.

In the Pari. Murukan is often associated with the kaṭampū tree which is not mentioned in the TMP. This reference to kaṭampū with Murukan is used seven times in our sources. On four occasions it is stated that Murukan resides under the kaṭampū tree;<sup>5</sup> on two occasions Murukan is portrayed as wearing a garland made of the flowers

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1. PN, 36:96, 57:10, 162:5, 336:4.

2. PrP, 33:3.

3. Pari., 17:3.

4. Ibid.., 17:1-7.

5. Ibid.., 8:126; 19:2; 19:104; and 21:50.

of kaṭampu;<sup>1</sup> and in another place it is stated that the devotees worship the guardian tree of kaṭampu.<sup>2</sup> These references show the religious significance attached to the kaṭampu tree. We quote here three relevant references.

"O Lord adorned with the garland composed of bunches of kaṭampu flowers which are like the wheels of a chariot."

(Pari., 5:81)

"O mount of Parankunṅam! Although the rain fails and makes the whole world suffer you will always have your perennial mountain-streams, where the lovers, as well as devotees, worship the Lord who resides under the kaṭampu tree".

(Pari., 8:127-130)

"There are several devotees at Parankunṅam, who worship the guardian tree of kaṭampu with flowers, young leaves, silk-cloth, gems and spears, followed by people who carry with them fire, musical instruments, sandalwood and flags." (Pari., 17:1-4)

From these descriptions we may legitimately conclude that the kaṭampu tree would have provided the necessary shelter not only to the deity but also to those who went to worship him. We can therefore imagine a time when people gathered together to worship Murukan installed under a kaṭampu tree, and after finishing their worship, took rest under the shade of the same tree. Thus this tree would have become inseparably associated with the deity and subsequently

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1. Ibid., 5:81 and 21:11.

2. Ibid., 17:1-4.

came to be regarded as the temple tree. The predominant religious characteristics attached to the tree being such, it is not at all surprising that the people not only worshipped the kaṭampu tree but also made use of its flowers and leaves to adorn the deity. In other words, the tree itself was regarded as the embodiment of the deity. This was the sacred tree of the village or the town; and it received all acts of worship which were meant for the deity.

Venkata Ramanayya rightly concludes:

".... the gods of South India had no temples at the beginning. Almost all of them were worshipped in the form of trees. This simple form of primitive worship still survives, although the people have learnt to build very beautiful houses for their gods to live in."<sup>1</sup>

We may also conclude that it may be due to its sacredness that the kaṭampu tree is regarded as the guardian tree by kings in ancient times. The descriptions of Murukan in association with the kaṭampu tree also prompt us to conclude that the god described in the Pari. is primarily a Dravidian one and that the conspicuous absence of such descriptions in TMP tends to suggest that the god portrayed in it partakes of a more Aryan nature. This may be cited as a legitimate reason to consider the Pari. as belonging to a period earlier than TMP. The nature, the Sanskrit elements, and the purānic legends of both works suggest a later date than other early Tamil works.

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1. Venkata Ramanayya, N., An essay on the origin of the South Indian Temple, p.5.

Symbolic descriptions of Murukan

There are occasional descriptions and incidental references in the Pari, and the TMP which enable us to visualize the god Murukan as worshipped by the people during the period of these two works. A few of them describe Murukan as having six faces and twelve arms, but in the section "Tirucciralaivāy" his six faces and their functions, which we have already referred to<sup>1</sup> are picturesquely presented. In the same section, his twelve arms and their functions are also described in consonance with the various functions of the six faces:

"One arm is held overhead to protect the sages who travel in the sky and the corresponding arm is reclined to his waist; one arm rests on his thigh which is clothed in fine garments and the other wields the elephant goad; one pair of arms whirls the great splendid spear and the shield; one arm is placed on his breast while the corresponding one shines amidst the garlands; one arm together with the hanging garlands gives signal to the sacrifice of the battle-field and the other rings the sweetly tuned bell, and as for the remaining pair of arms, one causes the abundant rains to pour down from the blue sky while the other adorns the maid who lives in heaven with a wedding garland."<sup>2</sup>

Hence each face performs a separate function and has a pair of arms

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1. Supra, p.74.  
2. TMP, 107-17.

functioning in conformity with it. In these descriptions, different aspects of the god Murukan are depicted. He is presented as teacher, as ruler, as protector, as destroyer, as the Lord loving his devotees, and as the beloved of the devotees. Although no such elaborate description of Murukan with six faces and twelve arms appears in any of the poems in praise of Cevvël in Pari., there is a passage in poem No.5 portraying him as the leader of the army of the Devas, holding a weapon in each hand. These weapons are the lamb, peacock, cock, bow, war-drum, sword, spear, axe, battle-axe, fire, garland and bell.<sup>1</sup> Many of these weapons portray him as the war-god of the Dravidians. Other weapons such as the lamb, peacock, bow, etc., depict him as the patron deity of the kuravar or hunting tribes of the Dravidian country. The details as to how the god obtained the weapons are all gathered from the Skandapurāna e.g. the god of fire giving Murukan the cock,<sup>2</sup> Intiran giving the peacock<sup>3</sup> and the god of death presenting the lamb.<sup>4</sup>

We also have a number of descriptions in which the radiant complexion of Murukan is beautifully delineated. Poets often speak

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1. Pari., 5:55-68.

2. allalil analan tan meyyir pirittuc celva vāraṇan koṭuttōn. Ibid., 5:57-8.

3. ..... vānattu valāṅkelu celvan tan meyyir pirittut tikaḷ porip pili yanimayil koṭuttōn. Ibid., 5:58-60.

4. tiruntukōṅ namantaṅ meyyir pirivittu irunkaṅ vellāṭṭu eḷil mari koṭuttōn. Ibid., 5:61-2.

of him as the red god using the terms, cēy, cevvēl, ceyyōn and cēyōn. His garments and garlands are described as red in colour, the colour of his spear is compared to that of a pavalakkoṭi, (a kind of marine plant), his appearance is compared to the burning fire and his face is described as the rising sun.<sup>1</sup> The opening lines of TMP describe in masterly fashion the splendid and holy appearance of the Lord, and the manner in which he showers grace on the adoring devotees.<sup>2</sup> The picture presented is that of the sun in all his majesty rising above the gently rippling bluish-green waves of the sea, dispelling the deep darkness of the night, adored by millions in all parts of the world, inducing the world's activity, and bringing light and pleasure to all. This description of sunrise is a simile which is usually interpreted as applying to Lord Subrahmanya, as he returns in the sky on his beautiful peacock, after conquering the hostile hosts of acurar and showering his grace on his faithful devotees. The beautiful bluish-green peacock symbolizes the sea with its gently rippling bluish-green waves, and Lord Murukan whose form is described as red symbolizes the blood-red sun. The action of the sun in dispelling darkness and bringing light corresponds to the god's divine power of dispelling the

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1. Ibid., 19:97-100.

2. TMP, 1-3.

darkness of nāyai and showering grace. When the peacock dances from time to time, there is a rustling of feathers. This dancing and rustling symbolizes the dancing and rippling of the waves. The universal figure adopted in this simile of the god symbolizing the sun is perhaps the original conception of god among the Tamils.<sup>1</sup> The interpretation of the simile as Subrahmanya conquering the hostile hosts of acurar is obvious evidence of the way in which the purānic personality of the Aryan god described in the Skandapurāna is attached to such descriptions. /ā

Murukan is also portrayed as riding on an elephant, wearing a pair of leather sandals on his holy feet, holding the victorious spear which destroyed Cūrapanman, and being adorned with garlands made of the flowers of kaṭampu interspersed with flowers of valli.<sup>2</sup> These descriptions enable us to draw a complete picture of Murukan with his vehicle, his weapons, his garlands, and his garments, a picture which is in fact a blend of Dravidian and Aryan elements.

The descriptions of Lord Murukan discussed above point to the following conclusions. Murukan, worshipped by the people during the period of these two works, was an image with six faces and twelve arms. This is especially true of the one at Tirucciralaivāy, which has been significantly described. The passage which described

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1. Kaliyānacuntaraṅṅar, Tiru. V., Murukan allatu alaku, p.55.  
2. Pari., 21:1-9.

the exquisite beauty and elegance of the Lord reveals the great joy the poet experienced - a state of happiness which he is sure will be permanent. This passage, therefore, tells others indirectly that they will, like the poet, get rid of their own difficulties and achieve similar spiritual enjoyment. The descriptions of Murukan having six faces and twelve arms are not only of philosophical significance (his hands and feet are everywhere; his eyes and heads are everywhere; his eyes are everywhere; he stands encompassing all the world) but also bring out the purānic personality of the Lord. We have already pointed out that the descriptions of the external appearance of the Lord were made with reference to purānic stories. The poets of these two works were happy in describing the purānic personality of the Lord as their minds were captivated by the stories of the Skandapurāna.

#### Murukan and his consorts

The next picture presented in these two works is that of Murukan with his consorts, Teyvayānai and Valli. Nine such instances have been noted in our sources; four in the TMP and five in Pari. The marked difference between the former and the latter is that the theme is introduced mostly in incidental references in the TMP; but in the Pari., it is employed largely to illustrate secular love against a religious background.

The relevant references in the TMP are given here.

- (a) "He is the spouse of the one who has a bright forehead, and unstained chastity"<sup>1</sup>
- (b) "The sixth face loves to enjoy itself with Valli, the pretty daughter of the hunting tribe, whose waist is as slender as a thin creeper"<sup>2</sup>
- (c) "Murukan with his young consort of spotless chastity comes to rest for some days at Tiru āvinankuṭi"<sup>3</sup>
- (d) "O Lord (you are) the cause of the wealth of the brahman priests; men of wisdom praise you in mountainous proportions; and you are husband of the (two) damsels"<sup>4</sup>

The descriptions in (a) and (c) refer to Teyvayānai; (b) refers to Valli and (d) both to Teyvayānai and Valli. This would indicate that the consorts thus described are two different women; Teyvayānai is the daughter of Intiraṅ, the king of the Devas, and Valli is the pretty daughter of the hunting tribe. In other words, the former belongs to the heavens and the other to the mountainous region of this world. In the description in (c) the poet also emphasises that Lord Murukan with his consort has come down from the upper world to rest for some days at Tiru āvinankuṭi. In the later literature, Teyvayānai figures as the wife of Skanda, and Valli as the consort of Subrahmanya.

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1. maruvil karpin vāṇutal kaṇavaṅ. TMP, 6.
  2. orumukam kuṇavar maṭa makaḷ koṭipōl nucuppin maṭavaral valliyōṭu nakaiyamarn taṅgē. Ibid., 100-2.
  3. tāvil kolikai maṭantaiyōṭu cinnāl āvinankuṭi acaitalum uriyaṅ..... Ibid., 175-6.
  4. mānkaiyar kaṇava. Ibid., 264.

Among the descriptions in the Pari., there are two in which the Lord is elaborately described in association with his consorts, Teyvayānai and Valli. Pari. No.9 may be taken as an example of a poem describing the conventional love-theme set against a religious background. The main portion of the poem is devoted to presenting the love-quarrel between Lord Murukan and his consorts. Lord Murukan is addressed thus:

"O Lord it rained heavily over Paraṅkungan in the season of extreme heat like the eyes of Teyvayānai, the daughter of the thousand eyed Intiran, which poured with tears on the day you married Valli, the daughter of the deer, in secret".<sup>1</sup>

The main portion of the remaining part describes how Teyvayānai and Valli quarrelled with their spouse Murukan, how the female companions of Teyvayānai quarrelled with the female companions of Valli, and how the parrots and peacocks of Teyvayānai quarrelled with the parrots and peacocks of Valli.<sup>2</sup> The poem is written without any special regard for the conventions relating to the five tinai, 'poetic situations'. There is no special emphasis on marutam, 'agricultural land' the tinai with which ūṭal, 'love quarrel' was associated; on the contrary, it is described as taking place in kurin̄ci, 'mountain

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1. Pari., 9:8-11.

2. It may be suggested that this poem may have given the unknown author the idea of composing the work Reṭṭikkutiyaṅgal, songs in praise of Lord Subrahmanya as worshipped at Reṭṭikkuti, narrating the story of the jealousy between his two consorts.

region' with which punartal, 'sexual union' was associated. It may, however, be stated that the treatment of the theme of love in this poem is quite similar to that of the anthologies of love poems; but the main difference is that divine beings are the characters of the former while human beings are the characters of the latter. The theme of love in this poem is balanced fairly by the descriptive details of conventional secular love.

The description of Murukan with his consorts in Pari. No.19 is displayed against a religious background. The introductory lines are a fine poetical description of Murukan with his consorts:

"O Lord Murukan, perhaps wishing to reside in this world even as you reside in the heavens (you) reached the kaṭampu tree, the significance of which is hard to comprehend even by the wise; you married Valli, who resembles the beautiful peacock, at Parankunnam, in order to make the people of this world live in happiness in the same manner as you do for the Devas in the upper-world; which marriage is in fact a contrast to your marriage to Teyvayānai".<sup>1</sup>

Unlike in poem No.9, the reference to the two marriages is only an introductory note. The rest of the poem gives us a graphic picture of the men and women of Maturai conducting themselves in procession towards Parankunnam, the king Pāṇṭiyan circumambulating the abode of Murukan in a clockwise direction with his ministers, the natural beauty of the mountain, and the radiant complexion of the god.

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1. Ibid., 19:1-7.

Therefore this poem is entirely devoted to describing the religious aspect. It may be stated that the description of Murukan marrying a human being, Valli, for the prosperity of the people of this world, is evidence which indicates that the god Murukan is not fictitious, but a king or a hero who really existed as often portrayed in the early Tamil puram poetry.

The other two references are incidental; one describes Murukan marrying a woman of the kuravar tribe<sup>1</sup> and the other describes Murukan as yearning for the love of the fragrant flower Valli.<sup>2</sup>

The foregoing discussions make quite clear that Teyvayānai and Valli, whom the later Tamil literature speaks of as the consorts of Skanda and Subrahmanya respectively, were regarded as the wives of Lord Murukan during the period of these two works. The former is portrayed as possessed of unblemished chastity and as being the daughter of Intirag of the upper-world; the latter is described as belonging to the hunting-tribe of the mountainous region of this world. This would indicate that the god sung of in these two works is a combination of the war-god of the Aryans with the Dravidian war-god who was the patron deity of the hunting-tribe of the Dravidian country. In other words, these two works were composed in a period when the Dravidian and Aryan cultures began to mingle. This is further established by the subject-matter of poem No.9 in Pari, in which Murukan,

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1. Ibid., 19:95.

2. Ibid., 14:22.

with his consorts, is described by employing the conventional pattern of love of the anthologies of love poems which monopolise the major portion of the Sangam literature. In this context it is appropriate to quote Vithiananthan who concludes:

"It is very unfortunate that we have lost the names of all the Dravidian gods except Murukan. Most probably by this time they were identified with the Aryan gods of similar attributes and had lost their identity altogether. By the end of this period even Murukan becomes identified with Skanda, the son of Śiva".<sup>1</sup>

Three other facts may also be pointed out at this stage. One is that the mixture of the conventional love theme with religious aspects assigns the chronology of the work Pari. to a later date than the other anthologies of love poems, while at the same time the mingling of religion and conventional love tends to suggest that this is an earlier work than the TMP. The other is that the later commentators and the Śaiva Siddhānta philosophers have interpreted the consorts of Lord Murukan as being his inherent energy - Teyvayānai is energy of action (kiriya catti) and Valliyamma is energy of desire (icca catti). In actual worship however, the supreme place of honour is reserved for the male deity although he accompanies Teyvayānai and Valliyamma. The third significant fact is that in all the shrines of Murukan of the present day a prominent place is reserved for Teyvayānai, though not very often for Valliyamma. Even at present the Aryan aspect of Lord Murukan is accorded greater prominence in actual religious practice.

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1. Vithiananthan, op.cit., p.104.

### Introduction of akam into Religious Poetry

The Pari. is perhaps the earliest religious work in which the akam themes are introduced. Out of a total of eight poems in praise of Murukan, the akam theme figures prominently in four poems while the remaining poems are devoid of it. These poems are essentially religious. The akam theme is, however, absent from the other earliest religious work, TMP.

The major portion of poem No.8 is devoted to describing a secular love episode which is loosely connected to the main religious theme. Only the introductory and the concluding parts of the poem are in praise of Murukan. The poet presents the akam theme ūtal, 'love quarrel between husband and wife appropriate to the agricultural land' in the form of a dialogue between the hero, the heroine, and the female companion. The heroine starts quarrelling with the hero when he returns home after seeking the company of the courtesan. The love episode in this poem is expressed without any special regard for the convention relating to the five tiṅai, 'poetic situations' because there is no special emphasis on marutam, 'agricultural land' the tiṅai with which ūtal, 'love quarrel' was associated; but on the contrary it is described in a poem composed in praise of Murukan and his hill abode Parankunram.<sup>1</sup> The poet,

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1. It will be recalled that kuriñci, the hilly tract, is appropriate to pupartal, union of lover and beloved.

speaks of varaiyā nukarcci, 'clandestine union between lovers before marriage without the knowledge of others' in the grove of Parāṅkuṅṅam and of nannar puṅarcci 'enjoyment of sexual union by the lovers' at the foot of the hill;<sup>1</sup> but in this poem 'love quarrel' is treated in greater detail than 'sexual union'.

The main subject of the poem is Murukan, his supremacy, his magnificent holy abode, Parāṅkuṅṅam, and his divine nature of showering grace on the devotees. This main subject is continuously in the mind of the poet although the love-theme is presented in an elaborate setting. The introductory portion is devoted mainly to describing the god's supremacy, and his abode and its vicinity while the concluding part is reserved mainly for describing the modes of worship of the devotees and his graciousness.

We may now cite poem No.9 as one in which akam is tinged with a religious aspect. The entire poem is devoted to describing ūṭai, 'love quarrel' between Murukan and his consorts Teyvayāṅṅai and Valli, except for a portion in which the poet describes in a nutshell the 'kaḷavu form of union' and 'kappu form of union' as well, outlining their importance.<sup>2</sup> It has already been discussed whether the description of the love quarrel between Murukan and his consorts complies with the requirements of the akam theme relating to the five tinai.<sup>3</sup> The description of the 'kaḷavu form of union' and the 'kappu form of union', on the other hand, deserve a detailed analysis.

1. Pari., 8:39-46.

2. Ibid., 9:14-25.

3. Supra, p.92.

The former is described as the best form of love, characterised by the sincerest mental attachment between two persons of opposite sex, who never knew each other before the union and are guided by destiny and intensely loving hearts.<sup>1</sup> The latter is described as resting upon a 'temporary love quarrel' which takes place because of the lover's irresponsible act of straying from the path of virtue and seeking the company of the courtesan.<sup>2</sup> Thereupon, on behalf of the hero, the mediators come to the scene to appease the heroine who is displeased with her lover. When the hero is reminded of the menstrual period of the heroine he returns home to be united with her. This union is entirely enhanced by ūṭal. Hence, the kaḷavu form of union is described as the best form of love, for in this form of union the hero never parts from his wife to seek the courtesan's company and consequently the heroine has absolutely no need to indulge in a love quarrel with her lover. The poet, therefore, states that it is only those who have not fully analysed the contents of poruḷiyal in Tamil who are likely to give up the kaḷavu form of union.<sup>3</sup> The poet thereupon proceeds to illustrate this kaḷavu form by citing as an example the kaḷavu union of Murukan and Valli. What the poet emphasises is that even Murukan desired the kaḷavu form of union.

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1. Pari., 9:14-5.
  2. Ibid., 9:16-20.
  3. Ibid., 9:25-6.

Two facts emerge from this description. One is the idea that prevailed during the period of this work regarding the 'kaḷavu form of union'; and the other is that the poet employs a secular love theme to illustrate the purānic story of Murugaṅ marrying Valli, the poetic pattern of which the poet may have thought would appeal more vividly to the mind of the reader.<sup>1</sup> This is perhaps the earliest poem in which the akam theme is employed in an elaborate setting, the characters being a god and two goddesses. The expression poruḷiyal,<sup>2</sup> the study of which is stated as essential, indicates that this poem was composed after Tolkāppiyam.

Like the early anthologies of love poems, Pari. poem No.14 contains a note in the colophon on the point in the love sequence upon which it was uttered by the female companion.<sup>3</sup> It says that the friend intercedes with Murukavēḷ on behalf of her mistress; she prays that the lover may now come, as the season is suitable. There is, however, no such love episode in the poem; in its entirety it is devoted to Murugaṅ and his hill abode. The descriptions of the bamboo, compared to the shoulders of the ladies,<sup>4</sup> and of the call or cry of the peacocks, compared to the voice of those who call for the

1. Infra, Ch.IV, p.266.

2. Poruḷiyal in this context means the sections (4) of Tol., Poruḷatikāram that treats of love poetry.

3. The other poems, however, have no such note in their colophons; but such a note appears with all the poems in praise of Tirumāl. Only one poem in praise of Vaiyai is accompanied by such a note.

4. Pari., 14:5-6.

heroes who left the heroines after sexual union,<sup>1</sup> are merely employed to portray the hill abode. The latter simile is used to make vivid the religious descriptive material. This poem may, therefore, be regarded as wholly religious and the note in the colophon is probably an interpolation. There are two reasons for this interpretation. One is that the poem contains no love episode as stated in the note and the other is that such a note is not appended to any other poems in praise of Murukan, where the akam theme figures prominently.

Two different akam episodes are described in poem No.18; one is a love quarrel between a hunter and his lady-love,<sup>2</sup> and in the other the Pānan appeases the heroine on behalf of the hero who sought the company of the courtesan.<sup>3</sup> In both these descriptions a suitable reply with a subtle poetic hint is expressed, reminiscent of some early love poems. The reply in the former runs thus:

"O my darling! you scorned me. Amazed by your beauty I watched the distress of the peacock at its inability to match your beauty by which even it was enchanted".<sup>4</sup>

The latter episode may be summarised thus:

"O Pānan! your song is full of lies. The marks on the body

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1. Ibid., 7-9.
  2. Parī., 18:7-13.
  3. Ibid., 18:15-21.
  4. Ibid., 18:7-10.

of the hero exhibit his association with the courtesan."<sup>1</sup>

The former suggests that the hero, though enchanted by the beauty of the peacock, denies it as it will hurt the feelings of his lady-love; and the latter indicates the heroine's awareness of the hero's seeking the association of the courtesan. These descriptions of the love episodes are entirely subordinate to the main religious descriptive material, or in other words, the love-episodes are loosely incorporated with the main religious theme, the description of Murukan and his hill abode.

Lastly, two passages in poem No.21 may be cited to illustrate the description of secular love. One describes how the lady-love casts angry looks on her husband and indulges in a love quarrel thinking that he might be mesmerised by the beauty of the maid whose dancing they were watching. It also portrays how the lady-love continued her ūtal having arranged her ornaments standing in front of a mirror and applied the smeared scented sandal paste on her chest in order to distract the attention of her lover from the dancing maid.<sup>2</sup> The other describes the hero and the heroine playing in a pond. The heroine starting to drown, and the hero leaping into the water and saving her.<sup>3</sup> These incidents are linked to the description of Murukan's hill abode Parankunram. These secular love episodes are,

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1. Ibid., 18:17-21.
  2. Pari., 21:18-26.
  3. Ibid., 21:39-45.

however, subordinate, as the poem abounds in descriptions connected with the religious theme. The introductory, as well as the concluding parts of the poem, clearly indicate that the image of Murukan was continuously in the mind of the poet.

A few significant facts emerge from the five poems enumerated and discussed above. These poems, according to the love themes, may be classified as follows. (1) Poems No.13 and 21 are similar in that the akan episodes are introduced discontinuously to describe the hill abode of Murukan. In these poems, the love aspects are mainly descriptive and entirely subordinate to the main subject-matter of the poems. (2) The religious theme in poem No.8, wherein the love theme is presented in greater detail to describe love quarrel in the form of a dialogue, is subordinate to the love theme. (3) The religious and the love themes are equally dominant in poem No.9, as the love theme is presented with the puranic story of Murukan marrying Valli and there is plenty of religious descriptive material around it. (4) Poem No.14 cannot be regarded as a love poem though the note in the colophon of the poem states that it was uttered at a particular point in a love sequence.

The other fact is that though the poets present love themes in these poems, the religious aspects are continuously in their minds as the introductory as well as the concluding parts of these poems are in praise of Murukan and his hill-abodes, and the love theme comes

in between. The secular love theme perhaps stirred the desire of the readers to study the poems more and more.

Another striking feature in all these poems is the incident of the love quarrel which is more dominant than any other secular love theme. This is a clear indication of the poet's delight in describing the theme ūtal in religious poems; perhaps "the delight of love is the lovers' quarrel; greater delight is the loving reunion".<sup>1</sup>

This analysis has also shown conclusively that there is a tendency to depart from the rigid conventions of akam poetry, and a further tendency for love themes to be dealt with in religious poems. In other words, the poets of Pari. employ the conventional love themes in their religious poems without following the rigid conventions of the early akam poetry, perhaps thinking that this poetic pattern may appeal more to the readers. It has also been clearly shown that, though akam themes are incorporated in these poems, they are not mingled with religious significance as in the case of Tēvāram. The marked difference is that the poets of Pari. describe secular love as it is, without introducing religious significance, unlike the Tēvāram where Śiva is generally spoken of as a lover and the bhakta is compared to the lady whom he loves. It may, therefore, be suggested that the love themes employed in these earliest religious poems in Pari. probably led the Tēvāram saints to employ the analogy of secular

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1. TK., 1330.

love and union to religious love and union.

Finally, this secular love theme in the poems in praise of Murukan, and more particularly other poems in praise of Tirumāl and Vaiyai, are probably the reasons for Nampiyāṅṅār Nampi excluding this work from the Śaiva Tirumurai, a series of Śaivite sacred songs. On the other hand, the predominant religious characteristics of TMP and the story behind it, attributed to the author Nakkīrar, most probably caused its inclusion in the eleventh book of the Śaiva Tirumurai. Because of its predominantly religious characteristics, it has become the sacred poem and the daily liturgy of the devotees of Murukan while the inclusion of secular love and the poems in praise of Tirumāl and Vaiyai led to the work Pari not being held sacred by the Śaivites.

### Shrines of Murukan

Even though six abodes of Murukan are claimed to be described in separate sections of the TMP, only four can be identified with existing shrines - namely, Tirupparankunṅam, Tiruccīralaivāy, Tiru āvinankuṭi and Tiruvērakam. These will now be examined.

Tirupparankunṅam is the most important and is elaborately described in the Pari also. The location of this shrine is clearly stated in the TMP to be west of Maturai;<sup>1</sup> but the existing hill-shrine is five miles south-west of the city. We may, therefore, infer that the old city was situated in a different location. In the TMP the

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1. māṭa māli marukir kūṭar kuṭavayin. TMP, 71.

location of the shrine is portrayed as a picturesque place surrounded by splendid natural beauty - "the little rock pools resound with the humming of the bees which fly over buds that blossom like eyes; they sleep in the lotus flower during the night, flitting to the neytal blooms at dawn, and then shifting to other flowers later on".<sup>1</sup> In the Pari. too, there are a number of descriptions of the hill and the shrine. The hill Parāṅkuṅgam with its spring of water is likened to the Himalaya and its lake.<sup>2</sup> The singing of songs and the dancing in groups at the shrine, to the accompaniment of cymbals resounding from the rocky hill, are also described.<sup>3</sup> We also have allusions to the playing of the flute, the beating of drums, and sweet music from the yāl.<sup>4</sup> Pari. No.17 alludes to a very significant practice of those days, that of worshipping the kaṭampu tree. It is stated that several people brought various oblations, and worshipped the vēlan kaṭimaram, 'the guardian tree of Vēlan' at Parāṅkuṅgam.<sup>5</sup> From this we may assume that the image of Murukan was worshipped under the shade of a big kaṭampu tree. Even Śiva and Viṣṇu, the most important of the gods worshipped by present-day Hindus, both appear to have had no temples in the distant past. The liṅgam, the universal emblem of Śiva, is seen not only in temples, but

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1. Ibid., 72-7.

2. Pari., 8:11.

3. Ibid., 9:71-3 and 17:9-13.

4. Ibid., 17:9-13.

5. Ibid., 17:1-4.

in the midst of dense forests with no covering over it except the branches of the sacred vilvam tree. It is also reasonable to conclude that music and dancing played a significant role in the life of the people of Maturai. There must have been professional singers, instrumentalists and dancers in the city. They would probably have visited the shrine at Parāṅkunram to give performances. What is most striking is that we do not find any reference to music and dancing at Maturai in the hymns of Campantar and Appar, because Maturai was ruled by the Jains during the period of these two saints, and as a result music and dance must have been at a low ebb.

Tiruccīralaivāy is given second place in importance in the TMP, and is identified with the modern Tiruccentūr. The name, 'Tiruccīralaivāy' is interpreted as "the sacred spot of the everlasting waves".<sup>1</sup> In early Tamil poetry, this shrine is referred to as 'Centil',<sup>2</sup> or 'Alavāy',<sup>3</sup> and in TMP too it is mentioned as 'Alavāy'. This tends to suggest that in later times, probably under the influence of strong Śaivite activity, the prefix, tiru, which denotes sacredness, was attached to alavāy. In the section 'Tiruccīralaivāy', the poet in an elaborate setting describes the arrival of Murukan seated on the celestial elephant, and the special attributes of his six faces and twelve arms, but there is no hint as to the location of the shrine except for the mere mention of the name 'Alavāy'. We may infer from

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1. Somasundaram, J.M., Tiruchendur, p.72.

2. PN, 55:18-19; AN, 266:20-21.

3. TMP, 125.

the description that the deity worshipped at Tirucciralaivāy was a six-faced, twelve-armed statue. The present temple 'Tiruccentūr' is located on the sea-shore, although the rest of Muruga's shrines are located on hills. The variance here is interpreted as "possibly due to Muruga's divine mission to free the Devas, and the conquest of Cūrapanman and his mighty hosts in their mid-ocean fortress nearby. So, the Puranas narrate, the Devas gained their deliverance and the Asuras his grace".<sup>1</sup>

Tiru Avinankuṭi is described in TMP as the third of the six favourite hill resorts of Muruga. The commentator Naccinārkkiniyar says that it was known in the days of Avvaiyār as 'Cittanvālvu'.<sup>2</sup> He probably came to this conclusion because in the veppā beginning with the line nallampar of Avvaiyār, she refers to a cittanvālvu. Cittan is one of the many names of Muruga.<sup>3</sup> This shrine is also said to take the name Avinankuṭi, 'the prosperous dwelling of Avi', after Avi-Vēlāvi-of the family of Vēlir Chiefs, one of whom was Perumpēkaṅ, one of the Seven Patrons of Tamil letters.<sup>4</sup> The name is also interpreted differently thus: tiru, 'Lakshmi', ā, 'kānatēnu, inan 'Sun', ku, 'Earth' and ti, 'fire'. All of these worshipped Śiva and earned their grace in that place. This interpretation, however, appears to be fallacious, for the prefix tiru, which denotes sacredness, is attached to the names of the other three shrines

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1. Somasundaram, J.M., Tiruchendur, p.2.
  2. Pattuppāṭṭu, ed. by Cāminātaiyar with the commentary of Naccinārkkiniyar, p.41.
  3. Ibid., see footnotes.
  4. Somasundaram, J.M., Palni, The Sacred Hill of Muruga, p.12.

described in TMP. Apart from the description in the last two lines of the section telling how Murukan with his young consort came to rest for some days at Tiru āvinakūṭi, we have no other evidence about the location of the shrine. The poet, however, praises the spot in many lines describing an aerial procession of gods and goddesses of surpassing elegance. A deputation of the three great gods, Viṣṇu, Śiva and Indra, sages, celestial choristers, thirty minor gods, and the other exalted ones waiting upon Murukan to plead on behalf of the god Brahmā, is described. This shrine is identified by some with a small place called 'Cittayvalavu' near Paḷani, a famous place sacred to Subrahmanya; but many believe it to be the present Paḷani hill itself. Arunakiriṅātar, a poet who lived in Tiruvannāmalai in the 15th century A.D., composed 95 tiruppukal, 'poems in various cantam verses in praise of Skanda to Paḷani and its presiding Lord.

The next shrine described in the TMP is Tiruvērakam which is said to be a shrine of Subrahmanya in the hill country of Malabar. It is popularly identified with Cuvāmimalai, an artificial hill temple four miles from Kumpakōṇam, and 20 miles from Tanjore. Arunakiriṅātar also identified Tiruvērakam with Cuvāmimalai.<sup>1</sup> The entire section 'Tiruvērakam' in TMP is devoted to describing the brahmins and their religious lives, except for the last line, in which Murukan's abode is mentioned as Erakam.<sup>2</sup> The prefix tiru was probably

1. Tiruppukal, 209, 227.

2. The location of Erakam near Kumpakōṇam is of interest; Tanjore District to this day contains a higher percentage of brahmins.

added in later times. From the description in TMP it is made explicit that the brahmins were the officiating priests of the shrine, and conducted the daily pūjā according to Vedic traditions. Furthermore, we may infer from the descriptions that the place Erakam probably had a large brahman population; it was the centre of their activity.

The fifth section in TMP is Kunrutōrājal, 'dancing on the hills' or 'god's play on all the hills', and it throws light on the true meaning of the conception of Murukan among the early Tamils. In Tol., as we have already seen, 'Cēyōṅ' is assigned to the mountainous region, and as such his shrines are always considered to be amid mountains and forests, which are dear to him. Murukan is described as embracing the people in kuravai, 'dance in a circle prevalent among the women of hill tracts', and plays on the hills, and showers his endless grace.<sup>1</sup> Therefore, Murukan is seen here mixing freely with the hunting tribes of the mountain region in their dances and drinking bouts. The significance of this aspect is interpreted thus:

"This is how god showers His graciousness. He is all in all to all, to high and the low, the lettered and the unlettered, the sage and saviour. To all of them He is accessible and shows grace...."<sup>2</sup>. Another interpretation of Murukan in association with the hill country

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1. TMP, 215-7.

2. Somasundaram, J.M., Two thousand years of Tamil literature, p.77.  
(see footnotes).

is that god is manifested in nature or beauty. The mountain region and its forests abound in luxuriant vegetation and flowers, waterfalls and ponds, animals and birds. The saint saw god in these awe-inspiring mountainous settings.

The last section in TMP is Palamutircōlai, 'a grove of ripe fruits', which is interpreted as hills in general by some commentators, as a particular hill called Aḷakarmalai by others. Somasundaram suggests that "the common identity of Palamutircōlai with Aḷakarkōyil on the Aḷakar-hills, 13 miles away from Maturai, has to be considered", because of the mention of the names 'Tirumāl kuṅṅam' and 'Tirumālirunōlai' in the earlier Tamil literature, including Pari.<sup>1</sup> He is also of the opinion that Palamutircōlai may be one of the many shrines on the lower Paḷanis, and the neighbouring groups of hills in the Pāṅṅi nāṅu.<sup>2</sup> This is supported by two passages in this section. Firstly, the highly poetical passage which portrays the rushing waterfalls leaping in sheets, sweeping away the trees and the products of the hills causing monkeys, elephants and peacocks to shiver with cold and driving bears to refuge in caves; and secondly another beautiful passage which describes the modes of worship of the hunting tribes of the mountainous region in an elaborate setting.

All the abodes of Murukan have been examined so far based purely on the descriptions in TMP, except for Tirupparankuṅṅam, which is

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1. Ibid., p.78 (Cil., XI, 91-100; Ibid., XI, 108. Pari., 15:22-3.  
2. Ibid.

referred to in some of the poems in the Pari. too. It is surprising to note the absence of the other shrines, Tiru āvinankuṭi, Tiruccīralaivāy and Tiruvērakam from the Pari. Five of the eight poems describe Parāṅkunram and its presiding Lord;<sup>1</sup> the remaining poems refer to hills in general.<sup>2</sup> These three poems were perhaps composed to emphasise that Murukan dwells on all hills even as was suggested for the section 'Kunrutōṅṅāṭal' in the TMP. It may be suggested that the poets of Pari. also composed poems in praise of the other three shrines since 23 poems are lost to us if the information given in the veppā of unknown date and authorship, that there were 31 poems in praise of Murukan in Pari., is correct.

#### Concept of bhakti.

The Pari. and the TMP are perhaps the earliest works in which the devotee's love or bhakti of Murukan is quite explicitly expressed, conveying not merely 'love of God' but also a deeper, mystical union with the Almighty. The language and the expression bear ample evidence to the personal experience of the poets; the outpouring of their hearts gives us a true picture of their spiritual elevation. This applies particularly to the poet of TMP. Apart from describing the beatific nature of Murukan and singing his glories with devotion, the poets of these two works

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1. Pari., poem Nos. 8, 9, 17, 19 and 21.

2. Ibid., poem Nos. 5, 14 and 18.

display bhakti as the means of salvation, portraying his holy feet as the refuge of the devotees, and representing his holy faces and holy arms as granting spiritual boons.

The devotee's approach to the holy feet of Murukan is described in three places in the TMP. In one, the poet promises the immediate fulfilment of the desire for salvation if the devotees, with the supreme intention of attaining the sacred feet of Murukan, pursue the path of righteousness and move towards self-realisation.<sup>1</sup> In another, he recommends devotees to sing praises with faces beaming with joy, to adore him with palms folded on the head, and to prostrate themselves at his holy feet, at whatever shrine they happen to see his image.<sup>2</sup> In the third, the devotee's desire to achieve the holy feet of Murukan through bhakti is described.<sup>3</sup> Thavamony cites the reference anpuṭai nannoli,<sup>4</sup> 'good words expressive of love (for god)' as clear indication that the TMP teaches bhakti in its technical, religious sense and also points out that this evidence is all the more important since the work belongs to early Tamil literature.<sup>5</sup>

On the other hand, the poets of Pari also often describe the shade of the holy feet as the place of surrender and final liberation

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1. TMP, 62-6.
  2. Ibid., 250-2.
  3. Ibid., 279.
  4. Ibid., 292.
  5. IG, p.126.

for the devotees. Only the virtuous and those who are extolled by ascetics will reach the shade of the holy feet of Murukan, and therefore, to achieve that status, one should worship him for his divine grace, love and virtue, but not for wealth, gold and enjoyment, which are worldly possessions detrimental to final liberation.<sup>1</sup> The commentator says that anpu, 'bhakti' creates aru, 'divine grace' which causes final liberation, and that aran, 'virtue', can be obtained through both divine grace and love.<sup>2</sup>

The reason for this interpretation is that love mollifies, softens and melts hearts quicker than any other passion, reaching its highest stage in the final realization of God. Kunrampūtanār describes how the lovers of Murukan, who worship him with their heads bowed and praise him in prayer, long to secure a permanent place in the shade of the holy feet.<sup>3</sup> Nallaccutanār speaks of the devotee who praises the Lord in worship not only for his own

liberation but also for the salvation of all other devotees in the shade of the holy feet.<sup>4</sup> Nappannanār sings of the devotee who with fellow devotees, sings the praise of Murukan who resides under the shade of the kaṭampu tree on Parāṅkunram.<sup>5</sup> These descriptions show conclusively that bhakti is fostered and developed by steady longing

1. Parī., 5:77-80.

2. nanṅamar āyamotu orunku nin paṭiyurai m. ed. by Cāminātaiyar  
inrupōl iyaikenap paravutam. Ibid.,

3. Ibid., 19:103-5.

4. nanṅamar āyamotu orunku nin paṭiyurai  
inrupōl iyaikenap paravutam. Ibid., 21, 68-9.

5. Ibid., 19:103-5.

for the holy feet of Murukan and constant meditation on him by such means of worship as constant thinking, praising through hymns, adoration with palms joined together, and prostration.

What strikes the readers of the poems in Pari, is the devotee's bhakti which creates in him the absolute trust and confidence in the power of Murukan and in the efficacy of his grace, because he goes to the extent of adoring the jewel-like hill where the Lord is housed,<sup>1</sup> worshipping the kaṭimaram under the shade of which he resides,<sup>2</sup> and longing to secure domicile at the foot of his hill-shrine Parāṅkuṅgam.<sup>3</sup> Similar poetic techniques and situations are employed to describe secular love in the early akan poetry.

All the descriptions of bhakti examined above, although cited as explicitly revealing the devotion and love of devotees in general towards Murukan, can also be taken as a true picture of the spiritual aspiration of the poets in particular. This is true in the case of TMP, as it describes the bhakta - author who has received the spiritual blessings of Murukan and directs other devotees who seek after liberation to approach him and obtain his grace. The current story about the author of this work also bears evidence of this fact.<sup>4</sup> On the other hand, although the poets of Pari.

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1. aṇinetuṅ kuṅgam pāṭum tolutum. Ibid., 17:51.

2. velaṅ kaṭimaram paravinar. Ibid., 17:3-4.

3. kuṅrattu aṭiyurai iyaikkenap paravutum. Ibid., 21:16.

4. Supra, Ch.1, p.10.

are not celebrated as saints and spiritual personalities, the description bears testimony to the profound spiritual experience which they underwent as bhaktas.

Murukan's response, however, to those who worship him with bhakti is presented through his splendid appearance. We have already mentioned the six faces and the twelve arms, of which four faces and two arms are represented as showering spiritual boons not only on those who love him but also on the people of the whole world. The face which is described as diffusing countless rays of light and as dispelling the dense darkness of the world,<sup>1</sup> and the arm which is portrayed as causing abundant rains,<sup>2</sup> show clearly his practice of granting boons to the whole world. The other three faces and the other arm shower spiritual boons on those who love him: one face casts a gracious look on the devotees who praise him, and grants the boon for which they pray with love and joy;<sup>3</sup> the other watches with interest the sacrifices of the brahmins who recite mantiram and worship according to the Veda,<sup>4</sup> the third teaches the hidden truths and enlightens the minds of sages,<sup>5</sup> and the arm garlands with the bridal wreath the maiden who lives in

- 
1. TMP, 91-2.
  2. Ibid., 115-6.
  3. TMP, 93-4.
  4. Ibid., 95-6.
  5. Ibid., 97-8.

heaven.<sup>1</sup> The reference kātalīṅ uvantu varaṅ koṭuttanrē,<sup>2</sup> 'gladly grants spiritual bestowal out of love' is a remarkable expression of Murugaṅ's love for his devotee. In addition, the references such as "the glorious Lord grants the favour of release from the sorrow of rebirth, and brings the most enjoyable bliss",<sup>3</sup> "the Lord who is adorned with jewels made of gold grants grace to those who suffer from distress",<sup>4</sup> and "the Lord embraces and showers his grace on those who approach him",<sup>5</sup> clearly demonstrate the spiritual blessings granted by Murugaṅ to his bhaktas.

These expressions, or even the term appu, conveying the meaning of spiritual blessings of Murugaṅ in response to his devotees' love, do not figure in the poems in Pari., although the steadfast longing of the bhakta for the holy feet of the Lord is prominently displayed, especially in the concluding part of each poem. In other words, though the devotee lovingly takes refuge at Murugaṅ's feet in order to live a divine life, the god's response is not explicitly expressed. The mystic union into which the god enters with the mind of his lover, and the way in which the beloved of god in turn, commits himself to god and surrenders entirely to him, is explicitly expressed only in the Tēvāram.

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1. Ibid., 116-7.

2. Ibid., 94.

3. nacaiyunarkku ārttum icai pērāḷa. Ibid., 270.

4. alarntōrku aḷikkum polampūncēey. Ibid., 271.

5. akalattup paricilar tāṅkum urukeluneṭuvēel. Ibid., 272-3.

### Modes of Murukan worship

Of the various aspects of religious significance seen in these earliest works, the modes of worship of the Tamils, and the role of the brahmans as officiating priests in some of the shrines of Murukan, deserve detailed analysis. We have conclusive evidence in our sources for Murukan worship then, as now, consisting of going to different abodes, worshipping or taking part in congregational worship, offering various oblations, worshipping the deity with songs and dances, conducting religious festivals and so on.

The Pari. hymns reveal the manner in which this worship was conducted. We have references to the practice of people worshipping Murukan, sometimes in the morning, and sometimes in the evening. Nallaliciyār speaks of people worshipping in the evening,<sup>1</sup> while Nappannaṅār describes how men and women proceed towards Parāṅkuṅgam to pay homage early in the morning.<sup>2</sup> These men and women, garbed in fine clothes and expensive ornaments, proceeded on horseback or in chariots.<sup>3</sup> This is clear indication that devotees in those days made use of vehicles and animals to travel to Murukan's abodes. The current theory that devotees should not go on vehicles or animals to temples was perhaps not observed during this period. In other words, the theory was perhaps formulated at a later date by Āṅmuka Nāvalar himself.<sup>4</sup>

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1. Pari., 17:7.
  2. Ibid., 19:14-5.
  3. Ibid., 19:12-3.
  4. CVV, II, p.76.

The subject matter of TMP also bears evidence to the fact that devotees went to different abodes of Murukan in order to obtain his grace. In the TMP, as we have already mentioned, the bhakta who has received spiritual blessings from Murukan directs other devotees who seek liberation to approach him and obtain his grace. The poem in fact describes the six hill shrines where he dwells, and how to reach those shrines.

The practice of people going to shrines on vehicles and animals and taking part in congregational worship is more clearly brought out in the description of the Pāṅṭiyan's visit to Parāṅkuraṅgam. In this description, the way in which the Pāṅṭiyan, along with his ministers, womenfolk, and citizens, worshipped the abode in a clockwise direction, is compared to the moon and constellations going round mount Mēru; and the premises where the people tethered the elephants to different trees, removing the horses from the paths and pushing aside the chariots, are compared to the encampment of an army.<sup>1</sup> A review of this description makes clear three facts: firstly the king himself went to worship Murukan in his abode, and his visit was celebrated with pomp and glory. Secondly, it was the custom, even during this period, for the devotees to worship the shrine in a clockwise direction, and this mode of worship survives even today. Thirdly, the elephants, horses and chariots, were

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1. Pari., 19:18-35.

perhaps used to transport the people in great numbers to celebrate the king's visit, and this is obvious evidence of people travelling to temples on vehicles and animals for congregational worship.

Offering various oblations to Murukan was another characteristic of the mode of worship of the period. Nallaliciyār presents a graphic picture of the devotees who worship the Lord at Parāṅkunṅam offering flowers, leaves, silk clothes, gems and spears, with songs sung in praise of Him.<sup>1</sup> The practice of offering a spear made of silver or gold for the fulfilment of a vow made to Murukan is in existence among the Śaivites even at present.

Nallantuvaṅār, on the other hand, describes the devotees who offer sandalwood, incense, lighted lamps, fragrant flowers, drums, gems, peacocks, axes, elephants and various other oblations dear to Murukan, in worship.<sup>2</sup> The offering of peacocks and elephants is proof that devotees donated living things as oblations. Even if only images or statues of these animals were offered, they were offered because they were the vehicles beloved by Murukan.

The poet also speaks of ladies worshipping the lord for various material benefits. Some ladies worship the Lord asking him to grace them with success in love,<sup>3</sup> some to grace them with conception;<sup>4</sup>

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1. Ibid.; 17:1-4.

2. Ibid.; 8:97-102.

3. Ibid.; 8:103-105.

4. karu vayiru urukenak kaṭampaṭuvōrum. Ibid., 8:106.

some for wealth<sup>1</sup> and others for the victory of their husbands in war.<sup>2</sup> All these clearly prove that Śaivite worship and religious practice derives its meaning from the bhakti that motivates them. The worshippers believed that all the oblations were to be offered with inner devotion and love for Murukan. To such worshippers, the god granted both spiritual blessings as well as material benefits. Apart from these, references may be cited from TMP for the practice of animal sacrifice. In the section 'Palamutircōlai' the poet describes the festivals conducted in honour of Murukan on holy days, in which the banner that bore the image of a cock was installed, gifts of millet and flowers were served, and rams were given in sacrifice.<sup>3</sup>

Music and dancing must have become an essential part of Murukan worship as it is referred to in a number of places in our sources. Nallantuvanār speaks of devotees singing songs to time measure and dancing to tāla.<sup>4</sup> Nallaḷiciyār delights in describing Parāṅkuṅṅam in association with sweet music and beautiful dancing. He compares the sweet music played on the yāl by Pāṅar to the sweet singing of the crickets; the sweet melody of the flute to the humming of bees, the beating of the drums to the sound of the mountain streams, and the dancing of ladies to the rustling of creepers.<sup>5</sup> Nallantuvanār

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1. ceyporuḷ vāykenac cevi cārttuvōrum. Ibid., 8:107.

2. aiyamar aḷukeṇa ariccippōrum. Ibid., 8:108.

3. TMP, 218-20.

4. pāḷuvār pāṅicirum aḷuvār arāṅkattālamum. Pari., 8:109.

5. Ibid., 17:9-16.

speaks of two different types of flutes played by the musicians at Parāṅkuṅṅam; one has seven holes and the other five.<sup>1</sup> Kuṅṅampūṭaṅṅār refers to music and dance competitions in the abode of Murukaṅṅ at Parāṅkuṅṅam.<sup>2</sup> From all these, we may reasonably conclude that Parāṅkuṅṅam was famous for music and dancing. Nallaṅṅiciyār's description clearly indicates that songs were sung by groups of people to the accompaniment of various musical instruments, while beautiful ladies performed dances. Another aspect described in all these references, is that music and dancing were performed not merely out of bhakti but also for pure enjoyment. On the contrary, not much mention of music and dancing at Parāṅkuṅṅam is made in TMP, and this applies also to the other five abodes of Murukaṅṅ, except for the descriptions of dances performed by young girls ; tupaṅṅkai performed by Pēymakaṅṅ, 'She-devil' at Parāṅkuṅṅam, kuravai at Kuṅṅrutōrāṅṅal, and veriyāṅṅal at Paṅṅamutircōlai - which will be examined shortly. There are, however, references to brahmans chanting the mystic formula of six letters in the section about Tiruvērakam;<sup>3</sup> to the sound of the drums of the gods, blowing of horns and conches, and the beating of drums in the section 'Tiruccīralaivāy'<sup>4</sup> and to celestial damsels playing sweet music on yāṅṅ in the section about Tiru āviṅṅaṅṅuṅṅi.<sup>5</sup> There is no mention of any of these things in Pari.

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1. Ibid., 8:22.
  2. Ibid., 9:72-3.
  3. TMP, 186-7.
  4. Ibid., 119-21.
  5. Ibid., 140-1.

From these references we may legitimately conclude that songs were sung in the presence of Murukan both in Tamil and Vedic Sanskrit and probably to the accompaniment of musical instruments.

There is evidence in our sources to suggest that during this period, in some shrines of Murukan, the religious ceremonies were officiated at and perpetuated by brahman priests while in certain other shrines, ceremonies were conducted by the worshippers themselves. The description of one face of the god guarding the sacrifices performed by the brahmans<sup>1</sup> throws light on the fact that the brahmans functioned as officiating priests in the shrine at Tirucciralaivāy. The reference also makes explicit that the rites in the shrine were performed according to Vedic tradition. Besides this, from the description in the section 'Tiruvērakam', we can reasonably conclude that Tiruvērakam was a prominent holy centre of brahman activities tending sacred fires, performing rites with full devotion, keeping folded palms on their heads in adoration, offering fragrant flowers to Murukan at proper times and so on. These, therefore, furnish ample evidence to show that the ritual in these two shrines was performed by brahman priests and the worshippers probably offered their oblations through them.

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1. Ibid., 95-6.

The poet, however, presents a different mode of worship in the other sections on Parāṅkuṅṅam, Kuṅṅutōṅṅāṅṅal and Paṅṅamutircōṅṅalai. He speaks of devotees performing ritual worship with song and dance. In the section about Parāṅkuṅṅam, there is a vivid description of a dance<sup>1</sup> performed by young girls who bless the banner of Murukaṅṅ on which is the image of a cock, and wish it great success. All the mountain slopes resound with echoes of their songs. The poet also describes how the girls beautified themselves prior to dancing:

"On their young breasts, shaped like unopened koṅṅku buds, they smear fine-coloured and scented sandal-paste made by grinding the strong, hard and fragrant sandalwood as though sweet-smelling naṅṅutan blooms are being piled; even before the sandal paste dries they spread over it the fine pollen of full bloomed vēṅṅkai".<sup>2</sup>

This description tells us of the mode of worship of the women devotees at Parāṅkuṅṅam, where the women worship directly, without officiating priests. Moreover, it also indicates that unlike current practice, young girls were permitted to go to shrines and to take part in dancing. It is also conclusively proved that the dance was performed in the sacred abode of Murukaṅṅ as a mode of worship. In addition, we have a description of tupaṅṅkai performed by Pēymakaṅṅ, 'she-devil'. This was probably another dance-form used as a mode of worship at Parāṅkuṅṅam by the female devotees of Murukaṅṅ.<sup>3</sup>

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1. Ibid., 52-6.
  2. Ibid., 31-6.
  3. Ibid., 50-6.

Reference can also be cited from Pari. for devotees conducting ritualistic worship of their own at Parāṅkuṅgam. Nappannaṅār describes how the ladies perform pūjā with flowers and water to the domed forehead of the sacred elephant of Murukan on which they applied kūṅkumam, having decorated it with chowries made of the tail of the yak, and raising over it a golden-handled umbrella.<sup>1</sup> On the other hand, Nallantuvanār speaks of devotees offering to the holy feet of Murukan various oblations which are dear to him.<sup>2</sup> Kēcavaṅār, however, differs in his descriptions, for according to him, Lord Murukan at Parāṅkuṅgam is well-pleased with the sacrificial ceremonies of the brahmans,<sup>3</sup> which is clear evidence of the fact that brahmans functioned as officiating priests. All these give us conclusive evidence of Parāṅkuṅgam being an abode open to all to worship on their own, although there were brahman priests to conduct ritualistic rites.

In the section 'Kunrutōṅṅāṭal' the poet speaks of the kuravai dance of the mountain tribes.<sup>4</sup> The men tread the kuravai dance to the small drum's beat, and with them there were damsels whose modest walk is like the strut of the peacock. The 'Red God' descends among them well-decked, dances with them, embraces them, and accepts their offerings. This dance tells us much of the inherent connexions

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1. Pari., 19:85-94.
  2. Ibid., 8:98-102.
  3. Ibid., 14:27-8.
  4. TMP, 197.

between the mountain tribes and the cult of Murukan. The kuravai dance was, therefore, the mode of worship of the people of the hill region, and Murukan was believed to come among them to shower his grace in response to such worship.

Finally, in the section 'Palamutircōlai' the typical Dravidian form of worship veriyāṭal is described. Though the technical term veriyāṭal is used by the early poets for ritualistic dances does not appear in the TMP, the technical terms āṭukalan<sup>1</sup> or veriyāyarkalan,<sup>2</sup> used to refer to 'the floor of the frenzied dance', are mentioned. While they danced in frenzy, songs were sung, horns were blown, bells were rung, and hymns were sung in praise of the sacred elephants of Murukan.<sup>3</sup>

The foregoing analysis and examination taken together point to the conclusion that the three types of dances, tunāṅkai, kuravai and veriyāṭal, figure prominently as the modes of worship of the people of this period. We need not emphasise this point any further; but what strikes the reader is that these dances are given prominence in the TMP as a mode of worship, and that the author directs devout souls who desire liberation and the grace of Murukan to Murukan's abodes. Each of these dance forms was probably associated with a particular shrine - tunāṅkai with Parāṅkunṅam, kuravai with Kunṅutōṅāṭal, and veriyāṭal with Palamutircōlai.

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1. Ibid., 245.
  2. Ibid., 222.
  3. Ibid., 245-7.

Furthermore, the description in the TMP of the young girls who in their worship bless the banner of Murukan and wish it eternal success, and that in the Pari. of the ladies who perform pūjā to the domed forehead of the sacred elephant with flowers and water, tend to suggest that during the period of these two works the devotees worshipped even the banner and the elephant of Murukan. In other words, like the kaṭampu tree which provided shelter to the deity, the peacock and elephant vehicles, the banner and the spear were regarded as sacred and received all acts of worship which were meant for Murukan himself. Subsequently, this practice perhaps contributed greatly to installing the spear, the emblem of Murukan, as the sole object of worship in some of the shrines of the god. Therefore, Arumuka Nāvalar's objection to the installation of the spear in the sanctum sanctorum at Nallūr in Ceylon, is not convincing.<sup>1</sup>

#### Allusions to mythology

Another noteworthy feature of these two works is the richness of allusions to stories that are found in the KP. This throws light on the delight which the poets took in describing the purāṇic personality of Murukan, as well as on the trend of popular opinion in the period. Murukan was a personal god for these poets, and they

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1. Arumuka Nāvalar Perumāṇin pirapantattirattu, (Collection of essays written by Arumuka Nāvalar and compiled by T.Kailāca Pillai), Part 11, p.5.

were naturally inclined to portray his superiority over all others and his graciousness to devotees by attributing to him qualities found in purānic stories which the poets thought would be a source of inspiration to the readers too. These legends cannot be rejected as entirely valueless because fact is bound to be mixed up with fiction. What we find in the Pari. and TMP is not a detailed account of the legends, but only passing references to them, except in a few cases. This in fact indicates not only the conception of the cult of Murukan, but also the way in which the poets used the legends to express their spiritual experiences. This is especially so of the poet of TMP. We may take up for investigation some of the allusions in both these works to certain parts of mythology.

