

# MUTTOLLĀYIRAM

*Text, Transliteration and Translations in  
English Verse and Prose*



CENTRAL INSTITUTE OF CLASSICAL TAMIL

Kamarajar Salai, Cheppakkam

CHENNAI



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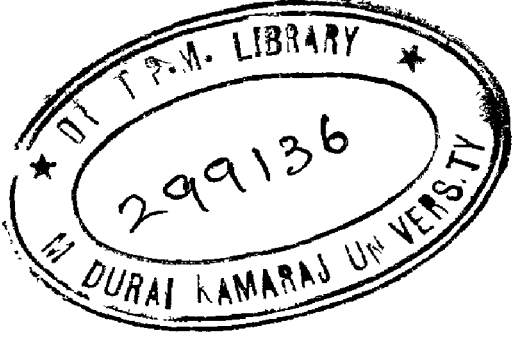
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CENTRAL INSTITUTE OF CLASSICAL TAMIL  
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## FOREWORD

The Tamils may be justly proud of the fact that Tamil has won the status of a Classical language, the status it richly deserves and should have got long, long ago. The *Central Institute of Classical Tamil (CICT)*, established in Chennai, has mapped out various plans including preparation of definitive editions of forty-one Classical Tamil texts and translation of these works into English and other major European languages as well as into major Indian languages, and writing of a historical grammar of Tamil. Language being the autobiography of a people, our objective is to preserve and safeguard the invaluable treasure of the literary compositions in our language. If only we could delve into our past and recover the riches and wealth of the mighty treasure trove of Classical Tamil poetry, we will be amply rewarded by its lofty poetry, the poetry that strengthens and purifies the holiness of heart's affection and enlarges our imagination. Apart from these, reading the ancient Tamil texts such as *Tolkāppiyam*, *Eṭṭuttokai*, *Pattuppāṭṭu*, *Tirukkural* provides a foundation for scholarship for the present and in this sense provides enlightened education.

It is heartening to write this foreword to the series of publications being brought out by CICT, which I am sure, will do full justice to the masterpieces in Tamil without compromising on the quality of production. The *Caṅkam* corpus being a repository of our glorious culture, it behoves our present and future generations to study them and to convey their message and the vision of life embodied in them to the public at large. Let me, therefore, commend the series to the enlightened beings the world over.

Sd/-

(M. KARUNANIDHI)





## PREFACE

*Muttollāyiram*, known for its antiquity and renown and recognized as a classic by the famous commentators of the late medieval age, Pērācīriyar, Nacciṇārkkīniyar and Guṇasāgarar is now made available in its present form. Its translators P.N. Appuswami, A.V. Subramanian, P. Pandian and P. Marudanayagam have done a remarkable job in handling the Tamil language of the late Sangam Period, catching its conceptual nuances