Murukan is popularly depicted as having six faces and twelve arms; and the poets love to address him as ārunukan, 'six-faced'. This is one of the terms by which this god was praised and prayed to in the post-Cōla period (circa A.D.1500), during which time there occurred a tremendous revival of the Murukan cult. We have already examined the description in the section 'Tiruccīralaivāy', of Murukan with six faces and twelve arms, and of their sacred functions<sup>1</sup> and the description in the major portion of poem No.5 in Pari. of how the six-faced god was born to the six presiding deities of

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1. Supra, pp.86-7.

the constellation Pleiades.<sup>1</sup> Besides these two, there is another allusion in which the poet of TMP gives the purānic story in a nutshell:

"O Lord whose forms are six! You were born to six women in the lake full of tarppai grass on the summit of the Himalaya and were taken up in the palms by one of the Five".<sup>2</sup>

The six holy women are the wives of the six sages, and the one of the five is akkini 'God of fire'. We also have another three passing references which merely describe Murukan as six-faced and twelve-armed: "O Lord whose faces are three times two and whose arms are three times four"<sup>3</sup> "With your six faces and six times two arms you desired the love of Valli".<sup>4</sup> "O Lord! you are with six times two arms and six faces".<sup>5</sup> These references come also from his birth to six presiding deities of the constellation Pleiades.

This description of the birth of Skanda, as we have already mentioned, is elaborately described under Urpattikkāṇṭam in the KP. However, the story is outlined in only two of the quoted allusions, one in the TMP, and the other in the Pari. All the remaining allusions merely describe the god as six-faced and twelve-armed. In the rest of early Tamil literature, neither this account of the birth of Murukan nor the references to his six faces and twelve arms are found. Therefore, it is reasonable to conclude that these two works

1. Supra, pp.78-9.

2. TMP, Lines 253-5.

3. mūviru kayantalai munnāṅku muḷavuttōl. Pari., 5:11.

4. arumukkattu āpirutōl.... Ibid., 14:21.

5. āpiru tōḷavai arumukam virittavai. Ibid., 21:67.

belong to the later period, when Tamil literature increasingly came under the influence of Sanskrit literature. In other words, they originated during a period when the Dravidian and the Aryan cultures commingled. There is another opinion which is popularly held, that these two works also belong to early Tamil literature and the purānic legends and the Sanskrit elements may be the result of the religious nature of these poems. On the other hand, the six faces are not fictional; they are not mere idols but representations of ideals. The six faces and twelve arms of Murukan ought not to be taken literally in the gross physical sense, but the significance of the image should be interpreted philosophically as signifying omnipresence.<sup>1</sup>

Murukan is famous for his victory over Cūrapaṇman; the early Tamil poems speak of this acuraṇ as cūr or 'the frightful'. Murukan in fact was originally the war-god of the Dravidian, but this fact is mixed up with the purānic story of Subrahmanya conquering the hostile hosts and their king Sūrapadma.<sup>2</sup> In the battle, when the king of the acurar appeared assuming the form of a mango tree, and was cut into two, the still living parts rose against the victor, who seized them and transformed them into a cock and a peacock, making the former his banner and the latter his vehicle. This purānic story is alluded to in our sources, twice in the TMP and six

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1. Supra, p.90.

2. For a detailed account see Cūrapaṇman vataippaṭalam in KP.

times in the Pari. Of these references, two in each of the works allude to the story in greater detail:

- (a) "The god with the tall and shining spear shaped like a leaf, entered the cold seas full of rocks, and destroyed Cūrapanman, the king of the acurar".<sup>1</sup>
- (b) "The god with the red spear, whose praise is immeasurable and victory faultless, subjugated the avunar by cutting down the mango tree with boughs bowing down with the weight of flowers, and destroyed Cūr who was half man and half-horse".<sup>2</sup>
- (c) "O Lord! to diminish the strength of the acurar who declared total war, you entered the vast earth-borne ocean which is dark blue like rain clouds, and destroyed Cūr".<sup>3</sup>
- (d) "O Lord! to scatter the rocks you entered the vast cold dark-coloured ocean on your glorious elephant and destroyed the mango tree of Cūr with your spear thrown at him, generating sparks of fire".<sup>4</sup>

The other four allusions in the Pari are exclamations. Two

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1. pār mutir paṅkkaṭal kalāṅkavuḷ pukkue  
cūr mutal taṭinta cūṭarilai neṭuvēl. TMP, 45-6.
2. aruveru vakaiyiṅ ancuvara maṅṭi  
avunar nalvala maṭaṅkak kavilinar  
māmutal taṭinta maṅṭuḷ korraṭtu  
eyyā hallicaic cevvēr cēey Ibid., 58-61.
3. pōr etirntu ēṅṅār matukai matantapak  
kāretirnterra kamancūl elilipōl  
nīr nīrantēra nīlantān kaluvattuc  
cūr nīrantu curriya mātaṭutta vēḷṅy Pari., 18:1-4.
4. pāyirum paṅkkaṭal pārtukaḷ paṭappukkue  
cēyuyar piṇimukam ūrntu amarulakkit  
tīyāḷal tuvaippat tīriyaviṭṭerintu  
nōyūṭai nuṭaṅkucūr māmutal taṭintu Ibid., 5:1-4.

refer to cutting down the mango tree,<sup>1</sup> one to destroying Cūr<sup>2</sup> and the other to destroying the mango tree of Cūr.<sup>3</sup>

Allusions (a) and (b) are from the TMP, and (c) and (d) are from Pari., (a) and (c) are quite similar in that they depict the destruction of Cūr; (b) and (d) are also quite similar as they depict the destruction of the mango tree of Cūr. In fact, an examination of the passages would show us that they are really a cluster of ideas strung together by identical words and phrases. The phrases pārmutir paṅikkaṭal in (a) and pāyirum paṅikkaṭal in (d) which are used to describe the vast blue ocean, the phrases avugar nalvalam aṅka in (b) and pōretirntērrār matukai in (c) by which the subjugation of the acurar is portrayed; the phrase māmutal taṅinta in (b) and (d) which is used to describe the destruction of Cūr and the cutting down of the mango tree, and eūr nirantu in (c) and cūrmatal taṅintu in (a) which are used to state the killing of Cūr, explicitly demonstrate this fact. The expression and diction are nearly identical. These allusions, therefore, indicate clearly how one poet made use of the words and phrases of the other in order to describe the same purānic story. At most it may be suggested from what we have already established that the author of TMP repeats the ideas, words and phrases of his predecessors, the poets of Pari.

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1. Ibid., 21:8 and 21:28.

2. Ibid., 14:18.

3. Ibid., 9:70.

That the story concerns the destruction of the mango tree of Cūr is significant. This incident resembles other incidents described in early Tamil poetry, of the kings of dangerous wrath and might destroying their enemies and cutting down their guardian trees.<sup>1</sup> The cutting down of the guardian trees of their enemies in battle by the kings of wrath was considered a symbol of victory. The wrath of several heroes described in early Tamil poetry is also compared with that of Murugaṅ. It was by such comparisons that the early poets heightened the emotional impact of their poems. Therefore what is clear from the allusions which describe Murugaṅ destroying the mango tree of Cūr, is that the poets of TMP and the Pari. have fused the tales of the kings of dangerous wrath and might destroying their enemies and cutting down their guardian trees, with the story of the mighty and wrathful god who destroyed the dreaded Sūrapadma in the form of a mango tree.

The spear or the vēl, according to the Tamils, is the emblem of this divinity and Murugaṅ was often described as vēlōṅ, 'one who holds the spear in his palm'. This vēl is said not only to have cut down the mango tree, but also to have cloven the hill Kiravuñcam, of which an avunaṅ called Kiravuñcaṅ assumed the form. This avunaṅ hid his brother Tārakaṅ who fought with Murugaṅ; and the god split the hill and freed the warriors who were imprisoned in it.<sup>2</sup> This purānic story is referred to in passing in our sources.<sup>3</sup>

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1. PrP, 33:3.

2. For a detailed account, see Tārakaṅ vataippaṭalam in KP.

3. Pari., 19:102-3, TMP, 266.

The god's predominant characteristics being such, it is not at all surprising that the emblem of this divinity, vēl, is the object of worship in some of the shrines of Murukan, especially in most of the shrines in Ceylon, and his worshippers often carry this spear and dance holding it in moments of ecstasy. On festive occasions, the vēl is also taken round the temple in procession. In Northern India, Lord Subrahmanya destroying Tārakan is celebrated with great pomp, while in Tamil country, Subrahmanya killing Sūrapadma is celebrated with stringent religious observances in Murukan shrines. The story of Subrahmanya killing Tārakan as described in Kumārasambhava by Kālidāsa can also be cited as evidence of its popularity in the North. This heroic deed of Subrahmanya was perhaps one of the reasons which led to the Tamils identifying their war-god Murukan with the Aryan god Subrahmanya, also a war-god.

The description of an aerial procession of gods and goddesses going in deputation to Murukan in the section 'Tiru Āvinakūṭi' depicts the poet's delight in portraying Murukan as the highest of all the Hindu Pantheon. Murukan cursed Piraman and compelled him to be born on earth for vaunting that it was he who endowed the spear which brought victory over the acurar to Murukan. Consequently, the other two gods, Śiva and Viṣṇu, could not perform their functions and went in a deputation with the other gods to Murukan to have the curse removed. In this context, it is interesting to note that

Intiraṅ is mentioned along with the other two great Hindu gods Śiva and Viṣṇu for this makes it seem that Intiraṅ was regarded as one of the greatest gods during his period. This fact is clearly indicated as nārperun teyvam,<sup>1</sup> 'the four great gods', which is, however, wrongly interpreted as Intiraṅ, Yamaṅ, Varuṅaṅ and Cōmaṅ even by Naccinārkkiniyar.<sup>2</sup> The reference nārperunteyvam should be interpreted as the four great gods Śiva, Viṣṇu, Intiraṅ and Piramaṅ. This is made clearer by the reference palar pukaḷ mūvar,<sup>3</sup> 'three (gods) extolled by many', which refers to Śiva, Viṣṇu and Intiraṅ. This is because the fourth, Piramaṅ, was in prison, and it was for this reason that the other three led the procession of gods and goddesses to Murukaṅ. Therefore, it is not surprising that the people of this period regarded Murukaṅ as the supreme, the all-pervading spirit of the universe, and the Essence from which all things evolved.

Murukaṅ is, on the other hand, portrayed as the beloved of the daughter of the Kuravas, Valli. To win the heart of Valli he came down to the earth and went to where she was, and subsequently married her. This story is also described under the section Valli tirumaṅappāḷalam in the KP and is celebrated with religious fervour in shrines of Murukaṅ in the Tamil country as well as in Ceylon. Dorai Rangaswamy comments that this story has been looked upon by

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1. TMP, 160.

2. Pattuppāṭṭu with the commentary of Naccinārkkiniyar ed. by Cāminātaiyar, p.39.

3. TMP, 162.

later generations as depicting the eternal pilgrimage of the Lord to the soul in quest of its love to save it from deluding environments.<sup>1</sup> Allusions to this purāṇic story figure in many places in our sources.

The foregoing analyses of the allusions to the mythology, taken together, point to many important facts. First, as we have already pointed out, the poets of Pari. and the poet of TMP allude delightfully to the stories from Skandapurāṇa in order to portray the purāṇic personality of Murukan, representing his divine glory, his showering of grace on the devotees, and his supreme, all-pervading nature. The analyses also indicate the fact that the poets speak the language of mythology in order to express their own message of Murukan's grace in a popular form, and this is obvious in the case of the poet of TMP in the light of the popular story attributed to Nakkīrar. The allusions also tend to suggest that the poets of these two works describe the war-god of the Dravidians, blending his indigenous character with the character of the Aryan god, employing the language of mythology. This contributed to a certain extent to portraying him even more as an embodiment of goodness, wisdom, mercy, love and grace than as a war-god. As a result, the poems are extremely religious and divinely inspired in contrast to the other early works. This religious aspect, in addition to the number of Sanskrit words and expressions, has caused modern critics

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1. RPT, I, p.514.

to consider these two works as belonging to a later date.<sup>1</sup>

Secondly, as these works are primarily lyrical outpourings from the hearts of the poets, the stories are used to give vent to the mystic and religious experience of the authors, and to symbolise a message of hope and salvation, so as to make the outpourings more concrete and alive, poetic and graphic.

Thirdly, these two works, as distinguished from the other early Tamil works, are characterised by a wealth of reference to purānic and mythological stories. In making their popular appeal, these two works cannot but take cognizance of the common new heritage of the time. On the other hand, a comparative study will reveal that these earlier works contain fewer allusions than the Tēvāram hymns do. Furthermore, the religious aspects of these two works, which we have examined under different sub-headings in this chapter, strongly resemble Tēvāram hymns except for the poetic metre, which is akaval. However, the basic difference between these two groups of works is that the former are composed in praise of Murukan and the latter are in praise of Lord Śiva. Further the Tēvāram hymns are more lyrical and soul-inspiring.

Fourthly, the allusions to mythology are clear evidence of the fact that mythological stories appealed to the age in general and the poets in particular. The poets, however, invest the myths with a historical character and expound them with piety and devotion, revealing their hidden truths.

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1. HTLL, pp.56-8.

Finally, by way of conclusion, it may be suggested in the light of the various aspects analysed under different sub-headings in this chapter, that the poems in praise of Murukan in the Pari. and the TMP share similar characteristic features. The only exception is the akam theme which figures prominently in some of the poems in Pari.

These two are Śaiva bhakti Literature.

It is essential at this stage, to emphasise why these two works should be considered as Śaiva bhakti literature. It has already been established that these two works strongly resemble the Tēvāram hymns in their religious aspects though they differ in poetic metre and the deity spoken of. The treatment of bhakti as conveying not merely 'love of god' but a deeper mystical union with the Almighty, strongly similar to that of the Tēvāram hymns, is fully analysed under the subheading 'concept of bhakti'. Another significant aspect of the Pari., which has been already analysed, is the mention of the composer of the music to which it was sung, and the name of the paṇ to which the music was set. The hymns of the three saints are also similar in this respect. This singing to paṇ of the hymns stirs bhakti in the minds of the singers, which is one of the characteristic features of all bhakti literature, Śaiva and Vaiṣṇava. The TMP and the Tēvāram hymns, on the other hand, form the daily

liturgy of the Śaivites. We have also already pointed out why the TMP is included in the eleventh book of the Śaiva Tirumurai and why the Pari. is excluded. Besides these, it may be observed that the faithful devotees of Murugaṅ are devotees of Śiva while the faithful devotees of Śiva are devotees of Murugaṅ too. Furthermore, Murugaṅ, the son of Lord Śiva is often described in these two works, as well as in the Tēvāram hymns, and is also given a prominent and permanent place in the Northwest pirakāram of the shrines of Śiva. All these factors contributed to making these two works as Śaiva bhakti literature, even though they are not composed in praise of Śiva. Murugaṅ worshippers are Śaivites and the literature composed in praise of Murugaṅ is also traditionally regarded as Śaiva literature.

Chapter Three

SHRINES OF ŚIVA AND ŚIVA WORSHIP

It is perhaps no great exaggeration to say that the Tēvāram Period occupied a supreme place in the history of the Tamil country for the growth of the numerous shrines of Śiva. The worship of Śiva as the highest of all the Hindu gods by the Śaivites is revealed in the hymns of the three saints. In all we have 746 hymns sung by the three saints about 274 shrines of Śiva, 377 of these are sung by Campantar about 220 shrines,<sup>1</sup> 275 are by Appar about 125 shrines,<sup>2</sup> and 94 are by Cuntarar about 84 shrines.<sup>3</sup> The hymns common to all the shrines are not included in the above analysis.

The Tiruppatikakkōvai enumerates the shrines sung of by the saints. According to this, the three saints sang hymns about 274 shrines, of which 190 were in the Cōla country, 14 in the Pāṇṭiya country, 7 in the Koṅku Nāṭu, 32 in the Toṅṭai Nāṭu, 22 in the Naṭu Nāṭu, one each in the Cēra and Tuḷu countries, five in the North country and 2 in Īlam (Ceylon). The shrines in the Cōla country are further classified into two groups, the shrines on the North bank of the river Kāviri, and the shrines on its South bank; 63 of these shrines are in the North and 127 in the South. These shrines are traditionally

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1. TO.Cam, I, pp.1-7.
  2. TO.App, I, pp.25-39.
  3. TO.Cun, pp.16-21.

called by the name pāṭal perṛa talāṅkaḷ as there are hymns that refer to them individually. Apart from these, we have a number of shrines in praise of which no hymn has been sung, which are referred to by their names either in the hymns on some other shrines or in the common hymns. These shrines are appropriately named vaipputtalam; 32 such shrines are mentioned in the hymns of Campantar,<sup>1</sup> 161 in the hymns of Appar,<sup>2</sup> and 71 in the hymns of Cuntarar.<sup>3</sup>

#### Origin and development

The acceptance of Śiva as a personal god must have had the natural consequence of making Śiva the highest of all gods; and this acceptance by the people was responsible for the growth of a number of different types of shrines throughout the Tamil country. It is interesting to examine some of the types of shrines mentioned in the Tēvār̥am, since they throw light on the origin and development of the sacred places of the Śaivites. We shall now take up for investigation certain types of shrines namely āḷakkōyil, peruṅkōyil, iḷāṅkōyil and maṇikkōyil,<sup>4</sup> which are probably derivative names indicating generally the architectural features or location of the shrines.

The name āḷakkōyil, which throws light on the origin of the Śiva shrines, deserves special mention. Appar refers to

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1. TO.Cam, I, p.9.
  2. TO.App, I, pp.40-47.
  3. TO.Cun, pp.21-24.
  4. App.Tev, 284:5.

one of these shrines as Kaccūr ālakkōyil, 'ālakkōyil at Kaccūr'.<sup>1</sup> Al means 'banyan tree', and it is therefore reasonable to conclude that this refers to a particular tree under which the shrine at Kaccūr was originally located, or under which the image of Śiva was worshipped. The fact that worshipping deities under a banyan tree is a traditional practice in the Tamil country may be cited as evidence for this. This is illustrated by the reference ālar kaṭavul, 'the god resides under the banyan tree' in PN<sup>2</sup> although the word 'Śiva' as such does not occur in pre-Pallavan Tamil literature. Murukan is also described as the son of the Lord who resides under the banyan tree.<sup>3</sup> The banyan tree, which usually has a number of trunks, was probably the most convenient place for worship as it provided a resting place for devotees on their pilgrimage. When the convenience of this tree was realised it is likely that small structures with the image of Śiva, or maybe only the image itself, were set up in its shade. Perhaps such a place subsequently developed into an important sacred place with beautiful buildings. Thus ālakkōyil at Kaccūr may have been originally situated under a banyan tree, and subsequently developed into a prominent and big temple due to its sacredness. Dorai Rangaswamy's suggestion that ālakkōyil was named after

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1. App.Tev, 283:4.

2. PN 198:9.

3. Manimēkalai, III, 144. Cil., XXIII, 91; XXIV, 70, 77; Kali., 83:14.

the peculiar shape of the dome<sup>1</sup> is mere supposition.

The striking aspect of ālakḱōyil at Kaccūr is that no hymns are sung about it either by Campantar or Appar. It is, however, described by Appar in a common hymn in which he states that brahmans praise the Lord in adoration there.<sup>2</sup> We are thus given to understand that it was a prominent shrine, with brahmans functioning as officiating priests. Cuntarar, however, composed a hymn in praise of the Lord who resides in ālakḱōyil at Kaccūr.<sup>3</sup> This prompts two possible alternative suggestions. One is that this shrine was more prominent during the period of Cuntarar than during the period of Campantar and Appar. The other is that Campantar and Appar may also have composed hymns in praise of it which were subsequently lost.

A suggestion may also be made at this stage about the names of shrines such as Ālaṅkāṭu, Ālampōḷil and Ālanturāi. The former two were probably once forests or places surrounded by āl trees, as the suffixes kāṭu and poḷil mean 'forest' and 'grove' respectively. The latter must have originally been a resting place under a big banyan tree as its suffix

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1. RPT, I, p.10.
  2. App,Tev, 284:5.
  3. Cun,Tev, hymn No.41.

turai means place, location, path, place of meeting, etc.<sup>1</sup>

It is therefore clear that these places became sacred on account of the deity worshipped there, and that temples were probably built there as they developed into villages and towns.

Now we may examine the type perunkōyil. The reference to perunkōyil clearly mentions that the Lord who keeps the river in his tangled hair dwells in 78 perunkōyil, 'large or great shrines.'<sup>2</sup> Venkata Ramanayya concludes that from very early times there existed in South India two important types of temples, the dolmen-shaped and the hut-shaped.<sup>3</sup> Due to the presence of the Aryan elements in the reformed Dravidian religion,<sup>4</sup> these two types, through a long process of evolution probably developed into large shrines. These 78 large shrines may include the 70 shrines referred to by Tirumānkaiyālvār by the name māṭakkōyil, and which are said to be built by Koccenkaṭcōla Nāyaṅār.<sup>5</sup> It may be noticed that Cuntarar addresses the shrine built by Koccenkaṭcōla Nāyaṅār at Nannilam as nannilattup perunkōyil, 'the great shrine at Nannilam'.<sup>6</sup> This suggests that the names māṭakkōyil and perunkōyil are synonymous, and thus

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1. DED, S.V. 2773, p.221.

2. perukkaru caṭaikkāninta perumāṅ cērum perunkōyil elupatinōṭettum.... App, Tev, 284:5.

3. An essay on the origin of the South Indian Temple, p.78.

4. Ibid.

5. NTP, Periya tirumōli, 6,6:8.

6. Cun, Tev, 98:1-10 (last lines).

indicates that of the 78 great shrines mentioned by Appar, 70 were built by Kocceṅkaṭcōḷa Nāyaṅār.

These shrines were perhaps the ones built with stūpi or vimānam, erected purely as architectural ornaments which denote the position of the image enshrined within the building. They were probably named peruṅkōyil because they were larger than the shrines built earlier. Dorai Rangaswamy concludes that "These were built on high basements with running steps on the style of māṭamālikai. These were therefore called māṭakkōyil. As compared with the old puny temples, these were huge and big. Therefore, these were called peruṅkōyil or the big temple: nannilattup peruṅkōyil".<sup>1</sup> The remaining 8 great shrines were perhaps built by the Tamil kings after Kocceṅkaṭcōḷa Nāyaṅār. It may also be suggested that these shrines were perhaps called peruṅkōyil during the period of these saints because they were larger than the other shrines. This would be similar to using the term tañcaip peruṅkōyil, 'the great temple of Tañcāvūr' to refer to the Rājarājēśvaram which was supposed to be the largest or greatest shrine during the period it was built.

The next type of shrine is iḷaṅkōyil. The prefix iḷam means 'young'. One of these shrines is referred to by Appar as kaṭampai iḷaṅkōyil, 'the young shrine of Kaṭampūr'.<sup>2</sup>

1. RPT, I, p.9.

2. App.Tev, 283:5.

It may therefore be suggested that the particular shrine at Kaṭampūr was probably entirely new, or built later than the other shrines in that village. The name mīyaccūr īḷāṅkōyil expresses this idea very clearly. Two shrines are mentioned in Appar's Tēvāram as being situated at Mīyaccūr.<sup>1</sup> One goes by the name of the place itself, Mīyaccūr,<sup>2</sup> and the other is suffixed with īḷam as Mīyaccūr Iḷāṅkōyil.<sup>3</sup> The latter shrine probably originated or was built later than the former, and was perhaps therefore called Iḷāṅkōyil.

Lastly, the shrines which were architecturally splendid were perhaps called maṇikkōyil. The prefix maṇi perhaps denotes beauty. It may be observed that Cēkkiḷār addresses Śiva's shrine at Tiruvārūr as pūṅkōyil<sup>4</sup> and maṇikkōyil.<sup>5</sup> Campantar speaks of Alavāy as maṇikkōyil.<sup>6</sup> The prefixes pū and maṇi mean 'beauty', and tend to suggest that there were beautiful temples. The prefix maṇi, which also means 'bell' suggests that the shrine at Tiruvārūr, and also the shrine at Alavāy, probably possessed a bell tower at their entrance, and were therefore distinguished from the other shrines as maṇikkōyil, 'temple with a bell-tower'. Dorai

1. TO.App, I, p.37.

2. App.Tev, 85;25:1, 220:4, 283:11, 294:5, 295:8, 220:7, 235:9, 263:3, 264:2, 283:8, 294:1, and 312:6.

3. App.Tev, hymn No.124.

4. PPTNC, 49 & 50.

5. PPTN, 223.

6. Cam.Tev, 378:4.

Rangaswamy is of the opinion that these temples were called maṅikkōyil because of the maṅi- like (bead-like) spherical domes in those temples.<sup>1</sup> Pūṅkōyil is also interpreted as 'flower-like temple' by some.

The numerous shrines which have been mentioned in the foregoing pages, are evidence not only of the widespread worship of Śiva as the highest god in the Tamil country, but also of the contemporary economic and social structure of the country. Narayana Ayyar suggests that "this has been largely due to the increase of population and commercial prosperity; but it is just these that are responsible for the growth of temples also, for temples satisfy a more or less universal need among the people; so, the greater the population, the greater the need for temples and they cannot be constructed by people who are themselves struggling for their ordinary means of livelihood".<sup>2</sup> In fact, old shrines were renovated and new shrines were built during this period.<sup>3</sup> Kings were converted to Śaivism.<sup>4</sup> Mahendravarman destroyed the Jaina temple at Pāṭalipuram and built with the material a Śiva temple at Tiruvatikai, naming the Lord Guṇabhara after his own title.<sup>5</sup> The shrines became the centres of education

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1. RPT, I, p.10.

2. OEHS, p.308.

3. Irācamāṅikkaṅār, M., Periya purāṇa āraṅgi, pp.106-119.

4. Caṭāciṇa Paṅṭārattār, T.V., Pāṅṭiyar varalāru, p.39. PPTN, 145.

5. PPTN, 145, 146.

and cultural activities. In short, the temple courtyard took the place of the Royal court, where music, dancing and the other entertainments were performed for the pleasure of kings and chieftains. In the temple courtyard similar entertainments were held for the religious uplift of the masses. In this context it is apposite to say that even the word kōyil developed from its original meaning of 'king's house' to denote the temple of god.

#### The physiographical divisions and the names of shrines

The Tol. divides the Tamil country into five regions, kuriñci, 'mountain region', mullai, 'pasture lands', marutam, 'agricultural lands', neytai, 'maritime tract' and pālai, 'arid lands'.<sup>1</sup> The physiographical divisions being five, both love and heroic situations or behaviour patterns were also considered to be five. The early Tamil works, which were generally based on the five-fold division of the land, consequently differ in poruḷ, 'general poetic contents or subject matter', tiṅai 'poetic situation' and turai, 'poetic theme' according to region. The hymnists also followed this poetic convention to a certain extent in composing some of their hymns even though these are almost wholly devotional. The akam hymns which have been examined in a chapter in the

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1. Tol.Poruḷ., cū. No.5 and the commentary.

present study clearly exhibit this fact. Let us now examine some of the names of shrines referred to in the Tēvāram and see how they fall under the fundamental five-fold division of the land.

(a) It may be observed that most of the names of the shrines in the mountain regions end with malai, kunram, or paruppatam meaning 'mountain' or 'hill' ( Skt. parvata). The general poetic pattern adopted in most of the hymns which are composed in praise of these shrines is that the Lord is extolled in relation to his abodes, the names of which end with malai, kunram or paruppatam. The names of 5 abodes end with malai,<sup>1</sup> 4 with kunram<sup>2</sup> and 2 with paruppatam.<sup>3</sup> The names of some shrines such as Kētāram, Kurrālam, etc. though they are situated in mountain regions do not have such endings but the hymns composed in praise of them contain features relating to the mountain region. Apart from the names, certain occurrences and situations portrayed, especially those by Campantar in some of the verses of the hymns on Appāmalai, Mutukunram and Paruppatam, may be cited as examples where the saint presents the general poetic contents and the poetic situation in relation to the mountain region.

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1. Īṅkōmalai, Kōṇamalai, Kāḷattimalai, Appāmalai and Kayilaimalai.
  2. Paraṅkunram, Koṭūnkunram, Mutukunram and Kaḷukkunram.
  3. Paruppatam and Intiranīlap paruppatam.

(b) Some of the names of shrines end with kāṭu, vaṇam, or pāṭi.<sup>1</sup> Kāṭu and vaṇam are forests or pasture lands, and pāṭi is a village in the pasture land- a karupporuḷ of mullai.<sup>2</sup> The endings -kāṭu and -vaṇam tend to suggest that the shrines referred to by them were originally located in the midst of forests. Referring to these shrines Narayana Ayyar observes: "If temples were constructed there, that could have happened, generally speaking, only after they became villages. Some of these should have developed into villages and towns for the reason that they were holy places".<sup>3</sup> The ending -pāṭi, on the other hand, prompts the conclusion that the shrines referred to were situated in villages, or the temples were established there only after those places developed into villages. These shrines probably originated later than shrines with names ending with either -kāṭu or -vaṇam.

(c) There are several shrines whose names end with -ūr, 'village', -kuḷam, 'tank', -āru, 'river' or -turai, 'bank or shore to a tank, pond or river'; they are most probably shrines in agricultural lands.<sup>4</sup> We have nearly 78 shrines with names ending with -ūr, 24 with -āru, 20 with -turai and 1 with -kuḷam. This indicates that there were more shrines in the agricultural lands than in the other regions, because more people lived

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1. 6 shrines with kāṭu, 1 with vaṇam and 2 with pāṭi.  
 2. Nampi, cū.22.  
 3. OEHS, p.312.  
 4. Nampi., cū.23.

there and consequently more shrines were built there. Appar proclaims that it is not an ūr, 'town' but is only aṭavi kāṭu, 'big forest' if there is no temple there.<sup>1</sup> By this we are made to understand that those who live in a place where there is no temple are not human beings but are half-animals.

Referring to the shrines whose names end with turai, Narayana Ayyar suggests a concrete line of inquiry: "The origin of these villages and the temples in them, is seen in the word turai which means a 'resting place'. When people were going long distances, they had to halt somewhere and usually the shade of a tree was very appropriate for that purpose.....Realising the importance of such places, philanthropic souls would have first erected small structures with the image of a deity within, and when, in course of time, the place became sacred on account of the deity, a village would grow round it. There were, therefore, several such villages in the period of Tēvāram".<sup>2</sup> It may, however, be suggested that sacred places with names ending with turai, a shore of a tank, pond or river, developed into villages or towns with temples because they were places busy with people. Consequently, the names of the shrines in those places ended

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1. App, Tev, 308:5.

2. OEHS, pp.312-13.

with turai.

(d) We have some shrines whose names end with either paṭṭinam or vāyil. Two shrines are mentioned as situated at Kāviriṭṭūmpaṭṭinam, one goes by the name Cāykkāṭu and the other goes as Pallavanīccuram. On the other hand four shrines, Nelvāyil, Kuṭavāyil, Tcṇmullaivāyil and Vaṭamullaivāyil, are noted for the -vāyil ending of their names.

Four hymns are sung on Cāykkāṭu, 2 by Campanṭar and 2 by Appar.<sup>1</sup> Cāykkāṭu, though it ends with kāṭu is a shrine situated in the maritime tract. Campanṭar refers to the shrine as Kāviriṭṭūmpaṭṭinattuc Cāykkāṭu, 'Cāykkāṭu at Kāviriṭṭūmpaṭṭinam'<sup>2</sup> and also describes some of the occurrences pertaining to the maritime tract:

"The waves of the sea wash up the boats, the conchshells, the pearls, the gems and the chanks" (6). "The female beetle feigns dislike for its mate as a woman for her lover and hides itself in the grove while her mate enjoys the stamens of the punnai flower, (alexandrian laurel)" (7). "Nūlaiciyar, 'women of the maritime tract' whose eyes are bright and whose hands are adorned with bangles gather the white flowers of the tālai tree" (5).<sup>3</sup>

These descriptions clearly indicate that the shrine was located in the maritime tract. There are, however, references in some verses (Nos.2&3) to the dancing of peacocks, and groves

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1. Cam, Tev, hymn Nos. 174 and 177; App, Tev, hymn Nos. 65 and 295.  
 2. Cam, Tev, 177:4.  
 3. Ibid., hymn No.174.

full of coconut and mango trees, which are common features of the surroundings of all shrines of Śiva. Appar's two hymns are as a whole devoted to the glories and greatness of Śiva except for the last lines which describe Cāykkāṭu as the abode of Śiva. What may therefore be suggested about the name Cāykkāṭu is that it was originally a forest though it is a place in the littoral region. It possibly developed into a town because of its holy place and was sung about by the saints when they visited it.

The ending -vāyil meaning 'entrance' is associated with the maritime tract in early Tamil works. Of the hymns composed in praise of the shrines whose names end with vāyil, only Puṇavāyil contains descriptions relating to the maritime tract. Puṇavāyil has two hymns about it, one by Campantar and another by Cuntarar.<sup>1</sup> Verse No.2 in the former and verse No.4 in the latter describe Puṇavāyil as located on the sea coast. Of the remaining three shrines, Kuṭavāyil, Vaṭamullaivāyil and Teṅmullaivāyil, all except the last are described as being in the midst of agricultural lands. Kuṭavāyil has two hymns about it by Campantar, Nos.158 and 194. Particularly in verse No.5 of hymn No.194 it is clearly described as being surrounded by paddy fields and groves.

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1. Cam.Tev., hymn No.269 and Cun.Tev., hymn No.50.

Mullaivāyil has two hymns about it, one by Campantar and the other by Cuntarar.<sup>1</sup> The title of the former is prefixed with ten, 'south' and the latter with vaṭa, 'north'. Cuntarar makes it clear in his hymn that the Lord whom he sings about resides at the north bank of the river Pāli.<sup>2</sup> From this it is clear that this hymn was written about Vaṭamullaivāyil. Campantar in his hymn describes how the waves wash up pearls which were disgorged by chanks and oysters.<sup>3</sup> Although there is no evidence to let us conclude that the shrine was located in the South, this description suggests that it was situated in a maritime tract. The ending vāyil would indicate that though it is mainly associated with the maritime tract in early Tamil works, it has been associated with an agricultural region too during the Tēvāram period, perhaps because the shrines faced a river or a tank.

(e) Lastly, the names of shrines ending with curam, 'parched barren tract', were probably the shrines in arid lands. It may be noticed that the names of only a few shrines end with curam. This indicates that the shrines in the arid lands were fewer than the shrines in the other four regions because

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1. Cam, Tev, hymn No.224 and Cun, Tev, hymn No.69.
  2. Cun, Tev, 69:5.
  3. Cam, Tev, 224:2.

few people lived there and consequently fewer shrines were built. The other striking feature is that the hymns composed in praise of these shrines do not contain occurrences relating to arid lands but on the contrary describe features relating to other regions. For instance, the hymn on Iṭaiccuram by Campantar describes the surroundings of the shrine, groves full of dancing peacocks, plantain trees, monkeys, and ponds full of fishes.<sup>1</sup> From this elaborate description, one may safely conclude that though this place was originally arid it developed into a fertile place because of its shrine.

(f) Apart from the five categories analysed above, we have some shrines whose names end with tānam, 'place' with tiṭṭai, 'dry spot in a river or sand-bank', iccaram, 'sacred place where someone obtained grace through worship', turutti, 'islet', palli, 'perhaps the shrines which were earlier hermitages of the Jains', virattam, or virattānam, 'shrines where Śiva is said to have performed eight great heroic feats', etc. These are mostly derivative names and are not based on the five fold-division of the land.

All the foregoing points taken together point to three inevitable conclusions. Firstly, it has been demonstrated that most of the names of the shrines are based on prevalent views of physiographical divisions. Five types of these have

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1. Ibid., hymn No.78.

been observed. However, some of the endings such as -kāṭu, -vaṇam, -turai, -curam and -vāyil, refer to the original physical setting of the shrines rather than that which existed when the saints visited and sang hymns about them. Secondly, it has been proved that there were a greater number of shrines in the agricultural lands and only a few shrines in the arid lands. This indicates that in the Tamil country, the growth of temples depended purely on the size of population; the greater the population, the greater the need for temples. Lastly, some of the shrines were not named according to the physiographical divisions but after some other attributes of the shrines.

#### The shrines of Śiva outside the Tamil land

We have already mentioned that nine shrines about which there are hymns in the Tēvāram are situated beyond the limits of the Tamil country. These shrines deserve special emphasis since they provide clear evidence of Śaivism existing in the North of India and spreading beyond the sea to Ceylon.

(a) Two shrines of Śiva in Ceylon have found a place in the Tēvāram. Campantar and Cuntarar each sang one of the two extant hymns on Kēṭiccaram, a shrine at Mātōṭṭam in North Ceylon.<sup>1</sup> The extant hymn on Kōṇēccaram, a hill-shrine at

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1. Cam, Tev, hymn No.243 & Cun, Tev, hymn No.80.

Tirukkōnamalai in North East Ceylon, was sung by Campantar.<sup>1</sup>

We have no hymn by Appar on Kēṭiccaram or Kōṇēccaram, and no hymn by Cuntarar on Kōṇēccaram. These three hymns, according to PP, were sung at Irāmēccaram, a celebrated shrine on an island at the south-eastern tip of the Tamil land, by Campantar and Cuntarar who visited the shrine on different occasions while they were on pilgrimage:

"(Campantar) even as he was in the town (Irāmēccaram) prayed and sang in praise of the Lord who takes pleasure in residing at Kōṇamalai which is situated in Īlam, which is surrounded on all four sides by the sea, and who has the young red-eyed bull as his vehicle, and meditated and humbly praised the holy red feet of the Lord of Kēṭiccaram located in Mātōṭṭam, which abounds in towers which reach the moon.....".<sup>2</sup>

"(Arūrar) who first prayed and then garlanded with a Tamil hymn, the Lord, the gem of Irāmēccaram, embellished Him who adorns himself on the head with serpents and who resides at Kēṭiccaram in Mātōṭṭam with conmalar mēlaikal, 'garlands of verbal flowers', and stood at a distance in adoration".<sup>3</sup>

An examination of these verses reveals several facts.

From the former it is clear that Kōṇēccaram had the distinction of being the first shrine to find a place in the Tēvāram.

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1. Cam.Tev, hymn No.381.

2. PPTC, 890.

3. PECFN, 109.

Consequently, it may be suggested that Campantar gave first place to the glories of Kōṇēccaram, because this shrine was more popular than Kētīccaram during his time. In the latter, Cēkkiḷār makes it quite clear that Cuntarar composed hymns only on Kētīccaram, and this prompts two possible suggestions. One is that by the time of Cuntarar, Kōṇēccaram had lost its popularity, while Kētīccaram gained prominence; the other is that Cuntarar might have composed hymns on Kōṇēccaram which were lost before reaching Cēkkiḷār. Hence, as it is now, Kētīccaram has the merit of having two hymns composed about it while Kōṇēccaram has only one.

A close examination of the latter verse further indicates that Cuntarar composed a hymn in praise of the Lord of Irāmēccaram. As there is no such hymn among his 100 extant hymns, it seems that this extra hymn was one which came to light between the time of Nampiyāṇṭār Nampi and that of Cēkkiḷār, but which has since been lost again. Moreover, the reference coṅmalar mālaikaḷ, 'verbal flower garlands' may also be interpreted to mean that Cuntarar sang more than one hymn on Kētīccaram. If this be the case, the extra hymns may have been lost after Cēkkiḷār's time.

The other significant fact that emerges from the analysis is that Irāmēccaram acquires the merit of having hymns sung about it, in addition to of being the venue for the composition of hymns on other shrines. A probable reason

for the saints singing hymns of Kēṭiccaram and Kōṇēccaram without visiting them is the tradition that brahmans should not cross the sea.<sup>1</sup> The Śaiva belief is that the saints sang the hymns about the glories of Kōṇēccarar and Kēṭiccarar having used their spiritual sight to see them. In the same way, they sang about the natural beauty of Kōṇāmalai and Mātōṭṭam, the rough sea of Kōṇāmalai, and the Lake Pālāvi at Mātōṭṭam. This worship is called the nēṇakkaṇ mode of worship.<sup>2</sup>

(b) Śiva's shrine Tirukkōkaraṇam in the Tuḷu country, on the west coast of South Kanara, has two hymns sung about it, one by Campantar<sup>3</sup> and the other by Appar.<sup>4</sup> Cēkkiḷār refers to Campantar's hymn, but not to Appar's. According to PP, Campantar sang to the Lord of Kōkaraṇam while he was at Kāḷatti.<sup>5</sup> It does not, however, refer to the hymn either by its first line or by any other name. Nor are we able from Cēkkiḷār's scheme to assign the other hymn to any particular period of Appar's life, as it is not referred to by him in PP. Hence it is difficult to conclude who composed a hymn first in praise of the Lord of Kōkaraṇam.

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1. Naccinārkkiniyar's commentary, Tol., poruḷ., cū.11.
  2. Infra, p.173.
  3. Dam, Tev, hymn No.337.
  4. App, Tev, hymn No.262.
  5. PPTC, 1025-27.

Contrasting pictures of Kōkaraṇam are presented by Campantar and Appar. Though many of the lines are devoted to the description and the praising of Śiva, Campantar portrays Kōkaraṇam as full of hills and forests, trees and flowers, peacocks and elephants. Appar, on the other hand, speaks only of the glories of Śiva, except in the last line of each verse, where he emphasises that Kōkaraṇam is a place surrounded by the sea.

(c) Tiruvañcaikkālam, a shrine of Śiva in the Cēra country, has two hymns, Nos.4 and 44, sung about it by Cuntarar; but as the name of the shrine is mentioned only in hymn No.4, it goes by the name añcaikkālap patikam. The other hymn is not called añcaikkālam anywhere, so it is titled Muṭippatukaṅkai in all editions, this being the first line of the first verse. Cēkkiḷār however refers to both hymns; to the former in the VC, and to the latter in the CPN. He states categorically that these two hymns were sung in praise of the Lord of Añcaikkālam:

(a) "He whose mind was flooded with devotion and bhakti, went round in a clockwise direction and entered the shrine of the black-throated Lord, worshipped both blossom-like holy feet, and in a rare act prostrated himself, rose, and started the Tamil hymn beginning with talaikkuttalai mālai (hymn No.4) asking the Lord to alleviate the conjugal life".<sup>1</sup>

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1. PPVC, 29.

(b) "Arūrar full of bhakti and desire to view the holy of holies, went round the courtyard of the shrine (Añcaikkalam), in a clockwise direction, prostrated himself on the floor, bowed and sang the hymn Muṭippatukaṅkai (hymn No.44) in praise of the Lord who adorns his head with the crescent, and worshipped him with his (friend) Cēramāṅ Perumāḷ".<sup>1</sup>

From the descriptions it is clear that hymn No.4 is referred to in (a) and hymn No.44 is referred to in (b). Though these two hymns occur in this order in the 7th Tirumurai, when they were sung in worship at Añcaikkalam by the saint hymn No.44 came before hymn No.4, which in turn immediately preceded the last hymn, Notittāṅmalai (hymn No.100). The saint was an honoured guest of the Cēra king for some time. What is made clear in PP is that hymn No.44 was sung on his first visit and hymn No.4 was sung on his second. The significant aspect of these two verses which describe the two hymns of Cuntarar is the similarity in expressing the profound devotion and love with which the hymns were composed. Cēramāṅ Perumāḷ, according to PP, accompanied Cuntarar when these two hymns were sung at Añcaikkalam.

A perusal of hymn No.44 however indicates that this hymn was not composed in praise of any specific shrine. The Lord is described as empirāṅ in all the verses of this hymn.

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1. PPCPN, 146.

All kinds of emotions such as humour, fear and love struggle to find expression. The saint himself asserts in the benedictory stanza that the hymn was composed to poke fun at the Lord. None of the verses speak of the Lord in relation to Añcaikkalam. This indicates that this hymn was a hymn common to all shrines rather than a hymn on Añcaikkalam. Therefore, the editors and commentators have every reason to deviate from the scheme of Cēkkiḷār and include it with the other common hymns.

Hymn No.4 is as a whole devoted to describing the glories of Śiva in the glow of complete realization and mystic love, except for the fourth line in each of the first nine verses which runs thus: "The father of Añcaikkalam of the groves in Makōtai on the sea beach". The waves are like mountains (1), the conches gape and pour forth pearls (2), the sea washes conches, oysters and pearls ashore (6), and the ships are laden with many a treasure (7) - these are some of the descriptions of the seaport Vañci of Cuntarar's time.

(d) Let us now examine the hymns on the shrines in the North of India. The Tēvāram contains hymns in praise of five shrines namely Paruppatam, mount Kayilāyam, Kētāram, Intiranilap paruppatam and Anēkatañkāvatam. Campantar sang hymns on all five, Cuntarar on the first three, and Appar only on the first two. All five of these shrines are traditionally called vañanāṭṭut talañkaḷ, 'shrines of the North country'.

Paruppatam, which is placed as the first among the shrines of the North country, has hymns sung about it by all three saints.<sup>1</sup> The name of this shrine is referred to as Paruppatam in the hymns of Campantar and Appar, and as Ciparppatamalai in the hymn of Cuntarar. Cēkkiḷār refers to it as Paruppatam,<sup>2</sup> Tirupparuppatam<sup>3</sup> and Tiruccilampu.<sup>4</sup> This shrine has come to be known in later days as Śrī Śailam. All three saints describe this shrine as the mountain retreat of Śiva. Campantar exclaims at the end of each verse paruppatam paravutumē; Appar proclaims at the end of each verse, paruppata nōkkinarē, and Cuntarar addresses it at the end of each verse as ciparppata malaiyē. Dorai Rangaswamy rightly suggests that Cuntarar seems to identify the great mountain, full of natural beauty, with God himself, for every verse ends in an address to the mountain as ciparppata malaiyē.<sup>5</sup> The other two hymns are also interpreted similarly for two reasons. One is that the refrains of the hymns are somewhat similar to the refrain of Cuntarar's hymn, and the other is that Cuntarar himself admits elsewhere that he gives expression to the ideas of his predecessors.

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1. Cam, Tev, hymn No. 118, App, Tev, hymn No. 58 and Cun, Tev, hymn No. 79.
  2. PPEKN, 198.
  3. PPTN, 348 & PPTC, 1027.
  4. EPTN, 349.
  5. RPT, II, p. 788.

A comparative study of these hymns shows that Campantar and Cuntarar devote a good deal of space to describing the natural beauty of the mountain, the various kinds of deer and peacock, the millet fields full of parrots and so forth, while Appar portrays solely the glories and greatness of Śiva. Campantar and Cuntarar, according to PP, had not visited the shrine but sang the hymns while they were at Kāḷatti;<sup>1</sup> Appar however reached the foot of Paruppatam and sang hymns worshipping the mountain.<sup>2</sup> Perhaps the reason that Cēkkiḷār said this is that the former two sang mostly about the beauty of the mountain, revealing to us a series of dramatic occurrences garbed in highly imaginative poetry while the latter described the Lord whom he had witnessed on the spot and omitted the natural surroundings.

The description of Appar's visit in PP, arises from still deeper interpretation. In verse No. 348, Cēkkiḷār states that Appar reached Paruppatam and in the subsequent one he says that Appar sang the hymn worshipping the mountain when he caught sight of it. This may be interpreted as meaning that though Appar reached the mountain perhaps because of his advanced age he did not climb it, but instead sang hymns worshipping the

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1. PPTC, 1020 and 27; PPEKN, 198.

2. PPTN, 348-9.

mountain from its foot. Cuntarar also speaks of the mountain as inaccessible in his benedictory stanza.

Anēkatāṅkāvatam and Intiranīlap paruppatam are the other two shrines about which there are hymns in the Tēvāram by Campantar.<sup>1</sup> We have no hymn by Appar or Cuntarar about these shrines. The hymn on the former is not referred to in PP and therefore it is difficult to conclude whether the saint had visited it or sung the hymn about it from elsewhere after having observed it by means of his spiritual sight. The hymn on the latter, according to PP, was sung at Kāḷatti.<sup>2</sup> The prefixes intiran and nīlam were perhaps added in order to signify the abode; Intiran is referred to in the benedictory stanza of the hymn as having worshipped Śiva in this abode; nīlam is interpreted as indicating the dark clouds which cover the mountain.<sup>3</sup>

A comparative study of these two hymns shows that a good deal of the hymn on Anēkatāṅkāvatam is devoted to describing the natural beauty of the abode, while a major part of the hymn on Intiranīlap paruppatam depicts the glories and superiority of Śiva. The poet's affection for nature permeates the former, clearly revealing the warmth of his feeling, the powerful imagery and his innermost mind. The latter is dominated by descriptions of the spiritual serenity and divine glories of the abode,

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1. Cam, Tev, hymn No.141 is on Anēkatāṅkāvatam and hymn No.163 is on Intiranīlap paruppatam.
  2. PPTC, 1027.
  3. TTPC, V, p.1318.

revealing the saint's deep devotion to Śiva. In short, the abode Anēkatānkāvataṁ is described in relation to Śiva while it is Śiva who is described in relation to the abode Intiraṇilap paruppatam.

Kētāram, a holy place in the Himalayas, has two hymns sung about it, one by Campantar and one by Cuntarar.<sup>1</sup> In both hymns, Kētāram is described as the holy abode of Śiva. Cēkkilār refers to these two hymns as follows:

- (a) (Campantar while he was at Kāḷatti) worshipped and sang patikam in refined music on Kētāram where there are ponds of red lotus flowers, after having sung in adoration on Vaṭakayilai".<sup>2</sup>
- (b) (Arūrar) melting with devotion stood still at Kāḷatti as if he had seen and become one with the red-footed Lord who danced, and sang the holy patikam with fullness and firmness of mind, on all the abodes, beginning with Paruppatam and sacred Kētāram, where Śiva delights to reside.<sup>3</sup>

The descriptions in PP clearly indicate that these hymns were sung by the saints about the places which they saw by means of spiritual sight while they were at Kāḷatti. The expression 'he had seen and become one with the red-footed Lord who danced, with fullness and firmness of mind'<sup>4</sup> is clear evidence of Cuntarar worshipping the Lord of Kētāram through spiritual

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1. Cam.Tev, hymn No.250 and Cun.Tev, hymn No.78.  
 2. PPTC, 1026.  
 3. PPEKN, 198.  
 4. PPEKN, 198.

vision, which is referred to as iruntu unarkinra nānam by Siddhānta philosophers.<sup>1</sup> In the same verse Cēkkilār, quite definitely states that Cuntarar sang hymns on all the shrines in the North. We have, however, no hymns on Intiranīlap paruppatam and Anēkataṅkāvatam in the extant 7th Tirumurai, so perhaps these were lost after the period of Cēkkilār.

An analysis of these two hymns brings out certain facts. These hymns are the overflowing of an exuberance of love and joy, and reflect the saint's sympathy with nature. The first verse in Campantar's hymn is a masterpiece in which the worshipping of the devotees and an incident nearby are beautifully portrayed:

"People say that Kētāram is the place where the devotees who subdue their five overpowering elephant-like senses, offer flower garlands in worship and where peacocks dance to the hummings of the bees, the deer frolics and the fishes leap in the pond where the blue lily blooms".

The expression enparāl, 'people say' is the clue that allows us to conclude that this hymn was sung without visiting the abode. In the other verses the saint speaks of viṇṇavar (2) muṇivar (3) imaiyōr (4) and vāṇavar (7) worshipping the Lord at Kētāram. These descriptions are quite different from those in the hymns sung while on visit to particular shrines.

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1. Civaṇāṇa cittiyār, 'aḷavaiyilakkaṇam', 13.

He also speaks of Kētāram as a holy place full of singing bees (1), beautiful parrots (4), fearful lions and male and female elephants (7&9).

Cuntarar, on the other hand, though he describes the natural surroundings of the holy place in the same vein also sees holiness in the wild beasts and plants:

"The elephants stand in groups and pour down the waters of the mountain stream and shower red powder on the Lord" (3).

"The elephants standing on the earth carry pearls and throw them away, which creates music that resounds all through the holy place. The old bamboo resounds like the musical drum reminding us of the musical compositions in Tamil" (7).

The most striking difference between these two hymns is therefore that Campantar describes nature as it is, and Cuntarar describes it as tinged with religious aspects. Some of the events, though said to have been seen by means of spiritual sight, are portrayed beautifully as if seen with the naked eye. Cuntarar speaks of himself in the benedictory stanza of this hymn as a slave and follower of the devotees of Śiva, including Campantar and Appar. This is clear evidence that Cuntarar consciously followed the poetic style of his predecessor Campantar, particularly in the hymn on Kētāram.

Kayilāyam, also popularly known as Noṭittāṅmalai and Kayilayaṅkiri, has according to several editions, hymns about

it by all three saints, two by Campantar, four by Appar, and one by Cuntarar.<sup>1</sup> Campantar, according to PP, sang hymns on Kayilai while he was at KĀḷatti;<sup>2</sup> but the hymns are not described any further. Hymn No.268 is referred to by its first line and is described as sung by Appar while he bathed in the sacred tank which was shown to him by Śiva who appeared in the form of an ascetic.<sup>3</sup> He sang hymn Nos. 269 and 270 at Tiruvaiyāru when he came out of the sacred tank having seen the kayilaikkāṭci.<sup>4</sup> Cuntarar sang his hymn on his way to Kayilai and finished singing as he reached the abode of Śiva.<sup>5</sup> Later the hymn was, as described in its benedictory stanza, handed over to Varuṇaṅ who took it to Añcaikkalam.

A close study of these hymns in the light of the descriptions in PP reveals several facts. Hymn No.367 of Campantar, which is referred to as a hymn on Kayilai in some editions, cannot be considered so. The hymn is in fact about Āṇaikkā, and Śiva is described in relation to other abodes such as Kayilai, Makēntiram and Arūr. Hymn No.47 of Appar, which is also given as a hymn on Kayilai in some editions, cannot be taken as a hymn

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1. Tēvārappatikāṅkaḷ, published by Tarunaiyātīnam, Cam, Tev, hymn Nos. 326 & 367; App, Tev, hymn Nos. 47 & 268-270 and Cun, Tev, hymn No.100.
  2. PPTC, 1026.
  3. PPTN, 370.
  4. PPTN, 370-81.
  5. FPVC, 39.

about Kayilai, for the incident of Irāvaṇaṅ lifting mount Kayilāyam, and Śiva crushing him with his toe, takes pride of place. As this hymn appears to be more of a common hymn than a hymn on Kayilai it is appropriate to include it among the common hymns of Appar. Therefore a total of five hymns remain to be taken as hymns on Kayilāyam. Those include hymn No.326 of Campantar (perhaps one of those referred to without any specific name in PP), hymn No.268 of Appar (referred to by its first line), hymn Nos.269 and 270 of Appar (perhaps referred to by the verse-form tāṅṅakam), and hymn No.100 of Cuntarar (referred to by its first line). The other point of contrast is that hymn No.268 of Appar and hymn No.100 of Cuntarar are only described as sung at Kayilai while hymn No.326 of Campantar and hymn Nos.269 and 270 of Appar are described as sung at Kāḷatti and Tiruvaḷyāru respectively.

A comparative analysis of these hymns shows that the three hymns of Appar are quite similar in subject matter and presentation, and were also composed in the same verse-form, tāṅṅakam. As a whole these hymns reveal the culmination of Appar's spiritual development, an intense devotion, a feeling of identity with God. They embody a sense of self-surrender, a feeling of leaving everything to be done as Śiva wills in his glory and greatness. The last half of the last line in each verse of these three hymns is devoted solely to describing Śiva as the Lord of mount Kayilai. Campantar, on the other

hand, describes the cloud-capped Kayilai (1 & 4), the wild animals (3 & 8) and various other features associated with the abode. Cuntarar says nothing about the mountain except to mention those who escorted him - Intiran, Tirumāl and Piraman, the vānavar, the amarar and the muniyar. The highest spiritual state is one of peace, self-forgetful bliss, and losing oneself in God. This is the predominant theme of this hymn. This state of absolute self-surrender is absent in the hymn of Campantar. Perhaps it was sung at Kāḷatti long before he merged with God. These hymns, though not enabling us to visualize the abode Kayilai impart an intense feeling of piety. Meenakshisundaram Pillai rightly states, "It is not mere emotionalism that we find in the hymns of these saints; it is a religion of universal brotherhood and service, where God, as unified Father and Mother, the Lord of Kailās, is not seen on the distant peak but in the form of every loving couple of living beings....harmonising love and service".<sup>1</sup>

The above analysis of the hymns about shrines outside the Tamil country mentioned in the PP, shows conclusively that a total of 19 hymns are identified as composed by the three saints on a total of nine shrines; 8 of these are by Campantar, 5 by Appar and 6 by Cuntarar. Seven of these 19 hymns, five by Campantar and two by Cuntarar, were sung at Kāḷatti;

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1. Professor T.P.Meenakshisundaram Sixty-first Birthday commemoration Volume, pp. 45 & 46 (1961).

three hymns, two by Campantar and one by Cuntarar, were sung at Irāmēccaram and two hymns by Appar at Tiruvaiyāgu. Another five hymns are described in PP as sung at particular shrines, one each at Ciparppatam and Kayilai by Appar, one by Cuntarar on the way to Kayilai and another two hymns at Añcaikkaḷam by Cuntarar. The remaining two hymns one by Campantar on Aṅēkataṅkāvatam and the other on Kōkaraṇam by Appar are however not referred to in PP.

From this, a significant fact emerges: it was customary to sing hymns about shrines other than that at which the saints were actually present. Kāḷatti, Irāmēccaram and Tiruvaiyāgu acquire the merit of having hymns of their own, and at the same time gain the distinction of being the venue of hymns about other shrines; perhaps for this reason these shrines, especially Kāḷatti, are regarded by the Śaivites as among the more significant abodes of Śiva. Kāḷatti is described as tenticaiyir kayilaiyeṇum tirukkāḷatti, 'Holy Kāḷatti is said to be the Kayilai of the South';<sup>1</sup> because of this, Kayilai itself is described as vaṭakayilai, 'Kayilai of the North'.<sup>2</sup> Two alternative suggestions are also possible about the saints singing hymns on other shrines than the one they were in. One is that the particular sacred venue must have reminded the saints

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1. PPTC, 1028.

2. PPTC, 1026.

of the shrines which were situated close to it, but which they were prevented from visiting. The other is that Cēkkiḷār was the one who was reminded of the shrines close to the ones sung about, and assigned the hymns accordingly.

### Some modes of Śiva worship

As seen in their works, the saints travelled all over the Tamil land visiting the shrines of Śiva and singing hymns in praise of him, which they themselves composed extempore out of their own religious experiences. The detailed accounts of the pilgrimages undertaken by these three saints are given elaborately in PP. For instance Campantar is said to have gone on pilgrimage six times, visiting at least 200 to 250 shrines.<sup>1</sup> His pilgrimage from the Cōḷa country to the Pāṇṭiya country is described in great detail. Therefore, the Tēvāram, and the accounts in PP give clear evidence proving that Śiva worship, then as now, consisted in going to different shrines and singing of the glories of Śiva. This mode of worship was prevalent even before the hymnists, as is revealed in Pari, and even more so in TMP; but as has already been seen these earlier pilgrimages were purely to the shrines of Murugaṅ.<sup>2</sup>

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1. For detailed accounts of the pilgrimages see the summary of the life history of Campantar by Cuppiramaṇiya Mutaliyār in Tiruttoṅṭar purāṇam, V, pp.1557-1590.
  2. Supra, Ch.II, pp.117-8.

A close study of PP reveals another significant mode of worship. On certain occasions, even though the saints did not actually visit some of the shrines, especially the nine shrines located outside the Tamil country, they still used their spiritual vision to worship the presiding deities of those shrines while worshipping in another shrine.<sup>1</sup> These are examples of the nāpakkam mode of worship. This mode of worship may be regarded as an aspect of nāna mārkkam, 'mystical realization of God', one of the four stages towards liberation as revealed in the Agamas.

What may be suggested in the light of the above analysis is that the hymns which were composed in elegant and melodious language, set to pan and sung in praise of Śiva while on pilgrimage, would have appealed strongly to the devotees who accompanied the saints, and especially as they were sung in the serene presence of Śiva, would have had rare divine power and appeal to earnest souls longing for religious illumination. It is natural that the outpouring of devotion gathered strength and momentum, reaching a climax when the hymns were sung in the company of several devotees in such a serene atmosphere. This Śiva worship and the religious literary movement which included that of the Vaiṣṇavite saints, has been

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1. Supra, p. 158.

popularly designated by some modern writers the 'bhakti movement' and the 'bhakti cult'.<sup>1</sup>

It may also be suggested that though this mode of worship was in existence even earlier, it developed, gathered momentum and became more widely used through two distinct channels, Śaivism and Vaiṣṇavism, during the seventh century. A parallel mode of worship, Vaiṣṇavism, began probably somewhat later than Śaivism. This mode of worship appears to have been used as a powerful weapon by Appar and Campantar to overthrow the Jain religion that, they felt, clouded the minds of the Tamilians during this period. It attracted large crowds of followers from every walk of life and became a popular movement in the real sense of the word. Apart from the simple choral music, the very texture of the sonorous language, with its admixture of Sanskrit diction, must have appealed to the masses enormously.

A number of references may be cited from Tēvāram illustrating the congregational worship which was popularly practised in the shrines of Śiva:

- (a) "Devotees in a group, worship Śiva, offering picked flowers and garlands and sing hymns in praise of Him";<sup>2</sup> (b) "Devotees form a circle in the shrine at Pukalūr and praise the Lord worshipping his holy feet";<sup>3</sup> (c) "Devotees get together in the shrine

1. HTLL, pp.100-133; HTL, pp.75-127.

2. Cam, Tev, 351:6.

3. Ibid., 228:1.

at Nagaiyūr and worship Śiva sprinkling flowers on Him";<sup>1</sup> (d) "Several bhaktas at Tiruviṭaimarutūr, according to tradition, praise the Lord collectively in worship by clasping their hands above their heads in adoration";<sup>2</sup> (e) "A number of devotees who have applied holy ashes assemble in the shrine and worship the holy feet of Śiva early in the morning";<sup>3</sup> (f) "Devotees congregate and sing hymns to music in worship while the brahmans chant the Vedas".<sup>4</sup>

All these references are from the hymns of Campantar and similar references are abundant in the hymns of the other two saints as well.

If we examine these statements closely we will understand the purpose for which this worship was conducted in those days. Congregational worship would probably have been conducted especially during the festival seasons or on special occasions which provided an opportunity for the people to gather together. On the other hand, this collective method of worship no doubt helped the illiterate masses enormously, as it had the power of giving an experience of oneness with all beings; and the sense of group-belonging. Vaiyapuri Pillai rightly suggests that "In front of the deity they poured out their hearts in fervent recitation of songs composed by their leaders and such joint recitations necessitated a kind of simple chorus music in

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1. Ibid., 223:6.  
 2. Ibid., 32:10.  
 3. Cam. Tev., 254:1.  
 4. Ibid., 38:6.

which any one could join".<sup>1</sup>

This popular method of worship survives even at present. Offering of garlands, sprinkling flowers, folding hands over the head and reciting hymns are some of the characteristic features noted in congregational worship. This tends to suggest that the devotees themselves conducted the worship without an officiating priest in some of the shrines. The significant features of the forming of a circle in (b), worshipping according to neri or tradition in (d) applying holy ashes in (e), conducting congregational worship early in the morning in (e) and brahmans chanting Vedas in (f) are clear evidence to show that this congregational worship was conducted in a systematic and orderly manner with religious serenity.

Further references may be cited to illustrate how the hymns were sung to provide an opportunity for creating a feeling of bhakti among the devotees. The saints speak of singing songs set to music,<sup>2</sup> of chanting hymns to the accompaniment of musical instruments,<sup>3</sup> and of devotees dancing with rapture to the recitation of hymns.<sup>4</sup> Campantar praises Irāvāṇaṇ for singing with mental concentration melodious songs in praise of Śiva and says that for such music Śiva showered grace on him.<sup>5</sup>

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1. HTLL, p.102.

2. Cam.Tev, 240:2, 181:9; Cun.Tev, 52:6, 11:2, etc.

3. Cam.Tev, 65:10, 330:3, 228:7, 284:4, etc.

4. Ibid., 183:6, 65:10 and 169:2.

5. Ibid., 71:8.

Appar proclaims that Śiva dwells in the minds of those who worship him three times a day with melting heart and with intensity of love, singing hymns in his praise without fail every day.<sup>1</sup> Cuntarar promises divine enjoyment to those who chant hymns set to music and dance rhythmically for several days.<sup>2</sup> The reference in Campantar's hymn may be cited as evidence of the origin of the later tradition that mental concentration is absolutely necessary to achieve divine grace. Appar's reference indicates what must have been the practice in his time, the constant singing of songs to music. Cuntarar's expression indicates how important it is to dance in harmony with the hymns set to music. Finally the references as a whole clearly demonstrate that singing hymns with melting heart while worshipping has perhaps inspired bhakti to ripen and develop into a deep realisation of God and enable its practitioners to live a life of supreme bliss in union with Śiva. This is characteristic of the hymns of the saints, the chanting of which dominated to a great extent the mode of worship of the period. Thus the pan system, which was peculiar to the Tamils,<sup>3</sup> was perhaps well developed and systematized during this period.

In temple worship, as it has been described in the Tēvāram, the devotees were subject to certain practices which must have

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1. App.Tev, 274:1.
  2. Cun.Tev, 30.10.
  3. HLL, p.102.

subsequently been formulated as rules governing Śaiva worship. Tēvāram speaks often of the practice of worshipping the shrine in a clockwise direction:

- (a) "Those who sprinkle beautiful flowers and worship Śiva daily in a clockwise direction will dispel their vinai";<sup>1</sup>  
 (b) "The Lord who dwells at Makalam gives release from the tie of birth and death to those who worship Him in a clockwise direction".<sup>2</sup> (c) "Those who walk around in a clockwise direction in worship will get rid of vinai and distress".<sup>3</sup> (d) "Devotees sang songs to music pouring out tears and walked around the shrine in a clockwise direction at Nallūr".<sup>4</sup>

In the first three references emphasis is laid on the importance of circumambulating the shrine clockwise in worship as such worship yields certain celestial benefits. These references, which describe benefits of worship, occur not in the TKK but in the other verses of their hymns. Therefore it is reasonable to conclude that the celestial benefits are perhaps promised in order to emphasise the importance of worshipping the shrine in a clockwise direction. The last expression indicates that such worship was performed with intense devotion and love. This manner of worship is included as one of the modes of worship in CVV.<sup>5</sup>

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1. Cam, Tev, 248:7.
  2. Ibid., 253:8.
  3. Ibid., 242:9.
  4. Ibid., 341:8.
  5. CVV, II, p.77.

The other significant mode of worship mentioned in the Tēvāram is aṭṭāṅka namaskāram,<sup>1</sup> 'falling prostrate on the ground touching the eight parts of the body', viz., two ears, two hands, two shoulders, chest and the forehead. This is described as the mode of worship for men by Ārumuka Nāvalar.<sup>2</sup> The Tēvāram does not however mention the names of the eight parts as done in the CVV. The mode of worship pañcāṅka namaskāram, 'falling prostrate on the ground touching the five parts of the body', viz., the two knees, two hands and forehead', which is assigned to women by Ārumuka Nāvalar<sup>3</sup> is also not mentioned by the hymnists.

The hand and the head play a considerable part in Eastern symbolism and it is the tradition of the Tamils to show their profound respect for elders and those in authority by bowing their heads and joining their hands together as in worship. This is revealed in the Tēvāram to be the most efficacious means of prayer, as in doing this, the devotees exhibit bhakti, veneration and love for Śiva.

- (a) "The devotees who keep their hands clasped over their heads and surrender to the shade of the holy feet of Śiva praying 'Lord save us' will dispel their perplexity";<sup>4</sup> (b) "Devotees! let us worship Śiva's abode Paruppatam with our heads bowed";<sup>5</sup>

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1. App.Tev, 208:7.  
 2. CVV, I, p.24.  
 3. Ibid., pp.24-25.  
 4. Cam.Tev, 86:7.  
 5. Ibid., 118:2.

(c) "Those who worship Śiva with their heads bowed will achieve the benefit of rising towards heaven day by day".<sup>1</sup>

These are only a few references from the hymns of Campantar but a number of similar descriptions occur in the hymns of the other two saints. These practices of worship are also included in the CVV.<sup>2</sup> Bowing heads and joining hands together as in worship have, however, come to play a different role in the political arena, for it is a common practice at present for political leaders to make superficial use of these gestures to attract votes. Therefore, the religious significance attached to this mode of worship has suffered a certain degree of degradation.

We have another reference in the hymns of Campantar, which runs thus:

"The vinai will not contaminate him who worships with his body the Lord who holds the trident".<sup>3</sup>

This may be interpreted in two ways; one is perhaps the aṅkappiratateṇam, 'a mode of worship by rolling round a temple in clockwise direction generally in fulfilment of a vow' and the other is the aṅkāṅka namaskāram. The latter is more appropriate as the former is generally performed only in the shrines of Murugaṅ.

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1. Ibid., 284:9.
  2. CVV, II, p.76.
  3. Cam.Tev, 25:7.

several

Apart from this, these expressions such as subduing the five organs,<sup>1</sup> weeping for the melodious songs sung in praise of Śiva,<sup>2</sup> melting the heart, worshipping with a single mind,<sup>3</sup> constant thinking about the holy feet<sup>4</sup> and worshipping with immensity of bhakti,<sup>5</sup> illustrate clearly the state of mind of the devotee in worship. The five sensory organs are considered to be the enemies of religious illumination and salvation and hence it is not surprising that the Tēvāram saints compare them to five wild elephants.<sup>6</sup> Bhakti in worship is, in fact, still more forcibly attained by ceremonies and rituals. Sacred ablutions early in the morning, offering flowers, water and milk, and worshipping with incense and the lighting of lamps are to be performed with inner devotion and love. The Śaivites therefore loved to symbolise religious truths by means of these oblations and so to celebrate the presence of their God. The hymnists often speak of worshipping with various oblations, especially flowers and garlands, which will be discussed in detail later.<sup>7</sup>

In the light of the foregoing observations it is interesting to note some of the rules and principles governing

- 
1. Ibid., 237:4 & 62:6.
  2. Ibid., 156:1.
  3. Ibid., 245:5.
  4. Ibid., 146:5.
  5. Ibid., 195:7.
  6. Ibid., 250:1.
  7. Infra, pp. 196-202, 202-213.

temple worship brought out by Arumuka Nāvalar. Some of the rules and principles especially concerning temple worship, which are mentioned in his work CVV, must have been extracted mainly from the works of the three saints. Most of the rules however are probably of his own formulation.

### Religious Festivals

Another important aspect that is worth examining is the reference in our sources to temple festivals, which throws light on the contemporary social and cultural life of the people as well as the economic structure of the society of the Tēvāram period. Expressions such as ani vilavu,<sup>1</sup> 'beautiful festival', oli vilā<sup>2</sup> 'festival with clamour and roar', kappār vilavu,<sup>3</sup> 'festival attractive to the eyes', kōla vilā,<sup>4</sup> 'colourful festival', peru vilavu,<sup>5</sup> 'festival with great pomp', kali vilā,<sup>6</sup> 'festival inspiring devotion' and mikucīr vilā,<sup>7</sup> 'very graceful festival' are used to describe the temple festivals. These clearly portray the exquisite beauty, the undiminishing glory and the great pomp and ceremony characteristic of festivals in those days. In the light of the above quotations we may infer that the festivals were held purely for religious purposes, and yet served as entertainment for the people. To conduct

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1. Cam, Tev, 277:5.

2. Ibid., 183:7.

3. Ibid., 384:8.

4. Ibid., 8:9.

5. Ibid., 20:4.

6. Ibid., 183:7.

7. Ibid., 37:5.

festivals on such a vast scale involves expense and close co-operation. They cannot be celebrated in such a manner by people who are struggling for their daily existence.

The mention of certain festivals by Campantar confirms that the celebration of those festivals was a regular and permanent feature in some of the shrines of Śiva. Festivals such as ātirai nāl,<sup>1</sup> a festival at the sixth nakṣatra in the month of mārkaḷi; ōpaviḷā,<sup>2</sup> a festival at the twenty-second nakṣatra in the month of aippaci, viḷakkīṭu,<sup>3</sup> a festival of light in the month of kārttikai, taippūcam,<sup>4</sup> a festival at the eighteenth lunar asterism in the month of tai, and uttiram,<sup>5</sup> a festival at the twelfth lunar asterism in the month of paṅkuṇi are festivals which are regular features in the shrines of Śiva even at present. Besides, the reference tiṅkaḷ nāl viḷa malku tirunelvēli,<sup>6</sup> 'Tirunelvēli abounds with daily and monthly festivals' can be cited as proof of the existence of daily pūjā and monthly festivals held in the shrine of Śiva at Tirunelvēli. There is a reference to peruñcānti, 'mahābhiṣēkam at the end of the chief festival,<sup>7</sup> in the shrine

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1. Ibid., 183:4.
  2. Ibid., 183:2.
  3. Ibid., 183:3.
  4. Ibid., 183:5, 192:5.
  5. Ibid., 183:7, and App, Tev, 102:2.
  6. Cam, Tev, 350.9.
  7. MTL, Vol.V, p.2874.

of Śiva at Mayilāppūr.<sup>1</sup> This festival is confused by Mānikkavācaka Mutaliyār<sup>2</sup> with kumpāpiṣēkam, 'ceremony of consecration or purification by sacred bathing of an idol in a temple with water, ghee, milk and so on'. The festival porrāppu<sup>3</sup> which is also referred to by Campantar in the hymns about Mayilāppūr is explained and identified with the 'ūñcal festival',<sup>4</sup> a festival in which the swing-song is sung in praise of the deity while moving the idol on a swing. The above festivals show conclusively the traditional and systematic manner in which they were celebrated in the shrines of Śiva during the Tēvāram period.

The festival ōṇam is held in honour of Viṣṇu.<sup>5</sup> It is, however, mentioned by Campantar as one of the festivals in Śiva's shrine at Mayilāppūr, and this no doubt prompts one to conclude that the ōṇam must possibly have been a festival in honour of Śiva too during the time of Campantar or was perhaps held in the Viṣṇu temple attached to the main shrine at Mayilāppūr.

As revealed in the Tēvāram, the celebration of the car festival is another important event at some of the shrines. Descriptions such as tērkoḷ vīti viḷavu,<sup>6</sup> 'the festival in

- 
1. Cam, Tev, 183:10.
  2. TPT, Tirumūrai, II, p.213.
  3. Cam, Tev, 183:9.
  4. TPT, Tirumurai, II, p.213.
  5. NTP, Iyarpā-nāṇmukan tiruvantāti, 41.
  6. Cam, Tev, 27:7.

which the car is conducted in procession along the street', tēr ār viḷavu,<sup>1</sup> 'the clamour and roar of the car festival', teriṅ ār maṅukil viḷavu,<sup>2</sup> 'the car festival by which the street is beautified' and tēriyal viḷā,<sup>3</sup> 'car festival procession', disclose the decorative manner in which car festivals were conducted in those days. It appears that people must have banded together to conduct the car festivals, and that people from all over the villages must have gathered in large numbers along the street to witness the procession. Early Tamil literature also mentions the chariots (cars) used both in war and peace, and given away as costly gifts by kings and chieftains. The bestowal of a chariot to the jasmine creeper by Pāri, one of the Seven Great Donors, is glorified in early Tamil literature.<sup>4</sup> But the chariots depicted in the religious devotional literature of the Pallava period, especially in the Tēvāram, were placed at the disposal of Śiva and thus have acquired religious significance.

Singing and dancing are the other attractions of a festival. One of the verses in the hymns of Campanantar speaks of the sound of the anklets worn by men and women, the sweet music of the flute, the clamour and noise of the devotees, and

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1. Ibid.; 84:3.
  2. Ibid.; 187:1.
  3. Ibid.; 334:3.
  4. PN, 200, 201.

the beating of the drums in the festival at Pukalūr.<sup>1</sup> In fact, several musical instruments were played during the festivals. Montai 'drum open at one end', parai, 'drum', kallavaṭam 'a kind of drum', muracu 'drum', mulavu, 'drum', caṅku, 'conch-shell' and kuḷal, 'flute', are some of the instruments mentioned in the Tēvāram.<sup>2</sup> The first five mentioned above are percussion instruments, the beaten faces of which are of tautly-stretched skin, one of the five kinds of musical instruments. These differ to some extent in appearance as well as in the techniques required to play them. Drums generally produce a rough and noisy effect, while the conch-shell produces a sustained sound. Most of the instruments played in the temple festivals were drums. This is perhaps the reason why the festivals are described as mula vilavu, 'festivals with drums', mulavār vilavu, 'festival abounds with drum sound' and oli vilavu, 'festival with noise'<sup>3</sup> and so on. The reference muracu atirntu āpai mun oṭa,<sup>4</sup> 'the elephant with the sound of the drum runs in front', can be cited as evidence of the fact that elephants were used to carry the drum in the festival processions.

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1. Cam, Tev, 2:6.

2. TO.Cam, III, 414, TO.App, II, 182, TO.Cun, 247:1.

3. TO.Cam, 414 (V).

4. App, Tev, 4:2.

From this it appears that the parai, characteristically indigenous to the Tamil country, was the primary instrument used in the festivals. The other fact is that the instruments cited above must, especially during the festival seasons, have been played in order to create religious atmosphere and incidentally to provide entertainment for the people who came to witness the festivals. The drum, as depicted in early Tamil literature however was the basic accompanying instrument of the bards.<sup>1</sup> It was played especially in the battlefield to create a martial spirit. The mulavu of a medium size, was probably the basic instrument of dancers, and was used to keep the time or beat.<sup>2</sup>

Singing and the dancing are colourful features of the festivals as described by the saints:

"Several women sang the 'Festival Song' at the main entrance to the shrine at Avūr and they were rewarded with gold coins for their meritorious performance by those who witnessed it".<sup>3</sup>

"A number of devotees got together in the daily festival and sang hymns set to pan in admiration of the Lord of Kōttāru".<sup>4</sup>

"In Śiva's shrine at Kurṅālam some devotees applied holy ashes all over their body and chanted in chorus following the deity in procession".<sup>5</sup>

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1. THP, p.102.
  2. Ibid., p.102.
  3. Cam.Tev, 8:6.
  4. Ibid., 188.3.
  5. Ibid., 99:2.

"In the graceful festival at Avūr young girls whose waists were like creepers entered the arena with young men and sang melodious songs in praise of the Lord".<sup>1</sup>

"The daily and the monthly festivals at Tirunelvēli are adorned with dances performed by arivaiyar, 'women between the age of twenty and twenty-five'.<sup>2</sup>

"The dancing girls in the clamour of the festival at Mutukunram performed dances in a theatre keeping time to the beating of the mulavu and synchronizing with the sweet music".<sup>3</sup>

From these references it appears that there were professional singers and dancers who were either maintained by the temples themselves or who came forward voluntarily to perform. Another fact to be noticed is that the mulavu is mentioned as being used for dancers and therefore it is probable that the mulavu was the basic instrument used by dancers even during the Tēvāram period.

It is interesting to compare this singing and dancing to that of the period of early Tamil literature. In fact singers and dancers were patronized mainly by the kings and the chieftains in those days. There were pānar 'minstrels who sang their songs to the accompaniment of yāl, kūttar, 'a type of minstrel who danced as well as sang', and viraliyar, 'female dancers and singers', and others.<sup>4</sup> But in the Tēvāram period the devotees as well became singers and dancers and thus music and

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1. Ibid., 8:9.  
 2. Ibid., 350:9.  
 3. Ibid., 12:7.  
 4. See THP, Chap.III.

dancing became a means used to inspire devotion and religious illumination. Thus, the shrines of Śiva became the focal point for music and dancing, replacing the courts of the kings and chieftains.

In the hymns of Appar there are references to various symbols of embellishment used at temple festivals.<sup>1</sup> Kavari, 'chowrie', used for fanning the idols at temple festivals; koṭi, 'flag', carried or hung in the shrines and along the streets; cōti, 'lights' which were perhaps the torches carried in the festival processions; tāmam 'garlands' which were made of various gems and coral and hung in the temple or over the street; and vitāṇam, 'arches which were erected over or across the street with white flags - all these made the temple festivals colourful and of magnificent beauty.

The factors enumerated and discussed so far show clearly that the temple festivals were a permanent and culturally significant feature in the shrines of Śiva. Thus they throw light on the religious and cultural life of the people and also demonstrate the sound economic footing of the society of the Tēvāram period. From this essentially religious standpoint in literature, it would appear to have been a period in which everything in life was dedicated to God and had a religious

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1. TO.App, II, 183:3.

connotation. Furthermore, a comparative study of the hymns of the three saints shows that the references as well as the descriptive accounts of the temple festivals are greater in number in the hymns of Campantar than in those of the others. The number of festivals mentioned by Campantar is about nine in contrast to Appar who mentions five, and Cuntarar who mentions only one. In addition he describes 37 shrines having festivals while Appar and Cuntarar describe 9 and 5 respectively.<sup>1</sup> This multiplicity of references by Campantar is perhaps because, being a boy saint he would have been more attracted by the festivals in those shrines than by their other aspects, and therefore probably made more references to them than did the other two. Appar being a mature saint may perhaps have overlooked the festivals and sung of other religious events. Cuntarar may have described these in some of the lost hymns referred to by TKP.

### Flowers and Garlands

Flowers and garlands hold a place of considerable significance in the Tēvāram. The hymnists delight in expressing their devotion, love and religious truths through the imagery of flowers and garlands; using them they celebrate the

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1. For details see TO.Cam, III, 437; TO.App, II, 183:7; TO.Cun, 251.

presence of their Lord, Śiva. It is a common characteristic of the Tēvāram for the hymnists to describe Śiva by associating him with flowers and garlands and by the devotees offering these to him in worship. There are various flowers and different kinds of garlands which are referred to very frequently. They represent not only the outward manifestation of love but also the inner expression of the deepest feeling of the devotees towards Śiva. Hence hardly any worship or religious ceremony takes place either in the home or in the temple without the use of flowers and garlands. As such, the flower garden is an inseparable part of every Hindu shrine in the Tamil country even at present. Indeed, some of the later Śaivite scholars have gone to the extent of framing sacramental rules for maintaining the flower garden of a shrine and even for plucking the flower and offering it to Śiva in worship.

In the Tēvāram, there are two types of descriptions of flowers, one is that in which the flowers are described as offered in worship, or as worn by Śiva; the other is the type where the flowers are referred to in descriptions of the natural beauty of the vicinity of the shrines. The former is done entirely against the background of Śaiva religion, while the latter is in most cases quite similar to the descriptions in early Tamil poetry. The religious import of these descriptions can be observed in the epithets often used by the hymnists to describe flowers. An analysis of some of

the different contexts in which the word malar is used in the hymns of Campantar demonstrate this fact.

According to him, plucked flowers only are used for the adoration of Śiva. Such flowers are referred to as koy malar, 'plucked flowers',<sup>1</sup> koyyār malar, 'beautiful plucked flowers',<sup>2</sup> koyyāni naru malar, 'beautiful fragrant plucked flowers' paritta malar, 'plucked flowers',<sup>3</sup> and so on. Only flowers of a good variety are used for adoration. Campantar refers to these as ina malar, 'selected flowers',<sup>4</sup> ina malart tokuti, 'collection of selected flowers',<sup>5</sup> ina mā malar, 'large selected flowers',<sup>6</sup> etc. Flowers and leaves together are used for adoration. In such cases, Campantar mentions them together as for example, ilaiyār malar, 'flowers with beautiful leaves',<sup>7</sup> and ilaiyuru malarkaḷ, 'flowers with leaves'.<sup>8</sup> He describes fresh and unblemished flowers as tū malar, 'unblemished flowers',<sup>10</sup>; tūya mā malar, 'large unblemished flowers',<sup>11</sup> nāp malar, 'flowers plucked the very same day',<sup>12</sup> kaṭṭalartta malar, 'flowers

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1. Cam, Tev, 53:9.
  2. Ibid., 31:8.
  3. Ibid., 262:5.
  4. Ibid., 116:6.
  5. Ibid., 22:7.
  6. Ibid., 347:2.
  7. Ibid., 200:2.
  8. Ibid., 25:5.
  9. Ibid., 261:2.
  10. Ibid., 118:5.
  11. Ibid., 248:10.
  12. Ibid., 11:3.

with untied petals',<sup>1</sup> paṇi malar, 'flowers drenched with dew',<sup>2</sup> etc. Besides these, tēmpaṭu mā malar, 'large honeyed flowers',<sup>3</sup> kaṭiyār malar, 'fragrant flowers',<sup>4</sup> celu malar, 'luxurious flowers',<sup>5</sup> vaṅga mā malar, 'large colourful flowers',<sup>6</sup> curumpār malar, 'flowers full of humming bees',<sup>7</sup> and so on, also occur but such descriptions are abundant in number and differ merely by the use of varying synonyms.

Some of the poetic diction used here is abundantly employed in early Tamil poetry too, but there it displays not only the beauty and eloquence of the poetic style or composition, but also the poetic skill of the poets of that period. In the Tēvāram, on the other hand, the poetic diction expresses the spirituality and exuberant bhakti of the saints, and portrays the purity, freshness and sanctity of the flowers offered in worship with deepest devotion and in fullness of love. The early Tamil poets describe the beauty of the flowers, but the hymnists portray their purity and sanctity.

Moreover, the descriptions reveal explicitly to us the sacredness of the intimate manner in which the hymnists either offered or wished others to offer flowers in worship considering this to be the most efficacious means of expressing

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1. Ibid., 177:4.
  2. Ibid., 187:3.
  3. Ibid., 204:8.
  4. Ibid., 16:7, 33:7.
  5. Ibid., 205:10, 376:3.
  6. Ibid., 248:4.
  7. Ibid., 249:6.

their love for Śiva. The descriptions of konrai flowers in the hymns of Appar, illustrate this best. The konrai flower is not only referred to in several hymns of Appar, but these descriptions are also characterised by the use of a very varied poetic diction. The following examples demonstrate the purity and the sacredness of the konrai flower:

tēn cottac cotta ninrattun tirukkōnrai, 'holy konrai flower glimmers dropping honey',<sup>1</sup> narum pon nān malark konrai, 'unblemished fragrant pure fresh and golden konrai flower',<sup>2</sup> kulaiyēru narun konrai, 'cluster of unblemished konrai flower',<sup>3</sup> koy malar am konrai, 'beautiful plucked konrai flower',<sup>4</sup> vampa vilu malark konrai, 'fragrant fresh beautiful konrai flower',<sup>5</sup> vaṭu viṭṭa konrai, 'unblemished konrai flower',<sup>6</sup> kārār kamaḷ konrai, 'fragrant konrai flower of the rainy season', ilaiyār punak konrai, 'cooling konrai flower with leaves',<sup>8</sup> tiḷaikkum vaṭṭoṭu tēn paṭu konrai, 'honeyed konrai swarming with bees',<sup>9</sup> etc.

Some of these descriptions are repeated synonymously.

The reason for this flower to be referred to more often than the others is that it is the favourite flower of Śiva, and thus the devotees offered it more often in worship than other flowers.

1. App. Tev, 95:1.

2. Ibid., 187:5.

3. Ibid., 303:2.

4. Ibid., 229:6.

5. Ibid., 13:2.

6. Ibid., 111:8.

7. Ibid., 220:9.

8. Ibid., 255:4.

9. Ibid., 139:6.

Different types of garlands are made for Śiva from the konrai flower alone. The following examples illustrate this fact:

- (a) virinta konraip paṭalai cēr...mārpar, 'Śiva drapes the paṭalai made of konrai flowers over his chest'.<sup>1</sup>
- (b) pūṅkonrait tārāṅ, 'Śiva has the tār of konrai flowers'.<sup>2</sup>
- (c) kaṭitār kamal konraik kanniyaṅ, 'Śiva is adorned with kanni made of fragrant konrai flowers'.<sup>3</sup> (d) konrai mālai... tikaḷ caṭai vaittavaṅ, 'Śiva draped the konrai flower garland on his glistening tangled hair'.<sup>4</sup> (e) viri konrai viṅṭa toṭaiyalāṅ 'Śiva is adorned with toṭaiyal of konrai flowers'.<sup>5</sup>
- (f) vaṅṭu yālcey cūṭark konraip piṅaiyal ceṅṭāṅ, 'Śiva adorned himself with piṅaiyal of glittering konrai flowers swarming with bees humming like the yāl'.<sup>6</sup> (g) narunṅ konrait tonkalāṅ, 'Śiva has a tonkal consisting of fragrant konrai flowers'.<sup>7</sup> (h) pannuru vaṅṭarai konrai alāṅkal.... mārpinaṅ, 'Śiva has draped over his chest the alāṅkal of konrai flowers swarming with bees humming sweetly'.<sup>8</sup>

We notice in the above illustrations that there are eight types of garlands made of konrai flowers, and that in our sources no other flower has been used to such an extent. It is likely that the making of various types of garlands out of konrai flowers became a highly specialised religious art during the Tēvāram period.

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1. Ibid., 28:4.
  2. Ibid., 214:6.
  3. Ibid., 221:8.
  4. Ibid., 127:3.
  5. Cam, Tev, 46:1.
  6. Ibid., 103:4.
  7. Ibid., 118:4.
  8. Ibid., 39:5.

### Flowers in worship

Besides describing flowers and garlands, the saints especially Campantar and Appar, speak of the use of flowers in worship in several of their verses. In fact, Campantar has devoted almost all the verses of three hymns, Nos. 40, 91 and 248, to describe this on an elaborate scale. The descriptions are either an expression of an earnest desire, which brings out the spiritual experience and exaltation of the saints, or a portrayal of the devotees worshipping Śiva with flowers. Moreover, the description of the use of flowers in worship reveals clearly the deep devotion and faithfulness of the devotees and their purity of service and submission to God. The importance and the sacredness of worship with flowers is made clear by Campantar who states that it is performed not only by the devotees but even by the ascetics, the vānavar and the tēvar.<sup>1</sup>

The offering of flowers in worship is also described in such a way as to demonstrate the manner in which it is done. Some devotees offer flowers daily in worship,<sup>2</sup> some offer them morning and evening;<sup>3</sup> others offer them three times a day;<sup>4</sup> and yet others, day and night.<sup>5</sup> The devotees who

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1. Ibid., 189:4; 292:1 and 139:1.

2. Ibid., 36:6.

3. Ibid., 37:6.

4. Ibid., 139:1.

5. Ibid., 38:1.

trust that Śiva will grant them freedom from rebirth, chant His name, sometimes standing and sometimes sitting, offering flowers in worship day and night.<sup>1</sup> These descriptions by Campantar are clear evidence of the systematised practice of worship with flowers during the Tēvāram period. We also have a few references which enable us to conclude that worship with flowers was in existence even before the Tēvāram period. Campantar refers to the devotees, Caṅṭēcurar,<sup>2</sup> Mārkkāṅṭēyar,<sup>3</sup> Muruka Nāyaṅār<sup>4</sup> and Vāli,<sup>5</sup> who lived earlier than the saints and also worshipped Śiva with flowers.

Furthermore, it can be observed that the saints often describe the devotees as sprinkling flowers at the holy feet of Śiva. In certain places it is stated that the devotees sing hymns in praise of Him and offer flowers in worship; in some, they prostrate themselves at His holy feet with flowers; and in a few they pick flowers and place them at His holy feet singing hymns with a melting heart. Besides this, the flowers are often offered with water and so 'flower and water' is a usage frequently occurring in the hymns of Campantar and Appar. Sometimes they are offered together with sandalwood, incense, or a lamp. There is a verse which aptly describes ladies

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1. Ibid., 200:4.
  2. Ibid., 312:7.
  3. Ibid., 20:7, 62:3.
  4. Ibid., 228:3.
  5. Ibid., 349:6.

holding flowers, water, tūpam and sandalwood in their hands and worshipping Śiva.<sup>1</sup>

The benefits of worship with flowers are stated either in the form of a promise or as an assurance. In hymn No.91, Campantar promises spiritual illumination, freedom from rebirth, and everlasting bliss to those who perform worship with flowers. Campantar's firm belief that worshipping Śiva with flowers frees one from vinai is clearly seen in the verses of hymn No.243. His strong sense of munificence is displayed in the verses of hymn No.40, where he invites others also to join him in worshipping Śiva with flowers. Appar goes one step further and states that even the thought of worshipping Śiva with flowers makes Śiva remain for ever in the minds of the devotees.<sup>2</sup> Cuntarar, states Śiva's desire to accept worship with flowers from those who have brought their senses under control.<sup>3</sup>

The hymnists also speak of patti malar, 'the flower of bhakti', con mālai, 'garland of words' and pā mālai, 'garland of hymns'.

"If you sprinkle the flowers of bhakti before the Lord of Arūr you will obtain mutti, 'final beatitude'".<sup>4</sup>

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1. Ibid., 79:6.
  2. App,Tev, 121:6.
  3. Cun,Tev, 19:8.
  4. Cam,Tev, 91:1.

"I keep thinking of the Lord who wears the intai on the tangle of his hair and in the worship of whom the devotees sprinkle flowers, praising him with garlands of words."<sup>1</sup>

"Devotees! you sing the elegant garland of hymns of Nāvalūraṅ about the Lord of Vāñciyam".<sup>2</sup>

"The vānavar will worship those who chant the pā mālai composed by Campantar".<sup>3</sup>

The patti malar, con mālai and pā mālai are mere expressions of bhakti. In other words the devotees worship Śiva with flowers of love and garlands of hymns which are the expressions of their innermost feelings of bhakti. If flowers and garlands are the outward signs of love, the patti malar, pā mālai or con mālai represent the innermost feelings of love. In addition the descriptions clearly illustrate the noteworthy spiritual significance attached to the flowers and garlands.

Appar describes Śiva as adorned with aṭṭa mā malar, 'eight large flowers'.<sup>4</sup> The Śaivites explain this as eight kinds of flowers viz.; punnai, vellerukku, cappakam, nantiyāvartam, nīlōrpalam, pātiri, alari and red lotus. In support of this they cite references in the Putṭaviti.<sup>5</sup> But none of the saints refer to the names of these eight flowers in their work. One is therefore unable to conclude that the eight flowers referred to in the Putṭaviti are the ones that Appar mentioned as 'eight flowers'.

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1. App, Tev, 7:4.
  2. Cun, Tev, 76:10.
  3. Cam, Tev, 377:11.
  4. App, Tev, 18:8 & 122:4.
  5. Putṭaviti, 20.

The factors enumerated and analysed above have shown conclusively not only the significance of flowers in the Śaiva religion but also the traditional manner in which flowers were offered in worship in the Tēvāram period. It has been seen that the saints, particularly Campanar and Appar, describe them frequently in their hymns. This is perhaps done with two motives, one being to remind bhaktas that they have to meditate on the inner meaning and significance of the flowers and the offering of them in worship, the other being to provoke thought and desire in the minds of people who were in a land which was in the firm grip of Jainism. It was Campanar and Appar who spearheaded the overthrow of the Jainistic religion that clouded the minds of the people of the Tamil country of the seventh century A.D. Referring to this, Purnalingam Pillai suggests:

"The boy-saint and the veteran saint appeared at this favourable turn of the tide. In the overthrow of Buddhism and Jainism, argument was not the weapon of either combatant; both trusted to their magic and witchcraft for it".<sup>1</sup>

It is therefore reasonable to conclude that these two saints, apart from the miracles that they are said to have performed to prove the Śaiva faith, must have utilised worship with flowers as one of the most attractive and impressive methods

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1. TL, p.175.

of worship, to encourage Tamilians to follow the Śaiva religion and not be carried away by Jainism. This is perhaps the reason why these two saints describe worship with flowers more frequently in their hymns than does Cuntarar.

When worship with flowers was revived as an attractive method of worship by these saints it must have had a strong appeal for the people. It must have been one of the novelties by means of which Śaivism became prominent in the Tamil country. Subsequently, the description of various flowers and the references to worship with flowers in the Tēvāram must have helped the later Śaiva Siddhānta philosophers and the Śaiva scholars to systematise and expound philosophically the use of flowers, and worship with flowers in the Śaiva shrines. The work, Putpaviti and the rules framed in CVV are no doubt derived from the Tēvāram.

The references to konrai flowers, and to garlands of different types made of konrai flowers, tend to suggest that the konrai tree must have had a prominent and permanent place in the flower garden or in the vicinity of all the shrines of Śiva. The necessary flowers were probably plucked from it for daily adoration or worship. In addition, it is likely that Śiva worship must have been conducted under the konrai tree where the deity or statue was perhaps erected. Thus the konrai tree and its flowers had strong religious significance

for Śaivites. It is interesting to note that the konrai flower, together with some of the flowers referred to in the Tēvāram is rarely if ever offered in worship at present in the Śiva shrines in the Tamil country and in Ceylon.

### Garlands in worship

We may now examine the different types of garlands mentioned in our sources. According to the survey of Ceṅkalvarāya Piḷḷai, Campantar refers to ten varieties of garlands, namely alaṅkal, iṅṅai, kanni, tāman, tār, tunaiyal, toṅkal, toṭai or toṭaiyal, piṅaiyal and mālai.<sup>1</sup> Appar, in addition, alludes to five other varieties such as āram, karōṭi, kōṭālam, paṭalai and vācikai, but he does not mention the alaṅkal, tāman, tunaiyal and toṭai referred to by Campantar.<sup>2</sup> Furthermore, Cuntarar adds another type, teriyal but there is no mention of the tāman, toṅkal, toṭai and piṅaiyal varieties stated in Campantar's hymns; and none of the new classes alluded to by Appar except for vācikai.<sup>3</sup> A perusal of the verses and the context where references are made to these garlands demonstrates the fact that there are only subtle differences between these garlands. In early Tamil poetry

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1. TO.Cam, III, 376.
  2. TO.App, I, pp.278-280.
  3. TO.Cun, 232.

too most of these garlands are mentioned; but in this case the descriptions appear while the poets sing of the contemporary day to day life. On the other hand, in the Tēvāram period the hymnists refer to garlands while singing hymns in praise of Śiva. The garlands have thus acquired a religious significance here.

Alaṅkal, according to Piṅkalam, is a garland of flowers strung together and worn on the hair (mayircūṭṭu mālai).<sup>1</sup> The word alaṅkal is derived from the verb alaṅku 'to move, swing, shake, dangle, be in motion'.<sup>2</sup> Hence it literally means 'moving or swinging wreath'. Campantar refers to this garland in four of his verses; in three he states that Śiva is adorned with an alaṅkal of koṅrai flowers;<sup>3</sup> and in one he promises freedom from the cycle of re-birth to those who garland him with alaṅkal in worship.<sup>4</sup> The place of adornment, which is said to be on the chest of Śiva, is mentioned in only one.<sup>5</sup> On the other hand Cuntarar states specifically that Śiva adorns the tangle of his hair with the alaṅkal.<sup>6</sup> Coming to any definite conclusion on the basis of these few references is difficult but it appears to have been a custom during the Tēvāram period to wear this garland both on the hair as well as on the chest.

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1. PKN, cū. 225, p.199; cū. 381, p.421.
  2. DED, S.V.203, p.18.
  3. Cam,TeV, 39:5, 40:5 and 302:4.
  4. Cam,TeV, 195:1.
  5. Ibid., 39:5.
  6. Cun,TeV, 76:10.

The description of kanni frequently occurs in the hymns of Appar. In most instances, it is portrayed as adorning the tangle of Śiva's hair. The flowers of erukku, kūvilam, konrai, mallikai and mullai compose the garland, kanni.<sup>1</sup> However it is perhaps because konrai is the favourite flower of Śiva that Appar describes it so often in his hymns. In addition, the crescent moon of Śiva is also described as kanni.<sup>2</sup> It is probable that it appears or is worn in the tangle of his hair. It is obvious that during the Tēvāram period the kanni was regarded as an adornment for the hair.

Early Tamil poetry too mentions kanni. For instance, the PN describes it as a garland of flowers in general, and states that it consists of a cluster of flowers of alexandrian laurel.<sup>3</sup> In Maturaikkāñci, it is described as a single flower, used as a military badge.<sup>4</sup> The word kanni, meaning wreath, garland, neck-rope for bullock, rope, according to DED, is derived from kannu, 'to be attached to, be fastened to'.<sup>5</sup> Hence, garlands fastened to the hair or the neck are called kanni.

Inṭai means, 'circlet of flowers, variety of garland'.<sup>6</sup> An analysis of the references to inṭai in the Tēvāram shows

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1. App, Tev, 208:5, 168:4, 17:8, 43:8, 218:3.
  2. Cun, Tev, 49:9, App, Tev, 98:1.
  3. PN, 24:8.
  4. Maturaikkāñci, 596.
  5. DED, S.V. 994, p.85.
  6. DED, S.V. 388, p.35.

clearly that it is a garland or circlet of flowers worn on the hair and made up of either a single kind of flower or of different kinds of flowers woven together; some garlands consist only of the buds of erukku,<sup>1</sup> while some contain erukku, vanni, mattam and konrai.<sup>2</sup> Though it is often characterised by the saints as a garland worn on the tangled hair of Śiva, it is sometimes offered in worship at the holy feet too.<sup>3</sup> Cuntarar speaks of the brahmans who offer inṭai three times a day at the holy feet of Śiva after bathing in the tank.<sup>4</sup> In certain references it is described as inṭai mālai<sup>5</sup> and inṭai mā malar;<sup>6</sup> hence in these contexts inṭai probably means lotus.<sup>7</sup> It is perhaps therefore that garlands of lotus flowers are also called inṭai mālai; inṭai being 'lotus' and mālai 'garland'; and the lotus flower is called inṭai mā malar, inṭai being 'lotus' and mā malar 'beautiful or big flower'.

Tonkai means 'hanging, anything pendant, hangings, pendant part of an ornament, decorative hangings as of cloth, festoons, garlands', etc.<sup>8</sup> It is derived from tonku, 'to hang,

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1. Cun, Tev, 31:7.
  2. Cam, Tev, 237:2; 290:10.
  3. Ibid., 340:5.
  4. Cun, Tev, 30:3.
  5. Cam, Tev, 120:3.
  6. Cun, Tev, 70:10.
  7. TED, p.199.
  8. DED, S.V. 2863, p.229.

be suspended, hang down, dangle', etc.<sup>1</sup> In the Tēvāram it is referred to only in four verses; in three verses of Campantar and in one of Appar. Flowers such as konrai and kūvilam are used to make the garland tonkal. Śiva is addressed as konrait tonkalān, 'one who wears the tonkal of konrai flowers'<sup>2</sup> and kūvilam tonkalān, 'one who wears the tonkal of kūvilam flowers'.<sup>3</sup> Another expression aptly shows that the statue of Śiva is adorned with tonkal together with tāmam and kappi.<sup>4</sup> Moreover it is offered in worship as an oblation along with sandalwood and fragrant incense.<sup>5</sup> From the descriptions referred to so far it appears that the garlands that hang as decorations over the statue of Śiva, have been called tonkal. But according to Pinkalam, tonkal is konṭai mālai, 'a garland worn on the hair-knot'.<sup>6</sup>

The garland pinaiyal is referred to in only three verses in the Tēvāram; in two verses of Campantar and in one of Appar. Campantar states that Śiva is adorned with pinaiyal of konrai flowers<sup>7</sup> and Appar specifies that Śiva's tangle of hair is adorned with pinaiyal of konrai flowers.<sup>8</sup> The word

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1. Ibid.
  2. Cam, Tev, 118:4.
  3. App, Tev, 216:1.
  4. Cam, Tev, 239:4.
  5. Ibid., 61:4.
  6. PKN, cū, 380, p.421.
  7. Cam, Tev, 103:4; 239:1.
  8. App, Tev, 64:5.

pinaiyal is derived from the verb pinai meaning 'to entwine, unite, copulate, tie, fasten', etc.<sup>1</sup> From this, flowers tied together into a garland were probably named pinaiyal. This is confirmed by the definition of pinaiyal in Pinkalam, which runs thus: pinaiyal enpatu pinniya mālai, 'knotted garlands are pinaiyal'.<sup>2</sup> This type of garland is mentioned in several poems in the early Tamil poetry. In fact in those days the pinaiyal was made even from the flowers of palmyra,<sup>3</sup> while sometimes the petals of lotus flowers were used.<sup>4</sup> It is therefore manifest from the references in the Tēvāram that this type of garland was made from the flowers of konrai and worn on the tangled hair of Śiva.

Tāmam is especially worn on the shoulders<sup>5</sup> and is mentioned in most of the works of early Tamil literature. The PVM, a treatise on rhetoric of uncertain date, describes it as a garland worn over the shoulders.<sup>6</sup> In the Tēvāram we have only one reference to this garland and even there its name is only mentioned together with two other kinds, tonkal and kappi.<sup>7</sup> From this it appears to have been the

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1. DED, S.V. 3423, p.277.
  2. PKN, cū. 228, p.199.
  3. NT, 90.
  4. Pari., 2:53.
  5. PKN, cū. 379, p.421.
  6. PVM, 1:21.
  7. Cam, Tev, 239:4.

custom to decorate the shoulders of Śiva with different types of garland.

Tār means 'flower blossom, flower-bud'.<sup>1</sup> Konrait tār, 'garland of konrai flowers' is a usage that occurs frequently in the Tēvāram of Appar. This reference is clear evidence of the devotees offering mostly garlands made of konrai flowers. It also proves that the statue of Śiva was adorned with garlands of konrai as konrai was the favourite flower of Śiva. Konrai mālai is the other usage that appears most often in the hymns of all the three saints, so it may be presumed that the other types of garlands were used less frequently to decorate the statue of Śiva. Moreover, these two frequent usages testify that tār and mālai are garlands of the same type. The PVM describes tār as a cluster of flowers<sup>2</sup> and according to MTL tār means 'wreath, garland, chaplet, flower-bud', etc.<sup>3</sup>

The names of the garlands, toṭaiyal and teriyal are derivative ones. The word toṭaiyal is derived from the verb toṭu, 'to connect, join, bind, fasten, fix', etc.<sup>4</sup> Hence, flowers connected together into a garland called toṭai or

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1. DED, S.V. 2585, p.205.

2. PVM, 2:1.

3. MTL, Vol.III, p.1841.

4. DED, S.V. 2865, p.229.

toṭaiyal. On the other hand, teriyal is probably derived from the verb teri, meaning 'select, choose', etc.<sup>1</sup> Hence, the garlands made of selected or chosen flowers are called teriyal. These garlands too are mentioned in several works of early Tamil literature. In the Tēvāram, toṭai and teriyal are each referred to in a single verse of Campantar and Cuntarar respectively. Campantar states that Śiva is adorned with toṭaiyal of konrai flowers;<sup>2</sup> and Cuntarar metaphorically represents Śiva's crescent moon as teriyal.<sup>3</sup> According to Piṅkalam, flowers strung together into a garland are called toṭaiyal, this being worn over the shoulders.<sup>4</sup> The compactness of an unblossomed flower is also called toṭai.<sup>5</sup> What may be pointed out here is the paucity of references to teriyal and toṭaiyal in the Tēvāram. This is perhaps because they were not popular varieties at that time.

Two other varieties, karōṭi and kōṭālam, are mentioned, each in a verse of Appar. According to Piṅkalam, karōṭi is muṭi mālai,<sup>6</sup> 'a garland for the crown'. Appar portrays Śiva as adorned with karōṭi on the tangle of his hair;<sup>7</sup>

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1. DED, S.V. 2815, p.224.
  2. Cam, Tev, 46:1.
  3. Cun, Tev, 97:8.
  4. PKN, cū, 225, p.199; cū, 379, p.421.
  5. PVM, 10:1.
  6. PKN, cū, 69, p.180.
  7. App, Tev, 107:8.

and he does not mention specific flowers in connection with it. In the Cētopurāṇam however, karōṭi is illustrated as skulls tied together with a snake to form a garland.<sup>1</sup> It therefore appears that karōṭi is not a garland of flowers. On the other hand, kōṭālam is a crescent-shaped necklace, as of pearls.<sup>2</sup> It is referred to in the Tēvāram as kōṭāla vēṭattar.<sup>3</sup> This means 'Śiva is adorned with kōṭālam and thus it does not clearly illustrate the meaning of kōṭālam. Referring to this garland, Aruṇaivaṭivēl Mutaliyār gives a different interpretation. He splits the phrase into kōl, 'holding in the hand', tālam, 'vessel' and vēṭam, 'appearance' giving the combined meaning as 'Śiva appears with a bowl in his hand'.<sup>4</sup>

Vācikai is another type of garland mentioned once in both the Tēvāram of Appar as well as in that of Cuntarar. Śiva is described as adorned on the tangle of his hair with a beautifully twisted vācikai.<sup>5</sup> On the other hand, Cuntarar describes the river Kāviri as worshipping the holy feet of Śiva offering a rounded vācikai.<sup>6</sup> Here the flowers washed by the waters of the river Kāviri are described as a vācikai,

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1. Cētopurāṇam, Irāmaṇaruccani, 89.
  2. MTL, Vol.II, p.1178.
  3. App.Tev, 230:1.
  4. TPT, Tirumurai, VI, p.131.
  5. App.Tev, 148:3.
  6. Cun.Tev, 48:2.

'garland'. Similar descriptions in early as well as later poetry are usually employed to portray either the behaviour or the emotions of the people. For instance, in order to describe the distress of Kaṇṇaki, Iṅkōvaṭikal personifies the river Vaiyai and its flowing waters covered with flowers, as a lady dressed in cloth and pouring forth tears.<sup>1</sup> The description of vācikai in the Tēvāram of Appar brings out three facts, vācikai is a rounded garland, it is worn on the hair, and it is offered by devotees in worship to Śiva. According to Piṅkalam, vācikai is a garland of flowers strung thickly together and is a mayircūṭṭu mālai, 'the garland for the hair'.<sup>2</sup>

One more type of garland, paṭalai is mentioned in two verses in the Tēvāram of Appar. In one, it is described as a garland of full-blown flowers of konrai adorning the shoulders of Śiva;<sup>3</sup> and in the other, as a garland of fragrant konrai flowers worn by Śiva.<sup>4</sup> These allusions do not prevent the conclusion that paṭalai is a garland of green leaves and flowers as stated by Tiruttakkatēvar;<sup>5</sup> here they merely refer to a flower garland in general. Piṅkalam, however, defines

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1. Cil., purāṅcēriyiruttakātai, 170-3.
  2. PKN, cū.229, p.199; cū.381, p.421.
  3. App.Tev, 28:4.
  4. Ibid., 207:4.
  5. Civakacintāmaṇi, 483.

it as kōttamālai, 'garland of flowers strung together'.<sup>1</sup>

The analysis made so far of the different kinds of garlands makes the following facts clear. Kaṇṇi, tār and mālai are the three main garlands largely used to decorate the shoulders of the deity Śiva, and they are most often composed of konrai flowers. Tāman, toṭai, teriyal, karōṭi, kōṭālam, paṭalai and vācikai are each referred to only in a verse or two. This suggests that they were probably not as popular as the other three. Alaṅkal, iṅṭai, kaṇṇi, piṇaiyal karōṭi and vācikai are mentioned as being the garlands used for the tangled hair of Śiva. Though konrai is the favourite flower of Śiva, various other flowers such as kūvilam, erukku, mallikai, mullai, vanni, mattam and iṅṭai are also used to make the different types of garlands. The devotees offered most of these garlands in worship.

There is nothing in any of the references that suggests that piṇaiyal is a garland of flowers knotted together (piṇṇiya mālai), or that paṭalai, vācikai and toṭaiyal are garlands of flowers strung together (kōttamālai) as stated in the Piṅkalam.

Whatever characteristics some of these garlands have in common with the garlands mentioned in early Tamil poetry, their

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1. PKN, cū., 725, p.509.

association and significance in the Tēvāram are exclusively religious. The significant fact is that in every case, they are referred to either as adornments of Śiva or as oblations to Him. In fact they are held in high regard, and are holy symbols expressing the love of the devotees to Śiva, and are offered in worship in order to obtain divine and celestial benefits in return.

It has been seen in the foregoing pages that the saints describe certain garlands as being worn on the tangled hair of Śiva, some as being worn either over the shoulders or on the chest, and others as being offered at his feet. These descriptions indicate either that it was Śiva's statue or image, and not the Śiva līṅkam that was the object of worship when the saints visited those shrines, or that the saints identified the līṅkam with Śiva's bodily form.

Chapter Four

THE LOVE HYMNS IN THE TEVARAM

It is necessary to consider the early Tamil poetry, Eṭṭuttokai 'Eight Anthologies' and Pattuppāṭṭu, 'Ten songs' before analysing the love themes in the Tēvāram. The Tol. divides the subject matter of all poetry into two broad categories, akam, 'inner' and puram, 'outer'. Akam is generally considered as the poetry of love and puram as the poetry of heroism.<sup>1</sup> In the Eight Anthologies, there are six akam works: Akanānūru, Kuruntokai, Naraiṇai, Aiṅkurunūru, Kalittokai and a portion of Paripāṭal; and in the Ten Songs there are three akam works: Mullaippāṭṭu, Kuṇṅippāṭṭu and Paṭṭinappālai. "Among these works, Paripāṭal is an anomaly, inasmuch as it is classified like the other five as akam poetry, but its extant akam poems are almost wholly devotional and quite different from the secular love poetry of the other five akam anthologies".<sup>2</sup>

The Tēvāram as a whole does not relate to love, except for certain hymns and some verses which fall essentially into the category of akam although they are religious rather than

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1. For a detail analysis see ETA, pp.19-66 and THP, pp.4-7.

2. ETA, p.34.

secular. Fifteen hymns and 5 verses of Campantar, 11 hymns and 21 verses of Appar, and 2 hymns and 6 verses of Cuntarar may be cited as love-poetry<sup>1</sup> and these poems deserve special analysis in our study, as they are quite different from the early secular akam poetry but similar to the poems in Pari. which, too, are almost wholly devotional.

In early akam anthologies and the three akam poems of the Ten Songs, secular love is expressed, but in the Tēvāram it is often portrayed as existing between God and His devotees. Lord Śiva is compared to a lover and the devotee to a love-stricken lady. Human emotions form the primary subject of early poetry and they are the emotions of a people who were acutely aware of natural surroundings. On the other hand, in the Tēvāram, it is the love between God and the devotee that is expressed in terms of conjugal love. The devotee's bhakti forms the primary subject of the Tēvāram. It is the bhakti of the saints who lived in spiritual serenity and had an intimate relationship and communion with god. In other words, the devotees, the lovers of God, lived a life of union with God in supreme bliss.

Though the Tol. states that paripāṭṭu and kalippā are the suitable metres for the composition of love poems,<sup>2</sup> four out of six anthologies in the Eight Collections and all the akam poems

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1. See the table 1(a).
  2. Tol., Akat., cū. 53.

in the Ten Songs are composed in the metre akaval or ācīriyam. The works Kalittokai and Paripāṭal are composed in the metres kali and paripāṭṭu respectively, but modern writers consider them as later works.<sup>1</sup> All these facts clearly indicate that akaval or ācīriyam was the predominant metre of this period for the composition of love poems. The love hymns in the Tēvāram are however sung either in viruttam or nēricai or kuruntokai or tāṇṭakam and the love themes are presented in the verse-form patikam. This is a new development in the history of Tamil Literature.

Tol. speaks of poets composing mystical love poetry.

It declares that even gods are subject to the urge of sexual love like all others, as stated by men of learning.<sup>2</sup> In the commentary to this cūttiram Naccinārkkīyār classifies this love as that of the goddess falling in love with God; women falling in love with God, God falling in love with women, and so on. He further states, referring to the word pakuti, that the desire of love in God is different from the love treated in the seven tiṇai of Akattinaiyiyal by Tolkāppiyār. The mystic love described in the Tēvāram, however, does not fall under the categories mentioned above.

In secular love the lover and the beloved are obsessed

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1. HTLL, p.56; ETA, p.477; CET, p.225.  
2. Tol., Poruḷ., cū. 83.

with the pangs of love and express their love in several ways. In religious love only the devotee speaks; instead of speaking, God takes possession of his heart. The hymnists, who are the love-stricken devotees, very frequently address their lover, Śiva, as perumān, 'master', ālvān, 'Lord', talaivan, 'head', nāyakan, 'husband', appan, 'friend', and aiyan, 'Lord'. Campanar calls Śiva a 'thief' as He steals his heart away.<sup>1</sup> Appar states, "Śiva penetrates the devotee's mind and is ever united with him".<sup>2</sup> Cuntarar exclaims that Śiva has penetrated his heart and stays united with him.<sup>3</sup> Thus the hymnists frequently state that Śiva penetrates their hearts and takes possession of them. Therefore, it is clear that God always enters the mind of His beloved who in turn, belongs to God and surrenders entirely to Him. Though the hymnists' love is one-sided, it is clear from their statements that God holds the devotee in union. He becomes 'one' with the devotee's mind and abides in his heart. This union lasts without separation forever and finally the devotee is granted civamutti, 'release from rebirth'. Thus, love is the means of liberation for the lovers of God.

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1. uḷḷāṅkavar kalvan, Cam.Tev, 1:1-10.
  2. uḷḷattē onrinirankuraiyum, App.Tev, 202:1.
  3. uḷḷattullē ninra onporul, Cun.Tev, 45:4.

Campanantar's akam hymns

Fifteen hymns and five verses in Campanantar's Tēvāram may be mentioned in which the akam element is limited to a line in each verse of 13 hymns. In two hymns, Nos. 56 and 63, it is limited to the 2nd lines, in three hymns, Nos. 73, 358 and 362, to the 3rd lines and in eight Nos. 44, 60, 76, 154, 159, 183, 303 and 359 to the last lines. The love theme is presented without such a pattern in the other two hymns, Nos. 321 and 374. The striking feature is that the love lines in each hymn mostly present the same idea in a nutshell; only the words and phrases differ.

The presentation of love elements in these hymns may be classified into two main patterns; one is the saint's complaints about the troubles Śiva causes him, the other is the saint's description of the painful emotions he suffers. The former may be sub-divided into Śiva taking his fill of love,<sup>1</sup> feasting on the fresh nectar of the lover,<sup>2</sup> causing the beloved to assume a pallid greenish hue,<sup>3</sup> stealing her bangles,<sup>4</sup> carrying off the lover's clothes,<sup>5</sup> making her sleepless,<sup>6</sup> and robbing her of her

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1. Cam, Tev, 73:3, 359:1-10, etc.
  2. Ibid., 76:1-10; 362:5, 7 & 9; 63:1, 4, 6, 7 & 9, etc.
  3. Ibid., 56:5; 73:8, etc.
  4. Ibid., 154:3; 358:2; 63:10, etc.
  5. Ibid., 63:3, 5 & 11, etc.
  6. Ibid., 63:2 & 8; 154:5, etc.

chastity and modesty.<sup>1</sup> The latter may be sub-divided into the lady in love suffering unending pain,<sup>2</sup> the affliction of unbearable separation<sup>3</sup> and the longing for union.<sup>4</sup>

From the above analysis, two facts come to light. One is that the love-themes are always subordinate to the religious aspects in Campantar's akam hymns. The description of Śiva's glories and greatness dominates his love hymns in contrast to the love hymns of Appar where the love themes are presented more elaborately.<sup>5</sup> The other is that there are more hymns about the troubles caused to Campantar by Śiva than about the painful emotions the saint suffers. In other words the saint speaks more often of Śiva as a lover than of himself as the lady whom He loves. This makes it clear that Śiva's love holds sway over the devotee's love. Campantar often addresses Śiva as ullaṅ kavār kalvaṅ<sup>6</sup> 'the thief who steals the heart'. Dhavamony interprets this to mean that God is described as a 'thief' who steals the mystic's heart. Because He takes possession of the devotee's heart without him being aware of it he is called a thief.<sup>7</sup>

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1. Ibid., 73:8; 154:10, etc.
  2. Ibid., 374:1-10.
  3. Ibid., 60:1-10 & 321:1-10.
  4. Ibid., 159:1-10; 303:1-10.
  5. Infra, pp. 226-7.
  6. Cam, Tev., hymn No. 1:1-10.
  7. LG, p. 144.

It is perhaps because Śiva's love for the saint exceeds that of the saint for Śiva that many have referred to the latter as followed satputra mārḡa, 'the way in which a good son loves his father'. Śiva is called 'father' when he does good and grants boons, he is called 'mother' when he shows love.

We now pass on to examine some of Campantar's akam hymns. Three hymns, Nos. 44, 154 and 183, for which miracles are attributed by Cēkḡilār deserve special mention:

Hymn No. 44 is said to have miraculously healed the disease called muyalakan from which the daughter of Kollimalavaṅ was suffering.<sup>1</sup> The last lines of the verses of this hymn are traditionally cited as evidence to prove that the mere chanting of this hymn cured the disease.<sup>2</sup> The lines in fact repeat a question: "Is it your nature to cause trouble to this lady?", which is in a way similar to the expression of love in some of the other akam hymns. Apart from this, it contains no clue of Campantar curing a disease by the name muyalakan.

The meaning of the word mayal in the reference māṅkaiyai vāṭa mayal ceṭtal (1 & 4), is 'confusion of mind, desire, lust and sensual infatuation', etc.<sup>3</sup> The word pali in paintoṭi vāṭap

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1. PPTC, 318-319.
  2. OEHS, pp.329-30.
  3. MTI, Vol.V, p.3073.

pali ceytal (9), means 'slander, calumny', etc.<sup>1</sup> These tend to suggest that the lady's vāṭal, 'withering, drying, becoming lean and fading' is due to love-sickness caused by Śiva, and not due to the attack of any disease. In each verse, the lines preceding the one about the indisposition of the lady refer to the beauty, particularly the physical attractiveness of Śiva. This is probably given as the cause of the lady falling in love. All this evidence contributes to the impression that this hymn is more a love hymn than a hymn which caused the miracle of curing a disease.

Hymn No.154 is associated with the miracle of reviving the daughter of a merchant, who was bitten by a snake.<sup>2</sup> However, some of the last lines of verses in this hymn, "You have stolen the bangles and feasted on the beauty of the lady" (3), "You have taken away the lady's chastity" (10), "You have made the lady lean" (4) and "You have made the lady grief-stricken" (7) are all attributes of secular love and are quite similar to most of the expressions in the akam hymns of Campantar.

In addition, expressions such as up melivu, 'distress of mind' (2), elil varval, 'swallowing up the beauty' (3),

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1. Ibid., Vol.IV, p.2547.

2. PPTC, 481-82.

meli nirmai, 'condition of growing lean' (4), alar paṭutal, 'public exposure of secret love affairs' (9), nirai nikkam, 'taking away chastity' are all connected with secular love. Three other references, the slipping off of bangles (3), sleeplessness till sunrise (6) and the idle talk about the love of the lady (8), indicate the pitiful condition of the lady in love. The phrase kannayarvu (5) does not refer to love, but this might be a textual corruption and the correct version perhaps is kantuyar, 'sleeplessness'. Narayana Ayyar cites all the above-mentioned references as alluding to the distress of the woman described in PP.<sup>1</sup>

Lastly, hymn No.183 makes no reference to the miracle of Campantar bringing back Pūmpāvai to life as described in PP.<sup>2</sup> Each verse in this hymn ends with the question: "Are you going away lady without seeing the festival?". This expression tends to suggest that the saint, narrates the various festivals conducted in the shrine at Mayilāppūr considering himself as lady-love, and invites another lady to witness the festivities. The mystic, perhaps thinking of his much-loved Śiva, and longing to unite with him, invites another lady to join him in witnessing Śiva being conducted in procession. It is the custom even at present

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1. OEHS, p.331.  
2. PPTC, 1078-91.

for ladies to invite other female companions to join them when they go to temple festivals. Though there is no clear evidence to establish that the hymn contains akam elements, the expression in the last lines of the verses may be cited as the speech of the lady-love since it resembles some of the expressions of the other akam hymns. Pūmpāvai means 'beautiful lady' and does not necessarily refer to the name of a lady as said in PP.

Hymn No.76, which is usually cited for irāṅkal, 'the heroine bemoaning her lover's absence', a mood appropriate to the neytal, 'maritime tract', contains verses which are composed in such a way as to depict a lady's lamenting her lover's absence. The lady-love bemoans her pangs of love by making mention of the peacock dancing in the embrace of his consort (1), the female deer sleeping with her mate (1) and the male and the female monkeys jumping together for joy (5). Beyond this, there is hardly any mention of the said love-theme except that each verse ends with enṇelil koḷvatu iyalpē, 'it is proper to taste the nectar of my beauty'. In fact all the verses are entirely devoted to describing Śiva and His abode. His external appearance is described in the second lines of each verse; his purāṇic characteristics are depicted in the 3rd, 8th and 9th verses; some of his holy abodes are mentioned in the 1st, 2nd and 4th verses; and the natural beauty of the shrine Ilampaiyāṅkōṭṭur is described in the last two lines of each verse.

The above analysis of hymn No.76 shows three things.

Firstly, it is quite clear that Śiva's appearance, his purānic characteristics, his glories and his holy abodes are the more important. The love-theme therefore takes only a secondary place in the hymns. It may be suggested that the glories which are elaborated in three lines cause the saint to fall into the love which is tersely embodied in the fourth line. Secondly, the hymn deviates considerably from the conventions relating to the five tipai. There is no special emphasis on neytal, 'maritime tract' the tipai with which iraṅkal is associated. Neither the tālai tree nor the fishermen nor other distinctive karupporu<sup>1</sup> of neytal is referred to in the hymn. On the contrary, the suffix ūr in the name Ilampaiyaṅkōṭṭūr indicates that it is marutam, 'cultivated land'. None of the descriptions of dancing peacocks, deer sleeping in groves, monkeys jumping for joy and descriptions of hills belong to neytal. The phrase enṇelil kolvatu iyalpē is the only clue which allows us to conclude that it is a hymn on the theme iraṅkal.

#### Appar's akam hymns

Eleven hymns and twenty-one verses in Appar's Tēvāram may be cited as examples of akappāṭṭu, which are composed in the form of

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1. Distinctive Attribute of a turai or 'aspect' of love.

outpourings of the lady in love, or of the mother, the foster-mother, or the companion of the lady in love. Among the hymns, seven are of the first kind, three are of the third kind, and one is of the second. Among the verses, eight are outpourings of the lady in love, five are of the foster-mother, and eight are of the companion of the lady in love.<sup>1</sup>

The poetic pattern adopted in most of these hymns and verses is that the description of love, is not limited to a line as in most of the hymns and verses of Campantar, but is presented with an elaborate setting in order to impart religious themes. Another contrasting feature is that Appar does not repeat a particular description of love in the same hymn as does Campantar, except in hymn No. 166 in which the description is not only limited to each last line but also repeated. In two other hymns, Nos. 221 and 226, besides the love theme being elaborately presented, part of the last line is repeated in each verse.

From the analysis in the first paragraph of this section, three facts come to light. First, seven akam hymns and eight akam verses are composed in the form of the speech of the lady in love. These speeches are greater in number than the speeches

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1. For details see the Table No.1(b).

of the mother, foster-mother and companion of the lady in love. Besides this, 4 whole hymns and 5 verses of this group are composed in the verse-form tāṅṭakam in which, too, the love-theme is presented with elaborate and varied settings.<sup>1</sup> It is therefore reasonable to assume that the saint has preferred to take up the role of the lady-love and express his love in the verse-form tāṅṭakam. This is perhaps because as a lady-love he might have found it easier to express his love directly to his lover, and also to establish a closer tie and relationship in his union with Him. The verse-form tāṅṭakam helps him to express his love more easily and elaborately.

Secondly, though the saint prefers to assume the role of the lady-love, he also delights in conveying his love through the speeches of the mother, foster-mother and companion of the lady in love, as opposed to Campantar, who prefers to be a lady-love and foster-mother only; and to Cuntarar who prefers only to be the beloved. What is clear from this is that Appar has introduced all the main characters of the conventional akam poetry, while the others have not.

Thirdly, the total number of akam verses composed by Appar is greater than those composed by Campantar and Cuntarar. This indicates that even though the hymn as a whole may not have secular

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1. App.Tev, hymn Nos. 222, 226, 258, 271 and 248:3-7.

love as its central theme, the poet delights in presenting the love theme in a single verse of the hymn. In such verses, the love-theme dominates, imparting a religious flavour, and expressing the mystic's love for Śiva. Śiva is the cherished possession of the devotee; He never leaves his mind; He is one with his thoughts.<sup>1</sup>

From the second paragraph it is clear that Appar delights in expressing his love for Śiva in terms of an elaborate portrayal of love between man and woman. In other words, the mystic is ecstatic about his love for Śiva and his union with Śiva which lasts in the whole verse and thus throughout the whole hymn. The other significant feature is that Appar very often speaks of his own love for Śiva, but not about Śiva causing love sickness in him as often as is the case with Campanantar. It is, therefore, appropriate to say that Appar has followed the path of dāsa mārḡa, the way in which a servant loves his master.<sup>2</sup> Referring to this path, Ponniah states that "He roamed about the land of South India visiting the shrines of his Lord Śiva, sang his glories and made complaints to Him of the pangs of separation. We can hardly find anywhere in the world such an instance of self-denial carried to a point of total identification of one's own interest with that

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1. IG, p.157.

2. It may be suggested that the love of God as master is less than the love of God as father (Satputra mārḡa).

of the object of love as in the life of Appar."<sup>1</sup>

We shall now see how Appar expresses his love for Śiva by placing himself in the position of the lady in love. He is deeply in love with Śiva, thinks of Him unceasingly, sees Him in his sweet dreams, sets his eyes waiting for his return, sings songs in praise of him, and worships him day and night.

His love is so profound that he exclaims, "could my eyes sleep unless I see him";<sup>2</sup> "could my eyes sleep unless I reach his abode";<sup>3</sup> "could my eyes sleep unless I sing in praise of Him with melting heart".<sup>4</sup> His profound love is clearly portrayed in some of the hymns: "He does not leave my heart but stays on for ever";<sup>5</sup> "His holy feet are in my eyes and in my heart".<sup>6</sup> He finally declares, "I shall not forget him even if I die".<sup>7</sup> His pangs of love make him say of Śiva, "he has forcibly carried off my bangles";<sup>8</sup> "he has tasted the fresh nectar of my beauty";<sup>9</sup> "opening the eye in His forehead, he has taken away my chastity";<sup>10</sup> "the unbearable pain of love and suffering vanished when he appeared in my dream".<sup>11</sup>

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1. SSTK, pp.46-7.
  2. App, Tev, 166:1.
  3. Ibid., 166:2.
  4. Ibid., 166:7.
  5. Ibid., 97:4.
  6. Ibid., 97:5.
  7. Ibid., 12:5.
  8. Ibid., 12:6.
  9. Ibid., 12:1.
  10. Ibid., 222:8.
  11. Ibid., 258:1.

Lastly he goes to the extent of declaring, "if I see Him again I shall not allow Him to go away but shall embrace Him at my breast as our bodies cling together".<sup>1</sup>

From these words of Appar it is quite clear that the saint is deeply in love with Śiva; he suffers in separation, and longs to be united with him. So he praises him with a melting heart and thinks of Śiva as his cherished possession. Appar's love is therefore fostered and developed by steady remembrance of God and constant meditation on him.

A unique aspect of the akam hymns of Appar is the description of Śiva's eyes in relation to love. In secular love poetry, the hero describes mainly the eyes of the heroine; but in Appar's akam hymns the lady in love speaks only about the eyes of her lover, Śiva, as scintillating with love. She states that Śiva by his sidelong glance has flashed his love to her.<sup>2</sup> His eyes cause the heroine to feel the pain of love, so she compares them to arrows.<sup>3</sup> He skilfully pretends that he is a stranger, so she describes his eyes as roguish.<sup>4</sup> She mentions Śiva as disturbing her clothing as well as her eyes,<sup>5</sup> and complains that the eye in his forehead has carried away her chastity.<sup>6</sup> She compares the eyes of Śiva to lances as they have penetrated hers.<sup>7</sup>

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1. Ibid., 258:8.
  2. Ibid., 97:2.
  3. Ibid., 222:1.
  4. Ibid., 248:5.
  5. Ibid., 258:8.
  6. Ibid., 222:8.
  7. Ibid., 222:1.

These descriptions are evidence of Appar making use of ideas found in earlier secular akam poetry, especially the Kāmattuppāl of Tirukkural. The descriptions in TK such as "she looked like viewing me with just a shrinking eye",<sup>1</sup> "he ever resides in my eyes"<sup>2</sup> and "they look at each other as if they were strangers"<sup>3</sup> are reminiscent of some of the lines quoted in the preceding paragraph, thus showing Appar's conversance with Kāmattuppāl.

One well known akam verse in Appar's Tēvāram is that beginning with the line munnam avanuṭaiya māmaṅ kēṭṭāl<sup>4</sup> which describes how the lady in love surrenders at the feet of her lover, Śiva. It is composed in the form of a speech of the companion to the foster-mother, revealing the secret union of the heroine. The companion states how the heroine fell in love with Śiva on hearing his name, his form, and his abode in turn. She becomes infatuated with love, departs from her parents, renounces worldly attachments, forgets herself completely, loses her identity, alienates herself from her household affairs and finally surrenders herself to the holy feet. This clearly indicates how the devotee surrenders himself totally to the god whom he loves madly.

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1. TK, 1095.
  2. Ibid., 1126.
  3. Ibid., 1099.
  4. App. Tev., 238:7.

This verse is a clear example of Appar presenting the love-theme in a whole verse, with overflowing bhakti. In other words, though the theme is outwardly secular union, inwardly it is mystic union. Many of Appar's akam verses are composed in secular love-themes or in the form of secular love poems, but expressing a mystic love. He deserves his popularity from this alone apart from any religious ground. Vellaivāraṅgaṅ is of the opinion that this verse is composed on the basis of uru peyar kēṭṭal,<sup>1</sup> 'feeling happy on hearing the name or fame of the lover'; one of the nimittam for marriage referred to in Tol.<sup>2</sup> It may however be noted that the lady-love's union with her lover is explicitly portrayed in it, and this proves that the subject matter is not to be confined to uru peyar kēṭṭal. Śaiva Siddhānta philosophers classified this state of the soul as cattinipātam, 'the degree of spiritual advancement, in which there is an utter mortification of self, and self-energizing principles, and a ripening of the soul for union with the deity'.<sup>3</sup>

Another notable feature is that the state of unity or surrender is described as occurring at the holy feet of the Lord, which is significant in the works of the other two saints as well.

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1. PTV, p.598.
  2. Tol, Puruḷ., cū. 266.
  3. TED, p.308.

Campanar asks the annam to convey the pitiful state of his love to Śiva signifying his willingness to surrender at his feet;<sup>1</sup> Cuntarar asserts that he has reached the holy feet of Śiva; and proclaims that those who chant the verses of hymn No.36 shall also achieve a similar bliss.<sup>2</sup> In secular love poetry however, the union is described differently. Here the heroine clasps the chest of the hero while the hero embraces the shoulders or breast of the heroine.<sup>3</sup>

#### Cuntarar's akam hymns

Two hymns and six verses in Cuntarar's Tāvāram fall essentially under the akam category.<sup>4</sup> This number is smaller than the number of akam hymns and verses of Campanar and Appar. It may be suggested that Cuntarar composed more akam hymns and verses, but that these were probably among the lost hymns referred to in TKP.<sup>5</sup>

Apart from these akam hymns, there are a number of references which clearly indicate Cuntarar's deep devotion and love for Śiva. In the last lines of all the verses of hymn No.24 the saint exclaims, "Of whom else besides you can I think?". He also proclaims very frequently that he will in no way forget Śiva but will think of him

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1. App, Tev, 60:4, 6.
  2. Cun, Tev, 36:11.
  3. Kuruntokai, 49, 274, 280, etc.
  4. For details see the Table No.1(c).
  5. TKP, 21.

unceasingly.<sup>1</sup> His heartfelt love makes him declare more strongly that apart from Śiva there is no one to support him.<sup>2</sup> He makes explicit the fact that he finds it difficult to live in separation; and therefore worries himself by asking, "how can I be separated from Śiva?".<sup>3</sup> He finds the separation unbearable and so sends his 'mind' as his messenger to convey his pangs of love to Śiva, and longs to unite with him as He is the ambrosia of his salvation.<sup>4</sup> He believes strongly that he is blessed with eyes merely to see his lover, Śiva.<sup>5</sup> His profound desire for union with God is made even clearer in his recurring statements, kaṅṅukotṭēn, 'I have found him'.<sup>6</sup> Similar expressions are ubiquitous in the Tēvāraṃ of Cuntarar.

All these references are found elsewhere than in the love hymns. They are expressions of Cuntarar's love towards Śiva though not presented in the form of love poems. Dhavamony describes this love of Cuntarar as a 'single-minded love', and states that it is one of the recurring themes in the hymns of Cuntarar.<sup>7</sup> It has also been seen that these expressions are very

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1. Cun, Tev, 1:1-3, 57:1-11 (last lines).
  2. Ibid., 28:1-9 (last lines).
  3. Ibid., 51:1-11 (last lines).
  4. Ibid., 64:1-9 (last lines).
  5. Ibid., 61:1-10 (last lines).
  6. Cun, Tev, hymn Nos. 58, 62 and 67 (last lines).
  7. IG, p.146.

often presented in the last lines of the verses of several hymns. This indicates two facts. Firstly, Cuntarar often expresses his single-minded love in the last lines of his verses, perhaps in order to relieve the unbearable pangs of separation, at the end of every verse. Secondly, this poetic pattern must have greatly helped the saint in composing the hymns extempore. It may also be suggested that the repetition of such expressions is designed not only to inspire piety and devotion in singing, but also to facilitate collective chanting, particularly in congregational worship.

We shall now take up the akam hymns and verses in Cuntarar's Tēvāram, which throw light on how the saint makes use of conventional love themes in order to express his own love for Śiva. An example of a reciprocated state of love is expressed in hymn No.36. In this hymn, the poet describes ladies who fall in love at the sight of the Lord of Tiruppainṇīli when He comes along in procession in the semblance of a beggar. All the verses of the hymn, except the benedictory stanza, are composed in such a way as to portray Śiva as a beggar, and thus indirectly to indicate the extent of the love of the women who fall in love with Him. In the following verses it can be seen how the poet presents in this mystic poetry some secular love themes in order to portray the love of the women:

"O Lord of Tiruppaiññili! Lord, who has a black throat due to the dark poison you swallowed. You have the greatness of being praised and prayed to by the whole world who perform sacred duties to you. O Lord who dwells in the burning-ground! What is the use of wandering all over the world carrying the human skull? You can receive alms in one house alone. Is that necklace of yours a serpent?" (1).

This is the song of a woman who has fallen in love with Śiva; but at the last moment, frightened by the serpent, she withdraws her love. Therefore, this verse may be regarded as añcikkūral,<sup>1</sup> 'utterances in fear', which is one of the attributes of secular love in early akam poetry. The damsel speaks of poison swallowed by Śiva and of the serpent worn by him.

"O Lord! You dwell at Tiruppaiññili where the pond is full of water and lotus flowers, and nearby is the grove full of māṭavi and punnai trees. Your form is pure; your mouth is beautiful; your eyes are attractive; but you dance with the ghosts. My Lord, why is this? Are you mad?" (3).

These are the words of another, perhaps impressed by his purity and beauty, but surprised by his dancing with the ghosts. The love-song about the beauty of Śiva may be taken as pukaltal,<sup>2</sup>

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1. Tol., Poru., cū. 109 refers to as accam nītal.

2. Nanni., cū, 127.

'utterances in praise', another of the attributes of secular akam poetry.

"O Lord who dwells in the burning-ground! You carry the human skull and cry out, 'I live at Painñili; will you please give me a little as alms? The ashes on your body shine white like pearl. You appear half a woman with beautiful long eyes. You carry another lady on your head. So we cannot offer you our alms; walk away" (5).

This is an excellent example of a love-quarrel; the theme with which marutam is associated. It can be noted that the damsel speaks of Śiva accompanying two other women, and this makes her feel that her lover associates with other women. Therefore, she refuses to give alms and instead asks him to go away. Dorai Rangaswamy interprets this as the words of the damsel who was ashamed to confess her love in the presence of the Mother-Goddess.<sup>1</sup>

"O Lord you eradicate the vinai of those who sing hymns daily in praise of you in prayer. You steal away the bangles of the damsels whose beautiful hair with the flowers of kuravu smells sweet. In this adventure can you recognize this house even in the dark night? Are you capable of walking in and escaping from here?" (6).

It can be observed that the damsel indirectly indicates her willingness for uṭṭanpōkku,<sup>2</sup> 'the stage of nocturnal clandestine

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1. RPT, II, 658.

2. Nampi., cū., 181.

assignation'; which is also one of the love-themes in secular love poetry. The poet incorporates this theme very beautifully into his mystic poem.

In the other verses, Nos. 7, 8, 9 and 10, the attribute 'utterances in fear' is presented indirectly by the poet.

A close study of the hymn as a whole reveals that the total image of Śiva is in the mind of the poet. He devotes many lines to describing Śiva and his glories, especially those of his figure, in every verse. There is hardly any description of love other than the attributes of secular love themes such as añcikkūral, pukaltai, ūtai and uṭanpōkku, which are indirectly implied in the verses. Therefore, the presentation of love themes is merely implicit and is entirely subordinate to the descriptions of religious themes.

Secondly, there is no evidence of the ladies expressing their love for Śiva in any of the verses except for the reference in the TKK:

.....āraniya viṭankarai  
minnu nuppiṭai mankaimār palar  
vēṇṭik kātal molinta col...

"This is a hymn composed in the form of a speech of the ladies of lightning-like subtle waists expressing their love unto the Lord of Paññili and longing to unite with Him". Dorai Rangaswamy suggests that if this hymn is taken as the speech

of a lady-companion playfully putting aside the lover, it fits in with the conventions of Tamil erotic poetry.<sup>1</sup> However, in the light of the facts enumerated above, this is clearly a cry from Cuntarar's heart. He considers himself as a woman in love, and Śiva as the loved one, presenting a state of unreciprocated love.

Thirdly, this hymn is an obvious example of the poet employing secular love-themes in a mystic poem without following the rigid conventions of early akam poetry. This is clear in the incorporation of ūṭal, 'love quarrel' amuripporuḷ which was associated with the tipai, marutam, and of uṭanpōkku, 'the stage of nocturnal clandestine assignation' which was associated with pālai in early akam poetry; but these two themes are employed together in a hymn which describes the Lord who dwells at Tiruppaiṇṇīli, a shrine situated on the north bank of the river Kāviri.

Furthermore, Cuntarar does not indicate that in any of his verses the Lord comes along in procession; but it is clearly stated in PP that Cuntarar sang the hymn beginning with the line, kāruḷāviya, in which the ladies express their love in the form of an interrogation when the Lord of Tiruppaiṇṇīli comes along in procession".<sup>2</sup>

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1. RPT, II, p.657.  
2. PPEKN, 84.

Fourthly, the poet has incorporated one of the elements of the love themes, añcikkūral, 'utterances in fear', in most of the verses of the hymn, and thus a sense of fear permeates them. Referring to this, Arunaivaṭivēl Mutaliyār suggests that the reason for the ladies' fear was not the harmful nature of Śiva, but only his greatness and glory. Therefore the fear itself caused the ladies to fall deeply in love with Him.<sup>1</sup>

Finally, this hymn and hymn No. 271 of Appar have certain features in common with ulā, one of the 96 varieties of poetic composition, collectively called cirupirapantam. These hymns may have given later poets the idea of composing poems on ulā, 'poem in kali-veppā metre which describe how the women of the seven different stages of womanhood are love-stricken at the sight of the hero as they see him coming along in procession'.<sup>2</sup>

The other akam hymn, No.37, will be taken up for examination when we discuss the hymns concerning ulā.

A special feature of the so called akam verses is that the love themes are introduced in a nutshell. In two verses, Nos. 469 and 470 respectively Śiva stealing the bangles of the women and Śiva fascinating them by his beauty are described. Another two verses, Nos. 924 and 926, describe respectively Śiva

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1. TPT, Tirumurai, VII, p.276.

2. MFL, Vol.I, p.458.

stealing the hearts of girls who play with the ball and look after their parrots; and Śiva being the single object of the thoughts of ladies and stealing the nectar of their beauty and chastity. The love themes are in fact introduced only in single lines and the remaining lines are devoted entirely to describing Śiva.

#### Dramatic expression of love

At times, the hymnists make use of the dramatic method to describe their love for Śiva. As in early akam poetry, they introduce the heroine, the mother, the foster-mother and the companion of the lady-love; but unlike it, they use the voices of these characters to express their own feelings. In the following pages we examine some of the hymns to show how the saints have followed the pattern of early akam poetry in their compositions.

#### (a) The speech of the heroine

Hymn No.362 in Campantar's Tēvāram portrays the pangs of love felt by the heroine for Śiva. The lady names the abode of the Lord who carried away her beauty, her complexion, her fresh nectar and her heart. The following will demonstrate these features further:

kaṅkoṅṭa cāyaloṭu ērkavarnta kaḷvar, 'the thief who stole away my eye-catching appearance and beauty' (1)

iravil pukuntu eṅ elilkavarnta iraiivar, 'the Lord who came in the night and carried away my beauty' (2)

nāṅmukam kāṭṭi nalaṅkavarnta nātar, 'the master who spoke of the modesty of my face and carried away my virtue' (3)

aṅcurumpār kuḷal cōra uḷḷam kavartār, 'the Lord who stole away my heart, untying my hair which is full of humming bees' (4)

ērpulku cāyal elil kavartā iraiivar, 'the Lord who stole away the nectar of my beautiful complexion' (5)

caṅkoṅṭucāyal elilkavarnta caivar, 'the Lord who stole my bangles and the nectar of my beautiful complexion' (6)

iraiivaḷai cōra elilkavarnta iraiivar, 'the Lord who stole my beauty and caused the bangles slowly to slip from my wrists' (7)

kācaṅṭai mēkalai cōra uḷḷaṅkavarntār, 'the Lord who stole my heart and caused my jewelled girdle to slip' (8)

ēṭalar cōra elilkavarnta iraiivar, 'the Lord who stole away my beauty and made the petalled flowers in my hair fade away' (9)

nalvaḷai cōra nalaṅkavarnta nātar, 'the master who stole away my beauty and caused my bangles to slip off' (10)

In this hymn Śiva is addressed as kaḷvar, 'thief', iraiivar, 'Lord', nātar, 'master' and caivar, 'Śaivite'. Words such as mukam, 'face' (3), curumpu, 'bee' (4), vaḷai, 'bangle' (7), alar, 'flower' (9) are presented with suitable prefixes; nāṅ, 'modesty',

am, 'beautiful', irai, 'wrists', ēṭu, 'petal', respectively. The description of Śiva who steals elil, 'nectar' is embellished with appropriate phrases, iraivaḷai cōra, 'bangles slip from the wrist' (7), uḷḷam, 'heart' with kulaḷcōra, 'untying the hair' (4), and nalām 'virtue' with nalvaḷai cōra (10) 'slipping off of the beautiful bangles (10). Further, elil kavartal, 'stealing the nectar' is demonstrated by different incidents, iravil pukuntu, 'entered in the night' (2), iraivaḷai cōra, 'the bangles slip from the wrist' (7) and ēṭalar cōra, 'the petals of flowers fade away, (9). Again, uḷḷaṅkavartal, 'stealing the heart' is demonstrated by aṅcurumpār kulal cōra, 'untie the hair which was full of humming bees' (4) and kācaṭai mēkalai cōra, 'jewelled girdle to slip' (8) and nalām kavartal with nāṇmukam kāṭṭi, 'speaking about the modesty of the face' (3), and nalvaḷai cōra, 'the beautiful bangles to slip' (10).

Hymn No.63 is also in a similar vein; mā+nalām (1), āṇ+nalām (4), am+nalām (9), pāy+kalai (3), pey+kalai (5), cey+kalai (11), and kōl+vaḷai (10) are examples of appropriate prefixes. Śiva tasting the nectar (1, 4, 5 and 9), carrying away the clothing (3, 5 and 11) and making the lady-love sleepless (2 and 7) are examples of recurrent features in the description.

From the above illustration two facts emerge. Campantar repeats the same description of love in the verses of the same hymn, and has the poetic gift of supplying it with suitable

prefixes and phrases vivifying them with appropriate incidents. Thus there is abundant vigour in Campantar's complexities of language and he can be classed with the early akam poets. The type of presentation illustrated above is a common feature of early akam poetry, especially of the poems in Narrinai and Kuruntokai, the poets of that period being gifted with this poetic style or composition.

Another example of a speech by the heroine to her companion is the hymn on Tiruttōpipuram.<sup>1</sup> It is a conversation between the heroine and her companion about the heroine's love. The companion notices the changes of appearance and so on,<sup>2</sup> of the heroine, and questions her about her lover. The heroine replies: 'He is the Lord who burnt Kāman and carries Umaī in half of His body as his consort' (1). The companion asks further, "When did he take your feminine qualities and where does He live now?". The heroine's replies are illustrated thus in the hymn:

"He came in the noon, Tōpipuram is the place He returned to after he left me taking away my feminine qualities" (1).

"Tōpipuram is the ahode of the Lord who spoilt my complexion

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1. Cam, Tev, hymn No. 358.

2. The lady-love's companion has her say on 32 occasions after she decides that the heroine had conjugal union with the lover through the seven indications: scent, appearance, behaviour, food, forgetfulness, gait and actions. Tol., Poruḷ., cū, 112.

and caused my white conch bangles to drop" (2).

"Tōṅipuram is the abode of the Lord who came in the semblance of a beggar and stole my heart" (3). "Tōṅipuram is the abode of Him who carried away my heart by placing His fingers softly on my body" (8). "Tōṅipuram is the abode of the prince who carried away my heart" (9).

"Tōṅipuram is the abode of the Lord who came wearing garlands and riding on his bull and stole my beauty" (10).

Thus the poet describes the speech of the heroine; portraying the Lord who carried away her heart, and telling her companion of the abode where the Lord dwells. The references, penmaikollal, 'taking away the feminine qualities' (1), cāyā-kollal, 'spoiling the complexion' (2), ullaṅkollal, 'stealing the heart' (8), cintai kollal, 'taking away the mind' (9) and elilkavartal, 'stealing away the beauty' (10) are some of the attributes of early akam poetry which are employed by the saint in the above hymn to portray the pangs of love felt by the lady-love for Śiva. Verses No. 4, 5, 6 and 7 are missing.

(b) The speech of the companion

Hymn No. 201 in Appar's Tēvāram may be cited as an example of the mystic taking the role of the companion of the lady-love, and putting his words into her mouth. A free rendering of the hymn is as follows:

"The lady-love feeds her parrot sweet milk and treats it tenderly, teaching it various words and phrases in order to send it as a messenger to convey her love to Śiva with whom she has fallen in love (4). She contemplates her love, pouring out tears, her bangles dropping off as she grows lean due to the pangs of separation, and longs with melting heart to unite with him (5). Her garments become loose and her bangles drop off as she goes in to the street to see him coming along in procession (6). She does not see him there, so she yearns even more for him, thus, she is saturated with love, but unable to satisfy it (7). Pouring out her tears, she thinks of him unceasingly and blindfolding herself, draws circles on the ground, praying that the two ends will join in order that she may be assured of his return (8). However, the lover does not come. So she longs in vain to be united with him. With her hair dishevelled, she says, "Sweet darling! come to me riding on your bull in the evening twilight" (9).

An examination of the hymn as a whole reveals that it is composed in the form of a speech of one companion of the lady in love to the other companions. The expression naṅkaimīr (6), 'ladies' by which the companion refers to the other companions is the clue which prompts this conclusion. It may be noticed that while the subject-matter of the hymn is similar to that in early akam poetry, it is handled in a more elaborate and satisfactory manner. In six verses the poet has brought together some of the meyppāṭu, 'signs of love' namely melting in heart, pouring out tears,

dropping of bangles, loosening of garments and disheveling of hair. These are some of the attributes of secular love, which are transferred to mystic love in order to symbolise the pangs of love experienced by the lover of God.

Cuppiramaṇiya Mutaliyār is of the opinion that this hymn is composed in the form of a speech of the mother.<sup>1</sup> This view cannot be accepted because it is not tradition in early akam poetry for the mother to speak of the love of her daughter so openly. Kurucami Tēcikar concludes that this is the speech of the foster-mother;<sup>2</sup> but his conclusion has not been adequately supported by argument. The expression naṅkaimīr may also be interpreted to mean the words of the foster-mother.

(c) The speech of the foster-mother

The hymns and the verses composed in the form of the speech of the foster-mother bear witness to the extreme pangs of love experienced by the mystic for Śiva. This form of speech is presented more elaborately by Appar than by Campantar, but it is absent in Cuntarar's Tēvāram. Let us now examine how the traditional treatment of secular love is adopted in Appar's akam hymns to disclose spiritual experience through the character of the foster-mother.

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1. TTPC, III, pp.407-8.

2. TPT, Tirumurai, V, p.485.

This class of akam poems is composed in six different forms. One form of speech in which the foster-mother exclaims about the heroine's pangs of love shows explicitly that the saint is madly in love with Śiva:

"How is it that my daughter has gone mad, having seen the Lord and fallen in love with Him and turned into an incarnation of love".<sup>1</sup>

"I begged of my daughter to be at home but she asked me, 'who are you to instruct me in righteousness? I will become<sup>a</sup> slave to Him".<sup>2</sup>

The other form of speech, which describes the heroine languishing in unbearable separation from her lover, aptly indicates how the foster-mother bemoans her daughter's pangs of love, and also how she tries to soothe her.

"Only the Lord of Tirukkalippālai will understand the pangs of love of my daughter who has seen neither His form nor complexion and who finds no solace in merely extolling his glories".<sup>3</sup> "She has fallen madly in love with Śiva and so sings songs in praise of Him and draws circles on the sand hill (thinking that her lover will come).<sup>4</sup>

The drawing of circles indicates not only the heroine's pangs of love but also her longing for union.

Thirdly, a form of speech which illustrates the heroine's longing for union with her lover shows that the mystic state

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1. App, Tev, 120:7.
  2. Ibid., 158:1.
  3. Ibid., 153:1.
  4. Ibid., 177:4.

consists in union between God and his lover.

She cries, "O my Lord who resides at Kalippālai do not reject but accept my love".<sup>1</sup> She begs of others to show her a path to attain her Supreme Lord.<sup>2</sup> She proudly says that "her Lord will come in search of her";<sup>3</sup> She firmly believes that "the Lord is her companion even when she dies".<sup>4</sup> She is madly in love, "her mind longing to see Him".<sup>5</sup>

The fourth form of speech by which the foster-mother pleads for her daughter is emotional and touching:

"It is right for this Lord to confuse the lady's mind and steal her bangles".<sup>6</sup> "My darling! come, let us go to the Lord and ask him whether it is proper for Him to steal your bangles and make you a contemptible subject of public derision".<sup>7</sup>

Lastly, the foster-mother reveals to the mother the love affairs of her daughter thus:

"She started to speak incoherently; she utters the name of her lover in solitude; and has become mad in her love, having seen the Lord coming along in procession".<sup>8</sup>

Revealing the state of love of the lady-love is arattoṭu nirral, a turai in secular love poetry. The poet has made beautiful use of it in his mystic poetry.

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1. Ibid., 153:3.
  2. Ibid., 153:8.
  3. Ibid., 153:6.
  4. Ibid., 153:9.
  5. Ibid., 153:5.
  6. Ibid., 158:5.
  7. Ibid., 159:3.
  8. Ibid., 120:8.

These forms of speech clearly show that the presentation of the speech of the foster-mother closely resembles that of secular akam poetry; but in this context the saint considers himself as a lady in love with Śiva and through the speech of the foster-mother presents his pangs of love, his unbearable separation and his longing to unite with Śiva. In other words, the love existing between God and His devotee is expressed in the form of the utterances of the foster-mother. In these the foster-mother's speech is simpler and more lyrical; than in early akam poetry. In the early akam poetry love is presented as existing between men and women, and its presentation is accompanied by elaborate similes and metaphors.

(d) The speech of the mother

In secular love poetry the heroine's mother speaks about the state of her daughter's love; so also in the context of religious love, the mystic, simulating a lady in love, expresses his own love for Śiva through the speech of the mother. Hymn No.142 in Appar's Tēvāram in which a mother speaks about the state of love of her daughter who has fallen in love with the Lord of Avatuturai, bears evidence of this:

She (the daughter) is not holy enough to apply holy ashes on her body and is unable to hide her love for him who adorns himself with the river Kaṅkai and wears the crescent

in the tangle of his hair (1). Even though she has not seen the boundless love of the Lord who wears the crescent, she has fallen in love with Him in secret and has become one with him, in her mind (2). She cries out, "O Lord, half your form is feminine, you stole away my heart; I shall say that you are the Supreme, the cōti and cuṭar (3). "See how eager she is to obtain the garland of konrai flowers of the Lord whose throat is like the dark rain-clouds and who proudly resides with Umai" (4). Though she has never been near the Lord who is sweet like milk and honey yet she says, "the Lord of Āvaṭuturai is my beloved" (5). She is in a state of losing her bangles and cries out, "my Lord who wears the garlands of konrai, kūvilam and ūmattam" (6) She is proud and not afraid of anyone because of her surrender to Him (7). She complains that the Lord who wears the crescent and half of whose body is that of a woman, has stolen her heart, chastity and feminine qualities (8). The bangles drop from her wrist as she cries out, "O Lord who formed a column of flame for Tirumāl and Piramaṅ" (9). Devoid of any sense of shame, she praises Him, "O naked Lord who crushed Irāvaṅga, the king of Lankā" (10).

These are parts of descriptions of love themes and are quite similar to conventional love poetry. The major difference is that the saint presents secular love in order to reveal his intensity of devotion to Śiva. The secret state of love is referred to as kaḷavu kaṭṭaṅal;<sup>1</sup> her emaciation is indicated by

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1. Ibid., 142:2.

the expression, 'bangles drop from her wrist';<sup>1</sup> her amorousness is clearly shown in the 3rd, 4th, 5th, 7th and 8th verses;<sup>2</sup> her transgression of the bonds of modesty is spoken of in the 10th.<sup>3</sup> These are some of the physical and mental states experienced by the heroine during the kaḷavu form of union.<sup>4</sup> This hymn, though composed in the form of the conventional love poem, deviates considerably from the rigid conventions, as the response of the hero is not clearly indicated. It cannot even be taken as orutalaik kāmam as this mystic love may be explained thus: "deeper bhakti involves reciprocal possession between God and devotee. God enters the mind of the lover, and the lover, in turn, belongs to God and surrenders entirely to Him".<sup>5</sup> The other notable feature of this hymn is that the religious aspects are presented in the guise of love themes, for the saint speaks more of Śiva's attractive appearance, his glories and his greatness, than the state of mind of the lady in love.

### The tūtu hymns

From the Tēvāram we may cite certain hymns which fall into the class tūtu, 'a kind of poem which purports to be a message of love sent through a companion, a bird, etc. to effect a tryst'. The hymnists consider themselves as girls in love

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1. Ibid., 142:6 and 9.
  2. Ibid., 142:3, 4, 5, 7 & 8.
  3. Ibid., 142:10.
  4. Tol., Poruḷ., cū, 97.
  5. IG, p.149.

and Śiva as their lover; and finding the separation from their lover unbearable, send certain birds, animals, beetles and even clouds as messengers to convey their love.

In Campantar's Tēvāram, two hymns, Nos. 60 and 321, may be cited as examples of tūtu. In the former, the saint considers himself as a girl in love, and requests a beetle (1), kuruku (2) a fowl (3), a crane (4), pigeons (5), annam (6), anril, 'nightingale of India' (7), a kuyil, 'hawk-cuckoo' (8), and a pūvai (9) to convey to the lover, Śiva, the beloved's pitiful condition and her unbearable agony in separation. On the failure of each of these to act as his messenger, he asks the parrot to chant the name of his lover thinking that perhaps the sound of that sweet name would reduce his pain to a certain extent:

"O my beloved parrot come to me! I shall feed you enough honey and milk; Would you once utter the holy name of the Lord of Tōṅipuram, who adorns himself with the crescent". (10)

This is a clear instance of the poet giving vent to his own heart-rendering feelings at this separation from the Almighty.

In the latter hymn, the saint requests in turn annam and anril (2), a crane (3), a kuruku and a crane (5, 6 and 7); and a duck and a crane (8) to go as messengers of his love to the Lord of Ceṅkāṭṭankuṭi. The way in which Campantar takes on the guise of a lady in love can be clearly seen in the words; "O crane!

go and tell the Lord that a lady devotee begged of you to go at least once to convey her love".<sup>1</sup>

What strikes a reader about these two hymns is that the secular love themes of early akam poetry are here employed to express the love of the mystic for Śiva. In the former hymn the pitiful condition of the love-stricken lady is referred to as nilaimai (1 and 5), the greenishness of complexion payalai caused by love sickness is expressed with suitable prefixes as mey+payalai (9), kūr+payalai (7), and uru+payalai (3); and the way the body grows lean due to pangs of love as mulai melital (4). In the latter hymn, the pain of love is expressed in the words tavirā nōy (1), allal (2), varuttam (3 and 4), nilaimai (5) and iṭar (6) and the public exposure of secret love affairs is described by the technical term alarkōṭal (9).

It may be observed that the saint speaks very often of payalai, 'the greenishness of complexion'. Referring to this, Dhavamony rightly points out that "in early Tamil poetry the pain of the lover's absence is believed to cause spotted marks on the skin of the lovelorn women. This belief is transferred to mystic poetry to symbolize the pangs of love for the God of love".<sup>2</sup>

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1. oru aṭiyāl irantāl enru orunāl cenru uraiyirō, Cam, Tev, 321:7.

2. LG, p.144.

All these are attributes of secular love poetry, and Campantar has made excellent use of them in two mystical poems in the form of messages given by the lover of God to messengers, to be communicated to Śiva. In several respects, these two hymns of Campantar are quite similar, except for the deity spoken of in the hymn; the former is in praise of the Lord of Tōṇipuram, and the latter of the Lord of Ceṅkāṭṭaṅkuṭi. Another aspect of these two hymns is that Campantar alludes neither to the incident of Irāvaṇa lifting mount Kayilāyam nor to the 'contemptible' deeds of the Jains and Buddhists, which allusions are regular features in the other hymns. This is perhaps because, rejoicing in sweet love when civam and his soul are united, he sang only of ecstatic experiences and forgot his animosities. Therefore it may be suggested that the saint had an especially close relationship with Śiva when he sang these hymns. These hymns may be quoted as demonstrating the fact that when the soul is in communion with civam it experiences nothing but pēriṅgam, 'heavenly enjoyment'.

In Appar's Tēvāram, hymn No.12 may be cited as an example of tūtu. To convey his state of love and his unbearable pain at the separation, Appar asks the kuyil, 'hawk-cuckoos' (1), a kuruku (3), the gentle south wind (4), a crane (6 and 7) and pūvai (8) to go as messengers to Śiva. In the form of rhetorical questions he asks, 'having tasted the fresh nectar of my love, will

he abandon me? (1 and 7); "having stolen my bangles, will he fail to give his garland of cassia flowers" (6), "knowing the day of his tasting the fresh nectar will he abandon kuri, 'trysting place fixed for clandestine lovers to meet' (2), and lastly due to his languishing sense of separation he goes to the extent of declaring, "I shall never forget him even if I die" (5).

Two other significant features may also be noticed in this hymn. One is that he speaks of his pangs of love to dumb trees from the position of the lady-love,<sup>1</sup> which is a unique feature in secular akam poetry.<sup>2</sup> The other is kūṭalilāittal, 'a kind of superstition said to have been practised by girls in love who are convinced that their lovers would return if, with eyes closed, they could draw a circle with their hands'. Here too, Appar considers himself a lady in love, and prays to the Lord to make the ends of a line meet in a circle in order at least to give him the satisfaction of knowing that his lover will come. (10).

Three secular love themes, kurikollai, 'rendezvous', speaking to dumb trees and kūṭalilāittal, figure prominently in this hymn. In addition, the other love aspects are described in a nutshell but with more flavour of secular love. The companions chosen by the saint as his messengers such as cuckoos,

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1. kaṇṭakāṅkāḷ muntakāṅkāḷ kaitaikāḷ neytalkāḷ, App.Tev, 12:2.

2. AN, 351; kali, neytal, 25.

cranes, pūvai and particularly the gentle south wind are the ones often used as messengers in secular love poetry.

Finally, in Cuntarar's Tēvāram, hymn No.37 may be cited. Referring to this hymn, Cēkkiḷār states that Cuntarar sang this hymn in the form of another's utterances when he was worshipping the Lord of Tiruvārūr.<sup>1</sup> Cuntarar considers himself a lady in love, and requests kuruku (1), parrots and pūvai (2), white cranes (3, 5 and 8), cakkaravāka birds (4), beetles and clouds (6 and 7), annam and cuckocs (10), in turn to go as his messengers to Śiva. The saint in fact expresses his pangs of love more elaborately than the other two saints. The portion dealing with love is expressed in the form of the heroine's speech and runs thus:

"She melts in her heart thinking of her lover (1). She could not forget him, so she could not sleep at night (2). She prays towards the direction where he lives and rejoices thinking of him (3). There is no change in her love towards him and at the same time there is no love quarrel with him (4). She sings hymns in praise of him and searches for him everywhere (9). Love has burnt her body and has consumed it (6). Her body has become lean, so the bangles drop off from her hands and her garments loosen (5). No one supports her and there is none to befriend her (8). The greenishness of complexion has spread all over her breasts and has spoilt her beauty (7); and thus expose her sweet state of love."

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1. PPEKN, 305.

Verse No.2 is exceptionally elaborate in its treatment of love. A free rendering of the verse runs thus:

"O white crane! may you tell the Lord of Tiruvārūr how I cannot forget him, how the bangles drop off from my hands as I grow lean day by day from the pangs of separation and how I spend sleepless nights thinking of his love".

It may be observed that the hymn describes the state of love with special reference to the convention relating to kaikkiḷai,<sup>1</sup> 'unreciprocated love as one-sided', because the lover's response is not indicated. Cēkkiḷār himself states that Cuntarar sang the hymn beginning with the line kurukukaḷ pāya in kaikkiḷai.<sup>2</sup> The love theme in the above hymn is presented in the last two lines of each verse in a most elaborate setting preceded by the other two lines in which the messengers are described in the first line and Śiva as the beloved in the second. The love-quarrel and the tiṇai, kaikkiḷai are two significant features of this hymn. The genuine flavour of secular love in this hymn is perhaps the outcome of two causes: one is that the hymn was composed at a later date, when secular love themes were introduced more in mystic poetry, and the other is that Cuntarar himself had a romantic personality and had two wives as depicted in PP.

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1. Tol., Poruḷ., cū. 53.  
2. PPEKN, 305.

The foregoing analysis as a whole points to three conclusions. Firstly, all three saints composed tūtu hymns which are quite similar to one another in poetic pattern and subject-matter. Secondly, these hymns are perhaps the earliest tūtu poems composed in the verse-form patikam, and they are single units entirely devoted to tūtu. Therefore, it may be suggested that this poetic pattern perhaps prompted the later poets to compose the pirapantam, tūtu, one of the poetic compositions of 96 varieties, in an elaborate and descriptive manner. Thirdly, it has also been shown how the poets have incorporated secular love themes in their religious hymns to express mystic love.

#### Poems concerning affection among animals and birds

In early Tamil akam literature there are several poems in which the poets depict beautifully the love affairs and family ties of animals and birds. The hymnists too describe, in some of their verses, incidents portraying the love and family affinities of animals and birds, while singing the glories of Lord Śiva. In early akam literature it can be noticed that the descriptions are mostly set against a background of human life and the experiences of the day to day life of the heroes and heroines of that age. But in the Tēvāram it is mainly against a background

of the life of the saints who lived a pious and religious life associated with God. This difference can be observed even in the poems about the affections of animals and birds, both in early akam literature, and in the love verses of the Tēvāram.

In the incidents involving animals and birds in the Tēvāram, the love theme is counter-balanced by the religious truths built around these stories. Some of the verses about animals and birds may be cited as evidence of this fact:

- (a) "The Lord of the Devas, riding on his bull, destroyed the three castles of the Acurar. He dwells at Tiruvaṅṅāmalai where the long-trunked wild elephant wanders calling his consort, and looks for her all over the mountain. At last being fatigued and exhausted he sleeps at the side of the mountain".<sup>1</sup>
- (b) "The Lord who crushed Irāvaṅṅaṅ, the king of Laṅkā and applied the holy ashes all over his body, dwells at Kuṅṅumpalā in Kuṅṅrālam, where male and female elephants carrying a cluster of honeyed flowers of konrai on their foreheads worship Śiva".<sup>2</sup>
- (c) "The Lord who swallowed poison as if it were ambrosia through his sacred throat when the Devas approached him crying out, "Lord save us", dwells at the mountain in Tirukkarkuṅṅi where the male wild elephant plucks an abundance of young bamboo shoots and feeds its consort".<sup>3</sup>

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1. Cam, Tev, 69:4.

2. Ibid., 207:8.

3. Ibid., 43:4.

- (d) "After bathing in the temple tank before sun-rise, the long-trunked elephant carrying flowers in his trunk and followed by the females, offers the flowers in worship, according to Śaiva doctrines to the Lord of Tirukkāppēr, which is surrounded by groves of flower gardens. The shelter for the devotees is the holy feet of Śiva and nothing else".<sup>1</sup>
- (e) "Those who worship by meditating deeply will attain the holy feet of the Lord who has at the same time one and several appearances and whose abode is Mt. Kayilāyam, where a female elephant perplexed in the dark, runs along the slope and reaches the foot of the mountain with its calf after searching for her consort all over".<sup>2</sup>

In the above verses, Campantar describes the life of the wild elephant while praising the glories of Lord Śiva. Verses (a), (b), (c) and (e) are composed with special reference to the mountain region, and verse (d) to the pasture lands. The description is tinged with a certain amount of artificiality. In the first three verses, three purānic legends, the destruction of the three castles of the Acurar, the crushing of Irāvāṇa, and the swallowing of poison, are in turn the predominant themes. It is therefore, apparent that the purānic legends depicting the glories of Śiva were in the mind of the poet when he sang these verses; and in such poems the theme of love is entirely subordinate

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1. Ibid., 284:1.

2. Ibid., 68:5.

to the purāṇic legends and to the connected Śaiva theology. The male elephant wondering about in search of its consort, the male and female elephants together offering flowers in worship, and a male elephant feeding its consort with the abundant young bamboo shoots, are the love themes observed in the verses. These themes are only secondary to the more significant religious aspects.

Verses (b) and (d) contain more religious aspects. In (b), besides the purāṇic legend depicting the glories of Śiva, the elephants offering konrai flowers in worship are portrayed and thus the religious theme and the love-theme are blended together. In (d), the poet emphasizes the importance of temple worship by citing the example of an elephant couple. He points out that even the elephants worship God according to Śaiva doctrine, viz, bathing in the temple tank before sunrise and carrying flowers for worship.<sup>1</sup> The male elephant offering flowers in worship followed by the female is a love theme which is tinged with religious flavour. Campantar observes that the female elephant walks behind the bull because it is a traditional custom in the Tamil country even at the present time, for the woman to walk behind the man. Further, in (c) it is seen that Śiva swallowed poison for the sake of those who came to him for their safety, just as the male elephant feeds its consort. In saying

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1. CVV, II, p.77.

this, the mystic thinks of his love for God, and longs to be united with him in the confidence that the Lord will hold him in union.

Tiruvannāmalai, Kūṟṟālam, Tirukkarkuṭi and mount Kayilāyam are all mountainous regions. The poet also lays special emphasis on elephants, which are usually associated in literature with mountainous regions. Therefore it is reasonable to conclude that these regions were full of elephants during the Tēvāram period. At present however there are no elephants in most of those mountains, the reason perhaps being that the forests were cleared as more and more people came to worship the local deities and villages and towns grew up around the shrines.

We can be sure that this happened in Tirukkānappēr, which must have been pasture land full of wild elephants during the time of Campantar. It must have developed into a village because it was a holy place and thus the forest around the shrine, was cleared, and the elephants killed or driven away.

Moreover, the love-themes in the above five verses, except for the religious import, are similar to those of the akam anthologies. The line, piṭivāyil vālvetiriṅ muḷaivārik karuṅkalīyānai koṭukkum,<sup>1</sup> 'the dark wild male elephant feeds his consort with abundance of the young shoots of bamboo' is similar

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1. Cam, Tev, 43:4.

to the line piṭiyūṭṭip piṇuṇṇum kaliru, 'the male elephant which drinks water only after feeding the female' of Kali.<sup>1</sup>

Let us now examine some of the verses concerning the life of monkeys:

"A female monkey with its baby jumps over the bamboos after quarrelling with its consort and climbs the peak of the hill of Cirāppalli".<sup>2</sup> "The kaṭuvan, 'male monkey' eats and enjoys the remains of the pulp of the jak fruit dropped by the manti, 'female monkey' after she had plucked and tasted them at Kurumpalā in Kurṅālam".<sup>3</sup>

"A female monkey after wandering about in search of edible fruit for her consort, takes the lead in worshipping the holy feet of the Lord of Tirumutukunṅam".<sup>4</sup>

"At Tiruppokkoḷiyūr a female monkey after wandering all over the slopes of the mountain in search of edible fruit in order to obtain them, finally worships the imperishable Lord, (Avināci) pouring water and offering flowers in prayer three times a day, morning, noon and evening".<sup>5</sup>

All the above four occurrences portray the love and family ties of the monkeys, the first two dealing entirely with 'conjugal love' and the last two with conjugal love, with slight religious colouring. Though the poet exaggerates the love affairs slightly in his descriptions, they contain features common to the life of the people of that age. In the first incident, the

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1. Kali., Pālaikkali, 11:9.

2. Cun.Tev., 98:2.

3. Ibid., 207:2.

4. Cun.Tev., 43:8.

5. Ibid., 92:7.

poet refers to ūṭal, 'love quarrel' of an 'open wedded love' in the life of the monkey. He suggests indirectly that the female monkey climbs the peak of the hill in order to commit suicide. Jumping from a mountain to commit suicide because of disgrace, dishonour, shame or indignity was a habit in the Tamil country and this is referred to in the Nālaṭiyār as varaipāyṭal,<sup>1</sup> 'the act of self-immolation committed by throwing oneself down from the hill top'.

The last two occurrences reveal the nature and the manner in which Śiva worship was conducted in those days. It is quite clear from the last two verses that, during the Tēvāram period, worship was conducted to obtain material comforts. Water was poured and flowers were offered in worship.<sup>2</sup> Appar says, "I never forget pouring water and offering flowers in worship".<sup>3</sup>

We shall also quote some of the descriptions about the behaviour of birds. There are descriptions of peacocks, cranes, parrots, annam and pigeons:

The peacock clamours wishing to dance with its consort at Tiruvālankāṭu.<sup>4</sup> The peacocks and peahens embracing each

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1. Nālaṭiyār, 369:4.

2. nocciyam paccilaiyāl nuraitir punalāl toluvār. Cun, Tev, 98:3.

3. calampūvoṭu tūpamarantariyēn, App, Tev, 1:6.

4. Cam, Tev, 45:4.

other dance at the slope of the mount Kotūnkunṅam.<sup>1</sup> The family affinity of the male crane, who lives without parting from his consort, makes Campantar feel more in love with Śiva, and he begs the crane to go as a messenger to the Lord of Tiruccenkāṭṭankuṭi to convey his pangs of love.<sup>2</sup> Another touching manifestation of love is seen in the description of the male and female parrots flying together to the millet fields to gather ears of corn to feed their little ones on having seen them leaving the nest and climbing the branches.<sup>3</sup> Campantar is also moved by the male and female annam which wander about without parting from each other;<sup>4</sup> the male dances with the female<sup>5</sup> and both sit on the lotus embracing each other.<sup>6</sup> The deep love of the female kuyil and of the male kuyil are also depicted in some verses. The female kuyil dances with her consort.<sup>7</sup> The male pigeon climbs to the top of a tree and calls his love.<sup>8</sup>

Most of these descriptions, though not in the akam hymns, describe the courting behaviour of some of the birds. Moreover, these incidental descriptions add vividity to the religious spirit of the verses. It is therefore probable that secular love was

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1. Ibid., 14:2.
  2. Ibid., 321:6.
  3. Ibid., 250:4.
  4. Ibid., 321:2.
  5. Ibid., 42:8.
  6. Ibid., 377:9.
  7. Cun.Tev, 10:7.
  8. Ibid., 50:6.

introduced by the hymnists into some of their hymns to express religious ideas in such a way as to make their faith more impressive and appealing to the common people.<sup>1</sup>

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1. Some grammarians too make use of secular love themes in the poems illustrative of the grammatical rules; for instance Taṇṭi uses it in almost all the verses to illustrate the figures of speech in his work Taṇṭiyalāṅkāraṃ.

Chapter Five

THE ALLUSIONS TO PURĀNIC STORIES IN THE TĒVĀRAM

Of the various aspects of religious significance seen in the Tēvāram, the frequent emergence of the purānic legends throws a flood of light upon the heroic feats and glories of Śiva, portraying him as the highest of all Hindu gods. The Śaivites' belief that those who speak of Śiva or even think of his heroic feats and glories, will be endowed with spiritual illumination, perhaps arises from the recurrence of purānic allusions in religious works. The highest human goal for true Śaivites is perhaps to understand philosophically the inner meaning of the purānic legends and come to unity with Śiva. But the inner meaning of these purānic legends has not so far been fully explained philosophically. On the contrary, they have generally been interpreted according to the whims and fancies of the interpreters. Though it is not intended to dwell here upon analysis of the philosophical interpretation of purānic legends, it is the task of modern philosophers to spiritualise the fictitious elements in the legends by means of such analysis.

In this connection one may agree with Narayana Ayyar's statement:

"The acceptance of Śiva as a personal god must have had the natural consequence of making some regard Śiva as

the highest of all gods, attributing to Him qualities which would be denied to other gods. It was such an attitude of mind that was responsible for the growth of a number of legends about Śiva, and also Viṣṇu, which were later on included in the epics and the purānas. Though these are only legends in which fact is bound to be mixed up with fiction, they cannot be rejected as entirely valueless. On the other hand, they happen to be most valuable, especially when there is no other source of information available, to show the trend of popular opinion".<sup>1</sup>

These preliminary comments made, we may now examine some of the allusions to purānic stories in the Tēvāram.

A study of these allusions suggests that they are the main technique used by the saints to portray Śiva as a superior god and his nature as one which bestows unrestrained grace on his devotees. The eight heroic feats of Śiva and some of his tiruvilaiyāṭal, 'sacred amusements' are alluded to very often in the Tēvāram. In fact, there is hardly any hymn without such an allusion, especially in the hymns of Campantar. It is surprising to note that if these references are left out, there is little remaining of several Tēvāram verses. Dorai Rangaswamy rightly points out that, "The literature of this age as distinguished from the literature of the caṅkam age is characterised

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1. OEHS, p.59.

by its wealth of references to the purāṇic and other mythological stories".<sup>1</sup>

Two noteworthy legends

Śiva's crushing of Irāvāṇa and the story of Pīraṇaṇ and Tirumāl searching for the top and the bottom of the pillar of fire are the two noteworthy legends referred to systematically in the Tēvāram. The former is referred to mostly in the 8th verses and sometimes in the 9th of the hymns of Campantar and also in the last verses of most of the hymns of Appar. These allusions deserve special analysis as the saints adopt a systematic manner of presenting them to illustrate various aspects of the Śaiva religion. The following analysis of the different types of these allusions will demonstrate this fact.

Allusions referring to the incident of Irāvāṇa lifting the mountain and Śiva punishing him occur very often.<sup>2</sup> They differ merely in their use of varying synonyms. By these allusions the saints perhaps emphasise the fact that those who commit wrongs will be punished by Śiva. In other words, the saints preach from a moral point of view and advise everyone not to commit mistakes because God will punish them. Because

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1. RPT, I, p.189.

2. TO.Cam, III, 388:5-7; TO.App, II, 172:12-15.

these admonitions occur in several hymns, it may be suggested that the saints considered them important. A number of references in this category may be cited for Śiva eliminating the ānavam of Irāvapaṇ. Though the word ānavam is not used it is represented by varying synonyms such as tiral, ānmai, vali, viral, tarukku, vīram and so on.<sup>1</sup> These allusions are used to preach the fact of the illumination of the soul by God. The darkness of ānavam is dispelled by divine grace. The great message of the saints is the grace of Śiva.

The type of allusion which speaks of Śiva showering grace on Irāvapaṇ portrays the action of the pure grace and love of Śiva.<sup>2</sup> These allusions emphasise the fact that even those who commit mistakes, if they realise their mistakes and worship Śiva with devotion and love will partake of his grace.<sup>3</sup> Appar promises a number of benefits of worship against the background of this story.<sup>4</sup> This is the most significant story and that may be the reason why it is mentioned in the greatest number of hymns. Some of the allusions to this legend speak of Śiva bestowing material comforts on Irāvapaṇ such as giving

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1. TO.Cam, III, 388:5.
  2. TO.Cam, III, 388:(15); TO.App, II, 172:17.
  3. Supra, Ch.I, p.33.
  4. Infra, Ch.VII, p. 374.

him a sword,<sup>1</sup> blessing him with long life,<sup>2</sup> granting him a chariot,<sup>3</sup> and so on.

It is interesting to compare these bestowings of Śiva with the liberality and munificence of the kings and chieftains mentioned in early Tamil poetry. Kailasapathy states that patronage towards bards and minstrels was considered the solemn duty of princes and noblemen; their liberality and munificence was one of the cherished ideals in the Heroic age.<sup>4</sup> So too, in the Tēvāram period, did Śiva shower material comforts as well as spiritual blessings on his devotees for their deep and unceasing devotion. Cuntarar prays to Śiva for various material comforts such as a lotus flower made of gold, a sword made of gold, a silk scarf, rice and curry with ghee thrice a day, and perfume.<sup>5</sup> So it is no wonder that Cēkkiḷār attributes to Cuntarar the miracles of obtaining 12000 pieces of gold,<sup>6</sup> transforming bricks into gold<sup>7</sup> and receiving heaps of paddy,<sup>8</sup> all with the grace of Śiva.

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1. TO.Cam, III, 338:22; TO.App, II, 172:18(3).
  2. TO.Cam, III, 388:26; TO.App, II, 172:18(1).
  3. TO.Cam, III, 388:24.
  4. THP, p.217.
  5. Cun.Tev, 46:10.
  6. PPEKN, 106-107.
  7. PPEKN, 50.
  8. PPEKN, 10-22.

We may cite some references in the hymns of Campantar in which certain other aspects of the Śaiva religion are mentioned in connection with the Irāvaṇa legend.

- (a) "When the arakkan lifted mount Kāyilai, Śiva crushed his head and hands with his sacred toe; then gave him a huge sword when he prayed to Him chanting the five sacred letters".<sup>1</sup>
- (b) "(Śiva) who appears holy with glittering sacred ashes crushed his (Irāvaṇa's) body as well as his ten heads along with their huge crowns".<sup>2</sup>
- (c) "O Lord! you crushed the crown of the arakkan who lifted the Kāyilai with his mountain-like shoulders, and showered grace on him for the sweet music that he sang with melting heart".<sup>3</sup>

In reference (a) Irāvaṇa chanting the five sacred letters is mentioned as well as the other incidents. There are two other similar allusions in the hymns of Campantar.<sup>4</sup> Nanaccivāya is the sacred lettered mantiram of the Śaivites, so the saint perhaps emphasises the importance of chanting this mantiram in these allusions. In reference (b) the saint speaks of the holy ashes applied to Śiva's body. Similar allusions occur in two other hymns.<sup>5</sup> Holy ash is one of the sacred signs of the

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1. Cam, Tev, 377:8.  
 2. Ibid., 342:8.  
 3. Ibid., 71:8.  
 4. Ibid., 307:8 & 280:8.  
 5. Ibid., 320:8 & 278:8.

Śaivites and it may be suggested that the saint merely stresses the significance of the holy ashes in these references. In reference (c) the emphasis is on sweet music. There are ten other similar allusions in the hymns of Campantar<sup>1</sup> and also a number of references in the hymns of Appar.<sup>2</sup> The hymnists find delight in describing Śiva as a lover of music and request devotees to sing to Him sweet music with melting heart. What the saints want to emphasize in this type of allusion is that the devotees who sing sweetly in praise of Śiva will also be granted divine benefits.

The allusions which have been examined so far have shown conclusively that the saints, especially Campantar, adopt a systematic pattern in referring to the story in order to emphasise not only the greatness, the glories and the unrestrained grace of Śiva but also some of the salient aspects of the Śaiva religion. The reason for these recurring allusions will be examined later.

Let us now examine the allusions to the story of Piramaṅ and Tirumāl searching for the top and the bottom of the pillar of fire.<sup>3</sup> These allusions occur mostly in the 9th verses

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1. TO.Cam, III, 388:16.

2. TO.App, II, 172:17.

3. For a detailed account of this legend see aṭimuṭi tēṭum paṭalam in KP.

of the hymns of Campantar. Appar refers to this story in every one of the verses of his hymn Ilinkapurāṇat tirukkuguntokai,<sup>1</sup> and also in a number of other hymns.<sup>2</sup> There are 39 allusions in Cuntarar's Tēvāram.<sup>3</sup>

Referring to the allusion in the 9th verse of hymn No.1 of Campantar, Cēkkiḷār says that the saint alludes to this story because he wanted to emphasize that Śiva bestows grace only on those who worship Him and not on others.<sup>4</sup> The Śaivites, however, interpret things differently. They argue that the formless cannot be seen by those having form, however high the form itself may be. In the story, Śiva is described as a pillar of fire and Piramaṅ and Tirumāl as a swan and a boar respectively. According to the Śaivites, the pillar of fire is formless, the swan and boar having forms. One may argue that the pillar of fire itself is a form; but the Śaivites explain that the form of fire is entirely different from the physical forms of the universe. The fire is the agent that effects destruction of the physical forms of the universe. Therefore they argue that as a pillar of fire, Śiva is superior to the boar, Tirumāl, and the swan, Piramaṅ. Thus this story shows Śiva as the Absolute, the greatest power. This is one of the stories which asserts Śiva's superiority over

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1. App.Tev, hymn No.208.
  2. TO.App, I, 64.
  3. TO.Cun, 76.
  4. Supra, Ch.I, p.34.

all other Hindu gods.

The two purānic legends which have been examined so far are predominant in the Tēvāram, especially in Campantar's Tēvāram. By the former legend, Campantar portrays Śiva as the embodiment of love and grace; by the latter, he describes Him as the Absolute, the greatest power. These two are the dominant themes in the 8th and 9th verses of his work from the beginning to the end. Regarding these recurring allusions, Narayana Ayyar has an entirely different view:

"The critical reader often feels the repetitions of these purānic details to be sufficiently wearisome, and since they do not convey any new meaning, many of the songs have to be read with impatience; and the only pleasure gained in doing so is the beautiful rhythm and the exquisite music of the words. Thus it is clear that the conquest accomplished by him was not an intellectual conquest at all".<sup>1</sup>

Though this conclusion may to a certain extent be acceptable, it is not completely true.

First, we should not forget the circumstances under which the saint composed these hymns. The hymns were sung at a time when the Tamil country was under the grip of the Jaina religion and as such the minds of the people were perplexed

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1. OEHS, p.343.

and confused. Therefore, the saint must have thought that it was essential for him to emphasize the superiority of Śiva and the salient aspects of the Śaiva religion repeatedly to make a sufficiently strong appeal to the people. Moreover, the hymns were sung about different shrines, located in different places and on different occasions. It was therefore necessary for the saint to repeat the glories and superiority of Śiva in the hymns sung at each place.

Secondly, one of the reasons for Caṃpantar composing the hymns was to induce the people to chant them in their daily worship. It is impossible for people to chant several hundreds of hymns in daily worship; they can sing a hymn or two, sometimes possibly a verse only. Therefore the saint must have thought that alluding to these stories in every hymn would give everyone a chance to recall the glories and greatness of Śiva. At the same time we should not forget that these hymns were sung when the saint visited these respective shrines. What is important to point out here is that the saint, as we have shown in our analysis, referred to this story in a systematic manner, which helped him enormously to compose the hymns extempore.

Thirdly, it has been shown in our analysis how the saint alludes to the story with slight variations in order to illustrate

its different aspects. Therefore Narayana Ayyar's conclusion that Campantar's accomplishment was not an intellectual one is not acceptable. It is a fact that Campantar, with a band of enthusiastic friends and followers, was partly responsible for almost completely wiping out Jainism as a religious force from the Tamil country.<sup>1</sup> He also argued with Buddhists and won them over.<sup>2</sup> All this was accomplished successfully by Campantar through the genuine literary flavour of the finer poems, and by his intellectual approach of putting forward the essential aspects of the Śaiva religion. Dorai Rangaswamy concludes:

"The Tēvāram poems are mainly lyrical outpourings of the heart of the poet, and the stories are referred to to express the subjective experience. They have, therefore, to be related to the subjective experience of these stories by the poet. They have a significance to the author and it is this that has to be studied".<sup>3</sup>

### The eight heroic feats

The Tēvāram hymns are rich in allusions to the feats of Śiva, especially the eight heroic feats: the cutting off of the head of Piraṃaṅ, the conquest of Antakācuraṅ, the destruction of the triple castle, the destroying of the sacrifices of Takkaṅ, the

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1. HTL, p.80.
  2. PPTC, 904-25.
  3. RPT, I, p.183.

conquest of Calantaraṅ, the skinning of the elephant, the burning of Kāmaṅ, and the conquest of the god of death. There are eight shrines renowned as the scenes of each one of these feats, namely Kaṅṅiyūr, Kōvalūr, Atikai, Paṅṅiyālūr, Viṅṅkuṅṅi, Vaḷuvūr, Kurukkai and Kaṅṅavūr respectively. In support of this, the Śaivites cite a verse of unknown date and authorship.<sup>1</sup>

Dorai Rangaswamy states that, "Śiva is said to have performed eight great heroic feats in eight different places within the Tamil country, which suggests an attempt at looking upon the feats as the feats of Tamil land".<sup>2</sup>

The hymnists often find delight in describing Śiva as aṅṅamūrṅṅti, 'Lord of eight forms'. There are also a number of hymns in which the saints speak of Śiva as vīraṅṅṅam and his abodes as vīraṅṅṅam. The eight scenes of Śiva's heroic feats are referred to in Appar's works.<sup>3</sup> Campantar describes the places as aṅṅāṅam enṅṅu ōṅṅiya nāḷiraṅṅṅu, 'four times two which were known as aṅṅāṅam'.<sup>4</sup> The phrases, vīraṅṅṅam and vīraṅṅṅāṅam occur in the hymns of Cuntarar also.<sup>5</sup> From these, it appears that the Sanskrit terms vīra śṅṅhāna and aṅṅṅa vīra śṅṅhāna were respectively given as vīraṅṅṅāṅam and aṅṅṅavīraṅṅṅāṅam, with the shortened forms vīraṅṅṅam and aṅṅṅavīraṅṅṅam during the Tēvāraṅam period.

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1. Pūmaṅ ciraṅ kaṅṅṅi, antakaṅ kōval, puram atikai, māmaṅ paṅṅiyal, calantaraṅ viṅṅkuṅṅi, mā vaḷuvūr kāmaṅ kurukkai, yamaṅ kaṅṅavūr, intak kācīṅṅiyil tēmaṅṅum koṅṅraiyum tiṅkaḷum cūṅṅitaṅ cēvakamē.
  2. RPT, I, p.180.
  3. App, Tev, 284:2.
  4. Cam, Tev, 175:3.
  5. Cun, Tev, 28:1-10, 38:1-10.

The description of the eight scenes of Śiva's heroic feats is also confusing. Appar enumerates the eight shrines as Kaṭṭiyūr, Kaṭavūr, Atikai, Vaḷuvūr, Paṇiyalūr, Koḷalūr, Kuṟukkai and Kōttitṭaikkūṭi.<sup>1</sup> But the last shrine is missing in the eight shrines listed in the verse referred to above. Campantar, however, speaks of the Lord of Virkūṭi as viratṭan.<sup>2</sup> Virkūṭi is one of the shrines mentioned in the above verse. Therefore, three alternative conclusions may be drawn from this analysis. One is that there was a tradition in which Kōttitṭaikkūṭi was known as the scene of Śiva's conquering Calantarai; another is that Kōttitṭaikkūṭi and Virkūṭi are one and the same; and the third is that Kōttitṭaikkūṭi might be a textual corruption or scribal error of later times.

We may now pass on to examine the eight shrines in the light of the hymns, and also allusions to the stories found in the other hymns.

Two hymns are extant about Kaṭṭiyūr, one by Campantar and one by Appar.<sup>3</sup> Campantar addresses the Lord as viratṭan and His abode as viratṭam (11), but Appar does neither. Śiva's heroic feat of beheading Piraṁai is alluded to in both hymns:

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1. App, Tev, 284;2.

2. Cam, Tev, hymn No.244.

3. Ibid., No.296 and App, Tev, 93.

"O viratṭan of Kaṇṭiyūr! for the sake of the celestials you have taken off the head of Ayaṅ and delighted in making it a bowl in which to have your meal".<sup>1</sup> "Every one knows that the Lord of Kaṇṭiyūr, who holds the musical instrument (yāl) in his hand beheaded the Creator (Piramaṅ)."<sup>2</sup>

Apart from these two allusions, this story is alluded to in 23 places in Campantar's hymns, 30 places in Appar and 8 in Cuntarar.<sup>3</sup> The story clearly shows the superiority of Śiva among the Trinity of Gods. The Creator's intoxication of power was cured by Śiva when he ordered Bhairava to cut off his head.

Kōvalūr is said to be the site of Śiva's heroic feat of conquering Antakācuraṅ. Two hymns are extant about this abode, one by Campantar and one by Appar.<sup>4</sup> Though neither of the hymns alludes to this story, Appar addresses the Lord as viratṭan while Campantar calls the abode viratṭānam. There are, however, a few passing references to the heroic feat in other hymns.

We may cite some of them:

"O Lord! you destroyed Antakaṅ with the fire trident"<sup>5</sup>

"You pierced Antakaṅ to death with the trident"<sup>6</sup>

1. Cam, Tev, 296:6.

2. App, Tev, 93:3.

3. TO.Cam, I, 91, TO.App, I, 53(7); TO.Cun, 61(7).

4. Cam, Tev, 236; App, Tev, 69.

5. Cun, Tev, 9:2.

6. App, Tev, 296:9.

"Destroyed Antakan with your trident"<sup>1</sup>

"He who killed Antakan with the fire trident"<sup>2</sup>

"He who killed Antakan pierced him with his trident"<sup>3</sup>

These allusions express the same idea using different synonyms.

The word antakan in these references may refer to the god

of death as well. But the word cūlam, 'trident' is the only

clue that allows us to conclude that they refer to Śiva

destroying Antakācuraṅ. Another noteworthy feature is that

the allusions to this feat are shorter as well as fewer than

the allusions to the other seven feats. This tends to suggest

that this legend was not as popular as the other seven during

the Tēvāram period.

The destruction of the triple castle is attributed to the Lord of Atikai, and 18 hymns are sung in praise of Him,

16 by Appar and one each by Campantar and Cuntarar.<sup>4</sup> This

story is alluded to in hundreds of other hymns as well. It is

remarkable that apart from the 16 hymns, Appar also composed

6 single verses and a whole hymn narrating the story in detail.<sup>5</sup>

This is perhaps because of his admiration for the Lord who had cured his dreadful disease.<sup>6</sup>

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1. Cun, Tev, 16:2.

2. App, Tev, 176:9.

3. Ibid., 309:5.

4. App, Tev, hymn Nos. 1, 2, 10, 24, 25, 26, 27, 28, 104, 166, 167, 216, 217, 218, 219 & 220; Cam, Tev, hymns No.46 and Cun, Tev, hymn No.38.

5. App, Tev, 14:5, 59:2, 73:7, 84:1, 113:3 & 185:5 and the hymn No.117.

6. PPTN, 70, 71.

The inner meaning of this legend is interpreted as Śiva purifying the three malam, 'impurities or evils in the soul'; namely āpavam, 'the source of darkness and impurity', kanman or vinai; 'the cause of action which results in pain and pleasure'; and māyai, 'matter in its obscuring or entangled power'. Tirumūlar makes it clear:

"The ignorant say that the very Primeval Being ~~man~~ bearing the river in his braided red hair (Śiva) destroyed the three castles! Three castles means the operation of the three malam. Who thinks that (He) destroyed three castles".<sup>1</sup>

Appar proclaims that Śiva destroyed the castles because of His love.<sup>2</sup> Śiva is the embodiment of love. Anpu and civam are not different things, but are one and the same.

"The ignorant think that love and civam are two different things, they know not that love is civam".<sup>3</sup>

Śiva, civam and anpu are synonyms for that which dispel the three malam.

The heroic feat of destroying the sacrifices of Takkan is a symbol of God's grace. The Śaivite tradition is that this feat took place at Pariyalūr. There is one hymn (No.134) sung about this abode by Campantar. He addresses the Lord as virattan, but there is no allusion to Śiva destroying the

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1. Thus the story is given a Śaiva siddhāntist explanation. Tirumantiram, 329.
  2. App, Tev, 90:3.
  3. Tirumantiram, 257.

sacrifices of Takkaṅ. The most striking feature in the hymn is the elaborate description of the two other heroic feats of Śiva, namely, the destruction of the triple castle (6) and the burning of Kāmaṅ (3). This is in addition to the usual allusions to the story of Śiva crushing Irāvaṅga (8) and the story of Piraṅga and Tirumāl (9).

There are several passing references in the Tēvāram which describe the various punishments meted out to those invited to the sacrificial ceremony. Intiraṅ's shoulders were cut off,<sup>1</sup> the body of Karuṅga was mutilated,<sup>2</sup> Cantiraṅ was kicked to death,<sup>3</sup> the teeth of Cūriyaṅ were plucked out,<sup>4</sup> the heads of Piraṅga and Tirumāl were cut off,<sup>5</sup> and Yamaṅ's legs were broken off.<sup>6</sup> These incidents are also described elaborately in KP. It may therefore be suggested that apart from the material in the Skanda Purāna, these Tēvāram expressions enabled Kacciyappaṅ to describe the yāka caṅkāram in his KP. Furthermore, the allusions enumerated above indicate clearly the hymnists' delight in portraying Śiva as the highest of all the celestials.

Śiva's unrestrained bestowal of grace on those who were punished at the yāka is also described:

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1. App, Tev, 265:9, 244:2, 301:3, 263:8, 245:8, 289:10; Cun, Tev, 16:2 & 17:5.
  2. App, Tev, 266:8, 239:3, etc.
  3. Cun, Tev, 16:6; App, Tev, 239:1, 253:5, 265:9, etc.
  4. Cun, Tev, 17:6, 31:7, 9:7, 26:3; App, Tev, 243:4, 239:1, etc.
  5. App, Tev, 198:2, 253:5, 14:7, 165:5, 198:2, 14:7, 253:5.
  6. App, Tev, 266:2, 309:9.

"The Lord who dwells at Mankalakkuṭi with His consort whose hair is adorned with fragrant flowers, destroyed the great sacrifices of Takkaṅ and showered immense grace".<sup>1</sup>

"O Lord! You killed the king of the birds and gave life back to him".<sup>2</sup>

"O Lord! you bestowed grace on Cantiraṅ on the day you destroyed the sacrifices of Takkaṅ".<sup>3</sup>

"....destroyed completely the glories of the sacrifices of Takkaṅ and showered immense grace".<sup>4</sup>

These allusions portray the superiority of Śiva and his nature of unrestrained grace. It may also be interpreted as Śiva purifying the āpavam of those celestials and bestowing spiritual illumination and everlasting bliss upon them.

The heroic feat of Śiva's conquest of Calantaraṅ, according to Śaivite tradition, took place at Virkuṭi. We have only one hymn by Campantar in the Tēvāram sung about Virkuṭi.<sup>5</sup> Though the saint addresses the abode as vīraṭṭam the purānic story is not alluded to in the hymn. There are, however, a number of references to the story in other hymns, seven in Campantar, twelve in Appar and two in Cuntarar.<sup>6</sup> These references are fewer than those to the other heroic feats except the conquering of Antakācuraṅ. This prompts the suggestion that

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1. App.Tev, 186:1.

2. Ibid., 266:8.

3. Ibid., 65:5.

4. Ibid., 300:4.

5. Cam.Tev, hymn No.244.

6. TO.Cam, I, 88; TO.App, I, 53(4) and TO.Cun, 61(4).

either this legend was not popular during the Tēvāram period or the hymnists did not regard it as a legend of as much importance as the others. A striking feature is that neither the hymn nor the allusions provide us with evidence to conclude that this heroic feat took place at Virkuṭi. Indeed Campantar alludes to two other heroic feats of Śiva in the hymn about Virkuṭi, Śiva swallowing the poison (4) and his skinning of the elephant (9), besides the usual stories of Śiva crushing Irāvāṇa (8) and that of Pīraṇaṇ and Tirumāl (9). What is important to notice in this context is the absence of the heroic feat of Śiva conquering Calantaraṇ in the hymn.

Another of the eight heroic feats of Śiva is the flaying of an elephant and wearing its skin as a shawl. This feat, according to tradition, took place at Valuvūr. Valuvūr is a vaiputtalam,<sup>1</sup> so it has no hymns sung about it. This heroic feat is mentioned very often in the Tēvāram. Gajasra is an elephant, an embodiment of evil. It is this demon in elephant shape that Śiva conquered. Dorai Rangaswamy's interpretation of this story may be right:

"The whole story of the elephant has like other stories a mystical significance. Arūrar asks, what is the import

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1. App. Tev., 283:8, 284:2.

of this flaying of the elephant?. Tiruvaḷḷuvar speaks of conquering the elephants of senses with the goad of knowledge. The black elephant of a deceitful world, becomes in the end the white elephant of knowledge, as experienced in the last episode of Arūrar, true to the message of Upmaivilakkam that the three malam themselves become sat, cit and ānanta aspects of mōkṣa".<sup>1</sup>

The conquest of Kāmaṅ is one of the eight feats of Śiva as remembered and cherished in the Tamil country. This heroic feat is said to have taken place at Kurukkai. Two hymns of Appar, Nos. 49 and 50, are extant about this shrine.<sup>2</sup> Each of the extant verses of these two hymns contains a different purānic story other than that about the conquest of Kāmaṅ. It is striking that instead, it is the conquest of the god of death traditionally attributed to the Lord of Kaṭavūr, which is described elaborately in one of the verses.<sup>3</sup>

There are a number of references to the conquest of Kāmaṅ in other places in the Tēvāram however. The expressions such as 'burner of Kāmaṅ', 'One who burnt the body of Kāmaṅ', 'He who burnt Kāmaṅ to ashes' and 'You burnt Kāmaṅ with your eye', occur often in our source. Kāmaṅ is described as kāmatēvaṅ, 'Lord of love',<sup>4</sup> kāmaṅ, 'king of love',<sup>5</sup> pēreḷilār kāmaṅ,

1. RPT, I, p.351.

2. Hymn No.50 contains only two verses.

3. App, Tev, 49:2.

4. Cun, Tev, 34:9.

5. Ibid., 6:2.

'surpassingly beautiful king of love',<sup>1</sup> kōlattār kuraiyillān, 'one who does not lack in beauty',<sup>2</sup> etc. His flag is portrayed as the splendid flag with printed makara fish;<sup>3</sup> his chariot is described as the gentle south wind;<sup>4</sup> his bow is said to be made of sugar cane<sup>5</sup> and his arrows to be flowers.<sup>6</sup>

Similar descriptions also occur in the early and later akam poetry where Kāmaṅ is personified mostly as a god of surpassing beauty creating the desire of love in the minds of the lover and the loved. But in mystic poetry Kāmaṅ is always portrayed as one who creates lasciviousness and so he is considered to be an enemy to religious illumination and the attainment of heavenly bliss. Hence, the mystics praise Śiva for his destruction of Kāmaṅ while the secular poets extol Kāmaṅ for his long life and propagation of love. Therefore the inner meaning of this heroic feat of Śiva is perfectly clear, it is the conquest of the passions.<sup>7</sup> Hence, it is no surprise that the saints often speak of Śiva as kāma nācaṅ, 'mortifier of the passions', kāmaṅ kāyntār, 'one who consumed Kāmaṅ', kāma takanaṅ, 'the one who burned Kāmaṅ' and so on.

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1. App.Tev, 289:9.

2. Ibid., 269:10.

3. Ibid., 311:4.

4. Ibid., 176:9.

5. Cun.Tev, 9:4; 16:9; App.Tev, 155:2.

6. Cun.Tev, 9:4; Ibid., 16:9.

7. Tirunantiram 332.

Lastly, the story of Mārkkantēyar is very popular in the Tamil country. There was a poet of this name in the caṅkam age.<sup>1</sup> It is assumed by many that Vaḷḷuvar also refers to this story.<sup>2</sup> According to Purāṇas, Śiva conquered the god of death for the sake of his devotee Mārkkantēyar;<sup>3</sup> and Śaivite tradition attributes this feat to the Lord of Kaṭavūr.

There are five hymns about Kaṭavūr, three by Appar and one each by Campantar and Cuntarar.<sup>4</sup> The heroic feat is alluded to in each hymn and we may cite the following:

- (a) "It seems that virattānar of Kaṭavūr kicked the god of death for the sake of Mārkkantān".<sup>5</sup> (b) "It seems that Virattānar conquered the god of death at Kaṭavūr".<sup>6</sup> (c) "O Lord! you killed the god of death and gave long life to maraiyōn (Mārkkantān)".<sup>7</sup>

References (a) and (b) show that the heroic act took place at Kaṭavūr. Reference (c) shows that there are two purposes for every act of god; one brings destruction and punishment and the other brings purification and grace. The god of death was punished and released from ignorance and intoxication of power. He was subdued and purified. Mārkkantēyar was saved and granted a long life.

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1. PN, 365.

2. TK, 269.

3. See Mārkkantēya paṭalam in K.P.

4. App.Tev, 31, 150 & 107; Cam.Tev, 266 and Cun.Tev, 28.

5. App.Tev, 31:9.

6. Cam.Tev, 266:2.

7. Cun.Tev, 28:3.

It is a significant feature that Appar addresses Śiva by referring to His holy feet.<sup>1</sup> The hymnists often say that the devotees pray at the holy feet of Śiva, offer flowers to them, sing hymns in their praise and surrender themselves to them. The holy feet are usually described as showering grace on devotees. But in the above-mentioned hymn they are referred to in order to illustrate Śiva's wrath against the god of death. Nevertheless, this wrath itself is instrumental in bestowing grace on the devotees.

The hymns enumerated and analysed so far reveal two significant facts. Firstly, it has been noted that it is only the three shrines, Kaṇṭiyūr, Kaṭavūr and Atikai that are mentioned in their respective hymns as the scenes of particular heroic feats of Śiva. Secondly, in connection with three other shrines, the saints allude to one or more of the eight heroic feats irrespective of whether they were the ones attributed to the particular shrine. There are no hymns sung about Vaḷuvūr, and no heroic feats mentioned in those about Kōvalūr.

The following facts have come to light. The slaying of the elephant, the destruction of the triple castle, and the conquering of the god of death are mentioned in hymns about Kaṇṭiyūr, in addition to the feat of Śiva cutting off the head

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1. App, Tev, 107:1-10 (last lines).

of Piramaṅ traditionally associated with this place. In the hymns about Kaṭavūr, the burning of Kāmaṅ and the slaying of the elephant are mentioned in addition to the traditional feat of Śiva conquering the god of death. Apart from the destruction of the triple castle, all the other seven heroic feats are alluded to in the hymns about Atikai. None of the heroic feats are referred to in hymns about Kōvalūr. The destruction of the triple castle and the conquering of Kāmaṅ are mentioned in the hymns about Paṅiyalūr. The conquering of the god of death and the slaying of the elephant are described in the hymns about Kurukkai and Viṅkuṭi respectively but not the traditional heroic feats. From this analysis it is not possible to conclude definitely that Śiva performed the eight heroic feats in those particular eight places. The only evidence is that the hymnists refer to those abodes as viratṭam or viratṭānam and the Lord as viratṭan. But this would have come about whether or not the individual feats were performed in their traditional locales.

The hymns about these eight shrines may be tabulated thus:

| Shrines      | Campanar | Appar | Cuntarar |
|--------------|----------|-------|----------|
| 1. Kaṭiyūr   | 1        | 1     | -        |
| 2. Kōvalūr   | 1        | 1     | -        |
| 3. Atikai    | 1        | 16    | 1        |
| 4. Paṅiyalūr | 1        | -     | -        |
| 5. Viṅkuṭi   | 1        | -     | -        |
| 6. Valuvūr   | -        | -     | -        |
| 7. Kurukkai  | -        | 2     | -        |
| 8. Kaṭavūr   | 1        | 3     | 1        |
|              | 6        | 23    | 2        |

From the above analysis several more facts emerge. None of the saints sang about all eight shrines. Campantar sang one hymn each about six different places. Appar sang twenty-three hymns about a total of five places. Cuntarar sang one hymn each about two. As there are no hymns sung about Vaḷuvūr, either it was not popular during the Tēvāram age or the hymns have been lost. Atikai has the greatest number of hymns and therefore it was probably the most popular shrine.

The total number of allusions to Śiva's eight heroic feats may be tabled thus:\*

| Heroic feats                    | <u>Cam, Tev.</u> | <u>App, Tev.</u> | <u>Cun, Tev.</u> |
|---------------------------------|------------------|------------------|------------------|
| Cutting off the head of Piramaṇ | 24               | 31               | 8                |
| Conquest of Antakācuraṇ         | 4                | 5                | 2                |
| Destruction of triple castle    |                  | very many        |                  |
| Destroying Takkaṇ's sacrifice   | 31               | 54               | 9                |
| Conquest of Calantaraṇ          | 7                | 12               | 2                |
| Flaying of the elephant         | 117              | 120              | 45               |
| Burning of Kāmaṇ                | 72               | 112              | 21               |
| Conquest of the god of death    | 120              | 162              | 35               |

\* This Table is prepared according to the survey of Ceṅkalvarāya Pillai. For details see TO.Cam, I, 85-92; TO.App, I, 53:1-8; TO.Cun, 61:1-8.

From this table, several facts are clear. There are most allusions to each of the eight heroic feats in Appar's Tēvāram. This clearly exhibits his greater liking for describing the eight heroic feats of Śiva. However, in proportion to the total number of his hymns there are more allusions to certain heroic feats in Cuntarar's Tēvāram than in the works of Campantar or Appar. This shows the literary tendency to move more and more to purānic materials and the Sanskrit originals. The destruction of the triple castle is referred to in the greatest number of verses by all three saints; so it must have been the most popular legend in the age of Tēvāram. The flaying of the elephant, the burning of Kāmaṅ and the conquest of the god of death must have also been popular legends as they were each alluded to in a great number of places. The conquest of Antakācuran and of Calantaraṅ, which are mentioned only in some verses, were perhaps not so popular as the rest of the legends.

#### The sacred amusements of Śiva

The tiruviḷaiyāṭal or the sacred amusements of Śiva are some of the other purānic stories alluded to in the Tēvāram. These stories are elaborately narrated in TVP, a purāṇam by Parañcōtimuṅivar on the 64 amusements of Śiva at Maturai. The striking contrast is that the sacred amusements of Śiva show

mainly His unrestrained showering of grace on his devotees whereas the heroic feats portray particularly His superiority over all other Hindu gods. We may take up for investigation some of the allusions in our sources to these amusements.

The story of Śiva appearing as virutta kumāra pālar is referred to by all the three saints, in four places in Campantar's Tēvāram, six places in Appar and one in Cuntarar.<sup>1</sup> These allusions occur in passing in different places and convey the same meaning in each place and do not describe the story clearly. The saints in these allusions either praise Śiva for his unrestrained bestowal of grace or merely refer to His appearing in the form of an aged person, a youth, and then a baby. Though these allusions may be taken as evidence for the occurrence of this sacred amusement, there is no indication of some of the most important events of the story, such as the birth of Gaurī, her parents giving her in marriage to a bachelor-student of Vaiṣṇava religion, the miraculous opening of the door, Gaurī feeding the old brahman with delicious food, her in-laws putting her out of the house, and lastly Śiva taking Gaurī into His service as described in the TVP.<sup>2</sup>

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1. TO.Cam, II, 263:7; TO.App, II, 129:9 and TO.Cun, 176:5.
  2. For details see Tiruvilāiyāṭal No.23 in TVP.

This purānic story brings home to the masses a simple significant truth - Śiva's unrestrained bestowal of grace upon his devotees who with sincere devotion, delight in treating the Śaiva bhaktas with delicious food even under the most difficult circumstances. Such treatment of the bhaktas is considered to be a virtue in a Śaivite. Some of the devotees, namely Iḷaiyāṅkuṭimāra nāyaṅār<sup>1</sup> and Kāraikkālammaiār<sup>2</sup> who are said to have attained eternal bliss through such deeds may be cited in evidence of this fact. Secondly, none of the allusions describe the degrading of the Vaiṣṇava family and the Vaiṣṇava cult as portrayed in the TVP in which the rivalry between the two sects, Śaiva and Vaiṣṇava, are more clearly expressed. This story constructed in such a manner as to suit the people of his time, is perhaps Parañcōtī's own creation. In fact the casual references are barely sufficient to fill out the story as related in TVP and thereby one comes to the irresistible conclusion that the story must have been Parañcōtī's own creation based on material gathered from the Sanskrit purāṇas.

There are a few references in the hymns of Campantar and Appar to a Tamil literary academy and to Śiva's sacred amusements (TV) of appearing as a poet at the Caṅkam in Maturai in order to give

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1. See PP, Iḷaiyāṅkuṭimāra nāyaṅār purāṇam.
  2. See PP, Kāraikkālammaiār purāṇam.

a porkilli (gold coins tied up in a piece of cloth) to his devotee Tarumi.<sup>1</sup> A reference to this is clearly made in the hymns of Appar:

"O Lord! You appeared in the caṅkam as an eminent poet and rewarded Tarumi with a bag of gold".<sup>2</sup>

This allusion tells implicitly of a literary academy in the Tamil country and refers to the TV of Śiva who appeared in order to grant his protection to Tarumi who worshipped Him with devotion and sincerity. Campantar too clearly states that Śiva established a caṅkam at Maturai when he says maturait tokai ākinān.<sup>3</sup> Tokai means 'assembly, collection, association, school', etc.<sup>4</sup>

The references cited above and those in the commentary on IAP may perhaps have helped Parañcōtimuṇivar to construct a story in the TVP under the caption Tarumikkup porkili alitta paṭalam. A story about the caṅkam is mentioned in the commentary on IAP, a grammatical treatise ascribed to the 7th or 8th century A.D., although its origin must be earlier, and it probably contains material as old as that in the Tol.<sup>5</sup> Though it states in an elaborate and systematic manner that the three caṅkam together lasted for a total of 9,990 years and that an aggregate

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1. For detail see Tiruvilāiyāṭal No.52 in TVP.
  2. App.Tev, 289:3.
  3. Cam.Tev, 312:11.
  4. DED, S.V.2861, p.229.
  5. ETA, p.11.

of 8,598 poets, including a few major and minor gods, took part in their proceedings, the story of Śiva appearing with a bag of gold for the sake of his devotee Tarumi is not mentioned in the IAP. Marr, referring to the stories in the TVP and the commentary on IAP comments:

"Strong tradition in the Tamil country says that the poets who 'contributed' to the eight anthologies, and the others of Pattuppāṭṭu and Tol., lived in an age of one or more literary academies, centred latterly on Maturai, the capital of the Pāṇṭiya kingdom. The main sources for the tradition of caṅkam are the TVP of Parañcōtimuṅivar and the commentary on IAP".<sup>1</sup>

The question of which work was the first to mention the caṅkam becomes significant at this point. If Nakkīrar is the commentator of the IAP, then it must contain the earlier reference to the caṅkam, and consequently its contents, apart from the references in the Tēvāram, should have provided Parañcōtimuṅivar with material for an elaborately detailed account of the academy and the TV of Śiva appearing in the guise of a poet in order to help his devotee.

Kailasapathy, referring to the statements in the IAP, comments that "In the absence of epigraphical and the other material evidence to corroborate the statements in the story, it

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1. Ibid., p.4.

is true that much of it is useless to the historian".<sup>1</sup> The references in the Tēvāram however reveal the existence of an academy at Maturai, though facts have been mixed up with fiction.

Two allusions in the hymns of Appar deserve special mention.

- (a) "The Lord, holding the holy book and the sacrificial grass in his hand, lives at Vicaiyamankai, having Umāi at His side, as the unblemished vācakar sings in praise of Him".<sup>2</sup>
- (b) Kuṭamula nanticanai vācakanāk koṭṭār<sup>3</sup>

Some scholars interpret these two allusions as referring to Māṅikkavācakar and cite them as evidence of the saint having lived before the Tēvāram hymnists. In fact, these allusions are ambiguous. In the former, the word vācakar, may be interpreted as 'antapar who sing in praise of Śiva',<sup>4</sup> in which case it does not refer necessarily to Māṅikkavācakar. In the latter, the phrase as a whole may be interpreted in two ways: Śiva took Nanti as the player of His musical instrument or Śiva caused Nanti to be born as Vācakar. Thus the allusion either means that Nanti was taken as the player of the musical instrument kuṭamula, 'large hemispherical loud-sounding drum' by Śiva or that Śiva took Nanti, a player of the musical instrument kuṭamula, and caused him to be born as Saint Māṅikkavācakar.

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1. THP, p.2.  
 2. App.Tev, 184:1.  
 3. Ibid., 309:11.  
 4. TPT, Tirumurai, V, p.402.

There are further allusions to TV of Śiva. Two refer to his transforming foxes into horses,<sup>1</sup> and the other to him carrying sand on his head at the bank of the river Vaikai.<sup>2</sup> Appar describes the Lord of Tiruvārūr and of Tiruvīlimiḷalai as transforming foxes into horses.<sup>3</sup> Śiva carrying sand is expressed as vaikait tirukkōṭṭiṇṇratōr tiramum, 'the cause for you standing at the bank of the river Vaikai'.<sup>4</sup>

We may also cite a few references to some of the other sacred amusements of Śiva. There is a phrase in a hymn of Campantar which describes Maturai as being overshadowed by four clouds.<sup>5</sup> It possibly refers to the sacred amusement of Śiva covering the city of Maturai with four clouds for the sake of his bhakta, the king of the Pāṇṭiya country. This story appears in the TVP, under the caption, Nānmāṭakkūṭalāṇa paṭalam.<sup>6</sup> Cuntarar alludes to three other sacred amusements of Śiva, namely the feeding of milk to the little piglets<sup>7</sup> which is described in the TVP as paṇṇikkūṭikkū mulai koṭutta paṭalam,<sup>8</sup> the assuming of the guise of the king to rule the Pāṇṭiya kingdom<sup>9</sup> which is mentioned in the TVP as

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1. For detail see Tiruvīlaiyāṭal No.59 in TVP.
  2. For detail see Tiruvīlaiyāṭal No.61 in TVP.
  3. App,Tev, 4:2; 125:8.
  4. App,Tev, 231:9.
  5. Cam,Tev, 7:5.
  6. Tiruvīlaiyāṭal No.19.
  7. Cun,Tev, 97:10.
  8. Tiruvīlaiyāṭal No.45.
  9. Cun,Tev, 38:8.

Tirumanap paṭalam,<sup>1</sup> and the selling of bangles in the guise of a merchant,<sup>2</sup> which is stated in TVP as Valaiyil virra paṭalam.<sup>3</sup>

The references in the Tēvāram however do not relate the purāṇic stories explicitly.

There are two other allusions in the hymns of Cuntarar, one describing the second TV and the other the sixteenth TV of Śiva. The second is the dispelling of the curse of the white elephant and is alluded to thus:

"O Lord! I surrendered at your holy feet as soon as I heard that the four trunked elephant was returned to its former status and also obtained eternal bliss when it worshipped You with deep devotion....".<sup>4</sup>

The sixteenth TV, Śiva illustrating the inner meaning of the four Vedas, is referred to thus:

"O Lord! what is that grace of yours that graced those who listened to your commentary upon the four Vedas when you illustrated it".<sup>5</sup>

In the TVP, the former story is given the caption, Vellaiyānaic-cāpantīrtta paṭalam,<sup>6</sup> and the latter that of Vētattukkupperuḷ aruḷic ceyta paṭalam.<sup>7</sup>

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1. Tiruvilaiyāṭal No.5.
  2. Cun.Tev, 43:9.
  3. Tiruvilaiyāṭal No.32.
  4. Cun.Tev, 65:7.
  5. Cun.Tev, 99:5.
  6. See Tiruvilaiyāṭal No.2 in TVP.
  7. See Tiruvilaiyāṭal No.16 in TVP.

All the amusements of Śiva alluded to in the Tēvāram may be summarised thus: Campantar refers to ten stories in a total of nearly twenty references;<sup>1</sup> Appar mentions nine stories in a total of sixteen references;<sup>2</sup> and Cuntarar alludes to seven stories in a total of seven references.<sup>3</sup>

The hymnists have referred to these sacred amusements in their hymns perhaps in order to portray the nature of Śiva's unrestrained bestowal of grace on his abject devotees. Furthermore, the stories portray some of the significant virtues of the Śaivites, which were preserved and practised by the Śaiva bhaktas even under the most impossible circumstances. It was by these virtues that they obtained religious illumination and eternal bliss. The analysis made so far also reveals that the number of the sacred amusements of Śiva alluded to in the Tēvāram is less than one third of the number compiled and illustrated by Parañcōtīmunivar in his work, the TVP. It is therefore obvious that Parañcōtī must have gathered all the material for his work, except the material for the caṅkam and the connected stories, from the Sanskrit purāṇas especially from the Skāṇḍapurāṇa, and not from the Tēvāram. Parañcōtīmunivar himself mentions that the

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1. TO.Can, II, 263.
  2. TO.App, II, 129.
  3. TO.Can, 176.

work TVP is based on the eighteen purāṇas of Sanskrit literature.<sup>1</sup> It is further stated that he composed the purāṇam on the 64 sacred amusements of Śiva in Tamil, at the request of prominent people, basing these on the original works in the language of the North.<sup>2</sup> However the possibility cannot be completely ruled out that it was the references in the Tēvāram that prompted him to think about the sacred sports of Śiva, and subsequently gave him the idea of writing a purāṇam based on the Sanskrit originals, or at least upon an earlier Tamil model or a shared tradition.

Another factor to be observed is that the references to the sacred amusements of Śiva in the Tēvāram are comparatively few in comparison to the allusions to the eight celebrated exploits of Śiva. One is therefore led to conclude that the hymnists delighted more in singing about Śiva's heroic deeds, than in singing about his sacred amusements. The hymnists perhaps thought that portraying Śiva as a superior god would appeal more strongly to the mind of the people and thereby prevent their conversion to other faiths, especially Jainism.

It has been seen from the above that the number and variety of references are proportionately greatest in the hymns of Cuntarar, who lived later than Campantar and Appar. This shows

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1. TVP, Pāyiram, 24.  
2. Ibid., 24 and 25.

again the literary tendency to move more and more towards the purānic material and the Sanskrit originals which were more widely used in the poetry composed under the patronage of kings in the 11th and 12th century. Referring to the literature based on purānic material and Sanskrit originals, Marr sums up thus: "Most literature of this period is religious and is inspired by purānic material or based on Sanskrit originals. This period may be said to commence with the composition in the 7th century of the earlier Tēvāram hymns and to close with the poetry composed under the patronage of kings in the 11th and 12th centuries".<sup>1</sup>

#### Some other important allusions

Śiva's bestowal of grace on His devotees in repayment for their sustained penance and the heroic deed of Murukan and Tirumāl are some of the other important purānic legends referred to in the Tēvāram. Allusions to these are comparatively few in number and most of them are shorter and less detailed than allusions to the purānic legends investigated so far. Let us examine some of the allusions to the first sort of legends referred to above.

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1. ETA, p.1.

Śiva's showering of grace on Aruccuṅgaṅ for his sustained penance is alluded to in a few hymns.

"O Lord! you granted pācupatam to Aruccuṅgaṅ"<sup>1</sup>

"O Lord! you in the guise of a hunter, chanting the sacred mantiram, granted to Aruccuṅgaṅ the bow and arrow, the flag, and a huge chariot".<sup>2</sup>

These are passing references and do not describe the story in detail.

The purāṇic story of Śiva bestowing a sea of milk on the sage Upamaṅgu for his penance is alluded to in two places:

"O Lord! You bestowed the sea of milk to the baby (Upamaṅgu, the son of Viyākkiraka)".<sup>3</sup> "Because of the milk of Kāmatēṅgu tasted by the baby (Upamaṅgu) which had rare penance, Lord, You gave him the sea of milk when he cried out for it".<sup>4</sup>

Śiva granting the cakkarappaṭai to Tirumāl for his illustrious pūjā is referred to in a number of verses in the Tēvāram and we may cite two of them:

"O Lord! you bestowed a discus (weapon) on Tirumāl when he plucked out his eye to replace the missing flower from among the thousand with which he was worshipping the Lord who holds the river in his tangled hair".<sup>5</sup>

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1. App. Tev. 7:10.
  2. Ibid., 50:1.
  3. Ibid., 107:6.
  4. Ibid., 169:6.
  5. Ibid., 49:5.

"O Lord! our shelter!! (You) bestowed on Tirumāl, who offered his eye in replacement of the missing flower from the thousand with which he was worshipping the deadly discus with which he cut asunder the heart of the arakkan (Calantaraṅ)".<sup>1</sup>

In each case the story is narrated in detail and a verse as a whole is devoted entirely to the account. Two facts are made clear from the descriptions. One is Tirumāl's worshipping of Śiva with devotion and love; and the other is Śiva's showering grace on Tirumāl.

The purānic legend of Pārvati performing penance in order to marry Śiva, and Śiva being moved by compassion to marry her, is also referred to in the Tēvāraṃ.

"O Lord of the celestials! Lord with the third eye!! having seen the penance of the lady who has fragrant flowers in her hair and breasts like tender coconuts, and having fully realized her goodness, you approached and married her, bestowing the gifts that she longed for".<sup>2</sup>

All these legends appear in the originals, the Sanskrit purāṇas, and describe the dedicated penance and sincerity of devotion shown by Aruccuṅgaṅ, Upamaṅṅu and Pārvati. Hence, these legends may be quoted to show the unlimited grace showered by Śiva on those who perform penance towards Him in order to

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1. Ibid., 14:10.

2. Cun, Tev, 16:1.

achieve some pursuit in life through perseverance and dedication. The allusions to the legend about Tirumāl depict three significant aspects, one is Tirumāl's dedication of his body in worship in order to achieve his pursuit, another is Śiva's superiority over Tirumāl and the third is the significance of worship with flowers. All these reflect the nature of Śaivism as depicted in the purāṇas of Sanskrit literature, which dominate to a great extent the work of the hymnists.

Let us now examine the allusions which describe the heroic feats of Murugaṅ and Tirumāl. Cuntarar refers to the heroic feats of Murugaṅ conquering Tārakaṅ and killing of Cūraṅ.

"The holy one (Śiva) created Murugaṅ who fought with the mightiest acuraṅ, Tārakaṅ, and destroyed him".<sup>1</sup>

"O Lord! You are the father of Murugaṅ who killed Cūr (when he appeared in the guise of a mango tree) in the sea".<sup>2</sup>

These are passing references made by Cuntarar while describing the glories and greatness of Śiva.

The heroic acts of Tirumāl killing an acuraṅ when he approached him in the guise of a crane, and His conquering of Iraniyaṅ are the two noteworthy legends referred to in the Tēvāraṅ.

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1. Ibid., 16:9.

2. Ibid., 64:6.

"He who split the mouth of the (acuraṅ) and also disgorged from his mouth the world that (he) swallowed".<sup>1</sup>

"...Tirumāl who appeared in a pillar of stone and destroyed Iraṇiyaṅ who could only be killed by a finger nail".<sup>2</sup>

The former is used in describing Tirumāl as the incarnation of Śiva; and the latter is used to describe the purānic story of Piraṅgaṅ and Tirumāl searching for the top and the bottom of the pillar of fire.

All these allusions, though they refer to the respective heroic feats of Murukaṅ and Tirumāl, are used to portray the superiority of Śiva. Murukaṅ is described as the son of Śiva and Tirumāl is portrayed as either the incarnation or subordinate of Śiva. It is therefore apparent that all the allusions to the purānic legends in the Tēvāraṅ are calculated to describe the greatness and superiority of Śiva over all the other Hindu gods and also to impart abstract truth and dogmas to the masses.

The foregoing analysis of the allusions to the purānic stories under different sub-titles, taken together, point to some inescapable conclusions. Firstly, elements of the Sanskrit

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1. Ibid., 40:1.  
2. App. Tev., 297:2.

purāṇas found their way into Tamil poetry. The Śaivism expressed in the Tēvāram is predominantly based on the doctrine given in the purāṇas of Sanskrit literature. Therefore it is not surprising that the two great religions of India, Śaivism and Vaiṣṇavism, claim the eighteen Sanskrit purāṇas as the repositories of their own doctrines. Marr is right in his conclusion that most Tamil literature of the early medieval period is religious and inspired by purāṇic material and based on the Sanskrit originals.<sup>1</sup> Varadarajan claims that the proportion of loanwords from Sanskrit in the works of the hymnists is between 10% and 15%.<sup>2</sup>

Secondly, it has been established that the allusions to various stories are proportionately more in the hymns of Appar than in those of Campantar. This is evidence that he had a greater fondness for purāṇic material and Sanskrit originals. He had no distaste for the Sanskrit language or Aryan culture, as he describes Śiva as "Sanskrit, Tamil and sweet music",<sup>3</sup> and the "Sanskrit language of the North, the Tamil language of the South and the four holy books of the Hindus",<sup>4</sup> and "Aryan and

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1. ETA, p.1.
  2. Varadarajan.M, Molivaralāru, p.109.
  3. App.Tev, 131:3.
  4. Ibid., 300:1.

centamil".<sup>1</sup> He also speaks of Śiva as muttamil or the three-fold classification of Tamil and nāṁmarai, or the four holy books.<sup>2</sup> He says that Śiva watches over both the Aryans and the Tamilians.<sup>3</sup> All these are clear proof of Appar's acceptance of the Aryan language and culture and of its blending with the Tamil language and culture during the Tēvāram period. Kamil Zvelebil states that "it is important, however, to appreciate the fact that Sanskrit literary works are an integral and intrinsic part of the literary heritage of the South and Sanskrit was the language of learning and higher culture throughout South India, though, of course, to a different degree in different parts of the South, and in different periods".<sup>4</sup> Purnalingam Pillai makes the same point, with greater emphasis, when he says:

"Leaf and flower, and water served to worship or do pūjā to the liṅkam or symbol of Śiva; sacrifice was all important to the Aryans who accepted the Śaiva mode of worship and blended it with their own. At such a time the words, vētam and marai came to be promiscuously used, antapan and pirāṁapan became synonymous, and āriyam and centamil came to be regarded as tongues of equal rank or status".<sup>5</sup>

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1. Ibid., 259:10.
  2. Ibid., 236:9.
  3. Ibid., 236:5.
  4. SM, p.8.
  5. FL, p.155.

Therefore, it may be suggested that because of the inclusion of purāṇic elements in the Tēvāram, it appealed more poignantly to the hearts of the people than it would have without them and was regarded as equal to the Vedas.

Another aspect is the inner meaning of the purāṇic legends, the Śaiva Siddhānta concept of the trinity of ultimate principles, pati, pacu and pācam. It has been noted in the foregoing pages that the eight heroic feats interpret Śiva's destructive force as being used for the sake of bestowing illumination and everlasting bliss. For instance the three castles are compared to the three malam and their destruction leads to purification. Thus the purāṇas come to play a significant role in the religious life of the people of the Tamil country during the Tēvāram period, being the instruments through which simple dogmas and abstract truth were taught to the masses. A critical reader will therefore find these purāṇic stories to be exquisite food for thought since they convey a new meaning of the doctrines of Śaiva Siddhānta.

Chapter Six

THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THE COMMON HYMNS

The study of the potuppatikam, 'common hymns' of the three saints is of paramount importance and extremely interesting. These hymns present a complete and unified picture of the divine grace of Śiva, state a number of salient doctrines of Śaivism and give evidence of the genuine spiritual experience of the three saints. In short, Śaivism has its best exposition as a living faith in these hymns. The unique feature of these hymns is that they are not composed in praise of any specific shrine and therefore have come to be regarded as common to all the shrines. They are appropriately called potuppatikaṅkaḷ. In the case of a few of these hymns Cēkkiḷār does not refer to them in PP and hence we are unable even to assign them to any particular period of the saints' lives.

A suggestion may be made at this stage about the naming of these hymns. The name potuppatikam by which these hymns are usually known in modern times is not mentioned by Nampiyāṅṭār Nampi or Cēkkiḷār. Neither does this name appear in the older manuscripts and publications, the hymns being referred to in them either by their subject matter or the refrain or certain words

and phrases taken from the verses.<sup>1</sup> The hymnists probably adopted these devices to refer to some of these hymns and subsequently Cēkḱilār too probably followed that method of referring to them in descriptions of the life history of the saints in PP. There can be, therefore no room for any doubt that the term potuppatikam is not used by the hymnists, but is a creation of the publishers and commentators of a later date.

## I

Seven hymns in the Tēvāram of Campantar, Nos. 116, 175, 221, 280, 298, 307 and 312, have been noted as common hymns in several recent publications.<sup>2</sup> Hymn No. 116 is named after the refrain tirunilakaṇṭam. This hymn, according to PP, was composed by Campantar to eradicate the disease called paṇinōy from which the devotees were suffering at Ceṅkuṇṇūr.<sup>3</sup> Though the hymn is credited with miraculous power, the extant verses contain no evidence of the name of the disease paṇinōy, of the devotees' being

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1. One of the older editions, namely Tēvārappatikāṅkaḷ, a collection of the hymns of the three hymnists, edited in 1917 by Capmukam Pillai, does not mention the name potuppatikam but refers to them either by the subject matter, refrain, or certain words and phrases. All the later editions, however, mention the name potuppatikam with their original names. For example in the Seven Tirumurai published by Tarumaiyāṭiṇam, each Tirumurai separately under the name Tēvārappatikāṅkaḷ contains the term potuppatikam at the top of each hymn and the original names in small script in brackets under it.
  2. For details see the Table No.3(a).
  3. PPTC, 335-36.

healed by the hymn, or even of the name of the place of the incident mentioned in PP. Unfortunately, however, the seventh verse is missing and we are, therefore, unable to decide conclusively whether or not this hymn was sung with the intention of curing the disease paninōy. It can however be observed that the hymn contains an oath sworn by the saint in each verse that 'sin will not be able to come into contact with those who worship the holy feet of Śiva'. The oath is uttered with the word tirunīlakaṅgam, which is one of the names of Śiva, and by which the hymn is also named. This oath in the hymn must have contributed to the growing practice among Śaivites of invoking Śiva as witness to an oath. In addition, two salient themes, namely worshipping with flowers and performing pūjā to the holy feet of Śiva, are described in most of the verses. Again, this may have led to Śaiva Siddhānta followers of a later date expounding and formulating them as doctrines of the Śaiva religion. In the TKK, heavenly enjoyment is promised to those who chant the ten verses of the hymn. All the above mentioned aspects of the hymn may perhaps have prompted Cēkkiḷār to credit it with miraculous power and attribute to it the incident of Campantar healing the disease at Ceṅkūṅgūr even if this was not referred to in the lost verse No.7.

Hymn Nos. 280 and 307 have also been named after their refrains. According to PP, the former was sung with the intention of making

the brahmans at Cīkāḷi realise that the pañcākkaram is the source of all the mantiram;<sup>1</sup> and the latter was composed before the saint merged with the cōti or brilliance of the deity at Tirunallūr with his chosen bride,<sup>2</sup> but it makes no mention of the descriptions in PP in any of the verses. Both hymns exemplify the significant aspect of the sacred five-lettered mantiram, which may perhaps have made Cēkkaḷār associate the hymns with miraculous incidents.

The significant difference between the Pañcākkarap patikam and Namaccivāyap patikam is that the sacred five letters are glorified in the former by each verse ending with añceluttu, 'five letters', and the mantiram, namaccivāya is extolled in the latter by each verse ending with namaccivāya. It can be observed that the refrain in all the verses of the former except the TKK, is añceluttu, but the hymn is, however, named after pañcākṣara, the Sanskrit translation of the Tamil añceluttu. This naming was most probably the work of the later commentators and editors because Cēkkaḷār himself refers to the hymn as añceluttin tiruppatikam,<sup>3</sup> 'the sacred hymn of five letters'. It can, therefore, be suggested that the phrase pañcākkaram must have appealed more to these commentators and editors than the Tamil phrase añceluttu. This is

1. PPTC, 266.

2. Ibid., 1246-48.

3. Ibid., 266.

evidence of the strong traditional belief that existed among some of the Śaiva scholars that Sanskrit was the language of God.

A novel way of presentation of the añceluttu and the namaccivāya can also be observed in the respective hymns. The former is glorified against the background of the descriptions of various benefits of chanting the 'Five Letters'. We may cite some of these:

"The sacred Five Letters kicked the god of death when he came to take the life of Mārkkanṭṭēyar, a devoted bhakta of Śiva" (1). "Whether they are nallavar, (those who do good deeds in life) or tiyavar, (those who commit sins in life), the Five Letters will clean their malam namely ānavam, (egotism), karmā, (the impurity of action), and māyai, (immersion in the material world), and help them attain the final beatitude" (4). "It helps the chanters not only to be released from both birth and death, but also to enjoy the fruits of freedom from distress and misery, and subsequently showers them with abundant wealth" (7). "Irāvāṇa (when crushed by the holy feet of Śiva) chanted the Five Letters and thus was blessed by Him" (8). "It is the deadly arrow for the enemy, vinai, of those who apply the holy ashes" (10).

These citations are sufficient to establish that the saint adopts a poetic pattern to exemplify the divine power of añceluttu, describing it as showering the chanters with various material and celestial benefits.

On the other hand, the mantiram, 'namaccivāya', is described as being itself an invocation, nāmam to Lord Śiva. The saint asserts this fact in the last line of the first seven verses of the hymn demonstrating the mantiram with Śiva's names Nātan, Nampan, Nakkan, Nayanan, Nallan, Nanti and Varatan; and also mentions the mantiram in each of the remaining verses as it has an inherent divine power if chanted repeatedly. Namaccivāya is the famous five-letter incantation which is the foundation of spiritual wisdom and the prescribed means for obtaining liberation from rebirth and union with the Supreme. Therefore, it is not merely a hymn containing spiritual truths taken up to the Śaiva Siddhānta philosophy at a later date as one of the dogmas of the Śaiva religion, but it is composed in such a way, repeating the mantiram in the last line of every verse, that it can be sung by a group of people in prayer or by a company of devotees on a pilgrimage. The hymns about pañcākkaram and namaccivāyam would have helped the authors to expound and formulate the principles of the sacred five letters in their Śaiva Siddhānta philosophical works collectively called Meykaṇṭa cāttiram. Thus the sacred five letters came to stay as divinely powered mantiram of the Śaivites<sup>1</sup> and as one of the incantations of the Śaiva religion.

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1. CVV, I, p.8.

Jesudasan rightly suggests: "Campanantar's poetry is said to have stimulated the currents of Śaiva Siddhānta philosophy in Tamilnad...".<sup>1</sup>

The Kōḷarupatikam No. 221 is an equally well-known hymn and is also an admirable song for a gathering of Śaivite devotees. According to PP, Campanantar composed this hymn when Appar advised him not to visit the Pāṅṅiya country when they were together at Tirumaraikkāṭu, solemnly declaring that even evil planets would never harm the devotees of Śiva.<sup>2</sup> There is, however, no reference in any of the verses to support this description of Cēkkiḷār. As in the other common hymns, this one contains no name, and in addition is not composed in praise of any specific shrine. In the TKK the saint declares that the hymn was composed in order to save the devotees from the harmful evil effects of the planets.

Cēkkiḷār, on the other hand, refers to this hymn by the first line of the first verse,<sup>3</sup> and does not mention the name 'Kōḷarupatikam' by which it is popularly known today, and by which it is also referred to by commentators and editors.<sup>4</sup> It is not clear when and by whom the hymn was named Kōḷarupatikam, 'hymn to eradicate the evil effects of the planets'. This creates a problem for critics and scholars. In this hymn the chorus is in two places. The first two lines with the chorus annuḷamē pukunta

1. HTL, p.81.

2. PPTC, 614-6.

3. Ibid., 616.

4. TTPC, IV, p.760, PTV, p.99.

ataṅāḷ, 'because he remained in my heart', are devoted to describing the image of Śiva and the last two lines with the chorus avainalla nalla aṭiyār avarkku mikavē, 'they are extremely good to the devotees of Śiva', give the names of different planets. Finally, the TKK promises heavenly enjoyment to those who chant. All these features make the hymn a passionate prayer for the conquering of the harmful evil effects of the planets, a prayer to realize the beauty of the image of Śiva and a striking spiritual triumphant note of the Śaivite devotees.

The common hymn, Tiruppācuram No.312, according to PP, was written on a palm leaf and thrown in the river Vaiyai to float against its current in order to testify to the truth of the Śaiva religion. This hymn is referred to in 24 verses in PP by Cēkkiḷār to describe its significance and to illustrate its meaning. The 1st, 3rd and 5th verses are each examined in four verses, the 2nd in three verses, the 4th in two verses and the others in a verse each.<sup>1</sup> Verse No.11 of the hymn bears full evidence of the miraculous incident described in PP, which runs thus:

"If he who established the academy of Tamil at Maturai could see very clearly the grace of the god that made the palm leaf float against the current without sinking in the clear water and reach the bank where stood the people who had no clear notion about him, does it not show that the god with the bull ensign is good indeed."

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1. PPTC, 821-44.

It can be observed in this verse that the saint speaks of the palm leaf running against the current in the past tense and therefore it may be concluded that this hymn was sung after the test and not before it. On the other hand, it may be suggested that either the first verse, which is a kind of benediction, or the first three verses, which are composed in a different metre from the remaining ones, are the ones composed for the test, the remaining verses perhaps having been sung after the incident. Another significant aspect about this hymn is that the celebrated work Civañānapōtam which also consists of 12 cūttiram and which is regarded as divine, without origin, and not to be read, except by a person who has attained a considerable degree of insight into religion, is said to be the elucidation of the 12 verses of this hymn.<sup>1</sup> This proves that its author, Meykaṇṭatōvar, expounded the rules of his work with reference to the Tēvāram hymns. Perhaps the original name of this hymn was pācuram, the term by which the saint himself referred to the verses in the TKK, and the prefix tiru, which denotes sanctity, was perhaps attached to it in later times. Cēkkilār too refers to this hymn by the name pācuram in two places.<sup>2</sup>

The names of Śiva's shrines are strung together in the hymn 'Kṣēttirakkōvai',<sup>3</sup> Kṣēttiram is shrine and kōvai is a set of things threaded or arranged together, and therefore the name Kṣēttirakkōvai

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1. TTPC, V, p.1007.
  2. PPTC, 818, 845.
  3. Cam, Tēv, hymn no.175.

is appropriate. The prefix tiru denotes sanctity. The saint does not, however, refer to this hymn by any particular name but describes each verse in it as a garland in the TKK. On the other hand, Cēkkilār does not mention this hymn in PP. Therefore, it may be suggested that this naming is perhaps the work of commentators of a later date. Another fact is that we cannot assign the hymn to any particular period of the saint's life as it is not mentioned in PP.

The extant hymn is unfortunately fragmentary as of verse No.5, only the first two lines remain, of No.7 the first three lines and of No.8 the last two lines and a portion of the second line only remain, and as a result some of the names of shrines are missing. The general poetic pattern adopted in all the other hymns is however present in this hymn; the incident of Śiva crushing Irāvāṇa in the 8th verse, Piramaṇ and Tirumāl trying to search for the top and bottom of the pillar of light in the 9th, the unrestrained contempt directed against the Jains and the Buddhists in the 10th, and the name of the saint and the benediction in the last. The other striking feature in the hymn is that a request is made in each verse either to chant the names of the shrines, or contemplate ~~en~~ the shrines, or visit the shrines, or praise the shrines in prayer in order to attain bliss. Finally, in the TKK a promise is made to those who chant the ten verses that they will attain the holy feet of Śiva. The religious significance of this hymn will be examined in comparison with those

of Kṣēttirakkōvai and the Aṭaiṅṅut tiruttāṅṅakam of Appar and the hymns Urttokai and Nāṭṭuttokai of Cuntarar.

Lastly, the verses of hymn No.298 are composed in a distich of two metrical lines called kural, and the subject matter is said to be quite similar to that of the Rgveda. This is probably the reason why it is named 'Tanit tiruvirukkukural' - Tani + tiru+irukku + kural. The prefixes tani and tiru perhaps denote the individuality and the sanctity of the hymn respectively; and irukku and kural refer to the Rgveda and to the metre respectively. The saint, however, does not mention the name in any of the verses and it is also not composed in praise of any specific shrine. The poetic metre kural is one of the innovations made in religious poetry by Camantar and it may be suggested that he must have been prompted to introduce this metre because of his familiarity with Tirukkural. Though the verses are composed in two lines, the purānic legends such as that of Śiva kicking the god of death (4) and destroying the sacrifices of Takkaṅ (6) are alluded to in two verses apart from the usual poetic descriptions such as Śiva crushing Irāvaṅṅa (8), Piramaṅ and Tirumāl searching for the top and bottom of the fire-pillar (9) and the unrestrained contempt directed against the Jains and the Buddhists (10). In these verses one finds the complete self-surrender of the saint as the bhakta of Śiva and his complete confidence in the Lord's Grace.

## II

Appar, on the other hand, composed the greatest number of Common hymns, a total of 37 hymns compared to the 7 each of Campantar and Cuntarar.<sup>1</sup> A number of religious themes have been displayed in these hymns with exquisite beauty in elegant language set in various metres. Several new ways of naming the hymns can also be noticed in these common hymns of Appar. Many of his utterances are the outpouring of his heart, and on the whole these hymns, which are unique and elevated spiritual lyrics, deserve special analysis.

The common hymn No.8 is said to have been composed by Appar when he was performing various sacred duties with devotion and love to the Lord at Pūmpukalūr.<sup>2</sup> In proof of this fact the commentators cite references from verse Nos. 414 and 415 in PP. Māṅikkavācaka Mutaliyār cites the reference nēṛpaṭaninru araikūvum tiruppatikan, 'hymns composed in front of the Lord with the earnest desire of longing to be united with him' and points out the word araiya of the first line of the first verse of the hymn in support of his argument.<sup>3</sup> Araikūval generally denotes a challenging or summoning to combat,<sup>4</sup> but in this context it has a religious connotation of the saint singing the glories of the Lord in his presence, with the earnest desire and longing to be

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1. For details see the Table No.3(b).
  2. PPTN, 412-15.
  3. TPT, Tirumurai, IV, p.67, see Patika varalāru.
  4. TED, p.64.

united with him. Cuppiramaṇiya Mutaliyār, on the other hand, brings this hymn under the reference piravum, 'the remaining hymns' of the verse in PP, and cites the reference mentioned by Mānikkavācaka Mutaliyār to Carakkarait tiruppatikam.<sup>1</sup> There is, however, no clue in any of the verses of Appar to his composing this hymn at Pūmpukalūr. The hymn has been named after the first phrase, civanepumōcai, of the first verse of the hymn but Cēkkiḷār does not mention this name in PP. This naming is perhaps done with the motive of emphasising the significance of the phrase civanepumōcai which is described as tiruninra cemmai.<sup>2</sup>

The common hymns No.9 is a unique composition which describes the offering of the principal members of the body in worship to Śiva and it is therefore named aṅkamālai - aṅkam, 'parts of body' and mālai 'garland'. The order of description in this hymn is from the head to the feet. The hymn emphasises the fact that the parts of the body, both inner as well as outer, are created for people by Śiva so that they may use them to worship him for their own salvation. Cēkkiḷār refers to this hymn as celkati kāṭṭiṭap pōṅṅum tiru aṅkamālai,<sup>3</sup> 'the hymn commends itself as pertaining to the salvation of people'. This hymn, according to PP, was sung at Tiruppūnturutti,<sup>4</sup> but there is no clue of this in any of the verses.

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1. TTPC, III, p.699.
  2. TPT, Tirumurai, IV, p.67.
  3. PPTN, 390.
  4. Ibid., 388-90.

In this hymn Appar introduces a new theme in a new metre which makes the hymn stand out as unique in the whole of Tēvāram. The new theme must have suggested to later poets the idea of composing the Pirapantam, Aṅkamālai, one of the ninety-six varieties of poetical forms, and the metre possibly paved the way for the revolutionising of poetic metre in Tamil literature. Though Cēkkiḷār refers to this hymn by the name 'Aṅkamālai'<sup>1</sup> the saint does not mention it in any of the verses.

In connection with the Śaiva Siddhānta doctrine one may bring together for study the three hymns about the sacred five-lettered mantiram. It appears that these hymns come in the best tradition of the Śaivite saints. Campantar composed two hymns, one about namaccivāya and the other about pañcākkara and Appar sang the hymn about namaccivāya (hymn No.11). Cuntarar may have also possibly composed such hymns which would perhaps have been eaten away by white ants as mentioned in TKP. The theme in the hymn of Appar is quite similar to those of the hymns of Campantar, which we have already analysed, but one of the marked differences between the hymns of Campantar and the hymn of Appar is that in the former the pañcākkaram is described as the final mantiram of the brahmins<sup>2</sup> and in the latter the Veda with its six Vedāṅgas is described as the rare jewel of the brahmins, and

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1. Ibid., 390.

2. Cam, Tev., 280-2.

the 'namaccivāya' as the jewel of the others.<sup>1</sup> This is clear evidence of the existence of the class of Śaivites standing side by side with the brahmans. The latter class could not all have been followers of Śaivism; for some were Vaiṣṇavas, some were neutral, having faith only in the Vedas, and some were believers in all the three i.e. the Vedas, Śiva and Viṣṇu.<sup>2</sup> Another feature to note is that Appar stresses the singing of ten verses on namaccivāya in his last stanza of the hymn. In fact Nāvukkaracar categorically mentions "these ten verses" only in two of his 312 hymns, one in the Namaccivāyap patikam and the other in the Irāmēccurap patikam. Therefore this reference tends to suggest that the hymn about namaccivāya should be chanted as a whole and not in isolated verses as it is only then that it will bestow its inherent divine power. This hymn, according to PP, was composed when Appar was tied to a stone and thrown into the sea<sup>3</sup> and this has been alluded to in the first verse. Namaccivāya is the refrain of this hymn repeated at the end of every verse, and the hymn is referred to by the name namaccivāyap pattu in the last verse. Cēkkilār, on the other hand, refers to the hymn a little elaborately as civapañceluttu 'five letters of Śiva'<sup>4</sup> and namaccivāya enra arramun kākkum añceluttu, 'the five letters of namaccivāya which protect from distress'.<sup>5</sup>

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1. App, Tev, 11:5.
  2. OEHS, p.369.
  3. PPTN, 123-5.
  4. Ibid., 125.
  5. Ibid., 126.

The common hymn No.14, according to PP, was composed at Pukalūr<sup>1</sup> but there is no reference in any of the verses to this. The special feature of this hymn is that in each verse a story from the Civapurāṇam is mentioned. Śiva swallowing the poison (1), standing in the form of a pillar of light (2), bestowing grace on Viṣṇu (3), destroying Tārakaṅ (4) destroying the triple castle (5), kicking the god of death (6), destroying the sacrifices of Takkaṅ (7), burning of Kāmaṅ (9), bestowing the discus weapon to Tirumāl (10) and crushing Irāvāṅ with his holy toe are the central themes of the verses. The poet thus delights in describing the purāṇic personality of Śiva, which clearly proves that he has made use of the Sanskrit Purāṇas in providing the theme of this hymn. In short, the poet is speaking the language of mythology in order to express his own message of Śiva's grace in a popular form. The hymn has been named Tacapurāṇam, 'ten purāṇam' as each of the verses describes a purāṇic legend of the Civapurāṇam, but this name is not mentioned in any of the verses. Cākkilār refers to this hymn by the name Tacapurāṇattaiṅ.<sup>2</sup> Historically, these purāṇic allusions may show what mythological stories appealed to that age in general and the poet in particular. The hymn is mainly the lyrical outpourings of the saint and the stories are said to express his subjective experience.

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1. Ibid., 415.

2. Ibid., 415.

From what has been observed so far it may be suggested that some of the names of the common hymns are probably given by commentators and not by the saints. Hymn No.18 bears evidence of this. There is no clue in any of the verses of this hymn of the incident of Appar singing the hymn to remove the poison from the dead son of Appūtiyaṭikaḷ as described in PP.<sup>1</sup> The name Viṭantīrtta tiruppatikam, 'the hymn that got rid of the poison' by which it is popularly known today is not mentioned in any of the verses either. On the other hand, Cēkkiḷār himself does not mention the hymn by this name but refers to it by the first phrase onrukolām of the first line of the first verse.<sup>2</sup> It can therefore be concluded that the name Viṭantīrtta tiruppatikam was probably the creation of some commentator at a later date. The hymn itself is a curiously wrought one as the saint adopts a new method of poetic presentation, by employing the numbers one to ten consecutively in the verses No. 1-10 to describe the image of Śiva, his adornments and his nature. In this context the saint speaks of the serpent worn by Śiva in two of the verses, No.5 and No.10. It was probably this reference that made Cēkkiḷār credit the hymn with the so-called miraculous power of getting rid of the poison from the dead son of Appūtiyaṭikaḷ.<sup>3</sup> It can therefore be

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1. Ibid., 201-3.

2. Ibid., 208.

3. TPT, Tirumurai, IV, see the commentary for the verse No.10, pp.164-5.

suggested that the commentators would subsequently have named the hymn 'Viṭamtīrtta tiruppatikam'.

One of the strong traditional beliefs of the Śaivites is that even the mere act of thinking of the shrines of Śiva or chanting their names will yield spiritual benefits. The common hymn No.15, in which the poet uses a novel way of describing the Lord in relation to the holy places, and concludes with the promise pāvanācam, 'destruction of the accumulated sin', clarifies this fact. The other hymn Kṣēttirakkōvai,<sup>1</sup> in which the shrines of Śiva are strung together, was perhaps composed in order to instil this idea. Alternatively, the traditional belief may have been a consequence of this hymn. In fact, it was not possible for people in those days to visit all the shrines of Śiva within their lifetime because the shrines were located far and wide all over the Tamil country and some were even outside it. Apart from this, transport facilities were very inadequate, people probably having to walk for days from one place to another to visit one or two shrines of Śiva. It is perhaps for this reason that all three saints strung together the names of all the shrines of Śiva in certain hymns in order at least to enable those who could not visit them to chant their names instead.

It is also interesting to examine the names of the above mentioned two hymns in the light of the reference in PP. Hymn

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1. App, Tev, hymn No.283.

No.15 is named after the refrain pāvanācam of the last verse and is also referred to by this name in PP. The importance of this hymn is also highlighted by the words pārparavum pāvanācap patikam, 'the world extols the pāvanācap patikam'.<sup>1</sup> On the other hand, hymn No.283 is not referred to by the name Kṣēttirakkōvai in PP but is described as the hymn composed in the poetic metre tāṇṭakam in praise of the abodes of the Lord of dancing.<sup>2</sup> Therefore, it is clear that the name of the former was in existence even during the time of Cēkkiḷār and that perhaps he himself named the hymn after the refrain pāvanācam of the last verse. The name of the latter, Kṣēttirakkōvai was not in currency during the time of Cēkkiḷār and is perhaps a subsequent creation of the commentators. On the other hand, both these hymns are said by Cēkkiḷār to have been sung at Pūmpukalūr,<sup>3</sup> though none of the verses allude to this. He is perhaps guided in this claim by the traditional story of the life of Appar.

Along with these two hymns, the Aṭaiyut tiruttāṇṭakam<sup>4</sup> in which 142 shrines are referred to, can be mentioned. The names of 11 of these shrines are said to end in paḷḷi, 8 in vīraṭṭam, 19 in ūr, 8 in kōyil, 8 in kāṭu, 9 in vāyil, 15 in iccaram, 17 in malai, 6 in āṟu, 3 in kuḷam, 3 in kaḷam, 4 in kā, 19 in kuṭi

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1. PPTN, 415.
  2. Ibid., 414.
  3. Ibid., 414-15.
  4. App, Tev., hymn No.284.

and 12 in turai. These groups of shrines are beautifully strung together, each in a verse, except the shrines ending in kalam, āru, kā and kuḷam, which are referred to together in the tenth verse. The striking feature in the hymn is that the benefits of worshipping each group of shrines are mentioned at the end of each verse. The poet promises freedom from distress (3, 4 & 9), release from accumulated demerit (5, 6 & 7) and heavenly enjoyment (1 & 2) to those who worship the particular groups of shrines. It can be observed that the saint requests others either to worship some of these shrines,<sup>1</sup> or to go to certain shrines to obtain the benefits,<sup>2</sup> or some times asks others to sing in praise of some shrines, or chant their names<sup>3</sup> without visiting them.

This grouping of shrines perhaps helped people in those days to remember the various shrines of Śiva and also certainly enabled them to contemplate them in worship without visiting them. The strong traditional belief among the Śaivites that worshipping either the kōpuram or the shrine itself from a distant place is punpiyam, 'virtue or religious merit' is perhaps inspired<sup>3</sup> by this hymn. It can be observed that there exists a habit among the Śaivites of worshipping the kōpuram of temples unconsciously

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1. Ibid., 284:4 & 11.
  2. Ibid., 284:2, 5, 6 & 7.
  3. Ibid., 284:1, 3, 9 & 10.

wherever they come across them in their normal life. On the other hand, the kōpuram themselves are normally built to a considerable height in order to make them visible to people even from distant places.

There are a number of common hymns which are named after the names of the verse-forms in which they are composed to which certain prefixes have been used to denote their respective theme or special quality. These hymns deserve special analysis as they reveal the saint's attempt to use a number of metres, to use various significant themes, and to employ different prefixes in order to distinguish one from another.

Firstly, we may examine the six hymns, Nos.74-79, which are named after nēricai. Hymn No.74 uses this with the prefix ninainta, Nos. 75-77 with taṇi and Nos.78-79 with kurainta. The refrain in each verse of hymn No.74 is ninaintavārē, and it is this which has perhaps been used as prefix to nēricai. Cēkḷiār does not, however, refer to this hymn directly by the name Ninainta tirunēricai, but it can be brought under the group of hymns which are referred to as nērpaṭaniru araikūvum tiruppatikam<sup>1</sup> because a similar phrase nērpaṭa ninainta vāru appears in the last line of the three verses, No.4-6, and the themes are also quite similar to those of the other hymns referred to by

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1. PPTN, 415.

this phrase. Cuppiramaṇiya Mutaliyār is of the opinion that Cēkkiḷār refers to this hymn in the categories mentioned as piravum.<sup>1</sup>

The other set of hymns which have been distinguished by the prefix taṇi describe the saint's personal experience of the Lord. The saint gives expression to the same spiritual experiences in the groups of hymns named Taṇit tirukkuṅuntokai, Taṇit tiruviruttam and Taṇit tiruttāṇṭakam. Therefore, the prefix taṇi denotes the individuality of those hymns, while nēricai, kuṅuntokai, viruttam and tāṇṭakam refer to the respective verse-forms. Two hymns which have been distinguished by the prefix kuṛainta express the saint's solicitation. This is made explicit in the chorus of the two hymns, eṇceyvān tōṅṛinēṇē, 'I have been born in this world and know not what to do' and therefore the hymns are named Kuṛainta tirunēricai where kuṛainta denotes the theme and nēricai refers to the poetry.

Among the three names which have been examined above, Niṇainta tirunēricai does not appear in PP, but the other two Taṇit tirunēricai and Kuṛainta tirunēricai are mentioned.<sup>2</sup> This suggests that the name Niṇainta tirunēricai may be the creation of the commentators of later times while the other two may be the original names or perhaps names coined by the author of PP.

1. TTPC, III, p.699.

2. PPTN, 414.

We have another five common hymns, Nos. 84, and 110-113, which are named after the verse-form viruttam. The prefix Aruyir is used in hymn No.84, pacupati in No.110, carakkarai in No.111 and tani in Nos. 112 and 113. Aruyir and pacupati are the refrains of the verses of hymns No.84 and 110 respectively, and carakkarai is a recurring phrase in the last lines of the verses of hymn No.111. All these titles are placed before the name of the verse-form viruttam and are therefore employed merely to differentiate the hymns from one another and not to denote any significant religious aspect, except in the case of the prefix tani which we have already analysed.<sup>1</sup> The name Aruyirt tiruviruttam is mentioned in PP but not the other names, Pacupatit tiruviruttam, Carakkarait tiruviruttam and Tanit tiruviruttam. Among the names not mentioned in PP, the first two may be brought under the group of hymns referred to as nēraṭṭaniṅṅu araikūvum tiruppatikam, 'hymns composed in front of the Lord with the earnest desire of longing to be united with him'.<sup>2</sup> The saint gives expression to such a theme in these hymns. The hymn Tanit tiruviruttam can be assigned to the group referred to as piravum.<sup>3</sup> In the light of the foregoing analysis it is clear that the name Aruyirt tiruviruttam was in existence during the time of Cēkkilār, but not perhaps the others, from which it can therefore be concluded

1. Supra, p.331.

2. PPTN, 415.

3. TTPC, III, p.699.

that these were the works of commentators of a later date.

Another twelve common hymns Nos. 202-13 are composed in the verse-form kuruntokai but these hymns are also differentiated from one another by the use of different titles attached to the name of the verse-form. Three hymns, Nos. 206, 207 and 211, have been differentiated by the use of the phrases marakkirpanē, tolarpālatē and uḷḷam, which are the refrains of those respective hymns. On the other hand, hymn No.210. begins with the line cintippār manattān, 'he is in the mind of those who contemplate' and the verses also give expression to the state of mind of the saint who contemplates the Lord. Therefore, the hymn is distinguished from the other hymns composed in the same verse-form by the use of the phrase cittattokai which refers to the theme and contents; it has also a similar meaning to that of the first line of the first verse. This is an exceptional hymn in the whole of Tēvāram as it consists of 30 verses.

Hymn Nos. 205 and 209 have been named after their subject-matter. In each verse, <sup>the</sup> former warns the messengers of the god of death not to approach the devotees of Śiva and it is this subject-matter that is summarised in the name kālapācam. The latter gives expression to the thoughts of the saint about the Lord, and is hence termed manattokai. Both these terms, kālapācam and manattokai are attached to the name Kuruntokai to differentiate them from the other

hymns. Another two hymns, Nos. 208 and 213 are distinguished by the use of the terms ilīṅkapurāṇam and ātipurāṇam respectively. The former depicts the indispensability of the mārkkam of cariyai, while its last verse narrates the purāṇic legend of Śiva appearing in the līṅkam. This is perhaps why the title ilīṅkapurāṇam is prefixed to the name Kuruntokai. The latter describes the superiority of Śiva by means of different purāṇic legends, and hence its name consists of ātipurāṇam prefixed to kuruntokai. The first verse of hymn No.212 tells of pāvanācam 'the destruction of the accumulated demerits of sin attached to the soul', and therefore the hymn is distinguished by the use of the term pāvanācam. The remaining three hymns, Nos. 202-204, are differentiated by the prefix taṇi attached to kuruntokai. From what has been cited so far it is clear that the different titles prefixed to kuruntokai are used in order to distinguish the hymns from one another. The terms have, however, been generally coined or chosen with respect to the subject-matter of the respective hymn.

None of these 12 hymns are referred to by their names in PP, but except for hymn No.203, are collectively mentioned as paṇmaittokai.<sup>1</sup> This suggests two possible alternatives; on the one hand it is possible that these hymns were named paṇmaittokai

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1. PPTN, 390.

during the time of Cēkkiḷār, their present names having been given at a later date; on the other hand, it is possible that Cēkkiḷār classified all these hymns in one group referring to them as paṇmaittokai, although they already had their own individual names. However, according to PP, except hymn No.203 which is credited with the miraculous power of protecting Appar in the lime-kiln,<sup>1</sup> all these hymns were sung by him when he was staying in the mutt built by him at Tiruppūnturutti.<sup>2</sup>

Lastly, there are 8 common hymns<sup>3</sup> on various religious aspects, in which each verse is composed in the verse-form called tāṇṭakam, with the extended line of eight feet. These common hymns are also distinguished by the fact that their names consist of various appropriate prefixes adjoined to the name of the verse-form, tāṇṭakam. They are entirely different from a number of other hymns composed in the same verse-form, as they are not in praise of any specific shrine.

It has already been mentioned that a strong belief existed among the Śaivites that the mere act of chanting the names of the abodes of Śiva yielded spiritual benefits. The hymn palavakait tirutāṇṭakam<sup>4</sup> may have contributed greatly to such a view. Each verse in it, except the 10th verse which extols

- 
1. Ibid, 98.
  2. Ibid., 388-90.
  3. Hymn Nos. 283, 284, 306-11.
  4. App, Tev, 306.

namaccivāya as the sacred nāman of Śiva is composed in praise of Śiva in relation to a specific abode, and promises various benefits to those who chant it. Those who chant the names of the abodes Pūnturutti and Neyttānam are promised release from rebirth in verses one and two respectively. Two verses, Nos. 7 and 9, speak of freedom from valvinai, 'accumulation of moral actions' for those who chant the names of the abodes - Kaṭṭiyūr and Venkāṭu. Freedom from palavinai, 'accumulated deeds of the former births' is mentioned in verse No. 4 for those who chant the name of Paḷaṅgam. Verse No. 6 promises release from accumulated moral actions and heavenly enjoyment to the chanters of the name Valamcuḷi and verse No. 8 release from accumulated deeds of the former birth and the ability to reach the Lord to those who chant the name Kuṭamūkku. Chanters of Aiyāru and Cōṅṅuttuṅai are promised freedom from distress and the obtaining of celestial benefits.<sup>1</sup> Finally, the last verse states that those who chant Śiva's nāman, Namaccivāya, will attain the final beatitude.

All these descriptions in the hymn have conclusively established two significant facts; the Saivites practice of chanting the names of the abodes of Śiva, and the chanting of the nāman of Śiva i.e., namaccivāya, for the purpose of obtaining various divine benefits. Besides this, it can also be suggested

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1. Ibid., 306:3 & 5 respectively.

that this hymn in particular perhaps contributed to the general practice among the Śaivites of chanting either a favourite name of the abode of Śiva or chanting the mantiram, namaccivāya immediately before going to bed and also immediately on awakening, while some ardent Śaivites frequently chant them even at odd times during the day.

Since each of its verses describes Śiva in relation to a specific shrine, this hymn has been named appropriately Palavakait tiruttāṅṭakam, 'various tāṅṭakam'. It is also referred to by a name very slightly different in PP, Palvakait tāṅṭakam.<sup>1</sup> The poetic presentation of this hymn is to a certain extent similar to that of hymn No.15, Pāvanācat tiruppatikam, but the marked differences between the two are that the former speaks of chanting the names of the abodes of Śiva and also mentions in each verse the benefits for such chanting while the latter in most verses requests devotees to contemplate the Lord in general in relation to his abodes and mentions the benefits of these deeds only in the last verse. This is of course in addition to the different poetic metres used in each hymn.

The hymn Aṭaivut tiruttāṅṭakam (284) the significant aspects of which we have already analysed, is referred to by the same name in PP.<sup>2</sup> The prefix aṭaivu in this context has a religious

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1. PPTN, 390.

2. Ibid.

connotation as it means 'the places of surrendering', and it is this prefix that has been attached to the name of the verse-form tāṇṭakam. In all its verses the saint requests devotees to worship those shrines in order to obtain salvation, especially in verse No.6 in which the word aṭaiya may have prompted the selection of the prefix aṭaiyu. The hymn Kṣēttirakkōvai (283) is already examined.<sup>1</sup>

The Śaiva Siddhānta philosophical interpretation of the existence of Śiva and the nature of his basic reality are primarily formulated from Tēvāram. The common hymn Ninra tiruttāṇṭakam<sup>2</sup> is clear evidence of the fact that Śiva is inseparably united with all beings, and especially with souls; that he is absolute and Supreme, and that there is none superior to him; that he is incomparable because he transcends every human thought; and that in his all-penetrating and all-pervasive subtle nature, he is beyond comparison and is represented both as possessing form and being devoid of forms. These are the philosophical themes displayed in the Meykaṇṭa Cāttiram of the Cantāṇakuravar. The verses speak of Śiva as immanent in all beings, animate and inanimate, and they conclude with the words ninravārē. Perhaps for these two reasons this hymn is distinguished from the other hymns by the prefix ninra which is attached to the name of the verse-form tāṇṭakam. Periyapurāṇam speaks of this hymn having

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1. Supra, p.327.

2. App.Tev, hymn No.307.

been sung at Pūmpukalūr where Appar was performing sacred duties for the Lord and also refers to it by the name Ninra tiruttāṅṅakam.<sup>1</sup>

We have another two common hymns, Viṅāviṅait tiruttāṅṅakam,<sup>2</sup> which is unique in its poetic presentation and Maṅumārrat tiruttāṅṅakam,<sup>3</sup> which is one of the popular and admirable songs of the Śaivites. The former consists of 11 verses of which the first five are composed in the form of questions regarding the symbols or emblems of Śiva, the last six being sung in the form of replies to those questions. The questions and answers portray the beautiful image of Śiva, which inspires devotees with reverential love and devotion for him. The hymn is, therefore, appropriately named viṅāviṅait tiruttāṅṅakam, 'the tāṅṅakam that is composed in the form of questions and answers'. Cēkkiḷār does not refer to this hymn but the commentators assign it to the group of hymns referred to as piṅavum in PP.<sup>4</sup> The latter, according to PP, was sung by the saint when the ministers and the army of the Pallava king Mahendravarman approached to arrest him.<sup>5</sup> 'We have surrendered to Lord Śiva and hence no man holds sway over us' - is the central theme of the verses of this hymn. This hymn is also appropriately named 'Maṅumārrat tāṅṅakam', 'the tāṅṅakam that is composed as replies in the form of refusal'. Cēkkiḷār does not, however, mention this name in PP but refers to

1. PPTN, 413-14.

2. App. Tev, hymn No.310.

3. Ibid., hymn No.311.

4. TTPC, III, p.699.

5. PPTN, 91-93.

it by its first line nāmārkkuṁ kuṭṭiyallōm.<sup>1</sup> In the light of the references in PP it is clear that these hymns were not called by their present names during the time of Cēkkilār and this tends to suggest that the commentators have probably named these with respect to their predominant themes, using the relevant phrases viṇāviṭai and marumārram, and attaching them to the name of the verse-form tāṇṭakam.

The names of the common hymns Nos. 308 and 309 are composed of the prefix taṇi attached to the name of the verse-form tāṇṭakam. Thus these hymns are distinguished by their individuality which we have already examined.<sup>2</sup> Periyapurāṇam mentions the Taṇit tiruttāṇṭakam in two places, in one it is mentioned as sung at Pūnturutti, and in the other, as sung at Pūmpukalūr. However, in the former case it is referred to as paravum taṇit tāṇṭakam,<sup>3</sup> and in the latter as nīṭu taṇit tāṇṭakam.<sup>4</sup> The prefixes paravum and nīṭu mean 'extolling' and 'long' respectively, which are the clues suggesting that one was sung at Pūnturutti and the other at Pūmpukalūr. The prefix paravum helps us to conclude that hymn No.308, which is exclusively in praise of Śiva, was probably the one composed at Pūnturutti, while the prefix nīṭu suggests that hymn No.309, which is a longer hymn,

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1. Ibid., 93.

2. Supra., p. 331.

3. PPTN, 390.

4. Ibid., 414.

consisting of 11 verses, was perhaps the one sung at Pūmpukalūr.

From the foregoing analysis of the common hymns composed in the verse-form tāṇṭakam we observe three significant facts.

(1) All the eight hymns were named after their subject-matter by the use of appropriate prefixes or phrases attached to the name tāṇṭakam in order to differentiate them one from another.

Six such prefixes or phrases, namely, aṭaivu, palavakai, ninra, tani, vināvitai and marumārram, have been noted and explained.<sup>1</sup>

(2) These hymns are generally the outpourings of the saint's heart reflecting his divine experience, describing the purāṇic personality of the Lord, and depicting his glorious superiority over the other Hindu gods which hymns are said to have helped to formulate some of the doctrines of the Śaiva Siddhānta philosophy. All these facts in combination with the melody, simple feeling, and genuine literary flavour of the lyrics, make these hymns a passionate prayer for the conquering of the senses, a prayer to realise the beauty of the deity. (3) Lastly it can be observed that three hymns, Nos. 284, 306 and 308, are said to have been sung in the mutt at Pūnturutti, another three, Nos. 307, 309 and 310 at Pūmpukalūr, and No.311 as a reply in the form of refusals to those who came to arrest the saint.

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1. Hymn Nos. 308 and 309 are named with the prefix tani and hymn No. 283 is Kṣēttirakkōvai.

## III

There are only seven common hymns extant in the works of Cuntarar, Nos. 12, 31, 33, 39, 44, 47 and 63, which are relatively less in number than those of Appar.<sup>1</sup> Some scholars, however, cite even a smaller number,<sup>2</sup> and exclude certain hymns which will be examined in our study, as being each composed in praise of a particular Lord. An analysis of these seven hymns clearly proves that Cuntarar repeats only the ideas of his predecessors, Campantar and Appar, with the result that the philosophical significance and the religious worth of these hymns are no more than that of the hymns of the other two saints.

In connection with the temple cult it is appropriate to group together for analysis the three hymns, Nos. 12, 31 and 47, which enumerate the names of the holy places of Śiva. Hymn No.12 gives the nāṭu in which the respective holy places are located; hymn No.31 also gives the names of the holy places but every verse ends stating 'Iṭaiyāṅu Iṭaimarutu' as the city of the Lord while hymn No.47 names the ūr of the holy places of Śiva. In other words, in hymn No.12 the saint describes the nāṭu as the places where the Lord resides; in hymn No.31 the emphasis is laid on 'Iṭaiyāṅu Iṭaimarutu' as the city of the Lord, although

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1. For details see the Table No.3(c).

2. PTV, p.737, TPT, Tirumurai, VII, see Talappatika attavanai, p.179.

the other holy places of the Lord are enumerated; and in hymn No.47, the poet describes the Lord in relation to the holy places in a novel way. The descriptions and enumerations of the holy places in these hymns are, to a great extent, similar to those of the hymn Kṣēttirakkōvai (No.175) of Campantar and those of the hymns, Kṣēttirakkōvait tiruppatikam (No.283), Aṭaiyut tiruttāṇṭakam (No.284) and Pāvanācat tiruppatikam (No.15) of Appar.

In hymn No.31 the last line ends with the words ūr eytamān iṭaiyāru iṭaimarutu, which can be interpreted in two ways. According to one interpretation, the holy place Iṭaimarutu is located at Iṭaiyāru, while according to the other, the holy places are Iṭaiyāru and Iṭaimarutu. The former interpretation appears more appropriate and acceptable. Dorai Rangaswamy states that Iṭaiyāru is the doab, or the area between two rivers, and also identifies the river with the Iṭaiyāru described in one of 'Caṅkam works', Akanānūru.<sup>1</sup>

The significant aspect of these hymns is that Cēkkiḷār does not refer to them in PP and therefore we cannot in his scheme assign them to any particular period of the saint's life. Dorai Rangaswamy, however, assigns them roughly as follows:

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1. RPT, II, p.796.

"As hymn No.31 mentions 'Iṭaiyāru', it must have been composed and sung when the poet visited the places north of Kāviri. Hymn Nos. 12 and 47 mention Ciṅkaṭi and Vaṅappakai respectively, as the daughters of the poet, and therefore, must have been composed in the period succeeding his marriage".<sup>1</sup>

The former interpretation is, however, open to comment because in the last lines of each verse, as well as in the TKK, the emphasis is on Iṭaiyāru Iṭaimarutu as the city of the Lord, and therefore it is more appropriate to suggest that this hymn had probably been sung when the saint visited the holy place Iṭaimarutu at Iṭaiyāru. On the other hand, the suggestion about the latter two hymns is not acceptable if the benedictory stanzas of these hymns, which mention Ciṅkaṭi and Vaṅappakai, are suspected of being interpolations and are treated as such.

The present names of these three hymns also deserve attention. Hymn No.12 has been named 'Nāṭṭuttokai' for it enumerates the 64 nāṭu in which the respective shrines are situated. It can, however, be observed that the saint does not refer to the hymn by this name in the TKK. Hymn No.47 gives the names of the ūr of the holy places, so it is appropriately named 'ūrttokai'. In the TKK of this hymn, the verses are described as a 'garland of verses about palavūr, 'many cities',

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1. Ibid.

but the hymn is not referred to exactly by the name. Hymn No.31 has been named after Iṭaiyāru which is, of course, a recurring name in the last line of each verse as well as in the TKK. It has already, however, been pointed out that this name is mentioned as Iṭaiyāriṭaimarutu, Iṭaimarutu at Iṭaiyāru'. The hymn therefore should be named after Iṭaimarutu and not after Iṭaiyāru. It may also be suggested that the present name has been the work of commentators of a later date, who possibly misunderstood the reference Iṭaiyāru iṭaimarutu. Some scholars have split this reference into two and interpreted it as referring to two holy places.<sup>1</sup> In this case the hymn must be named after the two holy places Iṭaiyāru and Iṭaimarutu. The description in the TKK is, however, clear evidence of the fact that this hymn was sung at Iṭaiyāru Iṭaimarutu. It also tends to suggest that this hymn was probably composed in praise of the Lord of Iṭaimarutu describing him as residing in those holy places which are enumerated in each verse. This is perhaps the reason why this hymn is not considered as a common hymn by some modern scholars.<sup>2</sup> Cēkkiḷār, however, neither mentions the names of these hymns nor refers to them in PP.

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1. TPT, Tirumurai, VII, see the commentary for the TKK of hymn No.31, p.242.
  2. PTV, p.737.

Two other common hymns, No.33 and 63, can be brought together for study for three reasons; (1) they do not belong to any specific shrine though they are stated to have been sung at Tiruvārūr and Tirumutukunram respectively, (2) they have been named after the refrains of the verses of their respective hymns and (3) they are referred to by Cēkkiḷār in PP. Hymn No.33, though it is said in the PP to have been sung at Tiruvārūr when the saint returned to that place after his pilgrimage,<sup>1</sup> does not bear any evidence verifying such a conclusion. The verses, which are composed by piling up descriptions of the Lord in the form of interrogations, display two facts. One is that most of the descriptions belong to purānic lore, and show that the mind of the poet was captivated in this period of his life by these stories.<sup>2</sup> The other is that these descriptions are quite similar to the first five verses of the Viṅāviṭait tiruttāṅṭakam<sup>3</sup> of Appar, proving that the saint gave expression to the same thoughts as his predecessor as well as composing similar verses, although in a different verse-form. Hymn No.63, according to PP, was sung at Tirumutukunram with the intention of receiving 12,000 pieces of gold at the hands of the Lord.<sup>4</sup> Dorai Rangaswamy

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1. PPEKN, 140-1.
  2. RPT, II, p.721.
  3. App.Tev, hymn No.310.
  4. PPEKN, 106-7.

concluded:

"In this hymn, though it is stated to have been sung at Tirumutukunram, there is no reference to any place except Tiruveḷḷai in the 4th verse. But, unfortunately, the last or the 10th verse has not reached us except for its first line and a portion of the second line. We are, therefore, unable to decide conclusively about the tradition that this hymn was sung with the intention of receiving 12,000 pieces of gold at the hands of the Lord".<sup>1</sup>

Hymn No.33 is named after the refrain namkkaṭikalākiya aṭikal, 'the Lord is our master'. The refrain of the verses of hymn No.63 is ennai aluṭaiya nampi elu pirappum eṅkaḷ nampi kaṭṭāyē, 'he is my Saviour Prince; he is our Prince in all our seven fold births'; the word nampi is also employed several extra times in each verse. Therefore the hymn is named nampi enra tiruppatikam. These two hymns are not referred to by these names in PP, the former being referred to by the first line pārutānki<sup>2</sup> and the latter by meyyil venpoṭi,<sup>3</sup> an abbreviation of the first line meyyai murrappoṭi. In the light of the reference in PP it is clear that the present names of these hymns were not in existence during the time of Cēkkiḷār, and that they were made up in a later period.

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1. RPT, II, p.685.

2. PPEKN, 141.

3. Ibid., 106.

Among the common hymns, the Tiruttoṭṭattokai (No.39) is a hymn of vital significance in the Seventh Tirumurai, because it gives the names of the saints of Śaivism. The hymn is named 'Tiruttoṭṭattokai', 'a series of devotees' because it contains the names, and sometimes the places of birth, of the saints of Śaivism. This is the main source of information on which Nampiyāṅṭār Nampi and Cēkkiḷār based their compositions Tiruttoṭṭar Tiruvantāti and Periyapurāṇam respectively. Dorai Rangaswamy comments on the hymn:

"This Tiruttoṭṭattokai hymn is important for giving us a clear idea of the religious and philosophical views dear to the heart of Nampiyārūrar. It must be regarded that he has given the names of those saints of Śaivism, who, he thought had a message to give to the world through their life."<sup>1</sup>

It is true that, in this selection of names, he must have been guided by their popularity in his own age. It may also be mentioned that the life of the saints described in this hymn gives a concrete representation of the abstract principles of his religion and philosophy which considerably helped the philosophers of a later date in formulating and expanding the works collectively called Meykaṇṭa cāttiram. This hymn, according to PP, was sung by Cuntarar on the request of Lord Śiva whilst living with Paravaiyār at

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1. RPT, II, p.936.

Tiruvārūr. The present name 'Tiruttonṭattokai' is, however, mentioned neither in the hymn itself nor in PP. In the latter it is referred to by the first line tilaivāl antaṇartam atiyārkkum atiyēn which was said to be suggested to Cuntarar by Lord Śiva himself.<sup>1</sup>

Lastly, hymn No.44 is a controversial one for commentators, some of whom, on the basis of the description in PP, consider it as composed specially in praise of the shrine at Tiruvañcaikkalam,<sup>2</sup> and others of whom regard it as a common hymn since it does not praise any specific shrine or place but only extols Lord Śiva in general.<sup>3</sup> Dorai Rangaswamy considers this as one with the same feeling of the Bhikṣāṭana hymns or a hymn by the poet with the same feeling of love, reverence, fear and humour of those damsels who had the vision of the Bhikṣāṭana.<sup>4</sup> On the other hand, the structure of the hymn itself argues that it is a common hymn because it does not mention any specific place, though Cēkkilār states that it was sung of the shrine Tiruvañcaikkalam. Moreover, the present name Muṭippatu kaṅkai which is the first line of the first verse, is the one by which Cēkkilār himself refers to it in PP.<sup>5</sup>

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1. PPTK, 199.

2. TPT, Tirumurai, VII, Patikavaralāru, p.346 and Talappatika attavanai of the same work, p.171.

3. PTV, p.737.

4. RPT, II, p.914.

5. PPCPN, 146.

All the common hymns of the three saints, which have been enumerated and discussed in this chapter, point to the following conclusions:

1. The singing of common hymns is a common and noteworthy feature of the three saints. We have examined the themes and the significance of 7 hymns of Campantar, 37 of Appar and 7 of Cuntarar, and established them as the unique and most elevated spiritual lyrics of all the hymns of the three saints reflecting their genuine spiritual experience of bhakti. Another fact is that Appar's common hymns are greater in number than those of Campantar and Cuntarar. It may, therefore, be suggested that he had greater literary and mystic preferences for singing hymns on general aspects of the Śaiva religion than the other two. The names of hymns which have been distinguished by the prefix tani can be cited as proof of his poetic aspirations to describe his divine experience, strong spiritual ardours, and communion with God. The hymns, Maṅattokai, Uḷḷattokai and Cittattokai, are the outpourings of his heart, and give us a true picture of his spiritual ardour.

2. Four categories of these hymns with respect to their naming have been noted. Two hymns, No.312 of Campantar and No.11 of Appar, bear evidence of belonging to the first category. Campantar's hymn is titled with respect to the reference pācuram

in the TKK by which the saint himself refers to the hymn.

Appar's hymn is named Namaccivāyap patikam the term by which the saint himself refers to the verses of the hymn in the last stanza. A total of 16 common hymns, 2 by Campantar and 14 by Appar, are referred to by their individual names in PP,<sup>1</sup> and these can be cited as belonging to the second category. In the third category there are 7 hymns, 1 by Campantar, 2 by Appar and 4 by Cuntarar, which have been referred to by their first lines, not by their present names, in PP.<sup>2</sup> The names 'Kōlarupatikam' of hymn No.221 by Campantar and 'Viṭamtirttapatikam' of hymn No.18 by Appar belong to the fourth category. These names do not appear in PP, or in the old editions, or in the old manuscripts. Neither do they contain any clear evidence of being composed by the saints as described in PP. It therefore appears that these names were probably the creation of commentators of a later date.

3. A number of hymns have been noted as having been named either by their refrains or by a suitable phrase chosen from one of their verses. Some poems in the early Tamil anthologies have also

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1. Cam, Tev, hymn Nos. 280, 307. see PPTC, 266 and 1248 respectively.  
App, Tev, hymn Nos. 306, 308, 284, 9. see PPTN, 390 and hymn Nos. 307, 309, 78, 79, 75-77, 84, 14 & 15. see PPTN 414-15.
  2. Cam, Tev, hymn Nos. 221. See PPTC, 616.  
App, Tev, hymn Nos. 18 and 203. See PPTN, 218 and 93 respectively.  
Cun, Tev, hymn Nos. 33, 63, 39 & 44. See PPEKN, 141, 106.  
PPTKP, 199 and PPCPN, 146 respectively.

been named thus due to their unknown authorship. This method of naming the early poems probably prompted a commentator to name some of the common hymns by their refrains, or a phrase of their verses, as those hymns do not specify any particular Lord or shrine. The creator of these names must have had a good knowledge of the early Tamil anthologies.

4. Another noteworthy aspect is that all the three saints in their benedictory stanzas promise either heavenly enjoyments or a highest state of bliss to the chanters of the common hymns. In three out of seven hymns, Campantar promises either the bliss of joining the Lord of the Vāṅavar (116), or that of governing the kingdom of Vāṅam (221) or becoming the King of the world of the Vāṅavar (312). The benefit of attaining the holy feet of Śiva and obtaining the status of tēvar are assured to the chanters of hymn No.175 and 280 respectively. Release from earthly attachments is mentioned in hymn No.298. Cuntarar, on the other hand, promises procuring the highest state of bliss or paralōkam, reaching the world of Śiva, and being released from vinai, in hymn Nos. 12, 47 and 31 respectively. In his other hymns either the benefit of chanting is not mentioned or the TKK has been lost. Lastly, as we have already stated, Appar mentions the benefit of chanting in only two hymns of his whole work. Both these are common hymns. The chanters are promised freedom from distress in

hymn No.11, and the destruction of the accumulated demerit of sin attached to the soul in hymn No.15. Apart from these, in four other hymns, Nos. 209, 283, 306 and 309, the saint states heavenly enjoyment as the benefit of worship.

In the light of the benefits of chanting enumerated above, it is indubitably proved that the elevated spiritual lyrics of these common hymns are embodied with a special divine power exhibiting the true picture of the divine grace of Śiva as well as the genuine spiritual experience of bhakti.

5. Most of the common hymns have been examined chronologically with respect to the various pilgrimages of the saints, with the help of Cēkkiḷār's scheme of arrangement of the hymns in PP. It has already been seen that among the seven common hymns of Campantar, two hymns, Nos. 175 and 298, are not referred to in PP; three hymns, No.221, 280 and 307, are, in the arrangement of Cēkkiḷār, presented chronologically; the two remaining hymns, No.116 and 312, are also presented chronologically and are each credited with some miraculous power. Two hymns, Nos. 11 and 18, out of a total of 37 common hymns of Appar, are described as possessing the miraculous powers of having enabled the saint to float in the sea along with the stone to which he was tied, and bringing back to life the son of Appūtiyaṭikal after ridding him of the poison of a snake, respectively. All the hymns except

hymn Nos. 311 and 203 are described as composed in one of two places. Hymn Nos. 9, 202, 204-213, 284, 306, and 308 are said to have been composed while the saint was living in a mutt built by himself at Pūnturutti. Hymn Nos. 8, 14, 15, 74-79, 84, 110-113, 283, 307, 309 and 310 are said to have been composed at Pūmpukalūr. Hymn No. 311 is assigned to the early period of his life.<sup>1</sup> From this arrangement of the hymns of Appar, we can conclude that the saint must have spent a long time at Pūnturutti and Pūmpukalūr. Among the common hymns of Cuntarar, Nos. 12, 31 and 47, are not mentioned in PP. Another three, hymn Nos. 33, 39 and 44, are presented chronologically and are connected with certain incidents. Only one hymn, No. 63, is presented chronologically and credited with the miraculous power of yielding 12,000 pieces of gold from the hands of the Lord of Tirumutukunram.

6. A comparative study of some of the common hymns of the three saints reveals certain interesting and important facts. It has been observed that Campanantar strung together the names of the shrines of Śiva in hymn No. 175, that Appar named some of the shrines of Śiva as the places of surrender in hymn No. 284, enumerated certain names of abodes of Śiva for the purpose of chanting in hymn No. 306, and described Śiva in relation to his holy places in hymn

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1. PPTN, 93.

No.15; and that Cuntarar in hymn No.47 followed a novel way of describing the Lord in relation to the holy places, in hymn No.31 enumerated certain cities of the Lord laying special emphasis on 'Iṭaiyāru Iṭaimarutu' and in hymn No.12 stated the cities as the places where the Lord resides. Therefore, it can be concluded that these hymns come in the best tradition of the Śaivite saints - of Aiyatikāḷ Kāṭavarkōṅ who has sung Kṣēttiravenpā, of Campantar who has composed Kṣēttirakkōvai, of Appar who has sung Kṣēttirakkōvai, Aṭaiyut tiruttāṅṅakam, Palavakait tiruttāṅṅakam and Pavanācat tiruppatikam, and of Cuntarar who has composed Naṭṭuttokai, Urttokai and Iṭaiyārruttokai. On the other hand, it has also been noticed that Campantar extols the five sacred letters in the hymns Pañcākkarap patikam and Namaccivāyap patikam, and Appar praises them highly in the hymn Namaccivāyat tiruppatikam. This can be cited as a common feature of the saints' expression of the doctrines of the Śaiva religion.

7. Finally, it has already been mentioned that Cuntarar gives expression to the same thoughts and ideas as the two other saints. Four out of the seven common hymns of Cuntarar, Nos. 12, 31, 47 and 33, bear evidence of this fact. The first three hymns, which give the names of the shrines of Śiva, demonstrate the way in which the saint repeats the ideas of Campantar and Appar, while the last one shows how he embodies in his work only the quintessence of Appar.

Chapter Seven

THE LAST STANZAS OF THE TĒVĀRAM HYMNS

The last stanzas of the hymns of Campantar and Cuntarar are generally benedictory, bearing the signatures of these saints unlike those of Appar, which do not. A number of last stanzas in Appar's hymns do at least mention the benefits of worshipping the Lord whom he praises. The contrast here is that in the benedictory stanzas of Campantar and Cuntarar, the emphasis is on the benefits of chanting, while in the last stanzas of Appar it is on the benefits of worship (except for the four discussed below).

Cēkkiḷār refers to the benedictory stanzas by the name tirukkāṭaikkāppu<sup>1</sup>, 'last benedictory stanza in a patikam of the sacred hymns containing the name of the author'.<sup>2</sup> The TKK contain not only the composer's name but also other details such as his place of birth, parentage, and so forth. His name is mentioned in most of the stanzas; the place of birth and parentage in many; and the caste, or even the abilities of the composer, in some. These references are

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1. PPTC, 80; PPEKN, 82.
  2. MTL, Vol.III, pp.1896-7.

given in detail in the TKK of Campantar. It is probably these characteristics of his TKK that led to the popular saying Campantar tannaip pātinān, 'Campantar sang about himself'. The term TKK is also popularly used in PP, mainly in reference to Campantar, seldom in reference to Cuntarar. This is perhaps because the TKK of Campantar are sung in a more authoritative way and are probably the first examples of their kind.

Two references may be cited from PP to show that in Cēkkilār's view, Appar too composed a TKK. One reference appears in Appar's life history, and the other in Campantar's. Both references are made in connexion with the miraculous opening of the main door of the temple at Magaikkāṭu.

"As there was delay in the opening of the door he prayed in the TKK, crying out, 'O Lord! Have you no sympathy? Think of me!'"<sup>1</sup>

"The door opened when Vākīcar with pain of mind and great devotion made his request in the TKK."<sup>2</sup>

The term TKK is used in both contexts to refer to the last verse of the hymn composed by Appar on the Lord of Magaikkāṭu.

The extant last verse of hymn No.123, to the singing of which is attributed the above miracle in PP, does not

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1. PPTN, 268.  
2. PPTC, 582.

exhibit the predominant features of the TKK of Campantar and Cuntarar, such as mentioning the name and seal of the saint, and the benefits of chanting. A close study of the references shows that the term TKK is used to emphasize the fact that the singing of the last verse caused the door to open miraculously.<sup>1</sup> Therefore the term in these contexts is perhaps used in the meaning 'last verse'. It may also be suggested that the closing of the doors of temples<sup>2</sup> is popularly known as kataikkāppu, and it could be that Cēkīlār perhaps had in mind the miraculous power of the last verse when he named it tirukkataikkāppu, adding the prefix tiru to the existing term. In reference to the TKK of the last verse of the first hymn of Campantar, Cēkīlār affixes the word cātti meaning 'closing' to the usual tirukkataikkāppu.<sup>3</sup>

This hymn (No.123) contains only ten verses in some of the earlier editions,<sup>4</sup> but in all the later editions it consists of eleven verses, including the one beginning with

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1. Marr refers to a Thai colophon in the Bangkok manuscript which mentions the 'opening of the gates of Kailāsa'. 'Some manuscripts in Grantha Scripts in Bangkok', BSOAS, Vol.XXXII, Part 2, 1969, pp.282 & 306.
  2. Marr also refers to a Thai colophon in the Bangkok manuscript which mentions the 'closing of the gates of Kailāsa'. Ibid., p.306.
  3. PFTC, 80.
  4. Tēvārappatikāṅkaḷ, ed. by Tirumayilai Caṅmukam Pillai, (1917).

the line vinpuḷār virumpi, which in earlier editions was the 7th verse of hymn No.122. So it is clear that the verse vinpuḷār virumpi was included as the 10th verse of hymn No.123 by commentators at a later date. This transfer of the verse was perhaps made because of the information given in PP. It clearly states that hymn No.123 consists of eleven verses,<sup>1</sup> and also explicitly mentions that the last verse is arakkanaī viralāl - the reference irakkamonrillīr made by Cēkkiḷār appears in this verse.<sup>2</sup> This information perhaps prompted the commentators to transfer one of the verses from the preceding hymn No.122, which is also in praise of the Lord of Maraikkāṭu. The reason for choosing the particular verse vinpuḷār virumpi as the 10th verse is probably due to its metre and subject matter which are quite similar to those of the other verses, especially the last verse.

However, in Appar's Tēvāram there are four hymns, Nos. 11, 15, 61 and 137, in the last verses of which the benefits of chanting are stated, although the verses are not called TKK. The relevant portions of the verses run thus:

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1. PPTC, 582.
  2. PPTN, 268.

"There is no distress for those who chant the ten verses on namaccivāya".<sup>1</sup> "Those who worship the holy feet of Śiva offering this garland composed of sacred words and praying 'O Lord!' are sure of their pāvanācam, the destruction of the accumulated demerits of sin attached to soul".<sup>2</sup> "Those who chant the ten verses on Irāmēccuran will think of the Lord with melting heart".<sup>3</sup> "Those who chant the hymn on Tiruvorriyūr are indeed celestials".<sup>4</sup>

Though these verses mention the benefits of chanting, they are not similar to the TKK of Campantar and Cuntarar, and according to the definition in the MTL cannot be considered as TKK in the absence of the name of the saint.<sup>5</sup>

A number of facts emerge from the above analysis.

Firstly, these verses cannot be suspected of being interpolations because the last verses of hymn Nos. 15, 61 and 137 are quite similar to most of the other last verses of Appar in respect of the purānic legend of Śiva crushing Irāvaṇa. Hymn No.11, though it does not allude to Śiva crushing Irāvaṇa, consists of ten verses, including the one which states the benefits of chanting and uses the word pattu with reference to the total number of verses in the hymn.

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1. App.Tev, hymn No.11.
  2. Ibid., 15.
  3. Ibid., 61.
  4. Ibid., 137.
  5. Supra, p. 356.

Secondly, if these verses were later additions, the saint's name would have been included in order to make them appear similar to the TKK of the other two saints; also, a greater number of such verses would have been interpolated. It may, therefore, be concluded that these verses are possibly the unconscious reflection of the saint's familiarity with the TKK of his younger contemporary, Campantar.

Thirdly, of the two hymns which Appar recommends for chanting, one includes a 'last verse'; the other does not. In hymn No.11 he refers to namaccivāyappattu, 'ten songs on the five sacred letters', counting the last verse as one of the ten. On the other hand, in hymn No.61 he refers in the eleventh verse to uraikal pattu, 'ten songs', not counting the last verse. Therefore the word pattu does not adhere to the strict sense of the word 'ten' but means alternatively, either nine verses or ten verses. These two hymns are clear evidence that Appar composed hymns consisting of ten or eleven verses, without conforming strictly to the rule suggested by some that a patikam should consist of ten verses.<sup>1</sup>

Fourthly, the striking feature in the last verse of hymn No.15 is that the hymn is described as a garland to be

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1. That this is fallacious in any case is demonstrated, supra, Ch.I, p.21.

offered at the holy feet of Śiva. This metaphorical representation of the hymn as a garland occurs very often in the TKK of Campantar and Cuntarar.

Fifthly, in the last verse of hymn No.137, the verses are referred to by the word urai as was done by Campantar<sup>1</sup> and Cuntarar.<sup>2</sup> This is another clear instance of Appar employing the same word used by Campantar and Cuntarar to denote the verses of a hymn. Two suggestions are possible concerning this usage. One is that either Campantar or Appar was influenced by the other. The other is that Cuntarar was possibly influenced by both Campantar and Appar.

The TKK of ten hymns in Campantar's Tēvāram, and sixteen hymns in Cuntarar's Tēvāram, deserve special mention. Among the former, two (those of hymn Nos. 217 and 382), have been lost. In another four hymns, Nos. 53, 115, 145 and 232, the last two or three lines of the TKK are missing. In the remaining four hymns of these ten, Nos. 92, 355, 367 and 375, though stanzas with the name of the saint is present, the benefits of chanting are not stated. Among the latter sixteen, the TKK of hymn Nos. 65 and 66 have been lost. In hymn No.63

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1. Cam, Tev, hymn Nos. 20, 47, 93, 170, 313, 326, 334, etc.  
 2. Cun, Tev, hymn Nos. 59, 91.

the last two lines and a portion of the second line of the TKK are missing. The remaining 13 TKK mention no benefits of chanting, although they bear the saint's name.<sup>1</sup>

The above analysis reveals three things. Firstly, it is possible that Campantar and Cuntarar composed the missing parts of those nine hymns (six in Campantar's Tēvāram and three in Cuntarar's) stating the benefits of chanting, and that they have since been destroyed by white ants.<sup>2</sup> This is especially possible in the case of Cuntarar's hymn Nos. 65 and 66, which were consecutive hymns; as were the lost verses which were numbered 8-10 and 6-10 respectively, according to all editions. In the TKK from which lines are missing, the benefits of chanting are not found as these are usually given in the last two lines. Secondly, both saints composed TKK (4 TKK by Campantar and 13 by Cuntarar) without stating the benefits of chanting. The 13 such TKK of Cuntarar are greater in number than those of Campantar and indicate clearly that Cuntarar composed these in imitation of his predecessor. Thirdly, these 17 TKK are unusual in that they do not mention the benefits of chanting. Probably,

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1. Ibid., hymn Nos. 1, 14, 30, 33, 37, 38, 44, 76, 77, 81, 90, 95 and 100.

2. TKP, 21.

the saints omitted the benefits of chanting in these to make them stand out among the rest of the TKK. But this has had the opposite effect and the devotees have chanted them less often than the ones in which the benefits of chanting have been explicitly stated.

Analysis of the benefits of chanting.

All the other TKK of Campantar may be classified into four main categories, according to the manner in which the benefits of chanting are stated. In the first category the benefits are mentioned in the form of oath-taking or asseveration;<sup>1</sup> in the second, more benefits, sometimes even of a material kind, are stated;<sup>2</sup> in the third, the benefits are given in the form of a recommendation,<sup>3</sup> and in the fourth, only a single benefit is mentioned. This last type is the most common in the hymns of Campantar.

In the first category, the TKK of hymn Nos. 220, 221, 273, 336 and 376 deserve special mention, as Campantar declares the benefits, using the word āpai, 'oath'. He solemnly declares in hymn No.376: "This is my oath that those who chant this hymn will not be reborn but will live in the upper world".

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1. Cam, Tev, hymn Nos. 273, 220, 226, 221, 237, 241, 275, 336, 265, 376, 362, 271, 233, 371 and 254.
  2. Ibid., 2, 20, 21, 76, 129, 136, 176, 203, 261, 262, 329, 338, 339, 360, 376, 381 and 383.
  3. Ibid., 56, 96, 127, 163, 236, 243, 244, 263, 277, 295, 305 and 325.

In another two hymns, Nos. 220 and 273, he promises that vinai will be extinguished. In the remaining two hymns, Nos. 221 and 336, he gives a solemn assurance that those who chant them will rule in the upper world or heaven. Oath-taking is a striking feature in these hymns, and this probably prompted Nampiyāṅṅār Nampi to praise Campantar as āṅṅainamatennaivalān.<sup>1</sup> This feature no doubt has contributed to their popularity among the Śaivites even at present. This is especially true of the hymn Kōlarupatikam<sup>2</sup> (No.221).

There are another ten TKK in this category. The TKK of hymn Nos. 226 and 362 give the benefits of chanting, accompanied by the words aiyuravillai, '(I am) not in doubt'. The TKK of hymn Nos. 237, 265 and 233 mention the benefits of chanting with the words vāymaiyākavē, uṅmaiye and meymmaiye respectively, which are equivalent to the biblical 'verily'. In the remaining five hymns, the benefits of chanting are stated either with the word tiṅam or tiṅṅam, 'certain'.<sup>3</sup> The saint must have had strong confidence in the divine power of these hymns to have declared their benefits in such strong terms.

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1. APT, 45.

2. Supra, Ch.VI, pp.316-7.

3. Cam.Tev, hymn Nos. 241, 275, 271, 371, and 254.

They are also very commonly sung in homes as well as in shrines.

In the 18 TKK of the second category, the saint promises many benefits all at once. In 14 of these, he promises that the chanters will attain some mystic goal besides obtaining a number of other benefits.<sup>1</sup> Hymn No.20 promises education, wealth, victories and glories, and personifies these as kalaimakal, tirumakal, cayamakal and pukalmakal, respectively. In hymn No.21, each verse states a certain benefit, usually of a material kind; all these benefits are enumerated in the TKK. In the remaining two hymns, Nos. 136 and 383, the saint concludes by stating that chanting these hymns will free those who chant them from distress, poverty, crime and sin. All these hymns, particularly the 14 hymns which include the attainment of divine bliss as a benefit of chanting, are very popular among the Śaivites. The reason for this is perhaps the larger number of benefits promised in them.

There are 12 TKK in the third category, in which the benefits of chanting are stated in the form of a recommendation.<sup>2</sup> Two of these, belonging to hymn Nos. 96 and 236, recommend that

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1. Ibid., hymn Nos. 2, 76, 79, 129, 176, 203, 261, 262, 329, 338, 339, 360, 376 and 381.
  2. Ibid., hymn Nos. 56, 96, 127, 163, 236, 243, 244, 263, 277, 295, 305 and 325.

the hymns be chanted in their respective shrines. The TKK of hymn Nos. 127 and 325 mention merely that these hymns should be chanted. In each of the remaining eight hymns the recommendation is made by one of the synonymous words, pāṭip paravumē, ētti vālminē, pāṭumin, moliyumin, ōtuvīr, pōrriceyyum, pakarum, molitakaiyavē.

A large number of TKK fall into the fourth category, in which only a single benefit is stated. In these stanzas, Campantar promises either a better world or freedom from bondage to every one who makes a habit of reciting the hymns. The benefits mentioned in this category include freedom from sin, crime, or distress, the attainment of heavenly bliss, escape from rebirth, and so on.

Let us now see how Cuntarar presents the benefits:

(a) Ten TKK state specifically that those who chant the verses of their hymns will be released from vinai. Such release or the destruction of vinai is described in strong terms such as arum,<sup>1</sup> 'will extirpate', kaliyum,<sup>2</sup> 'will depart', pōm,<sup>3</sup> 'will go', māyum,<sup>4</sup> 'will perish', ila,<sup>5</sup> 'will not', aṭaiyā,<sup>6</sup> 'will not approach',

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1. Cun.Tev, hymn Nos. 17, 85 and 99.
  2. Ibid., 91.
  3. Ibid., 19 and 26.
  4. Ibid., 50.
  5. Ibid., 55.
  6. Ibid., 89.

and kūṭā,<sup>1</sup> 'will not associate'. It is remarkable that some of the terms Cuntarar used to describe the destruction of vinai are the same as those used by the two earlier saints.<sup>2</sup> The number of stanzas which describe release from vinai are proportionately fewer than the corresponding stanzas by Campantar and Appar.

(b) In a number of TKK Cuntarar speaks of heavenly enjoyment or divine bliss.<sup>3</sup> This benefit is stated by means of a varied phraseology, which promises that those who chant these hymns 'will rule heaven', 'will reach heaven', 'will be the king of heaven', 'become the leader of the heavenly beings', 'obtain final beatitude' and so on. It is perhaps Cuntarar's supposed previous experience of heavenly bliss which gave him such a great longing for it and thus caused him to compose a greater proportion of hymns on this subject than did Campantar and Appar. Heavenly bliss according to PP, was promised to him by Śiva himself.<sup>4</sup> The story is that Cuntarar fell in love with Kamalini and Nantiṇi, two women of Pārvati's retinue, while they were gathering flowers on mount Kayilāyam.<sup>5</sup> In

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1. Ibid., 80.

2. Campantar uses the term pōm in hymn Nos. 11 and 23, keṭum in 350, māyum in 212 and 311, aṭaiyā in 260, 197 and 63, illai in 6, 351 and 161, arum, 273. For Appar vide infra., p.373.

3. Cun.Tev. hymn Nos. 79, 86, 40, 35, 20, 6, 23, 97, 93, 26, 83, 67, 3, 69, 2, 9, 32, 21, 25, 62, 47, 42, 88, 56, 64, 59, 74, 46, 54, 18, 24, 28, 78, 79, 12, 7 and 52.

4. PPTMC, 29.

5. Ibid., 22-29.

punishment for this carnal weakness he was sent to this world so that he could experience the fulfilment of his desires and realize their vanity.

(e) Cuntarar speaks in six of his TKK of the destruction of pāvam, 'sin'.<sup>1</sup> It can be observed that he describes the destruction with the verbal forms: arum, 'will extirpate', paraiyum, 'perish' and ila, 'will not'. These are some of the same terms which Campantar also uses about the destruction of sin.<sup>2</sup> This clearly demonstrates that apart from the thought-content, Cuntarar also made use of the actual words of his predecessor Campantar.

(d) Three TKK may be cited in which Cuntarar promises worldly or material benefits for chanting his hymns. Two of these (hymn Nos. 60 and 69) state that those who chant the verses of these hymns will lead a life in which their hair will not turn grey, in which they will not suffer from old age or any other distress, and at the end of which they will reach heaven. These benefits are given in two of Campantar's stanzas which also contain the same words and phrases,<sup>3</sup> but they are conspicuous by their absence in Appar's verses.

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1. Cun, Tev, hymn Nos. 5, 11, 15, 16, 53 and 57.
  2. Campantar uses the term paraiyum in 287, 285, 52, 278, 29 and 99. arum in 383 and ila in 246, 39 and 204.
  3. Cam, Tev, hymn Nos. 261 and 291.

The third (hymn No.71) promises watered lands and immense glory to those who chant its verses.

(e) In eight TKK, Cuntarar promises freedom from suffering, distress or calamity.<sup>1</sup> These benefits are promised quite often by Campantar, and in six verses by Appar.<sup>2</sup> Besides these, in another (hymn No.30), Cuntarar promises freedom from distress to the learned poets and mentions the benefit in its first line, which is unusual. In fact, it is unique in the whole of Tēvāram. He also speaks of freedom from birth and death in three TKK,<sup>3</sup> in contrast to Campantar, who speaks of it in several, and Appar, who speaks of it in none. The last stanza of Cuntarar's hymn No.33 is quite similar to several verses of Appar, as it requests devotees to worship Śiva. The only difference is that Cuntarar does not state the benefits of such worship. This stanza is evidence that Cuntarar composed verses similar to those of Appar.

The TKK enumerated and discussed above reveal some significant facts. The classification of the TKK of Cuntarar has shown conclusively that he echoes the words, phrases, ideas and poetic techniques of his predecessors. In (c) it

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1. Cun, Tev, hymn Nos. 48, 58, 82, 92, 94, 22, 43 and 49.
  2. App, Tev, hymn Nos. 120, 151, 154, 172, 180 and 190.
  3. Cun, Tev, hymn Nos. 70, 68 and 75.

has been shown how he makes use of the words and phrases of Campantar, and in (a), those of Campantar and Appar. His borrowing from the thoughts of Campantar is shown in (d); and (e) illustrates a verse composed on the model of Appar. How he presents the same kind of benefits as Campantar and Appar is demonstrated in (a), (b), and (e). In (e), a verse has been cited to prove the extraordinary poetic pattern Cuntarar adopts in presenting benefits. This pattern has no parallel in the Tēvāram of the other two saints. Finally, in categories 1 and 2 it has been shown how the benefits of chanting have contributed to the popularity of the hymns among the Śaivites even at present. The most striking difference observed is that the TKK of Cuntarar are generally composed in the form of statements or promises as opposed to the TKK of Campantar, which are sung in a variety of poetic patterns such as oaths, asseverations, promises, recommendations or requests, and in contrast to the 'last verses' of Appar, which are mostly in the form of a request, promise or recommendation.

#### Analysis of the benefits of worship

Besides the five 'last verses' examined already, another 45 last verses in Appar's hymns deserve special analysis. In

these verses, the benefits of worship are predominant as opposed to the benefits of chanting in the TKK. These verses may be classified into six categories. Nineteen verses speak of the destruction of vinai,<sup>1</sup> seven speak of freedom from distress or calamity,<sup>2</sup> five of heavenly enjoyment,<sup>3</sup> three of attaining the holy feet,<sup>4</sup> and two of salvation from sin,<sup>5</sup> while nine promise a good life, seeing Śiva, and so on.

The 19 verses on the destruction of vinai form the largest of these six categories of 'last verses'. Moreover, the 'last verses' dealing with vinai form a larger percentage of the total of Appar's 'last verses' than do the TKK of Campantar and Cuntarar which deal with vinai with respect to the total of the TKK of these two saints. Appar speaks of vinai in a large number of other verses as well and proclaims very frequently that Śiva will destroy it.<sup>6</sup> This recurring theme of vinai tends to suggest that Appar not only had great aversion to vinai, which prevents the soul from union with God, but also wished others to be freed from it. His conversion to the Jaina religion and the attack of the dreadful disease

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1. App, Tev, hymn Nos. 105, 130, 131, 132, 136, 143, 147, 152, 164, 169, 171, 181, 192, 194, 197, 198, 236, 246 and 250.
  2. Ibid., 120, 151, 154, 172, 180, 190 and 280.
  3. Ibid., 188, 193, 201, 210 and 306.
  4. Ibid., 114, 145 and 209.
  5. Ibid., 118 and 127.
  6. TO.App, II, 185.

cūlai, which he mentions very often, were perhaps the reason for his strong belief in the concept of vinai and the repeated mention of it in his works. Therefore, it is not surprising that he describes vinai as koṭu vinai, val vinai, tī vinai, aru vinai, peru vinai, cūl vinai, veyya vinai, tunpa vinai, ūlvinaḥ, vinaiḥ pakai and so on,<sup>1</sup> and uses different synonyms such as māyum, 'will perish' (181), pōy arum, 'will go and extirpate' (143), nīnkiṭum, 'will depart' (169), nācam, 'will annihilate' (197), pārum, 'will flee' (147), karuk keṭum, 'will perish with embryo' (194), etc. to describe its destruction. The strong prefixes used to describe vinai and the strong terms in which its destruction is stated underline clearly the saint's aversion to it.

A significant feature of the 'last verses' of Appar is the absence of specification of the material benefits, which is prominent in some of the TKK.<sup>2</sup> What is clear from this is that Appar does not advocate worship to obtain worldly benefits though the other two promise such benefits to those who chant their hymns. This is evidence for Appar's advocacy of complete indifference to worldly attachments in contrast to the tendency of the other two saints to favour

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1. TO.App, I, 68:311.

2. Supra, p. 369.

a life of worldly pleasures as well.

The other notable feature is that the benefits of worship are usually given against the background of the purānic story of Śiva crushing Irāvaṇa, a recurring theme in the 8th verses of the hymns of Campantar. The contrast is that Campantar presents the story merely as a feat of Śiva, while Appar alludes to it not merely to glorify Śiva but also to emphasise the certainty of obtaining the spiritual benefits which he promises. Therefore Cēkkiḷār's interpretation of this allusion to the 8th verse of hymn No.1 of Campantar<sup>1</sup> is more appropriate to the 'last verse' of Appar. It is also clear that this story was popular during the period of these two saints and was used extensively for religious propagation.

Besides the 'last verses' examined already, a number of other 'last verses' deserve special mention, as examples in which the saint emphasises the worship of Śiva. In some verses he invites others to join him in worship;<sup>2</sup> in others he requests the worship of Śiva,<sup>3</sup> and in still others he makes an earnest appeal to devotees to either go to a shrine or to see the Lord.<sup>4</sup> Though these stanzas make such

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1. Supra, Ch.I, p. 33.

2. App. Tev, hymn Nos. 90, 116, 161, etc.

3. Ibid., 159, 170, etc.

4. Ibid., 155, 182, 187, etc.

requests, they promise no benefits for such worship. Such statements in the TKK of Campantar and Cuntarar generally cover the benefits of chanting.

The 'last verses' enumerated and analysed so far, illuminate certain points. Firstly, it has been established that there are three types of 'last verses' in Appar's hymns; verses promising the benefits of chanting, verses describing the benefits of worship, and verses emphasising worship itself, without promising any benefits. 'Last verses' of the first category do not bear the name of the saint and in this respect they are dissimilar to the TKK. In the second category of verses, the emphasis is on the benefits of worship, and as such they are entirely different to the TKK. The third category of verses is similar to the other two categories except for the fact that they do not mention any benefits. As for the second point, two suggestions may be made at this stage. One is that Appar's sense of aversion to self-complacency, perhaps due to his maturity, may have precluded him from composing verses similar to the TKK of Campantar and Cuntarar. The other is that the last verses in Appar's hymns may have tempted some one to compose TKK and interpolate them in the works of Campantar and Cuntarar. Thirdly, these 'last verses' in Appar's hymns may also be considered as TKK, even though they are not regarded as such by Cēkkilār,

because of their refined and masterly presentation of spiritual benefits, without any element of self-praise.

Finally, we may conclude this section by showing that the analysis of benefits has also proved how the personal experiences of the saints are reflected in their last stanzas. It is perhaps because of his conversion to the Jaina religion and the attack of cūlai he suffered that Appar speaks so often of vinai; Cuntarar probably speaks of heavenly enjoyment because of his previous experience of it.<sup>1</sup> Similar experiences were lacking in the life of Campantar, and hence such feelings are not reflected in his TKK.

#### Personal references

The saint's name Nānacampantaṅ is mentioned in a large number of TKK. The name, shortened to Campantaṅ appears in 41 TKK, and to Pantaṅ in another 17. The elongated form with the prefix tiru is used in three TKK. Other names, Nāṅaṅ, Poṅṅināṅaṅ and Maṅṅaiṅānacampantaṅ, are each used in one TKK.<sup>2</sup> His place of birth, Cīkāli, which often accompanies his name, is indicated by such alternative names as Kāli, Kaḷumalam, Cappaḷi, Tōṅṅipuraṅ, Piraṅmapuraṅ, Pukali, Vēṅṅupuraṅ, Pūntarāy, etc.<sup>3</sup>

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1. Supra., 368.
  2. TO-Gam, II, 248(20).
  3. Ibid., 248(3).

References such as pūcuraṅ, maraiyōṅ, vētiyaṅ and so on,<sup>1</sup> are sufficient to establish that he belonged to a brahman family.

Campanantar also finds delight in associating himself with his gōtra as kavuniyar perumān, 'prince of the Kaundiya', kavuniyar kulapati, 'chief of the kavuniyar gōtra' etc.<sup>2</sup>

We may suggest that these references helped Cēkkilār enormously to reconstruct the life history of the saint in his work PP.

Campanantar is never guilty of modesty in his opinion of himself. He introduces himself as tamil virakaṅ, 'one proficient in Tamil', tamil nātaṅ, 'master of Tamil learning', muttamil virakaṅ, 'scholar of the three-fold Tamil' and so on.<sup>3</sup>

He praises his hymns as tiruneṟiya tamil, 'Tamil of the sacred path', centamil, 'refined classical Tamil',<sup>5</sup> kunrāt tamil, 'the never diminishing Tamil'<sup>6</sup> and so on. From these statements we can see that Campanantar praises himself as a Tamilian and is proud of his hymns being in Tamil but never prides himself on being an Aryan. Some find fault with Campanantar for his self-complacency, but Śaivite scholars interpret this as divine revelation.<sup>7</sup> The words of Campanantar

1. Ibid., 248(1).

2. Ibid., 248(4).

3. Ibid., 255.

4. Cam, Tev, hymn No.1.

5. Ibid., 41, 57, 135, 136, 138, 143, etc.

6. Ibid., 18.

7. TPT, Tirumurai, I, p.29.

himself vantavāre punaital valipātē,<sup>1</sup> may be quoted to prove this fact. Vantavāre means 'words overflowed through divine inspiration'.<sup>2</sup>

Campanatar also finds pride in describing himself as a composer of songs and a brilliant singer of hymns set to paṇ. There is a TKK which speaks of Campanatar as a man with knowledge of music.<sup>3</sup> The TKK of hymn Nos. 159 and 360 state that the saint himself sang the hymns to paṇ. A reference can also be cited as evidence for the saint setting paṇ and singing.<sup>4</sup> His brilliance in music is also expressed by the phrase nallicaiyālān, 'sweet musician', icaiyār tamil virakan, 'one proficient in sweet musical Tamil', etc.<sup>5</sup> Besides these, the references such as enṇamar paḷ kalaiyān, 'man of various praiseworthy arts'<sup>6</sup> and kalai nāṇacampanatan, 'Campanatar with the sound knowledge of arts'<sup>7</sup> portray him as a man with expertise in various arts. For this attribute however we have no authentic evidence in our sources except for his poetic genius and his talent in composing music on the basis of which perhaps these references were made. The paṇ system, a number of new poetic metres in the verse-form patikam, alliteration,

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1. Cam, Tev, hymn No. 28.
  2. TFT, Tirumurai, I, p. 143.
  3. Cam, Tev, hymn No. 319.
  4. Ibid., 5.
  5. TO. Cam, II, 249.
  6. Cam, Tev, hymn No. 319.
  7. Ibid., 11, 16, 79, 173.

rhyme and rhythm establish that Campantar was a worthy master of his art and it may be suggested that all these elements contributed as much to Śaivism and to the Tamil language as did the thought-content of the hymns themselves.

In Cuntarar's TKK the name Arūraṅ is mentioned more often than its abbreviated form Uraṅ. Another name for this saint which is often used is Vaṅṭoṅṭaṅ. The name Nampi appears only in a few TKK.<sup>1</sup> Cēkkiḷār speaks of Vaṅṭoṅṭaṅ, Nampiyārūraṅ, or Tampirāntōḷar. The latter two are not referred to by the saint himself in his works. The word nampi which is usually the title of a prince and generally conferred on important individuals<sup>2</sup> was perhaps added by Cēkkiḷār to the more frequently mentioned name Arūraṅ in order to portray the exquisite beauty and majestic personality of the saint. The saint also perhaps for this reason called himself nampi. Dorai Rangaswamy's interpretation that the name Nampi may also be explained as being deserved by him because he grew up as a prince of Naraciṅkamunaiyaraiyar's family<sup>3</sup> may be right. The name Tampirāntōḷaṅ does not appear in the TKK though PP states that this title was conferred on the saint by Śiva himself.<sup>4</sup>

1. TO.Cun, 156.

2. Tol., eluttu., cū, 154, commentary, and Nannūl., cū. 158, commentary of the Mayilai Nātar.

3. RPT, I, p.109.

4. PPTK, 127-9.

On the other hand, as the saint himself explains the name Arūraṅ is his proper name because he was named after the Lord of Tiruvārūr.<sup>1</sup> The name Vantontar, 'strong devotee', according to the saint's version, is a name conferred on him by Śiva for the harsh words he used to Śiva.<sup>2</sup> The naming of the saint after the Lord may have established the practice among the Śaivites of giving people various names of Hindu gods and goddesses. The name Cuntarar, meaning beautiful or handsome person, is the one by which the saint is commonly known in modern times. It is, however, neither referred to in the TKK nor found in the earlier works including PP, thus creating a problem for critics and scholars. Another significant aspect is that the names Arūraṅ, Uraṅ, Vantontar and Nampi appear not only in the TKK, but also in the other verses,<sup>3</sup> in contrast to the names of Campantar which are mentioned only in the TKK.

Cuntarar employs the term kātalan, 'loving son' and ciruvan 'son' to describe himself as the son of Caṭaiyaṅ and Icañṅāṅi. In two TKK he states he is the kātalan of his father Caṭaiyaṅ,<sup>4</sup> and in another proudly mentions himself

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1. Cun, Tev, hymn Nos. 59, 86, 89.
  2. Cun, Tev, 17:2.
  3. TO.Cun, 156.
  4. Cun, Tev, hymn Nos. 57 and 58.

as the kāṭalan of his mother Icaiñāṇi.<sup>1</sup> On the other hand, in three TKK he describes himself as the ciruvan of Caṭaiyaṇ,<sup>2</sup> in one as the ciruvan of his mother Icaiñāṇi<sup>3</sup> and in another as the ciruvan of both Caṭaiyaṇ and Icaiñāṇi.<sup>4</sup> The words kāṭalan and ciruvan in these descriptions mean no more than 'a son'.

He also takes pride in describing himself as 'king' or 'chief' as demonstrated by the use of different synonyms such as kōmān, vēntan, mannan and kōṇ. It may be noticed that the first two terms are mentioned with the word nāvalar, 'orator',<sup>5</sup> the third with Nāvalūr,<sup>6</sup> the native place of the saint, and the last with both nāvalar and Nāvalūr.<sup>7</sup> The use of these expressions gives rise to three possible alternatives. One is that Cuntarar describes himself as the king or chief of orators as well as the king or chief of Nāvalūr; another is that the title of nāvukkaraiyaṇ, 'the king of tongue' which is used about Appar and which Cuntarar himself mentions, perhaps led him to describe himself too as 'the chief of the great men of the tongue'; the third is that the expression nāvalar is perhaps a textual corruption of Nāvalūr. Dorai Rangaswamy concludes,

1. Ibid., 39.

2. Ibid., 7, 34 and 47.

3. Ibid., 38.

4. Ibid., 16.

5. Nāvalar kōmān, in hymn No.82 and Nāvalar vēntan in 57 and 71.

6. Hymn No.13.

7. Nāvalar kōṇ in hymn Nos. 3, 4, 16, 23, 24, 28, 41, 42, 83 and 84 and Nāvalūr kōṇ in 18 and 38.

"we find the expressions nāvalar kōṇ, nāvalar mannan, nāvalar vēntaṇ or nāvalar kōmāṇ in some verses and these also should be interpreted as the chiefs of the people of the place of Nāval or Nāvalūr".<sup>1</sup>

This is not convincing as he does not explain or justify such an interpretation.

Besides these, Cuntarar also clearly refers to Nāvalūr as his native place, using the expression Nāvalārūraṇ, 'Arūraṇ of Nāvalūr'.<sup>2</sup> The other terms nāvalūrāṇ<sup>3</sup> and nāvalavūraṇ<sup>4</sup> are also interpreted as Ūraṇ of Nāval or Tirunāvalūr. Nāval is a tree, 'jamorin plum', which generally grows in groups in several parts of the Tamil country. Therefore, the name Nāvalūr was probably derived from the name of the tree, nāval, due to the presence of a number of nāval trees in the area.<sup>5</sup>

The facts analysed above show conclusively that the description in the TMC in PP, which states that the saint was born at Tirunāvalūr to Caṭaiyaṇār and Icañṇāṇiyār, is borne out by the references found in the TKK of Cuntarar. There are, however, no direct references either in the TKK or in the other verses describing the saint's upbringing and the training

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1. RPT, I, p.88.
  2. Cun.Tev, hymn Nos. 14, 25, 26, 40, 46, 53, 62, 67, 69, 73, 76 and 99.
  3. Ibid., 34, 36, 87 and 88.
  4. Ibid., 50, 79, 85, 97 and 100.
  5. This fact can be further substantiated by the name of a village in the north of Ceylon, Nāvarkātu, 'jamorin plum forest' which is famous for nāval trees, and no doubt is named after this tree.

received under Naracinkamuṅaiyaraiyar and thereby one can conclude that such descriptions in the PP were purely the creation of Cēkkiḷār. The references enumerated by Dorai Rangaswamy proving that Cēkkiḷār made use of them to illustrate the story in PP are not of a quality to give sufficient credence for establishing the story so elaborately described by Cēkkiḷār.<sup>1</sup>

It has already been mentioned that Campantar very often associates himself with the Tamil language. Such descriptions are not found in the TKK of Cuntarar, except for the references tamil ūran,<sup>2</sup> poyyāt tamil ūran<sup>3</sup> and aruntamil ūran.<sup>4</sup> Cuntarar, however, is fond of introducing himself as a sincere and faithful devotee in a number of his TKK with different synonyms such as aṭitoṭṭan, 'humble servant',<sup>5</sup> aṭināy ūran, 'Ūran is a dog at the holy feet of Śiva',<sup>6</sup> aṭiyārkkāṭiyān, 'devotee of the devotees',<sup>7</sup> civatōṭṭan, 'devotee of Śiva',<sup>8</sup> civanāṭiyārkaḷukku aṭiyān, 'devotee of the devotees of Śiva',<sup>9</sup> toṭṭartōṭṭan, 'servant of servants'<sup>10</sup> and so on. Such descriptions

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1. WPT, I, p.110.
  2. Cun.Tev, hymn No.57.
  3. Ibid., 13.
  4. Ibid., 72.
  5. Ibid., 3, 21, 28, 43, 44, 51, 78, 80, 86, etc.
  6. Ibid., 94.
  7. Ibid., 52 (1-9).
  8. Ibid., 49.
  9. Ibid., 78.
  10. Ibid., 7.

very rarely occur in the TKK of Campantar. The frequent descriptions of Campantar exhibit his talent for poetic composition and also his love for his language. The constant references to Cuntarar as aṭiyān have to be interpreted in connection with the event of Śiva taking him into his service described in PP.<sup>1</sup> This incident in the life of the saint as narrated by Cēkkiḷār states that Śiva appeared as an old man with an old palm-leaf document, āvaṇam, to claim the poet as his hereditary slave. This description in PP was perhaps derived from the constant references enumerated above in the TKK of Cuntarar.

One of the striking phenomena in the above-mentioned description is that Cuntarar compares himself to a dog, always regarded as an animal grateful to his benefactor. This description could, therefore, carry no more significance than to emphasise his gratitude to his spiritual Guru, Śiva, who according to PP, appeared as an old man with an āvaṇam, and saved him on the eve of his marriage by generating the required feeling of spirituality. The spiritual Guru is always looked upon by Śaivites as none other than Śiva himself. In other words the description emphasises the relationship

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1. For a detailed account see TK in PP.

between the soul and the Lord, the relationship or love of the dog to its master refers to the relationship between Cuntarar and Śiva.

### Hymns described as garlands

The description of the hymns as garlands deserves special analysis as it provides a clue to the origin of the present title Tēvāram. Campantar speaks of tamil mālai, 'garland of hymn' in fourteen TKK<sup>1</sup> and mālai iraintu, 'two times five garlands' in another five.<sup>2</sup> The hymns are also described as con mālai, 'garland of words',<sup>3</sup> and con mālai pattu, 'ten garlands of words'.<sup>4</sup> Besides these, the phrases centamil mālai, 'garland of classical Tamil',<sup>5</sup> tamilin icai-mālai, 'garland composed in musical Tamil',<sup>6</sup> pā mālai, 'garland of song',<sup>7</sup> and tamil āram, 'garland of Tamil',<sup>8</sup> are also used. The word mālai is also used in connection with aruntamil, 'precious Tamil',<sup>9</sup> ontamil, 'beautiful Tamil',<sup>10</sup> vantamil, 'beautiful Tamil',<sup>11</sup> narramil 'good Tamil',<sup>12</sup> and so on.

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1. Cam, Tev, hymn Nos. 2, 46, 74, 80, 103, 104, 152, 219, 223, 239, 242, 247, 364, 376.
  2. Ibid., 161, 173, 175, 329 and 381.
  3. Ibid., 221, 264 and 339.
  4. Ibid., 137.
  5. Ibid., 43.
  6. Ibid., 274.
  7. Ibid., 243 and 377.
  8. Ibid., 147.
  9. Ibid., 262 and 350.
  10. Ibid., 260.
  11. Ibid., 240.
  12. Ibid., 244, 376.

A close study will show that Campantar makes use of the word mālai with 30 such different prefixes in about seventy-eight TKK.

Cuntarar, on the other hand, describes his hymns as ārūraṅga tamil mālaikaḷ, 'Arūraṅga's garlands of Tamil',<sup>1</sup> vantoṅṅaṅ ciranta mālaikaḷ, 'Vantoṅṅaṅ's good garlands',<sup>2</sup> and nāvalārūraṅ uraitaru mālai, 'garland composed by Nāvalūraṅ'.<sup>3</sup> He also speaks of con mālai, 'garland of word',<sup>4</sup> vākkenṅum mālai, 'garland composed of words',<sup>5</sup> tamil mālai, 'garland of Tamil',<sup>6</sup> tamil valuvā mālai, 'garland composed in flawless Tamil',<sup>7</sup> narramil mālai, 'garland composed in good Tamil',<sup>8</sup> vantamil māli, 'garland composed in beautiful Tamil',<sup>9</sup> and so on. He also speaks of tamil mālai, 'garlands of Tamil',<sup>10</sup> paṅṅu tamil nūl mālai, 'garland composed in Tamil according to grammar',<sup>11</sup> and ceṅcol tamil mālaikaḷ, 'garlands composed in classical Tamil'.<sup>12</sup> Thus in Cuntarar's works, hymns are described as garlands in eighteen TKK.<sup>13</sup> This metaphorical representation of the hymn as a garland, however, occurs only

1. Cun, Tev, hymn No.71.

2. Ibid., 68.

3. Ibid., 69.

4. Ibid., 11.

5. Ibid., 96:4.

6. Ibid., 47.

7. Ibid., 23.

8. Ibid., 67:5.

9. Ibid., 75.

10. Ibid., 82, 47.

11. Ibid., 41.

12. Ibid., 42.

13. Ibid., 3, 6, 10, 11, 23, 27, 29, 41, 42, 47, 56, 60, 68, 71, 75, 76, 79 and 82.

in one 'last verse' in the hymns of Appar.<sup>1</sup>

This demonstrates the fondness of the saints for describing their hymns as garlands. The individual verses of the hymns are considered as flowers which form the garland. But Cuntarar often describes each individual verse of his hymns as a garland. In fact the garland holds a considerable place of importance in Indian symbolism and the Śaivites have loved to illustrate their bhakti by means of garlands, using them to celebrate the presence of Śiva. Thus garlands have acquired a deep religious significance as outward expressions of the bond of love and respect. Hence it is appropriate that the saints describe their hymns as garlands to Śiva. This description provides an explanation for the origin of the present title, Tēvāram, to describe the works of the three saints. Tēvāram (tēva + āram),<sup>2</sup> means 'garland of god' and therefore the use of this name for the hymns of the three saints may possibly have originated from the usages enumerated above. In this context it is appropriate to point out that it is the tradition in Tamil literature to name a work by its metre, subject-matter, or the name of its author.<sup>3</sup>

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1. Supra, p.361-2.

2. Skt. deva + hāra.

3. For instance the Pari. is named after the metre paripāṭṭu; the TMP is named after the theme and the Tol. by the author, Tolkāppiyar.

The number 'ten'.

The specific mention of the number 'ten' is a striking feature in 120 of the TKK of Campantar. The words used are pattu in 104 TKK, iraintu (2x5) in seven,<sup>1</sup> orupatu (1x10) in eight<sup>2</sup> and ōraintinōṭaintu (5+5) in one.<sup>3</sup> In four hymns, Nos. 63, 90, 142 and 312, the number ten is used in the twelfth verse (TKK) to refer to the preceding eleven verses. In the other 116 hymns it is mentioned in the 11th verse and refers to the preceding ten verses.

From the above analysis three important facts emerge. First, the word pattu does not necessarily refer to ten verses but on occasion to eleven verses. Secondly, it prompts the suggestion that in each case where eleven verses have been referred to as ten, there has been a later interpolation. Thirdly, as worshippers are requested to sing 'ten songs', just the ten verses of a hymn excluding the TKK should be chanted together. This injunction does not apply to other hymns since there is no specific mention of the number ten in their TKK.

We have already examined the usage of the two hymns of Appar which include specific mention of the number ten.<sup>4</sup>

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1. Cam, Tev, hymn Nos. 97, 161, 173, 175, 198, 329 and 381.
  2. Ibid., 19, 20, 21, 22, 122, 123, 342 and 345.
  3. Ibid., 129.
  4. Supra, p. 361.

It is interesting to observe specific mention of the number ten in 32 TKK in the extant hymns of Cuntarar. In 23 stanzas, the number is mentioned on the basis of TKK being numbered as one of the ten.<sup>1</sup> In nine, it is stated on the basis of the TKK not being counted as one of the ten.<sup>2</sup> In other words, in the former, the specific number 'ten' is mentioned in the tenth verses. Of these, 9 verses are in praise of Śiva and the 10th is about the composer. In the latter, the specific number 'ten' is stated in the 11th verses. In these, 10 verses are in praise of Śiva and the 11th is about the composer. Among the first type of TKK mentioned above in three (hymn Nos. 44, 55 and 68), instead of using the word pattu, Cuntarar specifically describes the number ten by referring to it as eṭṭōṭu irayṭu (8+2), aintōṭaintu (5+5) and añciṇōṭaiñcu (5+5) respectively. In three stanzas of the second type, he refers to the number 'ten' as aintiṇōṭaintu<sup>3</sup> (5+5), iraintu<sup>4</sup> (2x5) and añciṇōṭaiñcu<sup>5</sup> (5+5). There are another two hymns, Nos. 11 and 2, in which the specific mention of 'ten' and 'eleven' respectively is stated in the TKK. In hymn No.11, in which there are only 8 verses, the eighth and ninth have been numbered as blank (or lost)

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1. Cun.Tev., hymn Nos. 3, 5, 6, 10, 20, 32, 42, 44, 49, 54, 55, 58, 62, 64, 68, 70, 80, 82, 83, 84, 85, 96 & 100.
  2. Ibid., 9, 16, 19, 34, 36, 61, 67, 69 and 98.
  3. Ibid., 9.
  4. Ibid., 61.
  5. Ibid., 69.

in most editions. In hymn No.2, which consists of 11 verses, the specific mention of the number 'eleven' is quite clearly made in the phrase ārum ōr nāṅkum ōr onrum (6+4+1). Here the TKK is numbered as one of the eleven of which the first ten verses are in praise of Śiva, while the eleventh is about the composer.

The above analysis allows us to observe several facts. First, the synonymous phrases used to make specific reference to the number 'ten' do not always refer to ten verses. If the TKK are not taken into account, in twenty-three hymns these phrases refer to 9 verses, and in nine hymns to 10 verses. Therefore, specific references to the number ten, which use different synonyms such as eṭṭōṭirantu (8+2), aintōṭaintu (5+5) añcinōṭaiñcu (5+5) and Iraintu (2x5) seem to indulge in poetic licence, rather than conforming to the precise meaning of the phrases. The description, ārum ōr nāṅkum ōr onrum (6+4+1) in the eleventh stanza of hymn No.2 clearly demonstrates that it numbers the verses on the basis of the TKK being included as one of the eleven. In contrast, the other nine hymns also contain 11 verses each, but the reference made by the word pattu in their TKK to the number ten is on the basis of the last verses (TKK) not being numbered as among the eleven.

Secondly, with Cuntarar, specific mention of the number ten can be interpreted as a request to the devotees to chant 10 verses, in some cases including the TKK, in others excluding it. But in hymn No.2, Cuntarar requests that all eleven verses be chanted, including TKK. In the case of Campantar, the request is made to chant 10 or 11 verses, excluding the TKK. When no specific mention of the number 'ten' is made in the TKK of a hymn of either saint, it is perhaps left to the discretion of the worshipper whether or not to chant the TKK together with the other verses.

Thirdly, two numerical possibilities can be suggested about hymn No.11 which consists of eight verses only. In the TKK of the hymn the words 'these ten verses of the garland' - appear. As already suggested this may be in reference to either 10 or 11 verses. However, according to several editions, the extant verses have been numbered 1-10 and thus two verses, Nos. 8 and 9, have been marked as blank (lost verses) and the TKK has been numbered as the tenth verse.

In this connection, it is interesting to compare the specific references to the number ten in the hymns of Cuntarar with those in the hymns of Campantar. There is no etymological connexion between Tamil pattu, 'ten' and patikam, a verse form, which may contain ten or eleven verses as in the hymns of Cuntarar, or

eleven or twelve verses as in the hymns of Campantar.

Secondly, it has already been noticed that the request has been made by Cuntarar in the 10th verses of 23 hymns to sing all ten verses. It is made quite clear by this that the TKK should be sung along with the other 9 verses in each of those hymns. But Campantar always requested devotees to sing the verses excluding the TKK. This is clear because such requests appear in the 11th verses of 116 hymns. Thirdly, the specific descriptions like aintōṭu aintu (5+5), aintinoṭu aintu (5+5) and añcinōṭaiñcu (5+5) include the TKK in certain hymns and exclude them in certain others in the hymns of Cuntarar,<sup>1</sup> while the descriptions Iraintu (2x5), orupatu (10) and ōraintinōṭu aintu (5+5) quite definitely exclude the TKK in the hymns of Campantar.<sup>2</sup>

Another fact may also be noted. Cuntarar modelled his patikam on those of his predecessors, Campantar and Appar. Bearing in mind the scheme adopted by Appar in most of his hymns, Cuntarar too makes it a point to compose a large number of hymns consisting of 10 verses. Attracted perhaps by the

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1. In hymn No.9 the number 'ten' is mentioned in the words aintinoṭu aintu (5+5) and in hymn No.69 it is stated as añcinōṭu añcu. In both cases the TKK is excluded. In hymn No.55 the number ten is mentioned in the words aintōṭu aintu (5+5) and in hymn No.68 it is stated as añcinōṭu añcu. In these cases the TKK is included.

2. Supra, p.388.

TKK of Campantar he composed similar TKK in his hymns.

Unlike Campantar, he asks his worshippers to chant the TKK together with the rest of the verses of the hymn to make up the conventional total of ten. This distinction does not apply to Appar who did not, as a rule, compose TKK

Finally, Dorai Rangaswamy's analysis of the number ten in the hymns of Cuntarar, is incomplete since he examines only the hymns consisting of 10 verses, and overlooks those consisting of 11 verses. Consequently, his conclusion, "instead of using the pattu, Arūrar in a few places specifically describes the number ten without giving room for any doubt by referring to it as ettōṭirantu (8+2) aintōṭaintu (5+5) and añcinōṭaiñcu (5+5)"<sup>1</sup> is not acceptable, as such descriptions appear in some of the last verses of hymns which consist of 11 verses as well.

#### Seeds of some traditions

The TKK of Campantar and Cuntarar provide us with many facts about their sacred hymns including the manner in which they were chanted. The saints describe the hymns as centamil,

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1. RPT, I, p.47.

'classical Tamil',<sup>1</sup> tap tamil, 'pleasant Tamil',<sup>2</sup> arun tamil 'rare Tamil',<sup>3</sup> narramil, 'excellent Tamil',<sup>4</sup> van tamil, 'beautiful Tamil',<sup>5</sup> tamil, 'Tamil',<sup>6</sup> and so on. These expressions are clear evidence that Campantar influenced Cuntarar. However, the expressions of self-praise in the TKK of Campantar, which have already been examined<sup>7</sup> are absent in the TKK of Cuntarar. What is therefore suggested is that though Cuntarar praises his own hymns, Campantar extols both his hymns and himself. Secondly, the expressions provide a clue to the meaning of the popular saying caivamum tamilum talaittu initōnka, 'sweetly flourish Śaivam and Tamil'. As the sacred hymns are referred to as 'Tamil' the word Tamil in the above phrase may refer to the language in which the hymns are expressed.

The saint Campantar finds pride in describing his hymns as nānat tamil, 'hymns of spiritual wisdom',<sup>8</sup> nāna molī mālai, 'garlands of hymns composed in the language of spiritual wisdom',<sup>9</sup> and arun mālait tamil, 'garland of Tamil inspired with grace'.<sup>10</sup> Cuntarar, on the other hand, praises his hymns

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1. Cam.Tev, hymn Nos. 41, 57, 135, 136, 138, 143, 238, 248, 256, 266, 282, 293, 296, 302, 304, 354, 357 and 378. Cun.Tev, hymn No. 26.
  2. Cam.Tev, hymn Nos. 228, 229; Cun.Tev, hymn No.4.
  3. Cam.Tev, hymn Nos. 261, 273; Cun.Tev, hymn Nos. 9, 55.
  4. Cam.Tev, hymn Nos. 301, 353, 370; Cun.Tev, hymn No.61.
  5. Ibid., 62, 252, 343; Cun.Tev, hymn No.30.
  6. Cam.Tev, hymn Nos. 10, 77, 81, 95, 147, 166, 177, 197, 209, 210, 230, 235, 251, 253, 268, 278, 287, 308, 321, 322, 346, 355, 356, 363, 367, 384.
  7. Supra, p.377.
  8. Cam.Tev, hymn No.117.
  9. Ibid., 340.
  10. Ibid., 3.

as iraiyār pāṭal, 'hymn abounding with the grace of God'.<sup>1</sup>

He also speaks of his hymns as composed in spiritual joy and love<sup>2</sup> and spiritual love and divine enjoyment.<sup>3</sup> These expressions clearly indicate the purity and the holiness of the hymns, and also probably contributed to the traditional belief that the hymns are the words of Śiva.<sup>4</sup>

In this context it is appropriate to mention two different conclusions put forward about the TKK of Campantar by Vellaivāraṅgaṅ and Cuppiramaṇiya Pillai. The former is of the opinion that Campantar composed his TKK and swore that those who worshipped Śiva chanting his hymns would achieve every virtue in their lives and enjoy heavenly bliss thereafter.<sup>5</sup> The latter takes the view that in those stanzas Campantar wants others to enjoy the spiritual delight that he has been enjoying.<sup>6</sup> This interpretation appears to be the more appropriate, because Campantar himself declares that Śiva bestows bliss on his devotees as He enjoys it himself.<sup>7</sup> Campantar too composed his hymns with the grace and inspiration of Śiva - his soul and God's remain united without either

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1. Cun, Tev, hymn No.25.

2. Ibid., 30.

3. Ibid., 55.

4. PTV, p.540.

5. Ibid., p.496.

6. Cuppiramaṇiya Pillai, K., Tiruñāṇacampanṭa cuvāmikaḷ carittiram, pp.41-46.

7. Cam, Tev, 238:2.

of them losing their individuality - "as body and soul, fruit and juice, flower and smell, fire and heat, music and melody, in other words, as unity in duality".<sup>1</sup> The hymns are therefore the revelation of Śiva. Campantar himself admits the co-authorship of Śiva when he says 'my words are His words'.<sup>2</sup> Hence Campantar's intention in composing the hymns may also be that of Śiva.

Finally let us examine some of the references which indicate the manner in which the hymns are intended to be chanted:

- (a) "Those who are able to chant the hymns pañkanīka 'without any inaccuracies' will lead a long life in the company of the devotees of Śiva"<sup>3</sup> (b) "Those who are able to recite the ten verses ūnaminṛi, 'without any mistake' will rule in the heavenly land".<sup>4</sup> (c) "Tāṅkavallār, 'those who are able to keep' the garlands of the verses in their minds will live in glory".<sup>5</sup> (d) The goddesses of wealth will lodge in the hearts of maṇakoḷap payirruvōr, 'those who memorise and remember' this hymn".<sup>6</sup>

The references pañkanīka in (a) and ūnaminṛi in (b) probably refer to verbal errors, faltering in singing or dividing the words and phrases wrongly. Such chanting, according to the belief of the Śaivites, will not yield the benefits of correct

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1. IG, p.259.  
 2. Cam, Tev, 76:1-10.  
 3. Ibid., 47.  
 4. Ibid., 174.  
 5. Ibid., 5.  
 6. Ibid., 126.

chanting, but will be sinful.<sup>1</sup> These references, although they pertain to those specific hymns, may be regarded as relevant to all the hymns. It may be suggested that these references have contributed to the current belief of the Śaivites that those who chant the verses should separate the words by interpreting the verses as they sing, in order to bring out the meaning. On the other hand, in references (c) and (d) the emphasis is perhaps on memorizing the hymns for easy chanting. These are sufficient to establish the existence of the practice of memorizing the hymns during the Tēvāram period. This custom is with us even today. It is common among the Śaivites to memorise and sing Tēvāram in daily prayer, in worship at the shrine, or on religious occasions. What is suggested here is that the memorizing of Tēvāram helped the people to be fluent in their chanting and thereby obtain an understanding of the true meaning and significance of the hymns.

The Śaivite belief is that the chanting of sacred hymns showers grace even on the relatives of those who chant and on

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1. This is of interest as being similar to the view of chanting the Ṛgveda in a faulty manner, entirely faulty chanting rendered the mantra invalid and positively harmful, hence the need for the Vedāngas, the ancillary 'sciences'. See Manomohan Ghosh, M.A., Pāṇiniya Śikṣa or The Śikṣā Vedāṅga ascribed to Pāṇini, pp.78-9.

those who merely listen to the chanting:

"The hymn composed in Tamil will bestow glory in this world and bliss in the next not only upon those who chant it but also upon their relatives".<sup>1</sup>

"Those who are able to recite the ten verses clearly or listen to them will obtain heavenly enjoyment".<sup>2</sup>

Two facts are clear from these references. One is that even those who do not chant the sacred hymns will benefit if one of their relatives is in the habit of reciting them, and the other is that those who listen to the chanting of the sacred hymns are also blessed even though they themselves do not do the chanting. The above mentioned references are perhaps made with the view of encouraging people to chant the hymns or listen to them. The hymns referred to in the TKK do not appear of themselves to be of any significance although they have perhaps contributed to the rise of these beliefs among the Śaivites.

The references cited and discussed have conclusively proved the importance of the TKK. The TKK must have provided Cēkkilār with all the necessary material to reconstruct the life histories of Campantar and Cuntarar. It has been shown

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1. Cam, Tev, hymn 364.

2. Ibid., ll, 105, 117.

that the TKK of Campantar contain detailed information about the saint. It is therefore not surprising that Cēkkiḷār illustrates the life history of Campantar elaborately. We have also made clear that certain references in the TKK of Campantar have contributed to the currency of certain traditional beliefs among the Śaivites. Therefore, the TKK of Campantar may be looked upon as the key that unlocks not only the treasures of the work of Campantar but also some of the hidden aspects of the sacred hymns as a whole.

Finally, the classifications of the benefits of chanting and worship, the description of hymns as garlands and the specific mention of the number 'ten', which are enumerated and discussed above, have proved that Cuntarar gives expression to similar thoughts and ideas to those of his predecessors. He himself admits this indirectly in the words:

"I always chant and enjoy the hymns then sung by the singer of sweet music, Campantan, and the king of words, Appar".<sup>1</sup>

This is subsequently confirmed in PP which refers to Cuntarar visualising Śiva enjoying the hymns of Appar and Campantar as he worshipped him.<sup>2</sup> Dorai Rangaswamy is right in his conclusion:

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1. Cun.Tev, 67:5.  
2. PPEKN, 44.

"Arūrar refers to these two great saints, Campantar and Appar, with great reverence and love. In great humility, he sings that he is only repeating what these two great saints have sung. Therefore, by his time, the two saints and their poems must have become very popular and authoritative".<sup>1</sup>

These factors point to the conclusion that the TKK of Cuntarar may be regarded as the master-key to unlock not only the hidden treasures of his hymns but also those of the other two, especially those of Campantar.

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1. RPT, I, p.2.

## Chapter Eight

### CONCLUSION

Our survey has demonstrated that the eight poems in Pari. and TMP - all exclusively in praise of Murukan - and the Aṭaṅkanmurai, which as a whole is in praise of Śiva, comprise what may in general be called Śaiva bhakti literature. The authors of these works, the bhaktas of Murukan and the devotees of Śiva, were ardent Śaivites, and particularly those hymnists who are regarded as the "three great Lords of Śaivism". We have established that the works in praise of Murukan may also be regarded as Śaiva literature.<sup>1</sup> Here we refer particularly to the eight poems in Pari. which are not only excluded from the PTM but also are not chanted in temples and in homes during religious ceremonies at present, even though in many respects they show a close affinity to TMP, and Tēvāram.

At this point it is necessary to mention the chronology of these works as evidenced by primary and secondary data. Though there is no primary evidence to establish the exact dates of Pari. and TMP, there is secondary evidence such as language, society, cultural features and development of thinking, to show that of the two, TMP is of later origin.<sup>2</sup> These two works in the views of several

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1. Supra, Ch.II, pp.137-8.

2. Ibid., pp. 85, 131.

historians of Tamil literature were undoubtedly later than the other so-called Sangam works which are themselves of uncertain date.<sup>1</sup> However, Pari. and TMP are slightly earlier works than Tēvāram. Marr rightly suggests that "Alone among the anthologies, parts of Pari. show close affinity to Tamil devotional poetry such as Tēvāram, and it is possible that Pari. was the work of the same period of Tēvāram or a little earlier".<sup>2</sup> It still remains the task of historians to find evidence of the primary type for the correct dates.

Among early and medieval literary works only a few can be dated accurately. Examples are the hymns of Campantar and Appar. It has been established on the basis of primary and secondary evidence that Campantar was the junior contemporary of Appar<sup>3</sup> and that their works were composed in the 7th century A.D. Though there is a great deal of controversy about the period of Cuntarar, on the basis of the available evidence we have assigned his work to the 9th century A.D.<sup>4</sup>

In accordance with the above dating, these works have been examined in the following order; first Pari. and TMP, then the Tēvāram. We have followed the tradition established in PTM by

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1. Subramoniam, V.I., 'Landmarks in the History of Tamil Literature', Proceedings of the Second International Conference Seminar of Tamil Studies, Madras, p.108.
  2. ETA, p.477.
  3. Supra, Ch.1, pp.25-6.
  4. Ibid., p.27.

placing Appar's works second even though Campantar was only a junior contemporary of his. It is explicit from the inclusion of the earliest work, TMP, in the 11th Tirumurai, that the PTM was not compiled in chronological order. Campantar's Tēvāram was used to form the first three Tirumurai; probably because he has the merit of composing the greatest number of hymns. It may also be suggested that, if one argues that the first seven Tirumurai were also arranged by Nampiyāṅṅār Nampi, there is no doubt that he compiled them in that order because he had the greatest admiration for him and his hymns.<sup>1</sup>

The distinguishing features of these works are that the Pari. poems are set to paṇ; the TMP, though not set to paṇ, is in the daily liturgy of ardent Śaivites; and the Tēvāram is not only set to paṇ but is also an essential feature of all religious ceremonies in the temples as well as in the homes of the Śaivites. The Pari. poems are the earliest works in Tamil Śaiva bhakti literature which were set to paṇ and sung by devotees.

The survey of these works has shown that, apart from TMP, there are instances of textual lacunae in the works studied; indeed, of the 31 poems in praise of Murugaṅ in Pari., only eight survive now. In the Tēvāram, though hundreds of hymns are said to have been lost before they were compiled by Nampiyāṅṅār Nampi, only a single hymn

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1. Ibid., p.58.

of what he compiled has been lost before it was printed in book form.<sup>1</sup> In the extant works, 54 hymns are fragmentary in Campantar's Tēvāram, 30 hymns are fragmentary in Appar's Tēvāram and four hymns in Cuntarar's Tēvāram. In these hymns, either verses have been lost or certain lines are missing. Two alternative suggestions are possible about the period of this fragmentation. One is that the missing verses and lines were lost before the hymns were collected by Nampiyāṅṭār Nampi, and the other is that they were in existence when Nampiyāṅṭār Nampi collected them, but fell a prey to termites before they were printed. The number of lost verses in certain hymns in the extant works is largest in Appar's Tēvāram and the least in Cuntarar's Tēvāram.

The constant recurrence of phrases and themes and the reiteration of half or whole lines in each verse of many hymns in the Tēvāram suggests improvisation as its fundamental method of composition. Referring to the eight anthologies, Marr concludes, "It has been seen that any one feat may be attributed to several patrons. This too is a feature of bardic poetry that originates in improvisation".<sup>2</sup> This feature in the Tēvāram may be attributed to Śiva in association with his several abodes. It is of course true that these repetitions are wearisome to a critical reader since they do not convey any new meaning. But it should not be forgotten that

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1. Ibid., p.28.  
2. ETA, pp.472-3.

they would not only have helped the saints to compose the hymns extempore but also would have stimulated the masses of the Tamil society, who were mostly illiterate, to chant them collectively.

It is not possible to state precisely when these hymns were first reduced to writing and collected into seven Tirumurai since epigraphical or archaeological material is not available. The description in TMK is not authoritative for two reasons. One is that the description of the compilation of the seven Tirumurai is vague and tends to suggest that it is not the work of Nampiyāṅṭār Nampi but of another.<sup>1</sup> The other is that the information given is not corroborated by epigraphical or archaeological evidence. It may be suggested that these hymns were orally transmitted from generation to generation before they were committed to writing. That they survive in their original form is open to doubt since many errors have probably come from the transcription from one MS to another down the centuries.

Our study of these early works has clearly proved how bhakti originated and developed gradually into its full form as the means of liberation, illumination and bliss for the devotee. The Pari. advocates love, divine grace and virtue but not gold, wealth or luxury.<sup>2</sup> In these poems, the devotees' attitude is one of love and loyal submission to the holy feet of God as being the means of

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1. Supra, Ch.I, p.14.  
2. Pari., 5:78-80.

deliverance from the sufferings of rebirth. A notable feature of these poems is that God's response to the devotees' love is not explicitly expressed there as in the other works.

The TMP, perhaps the earliest non-fragmentary poem in praise of Murukan, exhorts devotees to obtain grace and liberation. The central theme in this work is that if the devotee worships God with love, God will grant him the priceless gift of final liberation, which would otherwise be difficult to obtain.<sup>1</sup> This provision for a response from God to the devotees' bhakti shows that TMP is the earliest work in Tamil Śaiva bhakti literature which exhibits how the devotee pours out his love to God while God responds by showering endless grace on him.

The main difference between the two works is that the Pari. represents the self-expression of the devotees who desire salvation while the TMP represents the outpourings of the devotees who have already had Divine revelation and grace. This is perhaps another reason why the Pari. poems have not gained a place of religious importance in the Śaivite world and were excluded from the sacred collection of the PTM. The two main reasons are that the anthology contains six poems in praise of Viṣṇu and eight secular poems in praise of Vaiyai, and that secular love-themes dominate some of the poems in praise of Murukan without symbolising the mystic union of the devotee with the Almighty.<sup>2</sup>

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1. TMP, 295.

2. Supra, Ch.II, pp.103-4.

The analysis has revealed that the full flowering of Tamil Śaivite bhakti is noticeable in a number of mystic hymns in Tēvāram. It has been demonstrated that Campantar worshipped Śiva with intense bhakti for the purpose of achieving spiritual illumination, freedom from rebirth, and final liberation. Dhavamony concludes, "The characteristics of bhakti, as described by Campantar, are loving contemplation of things divine, sincere and genuine acts of worship, single-minded devotion, and total surrender of the whole person to God in loyal service".<sup>1</sup> On the other hand, Appar's bhakti flows from the bottom of his heart which is pure, sincere and genuine, paving the way for the attainment of final liberation. Single-minded love is very often expressed through Cuntarar's bhakti which showed him how to liberate himself from worldly attachments, be freed from fetters, and finally take refuge under the shade of the holy feet of Śiva.

The devotee's bhakti towards God is first introduced in the Pari. poems. It achieves a deeper meaning when it finds expression together with the response of God in TMP. The full flowering of bhakti finds expression in a refined and profound manner only in the mystical verses of the Nāyanmār.<sup>2</sup> Pillay (probably referring to the Pari. and the TMP) says that the beginning of the bhakti cult is

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1. IG, p.354.  
2. Ibid.

traceable to the third or fourth century A.D., and (probably referring to the Tēvāram and Tivviyappirapantam) that it blossomed into full vigour in the seventh century A.D.<sup>1</sup>

The study of Pari. and TMP has proved of great importance as there is much evidence in them of what might be called indigenous Tamil religion, though seemingly already coalesced with the purānic elements of the cult of Skanda. This Indo-Aryan penetration is further confirmed by the occurrence in Pari. and TMP of a number of loanwords and allusions to numerous purānic legends. Referring to the loanwords in the eight anthologies, Marr suggests that "These are not only technical terms, but also a large number of words of quite ordinary application".<sup>2</sup> This conclusion is more appropriate to the Tēvāram.

Examining allusions to the purānic story of Murukan's victory over Cūrapanman we have conclusively proved that the author of TMP made ample use of the words, phrases and ideas of the Pari. poems.<sup>3</sup> Another significant aspect which emerged from the analysis is that in Pari. and TMP are fused the tales of the kings of dangerous wrath and might who destroyed their enemies by cutting down the guardian trees and the story of the mighty and wrathful Murukan who destroyed the dreaded Cūrapanman who had assumed the form of a mango tree. This, along with an analysis of kaṭimaram,<sup>4</sup> is sufficient evidence to

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1. Pillay, K.K., 'Landmarks in the History of Tamilnad', Proceedings of the Second International Seminar of Tamil Studies, Madras, p.20.
  2. ETA, p.476.
  3. Supra, Ch.II, p.131.
  4. Ibid., p.83.

show that the guardian tree of the kings acquired a religious connotation during the time of Pari. and TMP.

The temples satisfied a more or less universal need among the people. The agricultural region was of course more populated than the other regions; so it was no wonder that there was a greater number of temples there.<sup>1</sup> New temples originated and old temples were kept in good repair wherever the population was large. People went on pilgrimage chanting hymns and taking part in worship. Congregational worship became prominent; oblations of various kinds were offered and the use of flowers and garlands played a significant role in worship.<sup>2</sup> Though brahmans functioned as officiating priests in most of the shrines, there were some temples where the devotees themselves performed pūjā. The temples became centres of educational, social and cultural activities. Purānas were expounded for the benefit of the masses. This was perhaps the most efficacious method of instruction adopted to educate the illiterates of the Tamil society of the period. Music and dancing formed other attractions of the temple. Vedas and ancillary studies took place to impart religious knowledge. Festivals were held purely for religious purposes, and yet served as entertainment for the people.<sup>3</sup> All these prompt us to conclude that the increase of population and commercial prosperity were responsible for the

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1. See our Ch.III, pp.149-50.

2. Ibid., pp.190-213.

3. Ibid., p.182.

construction of numerous temples and the pursuit of other religious activities. People who were afflicted with poverty could hardly engage themselves in such activities.

Our analysis of the TKK has proved to be of great importance as it has revealed a number of salient facts, particularly the origin of the present title Tēvāram meaning Tēva+āram, 'garland of God' as a common name for all the hymns of these three saints. The occurrences of the word mālai, which refers to either the hymns or the verses, have been enumerated.<sup>1</sup> It has been explained that all the three saints, especially Campantar and Cuntarar, speak very often of their hymns as garlands and hence refer to their hymns as being garlands for Śiva. In short, the saints express their profound bhakti through their garlands of hymns. We therefore concluded that the compound Tēvāram, of Sanskritic origin, arose only after the 15th century since this term is not found in the Tēvāram itself nor is it used by Nampiyāṅṭār Nampi or Cēkkiḷār or Cantānakuravar. The description of hymns as garlands for Śiva is symbolic of the marriage of the soul to the almighty. Śiva is the lover, the devotee is the lady in love and the hymns form the marriage garland which brings about the wedlock. The devotee and God become one in love, a spiritual communion and identity.

Two significant aspects, the benefits of chanting and the benefits

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1. Supra, Ch.VII, pp.385-7.

of worship, have been brought to light by the examination respectively of the TKK of Campantar and Cuntarar, and the last stanzas of Appar. The former two advocate chanting their hymns to obtain various spiritual and material benefits while the latter advocates worship of Śiva for celestial benefits, precluding material comforts. In other words, in the TKK the emphasis is on chanting, but in the last stanzas it is on worship. The other main difference between the two categories of stanzas is the complacency of the former. Campantar and Cuntarar often praise themselves, their native place, and their mother tongue. Appar does none of this. Three different explanations are possible about this. One is that Appar's maturity perhaps prevented him from composing complacent TKK; the second is that the TKK in the hymns of Campantar and Cuntarar may be interpolations of a later date; and thirdly, the belief of the Śaivites is that even those stanzas which are apparently complacent are really the words of God.

The akam hymns, in which love existing between God and his devotee is often expressed in terms of love existing between man and woman, are distinctive compositions expressing the saints' experience of loving communion with God. In other words, illumination and bliss are expressed in terms of the divine story of a loving couple - the soul and God.<sup>1</sup> The analysis of these hymns has

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1. RPT, II, p.1265.

clearly proved how the saints in composing their akam hymns have made use of seven tipai and several turai of the Akappāṭṭu and Kāmattuppāl which are so beautifully put into proper form by the early Tamil poets and Tiruvalluvar respectively. Secular love is an appropriate medium for the disclosure of divine experience and thought. From the enumeration and classification of the akam hymns and verses, it has been established that all three saints preferred to take up the role of the lady in love, rather than other roles such as the companion of the beloved, the mother, or the foster-mother. Appar shows greater inclination than the other two in this respect.<sup>1</sup>

We have also demonstrated how both the poets of Pari. and the hymnists deviate considerably from the rigid conventions of Akappāṭṭu in composing their love poems. This is seen more in the Tēvāram than in the poems of Pari. Another interesting contrast observed is that the love themes are presented purely in secular form in the poems of Pari. as in early akam poetry, while in the Tēvāram akam is turned into an instrument for vividly expressing spiritual union. In this union, God's love holds sway over His beloved in such a way that the hymnist gives himself up entirely to the divine embrace and becomes himself divine in action and existence. Holding the devotees in union, God becomes one with them and abides

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1. Supra, Ch.IV, pp.224-6. In In memoriam, Tennyson has used the same technique to express his sorrow at the death of his great friend.

in them. Thus secular love, fully flowering into mystic love, finds expression in Tēvāram only in the akam hymns. The analysis of akam themes in Pari. and Tēvāram has thus conclusively proved that secular love themes were introduced step by step into mystic literature, culminating in whole-hearted devotion to God and the desire to flood the land with lyrics of deep religious fervour.

On the basis of primary and secondary evidence it has been proved that Cuntarar gave expression to the thoughts and ideas which were held by the other two saints. Cuntarar himself admits that his hymns repeat only the ideas of his predecessors, Campantar and Appar.<sup>1</sup> This means that the works of Cuntarar are the epitome of the works of the other two saints. This possibly prompted Cēkkilār to say that Cuntarar in his worship of Śiva states that the god found delight in the hymns of Campantar and Appar.<sup>2</sup> From this it is quite clear that the works of the latter two had not only become popular and authoritative during the time of Cuntarar but also familiar to him. That Cuntarar was much influenced by the other two saints is established further by the analysis of the TKK, the common hymns, and the akam hymns.

The TKK of Cuntarar closely follow the pattern of Campantar's TKK. In addition, two more important facts which emerged from the

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1. Cun, Tev, 67:5.

2. PPEK, 44.

analysis of the TKK may be cited in support of this view. One is that, like Campantar, Cuntarar also describes his hymns as garlands.<sup>1</sup> This description is however beautified and elaborated in several stanzas comparing individual verses to garlands, thus likening the ten verses of a hymn to ten garlands. The other is that the classifications of benefits enumerated in the TKK of Campantar and Cuntarar establish that even the subject matter is generally similar to that of Campantar.

The comparative study of the common hymns of the three saints provided substantial evidence that Cuntarar composed hymns similar to those of Campantar and Appar, besides giving expression to their ideas and thoughts. The common hymns Nāṭṭuttokai, Urttokai and Iṭaiyārruttokai are quite similar to the common hymns Aṭaiyut tiruttāṅṭakam, Kṣēttirakkōvai and Palavakait tiruttāṅṭakam of Appar and the common hymn Kṣēttirakkōvai of Campantar. The remaining five common hymns in the Tēvāram of Cuntarar are themselves evidence of the saint composing common hymns very similar to those of his predecessors.

Among the akam hymns of Cuntarar, hymn No.37, which is examined under the sub-heading "tūtu hymns" in chapter four, is quite similar in poetic pattern and subject matter to the tūtu hymns Nos. 60 and 321 of Campantar and hymn No.12 of Appar. Apart from

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1. Supra, Ch.VII, pp.385-6.

this, hymn No.36, which describes ladies falling in love at the sight of Śiva when he goes on the road in the semblance of a beggar, is another clear example of Cuntarar repeating the thoughts and ideas of Appar (hymn No.271). The only difference in this case is that Appar describes a single lady who falls in love with Śiva while Cuntarar describes several ladies who fall in love. What is clear from this is that Cuntarar elaborates the ideas of Appar by means of a number of secular love themes such as añcikkūral, pukalntu kūral, ūṭal and uṭappōkku.<sup>1</sup>

Finally, hymn No.74, which does not praise Śiva in relation to one specific shrine, but to two shrines together,<sup>2</sup> was clearly influenced by hymn Nos. 4, 6, 7 and 348 of Campantar,<sup>3</sup> and hymn Nos. 224 and 286 of Appar.<sup>4</sup> A striking feature about these hymns is that, according to PP, they were sung when the saints were worshipping in one particular shrine though the hymns praise Śiva in relation to two shrines.

We may complete our proof of this point by citing the TKK which are an important aspect of the hymns of both Cuntarar and Campantar as proof that Cuntarar was influenced more by Campantar than by Appar.

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1. Supra, Ch.IV, pp.234-7.
  2. Supra, Ch.I, p.50.
  3. Ibid., p.28.
  4. Ibid., p.43.

The most important effect of Tēvāram is the lasting impression it has made on Tamil language and literature. The verse-form patikam in the hands of the saints achieved freshness, richness and flexibility through various devices. Campantar introduced a number of new metres such as molimārru, mālainārru, valimoli, maṭakku, iyamam, ēkapātam, irukkukkuṟaḷ, elukūṟṟirukkai, iraṭi iraṭivaippū, nālaṭimēlvaippu, muṭukiyalākiya tiruvirākam, cakkaramārru, and kōmūttirikam, which are enumerated in PP as original contributions of the saint.<sup>1</sup> These are curiously constructed poems known as mīraikavi or cittirakavi. The absence of the reiteration of half or whole lines in most of these hymns tends to suggest that these hymns are non-improvised compositions.

The hymns composed in nēricai, viruttam, kuruntokai and tāṇṭakam in Appar's Tēvāram, are entirely new to patikam. The hymns in the fourth Tirumurai (Nos.1-21 of the total of 312 by Appar) are the only ones which were composed to paṇ in the manner of those of the other two saints. The hymns composed in the unique verse-form tāṇṭakam, which are collected into the 6th Tirumurai, rightly earned Appar the title tāṇṭaka vēṇṭaṇ, 'master of tāṇṭakam'. Cuntarar, who repeats only the ideas and thoughts of the other two, does not add anything new to the verse-form patikam.

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1. PPTC, 276-7.

Besides these original contributions, some of the hymns perhaps paved the way for the development in later periods of some new kinds of pirapantam, such as Tūtu,<sup>1</sup> Aṅkamālai, Kēcātipātam, Pātātikēcam and Ulā. The tūtu hymns, which are entirely messenger-poems, probably influenced the birth in Tamil of the pirapantam, Tūtu in an elaborate and distinctive manner. The hymns No.271 of Appar and No.36 of Cuntarar, probably influenced later poets to compose Ulā in an elaborate and descriptive manner.

A degree of what may be termed Indo-Aryan penetration into Tamil society is clearly manifested by the numerous references in Tēvāram to purāṇic legends and brahmanical customs. The richness of allusions to a number of purāṇic legends which must have captivated the popular mind of that period has got into the very texture of the literary language and made earnest appeal to the people with inspiring devotion and love. The purāṇic allusions, which are characteristic of these works and interesting in themselves, kept the masses pious. The purāṇic legends, which are systematically alluded to in the hymns of Campantar and Appar, and which portray the greatness and superiority of Śiva over all other Hindu gods, are calculated to inspire devotion and love in those who chant the hymns, and to impart abstract truths and dogmas. The Sanskrit diction, which enormously influenced the Tamil language during

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1. Supra, Ch.IV, pp.251-8.

this period, was another element that helped Tamil poetry become flexible and resilient.<sup>1</sup>

The pan system, which was peculiar to the Tamils, was developed and systematized for the purpose of singing the devotional hymns. This helped to purify the grosser instincts of the people when they chanted the hymns in simple choral music pouring out their hearts. The hymns, which were composed in simple Tamil, with beautiful rhythms, exquisitely musical words, and different kinds of metres in a new verse form patikam were undoubtedly admirable for musical rendering. These techniques helped these works, especially Tēvāram, become a great moving force in the lives of the people who lived in the midst of religious rivalry.

The Tamil Śaiva Siddhānta philosophy had its roots in the Tēvāram, which helped it enormously in its stupendous development under Meykaṇṭa Tēvar in the 13th century. A compendium of fourteen Śaiva Siddhānta works, collectively called Meykaṇṭa cāttiram, the authors of which are popularly known as Cantāṇa Kuravar, contains the essence of Śaiva theology expounding the relationship of God to matter and soul and is mainly derived from the Tēvāram. We have cited Akattiyar tēvārat tirattu to prove how the Tēvāram hymns were used to expound the ten-fold theology of Tamil Śaivism,<sup>2</sup> and the

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1. HTLL, p.103.

2. Supra, Ch.I, pp.62-4.

Tirumurai tirattu to show how Umāpaticivācāriyār makes use of the hymns to formulate the rules governing the theology of Tamil Śaivism in his work Tiruvaruṭṭayan.<sup>1</sup> The analysis of flowers in worship has clearly established how the work Fuṭṭaviti was written in the light of the Tēvāram hymns by Nānapirakāca Paṭṭāraḱar of Tiruvārūr.<sup>2</sup> The study of the modes of worship and the use of garlands in worship have proved how, using Tēvāram, Arumuka Nāvalar formulated some of the rules governing temple worship and enumerated the different kinds of garlands in his work Caiva viṇā viṭai.<sup>3</sup>

A comparative study of some of the hymns of Campantar and Appar revealed a most significant fact. The tūtu hymn Nos.60 and 321 of Campantar<sup>4</sup> and the tūtu hymn No.12 of Appar<sup>5</sup> are quite similar not only in poetic pattern but also in subject matter. Among the common hymns Kṣēttirakkōvai (No.175) of Campantar, and Kṣēttirakkōvai (No.283) and Aṭaivut tiruttāṭṭakam (No.284) of Appar are identical in several respects. It has also been shown that the hymns Pañcākkarap patikam and Namaccivāyap patikam of Campantar, and the hymn Namaccivāyap patikam of Appar are similarly composed on the five sacred letters.<sup>6</sup> Moreover, hymn Nos. 4, 6, 7 and 348 of

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1. Ibid., pp.64-5.
  2. Supra, Ch.III, p.201.
  3. Ibid.
  4. Supra, Ch.IV, pp.251-3.
  5. Ibid., pp.254-5.
  6. Supra, Ch.VI, p.355.

Campan<sup>1</sup> and hymn Nos. 224 and 286 of Appar<sup>2</sup> bear evidence to both saints composing single hymns in praise of Śiva in relation to two shrines. All these similarities in composition tend to suggest that one of the two saints was influenced by the other. We may conclude that the hymns of one of the saints referred to above (as well some other hymns) probably slightly precede all the hymns of the other saint. One may suggest that Campan, the junior contemporary of Appar, repeats the ideas of the latter.

At this stage, an interesting contrast may be drawn between early Tamil poetry and early Śaiva bhakti literature. The early love poetry appearing in such anthologies as Akanānūru and Aiṅkuruṅūru was composed, in common with the puram panegyrics, for pleasure and approbation on the part of the poets' patrons and audience, and may in no way have been an expression or sublimation of the poets' own feelings. It would not be possible to regard as Romantic the poems of the akam anthologies.<sup>3</sup> In early Śaiva bhakti literature the akam hymns were composed in praise of the saints' deity and also for the devotion and approbation of the audiences of devotees and were an expression or sublimation of the saints' own feelings of bhakti. The kātal cuvai permeates the former while bhakti rasa the latter.

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1. Supra, Ch.1, p.28.
  2. Ibid., p.43.
  3. ETA, p.471.

The glories, greatness, and munificence of kings and chieftains were the predominant themes in the early puram poetry; music and dancing were performed in the royal court for the pleasure and approbation of the kings and chieftains. The poets, expressed their love and regard for them through their poetry and, in return, rewards and titles were conferred on them for their talents. But in early Śiva bhakti literature the temple took the place of the royal court, God replaced the kings, the king himself became the worshipper of God; the king's guardian tree evolved into the religious guardian tree. The people, who had been adulators of kings, turned into worshippers of God. The saints took the place of the bards of yore. The glories, greatness and holy grace of God became the predominant poetic themes. God showered grace and illumination on the saints for their bhakti and thus final liberation was the reward of strenuous perseverance.

TABLE NO. ITHE AKAM HYMNS IN THE TĒVĀRAM(a) Campanantar's Tēvāram

| <u>Pat.No.</u> | <u>Hymns</u>          | <u>Verses</u> | <u>Speaker</u> |
|----------------|-----------------------|---------------|----------------|
| 1              | Tiruppiramapuram      | 3 & 6         | heroine        |
| 44             | Tiruppāccilāccirāmam  | 1 - 10        | foster-mother  |
| 56             | Tiruppārrurai         | 1 - 10        | heroine        |
| 60             | Tiruttōṅipuram        | 1 - 10        | "              |
| 63             | Tiruppiramapuram      | 1 - 11        | "              |
| 73             | Tirukkāṅūr            | 1 - 10        | "              |
| 76             | Tiruvilampaiyankōttūr | 1 - 10        | "              |
| 154            | Tirumarukal           | 1 - 10        | foster-mother  |
| 159            | Tiruvāṅaikkā          | 1 - 10        | "              |
| 183            | Tirumayilāppūr        | 1 - 10        | heroine        |
| 242            | Tiruvalaṅcuḷi         | 6 & 7         | none           |
| 256            | Tirumūkkiccaram       | 6             | heroine        |
| 303            | Tiruvārūr             | 1 - 10        | "              |
| 321            | Tiruccenkāṭṭaṅkuṭi    | 1 - 9         | "              |
| 358            | Tiruttōṅipuram        | 1-3, 8-10     | "              |
| 359            | Tiruvirāmēccuram      | 1 - 10        | "              |
| 362            | Tirupparitiniyamam    | 1 - 10        | "              |
| 374            | Tiruvīlimilalai       | 1 - 10        | "              |

(b) Appar's Tēvāram

| <u>Pat.No.</u> | <u>Hymns</u>        | <u>Verses</u> | <u>Speaker</u>              |
|----------------|---------------------|---------------|-----------------------------|
| 6              | Tirukkalippālai     | 1 - 10        | foster-mother               |
| 12             | Tiruppalaṅgam       | 1 - 10        | heroine                     |
| 97             | Tirunallūr          | 1 - 10        | "                           |
| 120            | Tiruvārūr           | 7 - 8         | foster-mother               |
| 138            | Tiruppācūr          | 6 - 8         | heroine                     |
| 142            | Tiruvāvaṭuṭuṅai     | 1 - 10        | mother                      |
| 153            | Tirukkalippālai     | 1 - 10        | foster-mother               |
| 158            | Tiruttōṅipuram      | 1 - 10        | "                           |
| 159            | Tiruppukalūr        | 2 - 3         | "                           |
| 166            | Tiruvatikaiviraṭṭam | 1 - 12        | heroine                     |
| 177            | Tirukkōḷampam       | 4             | foster-mother               |
| 179            | Tiruvalaṅcuḷi       | 9             | companion of<br>the heroine |
| 201            | Tirumarukal         | 4 - 9         | "                           |
| 222            | Tiru āmāttūr        | 1 - 10        | heroine                     |
| 226            | Tiruppuraṅampayam   | 1 - 10        | "                           |
| 238            | Tiruvārūr           | 7             | companion of<br>the heroine |
| 248            | Tiruveṅkāṭu         | 3 - 7         | heroine                     |
| 258            | Tiruvogṅiyūr        | 1 - 10        | "                           |
| 271            | Tiruvalampuram      | 1 - 10        | "                           |

(c) Cuntarar's Tēvāram

| <u>Pat.No.</u> | <u>Hymns</u>              | <u>Verses</u> | <u>Speaker</u> |
|----------------|---------------------------|---------------|----------------|
| 33             | Namakkaṭikaḷākiya aṭikaḷ  | 6             | heroine        |
| 36             | Tiruppaiñṅili             | 1 - 10        | "              |
| 37             | Tiruvārūr                 | 1 - 10        | "              |
| 46             | Tirunākaikkārōṅam         | 3 & 4         | none           |
| 91             | Tiruvogḡiyūr              | 2 & 4         | none           |
| 93             | Tirunaḡaiyūrc cittiḥcaram | 5             | none           |

TABLE NO.2ARRANGEMENT OF HYMNS ON THE BASIS OF THE PAṆ(a) The hymns of CampantarFirst Tirumurai

| <u>Paṇ</u>          | <u>Serial No.</u> | <u>Total No. of hymns</u> |
|---------------------|-------------------|---------------------------|
| 1. Naṭṭapāṭai       | 1 - 22            | 22                        |
| 2. Takkarākam       | 23 - 46           | 24                        |
| 3. Paḷantakkarākam  | 47 - 62           | 16                        |
| 4. Takkēci          | 63 - 74           | 12                        |
| 5. Kuṟiñci          | 75 - 103          | 29                        |
| 6. Viyāḷakkuṟiñci   | 104 - 128         | 25                        |
| 7. Mēkarākakkuṟiñci | 129 - 135         | 7                         |
| 8. Yāḷmuri          | 136               | 1                         |
|                     |                   | <hr/> 136                 |

Second Tirumurai

|                       |                     |           |
|-----------------------|---------------------|-----------|
| 1. Intaḷam            | 137b- 175 (1-39)    | 39        |
| 2. Cīkāmaram          | 176 - 189 (40-53)   | 14        |
| 3. Kāntāram           | 190 - 218 (54-82)   | 29        |
| 4. Piyantaik kāntāram | 219 - 232 (83-96)   | 14        |
| 5. Naṭṭarākam         | 233 - 248 (97-112)  | 16        |
| 6. Cevvaḷi            | 249 - 258 (113-122) | 10        |
|                       |                     | <hr/> 122 |

Third Tirumurai

| <u>Paṇ</u>          | <u>Serial No.</u>              | <u>Total No. of hymns</u> |
|---------------------|--------------------------------|---------------------------|
| 1. Kāntāra pañcamam | 259 - 282 (1-24)               | 24                        |
| 2. Kolli            | 283 - 299 (25-41)              | 17                        |
| 3. Kollikkauvāṇam   | 300 (42)                       | 1                         |
| 4. Kaucikam         | 301-314 & 375 (43-56<br>& 117) | 15                        |
| 5. Pañcamam         | 315 - 324 (57-66)              | 10                        |
| 6. Cātāri           | 325 - 357 (67-99)              | 33                        |
| 7. Paḷam pañcuram   | 358 - 374 (100-116)            | 17                        |
| 8. Puṇanīrmai       | 376 - 381 (118-123)            | 6                         |
| 9. Antālikkupīñci   | 382 - 383 (124-125)            | 2                         |
|                     |                                | 125                       |

(b) The hymns of ApparFourth Tirumurai

|                       |  |    |
|-----------------------|--|----|
| 1. Kolli              | Pati. No.1<br>Tirunēricai 22-79<br>Tiruviruttam 80-113 | 93 |
| 2. Kāntāram           | 2 - 7  | 6  |
| 3. Piyantaik kāntāram | 8  | 1  |
| 4. Cātāri             | 9  | 1  |
| 5. Kāntāra pañcamam   | 10 - 11  | 2  |
| 6. Paḷantakkarākam    | 12 - 13  | 2  |

| <u>Paṇ</u>        | <u>Serial No.</u> | <u>Total No. of hymns</u> |
|-------------------|-------------------|---------------------------|
| 7. Paḷam paṅcuram | 14 - 15           | 2                         |
| 8. Intaḷam        | 16 - 18           | 3                         |
| 9. Cīkāmaram      | 19 - 20           | 2                         |
| 10. Kuṟiṅci       | 21                | 1                         |
|                   |                   | 113                       |

#### Fifth Tirumurai

All the hymns of this tirumurai (114-213) are composed in kuruntokai and are traditionally sung in the rāga nādanāmakriyā.

#### Sixth Tirumurai

All the hymns of this tirumurai (214-312) are composed in tāṅṭakam and are traditionally sung in the rāga, harikāmbōji.

#### (c) The hymns of Cuntarar

#### Seventh Tirumurai

| <u>Paṇ</u>         | <u>Serial No.</u> | <u>Total No. of hymns</u> |
|--------------------|-------------------|---------------------------|
| 1. Intaḷam         | 1 - 12            | 12                        |
| 2. Takkarākam      | 13 - 16           | 4                         |
| 3. Naṭṭarākam      | 17 - 30           | 14                        |
| 4. Kolli           | 31 - 37           | 7                         |
| 5. Kollik kauvāṇam | 38 - 46           | 9                         |
| 6. Paḷam paṅcuram  | 47 - 53           | 7                         |
| 7. Takkēci         | 54 - 70           | 17                        |

| <u>Paṅ</u>            | <u>Serial No.</u> | <u>Total No. of hymns</u> |
|-----------------------|-------------------|---------------------------|
| 8. Kāntāram           | 71 - 75           | 5                         |
| 9. Piyantaik kāntāram | 76                | 1                         |
| 10. Kāntāra pañcamam  | 77                | 1                         |
| 11. Naṭṭapāṭai        | 78 - 82           | 5                         |
| 12. Puṅaīrmai         | 83 - 85           | 3                         |
| 13. Cikāmaram         | 86 - 89           | 4                         |
| 14. Kuṅiñci           | 90 - 93           | 4                         |
| 15. Kaucikam          | 94                | 1                         |
| 16. Centurutti        | 95                | 1                         |
| 17. Pañcamam          | 96 - 100          | 5                         |

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TABLE NO. 3THE POTUPPATIKAṆKAL, 'THE COMMON HYMNS'(a) The common hymns of Campantar

| <u>Name</u>   | <u>Number</u> | <u>Tirumurai</u> | <u>First line</u>                |
|---|---------------|------------------|----------------------------------|
| 1. Tirunilakaṇṭap patikam   | 116           | I                | <u>avvinaikkivinai</u> .....     |
| This hymn is named after the refrain, <u>tirunilakaṇṭam</u> , of the verses of the hymn.  |               |                  |                                  |
| 2. Keṭṭtirakkōvai   | 175           | II.39            | <u>ārūr tillaivampalam</u> ..... |
| This hymn gives the names of the abodes of Śiva and therefore it is called Keṭṭtirakkōvai - names of shrines strung together.   |               |                  |                                  |
| 3. Kōlarupatikam  | 221           | II.85            | <u>vēyurutōli</u> .....          |
| The verses of this hymn describe the dispelling of the evil effects of the planets and therefore the hymn is named <u>kōlarupatikam</u> .   |               |                  |                                  |
| 4. Pañcākkaṇṭap patikam   | 280           | III.22           | <u>tuñcalum</u> .....            |
| The refrain of this hymn is <u>āñceluttu</u> . The hymn is named <u>pañcākṣara</u> , the Sanskrit translation of the Tamil <u>āñceluttu</u> .   |               |                  |                                  |
| 5. Taṇit tiruvirukkukkuṛaḷ  | 298           | III.40           | <u>kallāñḷal</u> .....           |
| The verses of this hymn are composed as distiches of two metrical lines and the subject matter is said to be similar to that of the <u>Rgvēda</u> . Therefore the hymn is named as <u>taṇit tiruvirukkukkuṛaḷ</u> (taṇi + tiru + irukku + kuṛaḷ). |               |                  |                                  |
| 6. Namaccivāyat tiruppatikam  | 307           | III.49           | <u>kātalāki</u> .....            |
| This hymn is named after the refrain, <u>namaccivāya</u> , of the verses of the hymn.   |               |                  |                                  |

| <u>Name</u>  | <u>Number</u> | <u>Tirumurai</u> | <u>First line</u>               |
|--|---------------|------------------|---------------------------------|
| 7. Tiruppācuram  | 312           | III.54           | <u>vālka antanar</u> .....      |
| This hymn is called <u>pācuram</u> in the benedictory stanza.  |               |                  |                                 |
| (b) <u>The common hymns of Appar</u>   |               |                  |                                 |
| 1. Civanenunōcai   | 8             | IV.8             | <u>civanenunōcai</u> .....      |
| This hymn is named after the first phrase, <u>civanenunōcai</u> of its first verse.  |               |                  |                                 |
| 2. Aṅkamālai   | 9             | IV.9             | <u>talaiyē nivanāṅkāy</u> ..... |
| This hymn describes the offering of the principal members of the body as garlands to Śiva and is therefore named <u>aṅkamālai</u> .  |               |                  |                                 |
| 3. Namaccivāyat tiruppatikam   | 11            | IV.11            | <u>corrupai vētiyan</u> .....   |
| This hymn is referred to by the name, <u>namaccivāya</u> in its last verse.  |               |                  |                                 |
| 4. Tacapurāṅam   | 14            | IV.14            | <u>paruvurai yonru</u> .....    |
| This hymn is so-called because each verse describes one of the ten <u>purāṇic</u> legends.   |               |                  |                                 |
| 5. Pāvanācap patikam   | 15            | IV.15            | <u>parrarāreṅr</u> .....        |
| This hymn is named after the refrain <u>pavanācam</u> of the last verse of the hymn.   |               |                  |                                 |
| 6. Viṭamtīrtta patikam   | 18            | IV.18            | <u>onrukolānavar</u> .....      |
| This hymn, according to <u>PP</u> , had the divine power of ridding the poison from the body of Appūtiyaṭikal's son, who died of a snake bite, and therefore it is named <u>viṭamtīrtta tiruppaṭikam</u> . |               |                  |                                 |

- | <u>Name</u>  | <u>Number</u> | <u>Tirumurai</u> | <u>First line</u>                |
|--|---------------|------------------|----------------------------------|
| 7. <u>Ninainta tirunēricai</u>   | 74            | IV.74            | <u>muttinai maniyai</u> .....    |
| The refrain of the verses of this hymn is <u>ninainta neñcam alakita ninaittavārē</u> and therefore is named <u>ninainta tirunēricai</u> .   |               |                  |                                  |
| 8. <u>Tanit tirunēricai</u>  | 75            | IV.75            | <u>tonṭanēn paṭṭa</u> .....      |
| 9. <u>Tanit tirunēricai</u>  | 76            | IV.76            | <u>maruḷavā maṇattanāki</u> .... |
| 10. <u>Tanit tirunēricai</u>   | 77            | IV.77            | <u>kaṭumpakai</u> .....          |
| These three hymns describe the personal divine experience of the saint in a kind of poetry called <u>nericai</u> and therefore they are named <u>tanit tirunēricai</u> .   |               |                  |                                  |
| 11. <u>Kuṟainta tirunēricai</u>  | 78            | IV.78            | <u>venrilēn</u> .....            |
| 12. <u>Kuṟainta tirunēricai</u>  | 79            | IV.79            | <u>tammānaṅ kāppa</u> .....      |
| The refrain of the verses of these two hymns is <u>enceyvān tōṅrinēṇē</u> , 'I have been born in this world and I do not know what to do' and therefore these two hymns are named <u>kuṟainta tirunēricai</u> . (The saint begs the Lord for his salvation.) |               |                  |                                  |
| 13. <u>Āruyirt tiruviruttam</u>  | 84            | IV.84            | <u>eṭṭān ticaikku</u> .....      |
| This hymn is named after the refrain, <u>āruyir</u> , of its verses. <u>Viruttam</u> is the metre used.  |               |                  |                                  |
| 14. <u>Pacupatiṭ tiruviruttam</u>  | 110           | IV.110           | <u>cāmpalaip pūci</u> .....      |
| This hymn is named after the refrain, <u>pacupati</u> , of its verses.   |               |                  |                                  |
| 15. <u>Carakkarait tiruviruttam</u>  | 111           | IV.111           | <u>viṭaiyum</u> .....            |
| This hymn is named after one of the recurring phrases, <u>carakkarai</u> of the last line of its verses.   |               |                  |                                  |

| <u>Name</u>                   | <u>Number</u> | <u>Tirumurai</u> | <u>First line</u>            |
|-------------------------------|---------------|------------------|------------------------------|
| 16. <u>Taṅit tiruviruttam</u> | 112           | IV.112           | <u>veḷḷik kulaittuṇi....</u> |
| 17. <u>Taṅit tiruviruttam</u> | 113           | IV.113           | <u>paṇaḷat taṭavarai....</u> |

In these two hymns, the saint describes his personal divine experience.

|                                  |     |      |                           |
|----------------------------------|-----|------|---------------------------|
| 18. <u>Taṅit tirukkuṅuntokai</u> | 202 | V.89 | <u>oṅṅu veṇṇirai.....</u> |
| 19. <u>Taṅit tirukkuṅuntokai</u> | 203 | V.90 | <u>mācilvīṇaiyum.....</u> |
| 20. <u>Taṅit tirukkuṅuntokai</u> | 204 | V.91 | <u>ēyilāṇai.....</u>      |

These hymns are named after the verse-form kuṅuntokai, but the prefixes taṅi and tiru denote respectively its individuality and its sanctity.

|                                      |     |      |                         |
|--------------------------------------|-----|------|-------------------------|
| 21. <u>Kālapācat tirukkuṅuntokai</u> | 205 | V.92 | <u>kaṇṭu koḷḷa.....</u> |
|--------------------------------------|-----|------|-------------------------|

This hymn is so-named because it deals with the saint's injunctions to the god of death not to approach the Śaiva devotees.

|  |     |      |                     |
|--|-----|------|---------------------|
| 22. <u>Maṅakkirpaṇēyenum<br/>tirukkuṅuntokai</u> | 206 | V.93 | <u>kācaṇai.....</u> |
|--|-----|------|---------------------|

This hymn is named after the refrain maṅakkirpaṇē of its verses.

|   |     |      |                        |
|---|-----|------|------------------------|
| 23. <u>Toḷarpālatēyenum<br/>tirukkuṅuntokai</u> | 207 | V.94 | <u>aṇṭattānai.....</u> |
|---|-----|------|------------------------|

This hymn is named after the refrain, toḷarpālatē of its verses.

|  |     |      |                         |
|--|-----|------|-------------------------|
| 24. <u>Iḷiṅkapurāṇat<br/>tirukkuṅuntokai</u> | 208 | V.95 | <u>pukkaṇaintu.....</u> |
|--|-----|------|-------------------------|

In the last verse, Śiva appearing in the Iḷiṅkam (iḷiṅkatē tōṅṅiṇāṇē) is described and therefore the hymn is named iḷiṅkapurāṇat tirukkuṅuntokai.

| <u>Name</u>   | <u>Number</u> | <u>Tirumurai</u> | <u>First line</u>                |
|---|---------------|------------------|----------------------------------|
| 25. Maṇattokait<br>tirukkuṅṅuntokai   | 209           | V.96             | <u>ponnullat tirai</u> .....     |
| The saint gives expression to the state of his mind in each verse of this hymn and therefore it is named <u>maṇattokai</u> .  |               |                  |                                  |
| 26. Cittattokait<br>tirukkuṅṅuntokai  | 210           | V.97             | <u>cintippār maṇattān</u> .....  |
| The first verse of this hymn begins with the phrase, <u>cintippār maṇattān</u> , 'He dwells in the mind of those who think of him' and thereby the hymn is named <u>cittattokai</u> . |               |                  |                                  |
| 27. Uḷḷat tirukkuṅṅuntokai  | 211           | V.98             | <u>nṅalaittatōr</u> .....        |
| The hymn is named after the refrain, <u>kaṅṅukonṅaten, uḷḷamē</u> , 'my mind has found him'.  |               |                  |                                  |
| 28. Pāvanācat tirukkuṅṅuntokai  | 212           | V.99             | <u>pāvanam paḷiparrara</u> ..... |
| The first verse of this hymn describes the destruction of the accumulated demerits attached to the soul and therefore the hymn is named <u>pāvanācam</u> .                            |               |                  |                                  |
| 29. Ātipurāṅat<br>tirukkuṅṅuntokai  | 213           | V.100            | <u>vēta nāyakan</u> .....        |
| The superiority of Śiva is depicted in this hymn and therefore it is named <u>ātipurāṅat tirukkuṅṅuntokai</u> .   |               |                  |                                  |
| 30. Kṣēttirakkōvai  | 283           | VI.70            | <u>tillaiccirrampalam</u> .....  |
| The shrines of Śiva are strung together in this hymn and so it is named <u>kṣēttirakkōvai</u> .   |               |                  |                                  |
| 31. Aṅaiṅvut tiruttāṅṅakam  | 284           | VI.71            | <u>poruppalli</u> .....          |
| The shrines of Śiva, which are the places of surrender, are strung together in the verse-form <u>tāṅṅakam</u> , in this hymn. It is therefore named <u>aṅaiṅvut tiruttāṅṅakam</u> .   |               |                  |                                  |

| <u>Name</u>   | <u>Number</u> | <u>Tirumurai</u> | <u>First line</u>                                   |
|---|---------------|------------------|---|
| 32. Palavakait tiruttāṅṅakam  | 306           | VI.93            | <u>nēnrtorutti</u> .....                            |
| Each verse in this hymn describes Śiva in relation to a specific shrine. It is therefore appropriately named <u>palavakait tiruttāṅṅakam</u> .  |               |                  |   |
| 33. Nīnra tiruttāṅṅakam   | 307           | VI.94            | <u>irunilanāy</u> .....                             |
| The refrain of the verses of this hymn is <u>nīnraṅṅarē</u> .   |               |                  |   |
| 34-35. Tanit tiruttāṅṅakam  | 308<br>309    | VI.95<br>96      | <u>appan nī</u> .....<br><u>āmayan tirttu</u> ..... |
| The saint describes his personal experience in the verse-form <u>tāṅṅakam</u> . Therefore the two hymns are named <u>tanit tiruttāṅṅakam</u> .  |               |                  |   |
| 36. Vināṅṅait tiruttāṅṅakam   | 310           | VI.97            | <u>aṅṅakaṅṅanta</u> .....                           |
| The first five <u>tāṅṅakam</u> of this hymn are composed in the form of questions and the last six are sung in the form of answers. Therefore it is named <u>vināṅṅait tāṅṅakam</u> . |               |                  |   |
| 37. Marumāṅṅat tāṅṅakam   | 311           | VI.98            | <u>namārkkum</u> .....                              |
| This hymn is composed in the form of a refusal in <u>tāṅṅakam</u> and is therefore named, <u>marumāṅṅat tāṅṅakam</u>  |               |                  |   |
| (c) <u>The common hymns of Cuntarar</u>   |               |                  |   |
| 1. Nāṅṅuttokai  | 12            | VII.12           | <u>vīlak kālapai</u> .....                          |
| This hymn gives the <u>nāṅṅu</u> in which the holy places are situated and therefore it is named <u>nāṅṅuttokai</u> .   |               |                  |   |
| 2. Iṅṅaiyāru  | 31            | VII.31           | <u>muntaiyūr</u> .....                              |
| The refrain of its verses is <u>ūreyta māṅṅ iṅṅaiyāru iṅṅaimarutē</u> and therefore this hymn is named <u>tiru iṅṅaiyāru</u> .  |               |                  |   |

- | <u>Name</u>   | <u>Number</u> | <u>Tirumurai</u> | <u>First line</u>             |
|---|---------------|------------------|-------------------------------|
| 3. Namakkaṭikalākiya aṭikal   | 33            | VII.33           | <u>pārutānkiya</u> .....      |
| This hymn is named after the refrain <u>namakkaṭikalākiya aṭikal</u> of its verses.   |               |                  |                               |
| 4. Tiruttoṅṭattokai   | 39            | VII.39           | <u>tillaivāḷ antapar</u> .... |
| This hymn gives only the names and sometimes the places of birth of the Śaiva devotees, and therefore it is named <u>tiruttoṅṭattokai</u> . |               |                  |                               |
| 5. Muṭippatukaṅkai  | 44            | VII.44           | <u>muṭippatu kaṅkai</u> ..... |
| This hymn is named after the first line of its first verse.   |               |                  |                               |
| 6. Urttokai   | 47            | VII.47           | <u>kāṭṭūṅkaṭalē</u> .....     |
| This hymn describes the Lord in relation to his holy places and therefore it is named <u>ūrttokai</u> .                                     |               |                  |                               |
| 7. Nampiyēra tiruppatikam   | 63            | VII.63           | <u>meyyai murra</u> .....     |
| The word <u>nampi</u> is employed several times in each verse. Therefore this hymn is named <u>nampi enra tiruppatikam</u> .                |               |                  |                               |

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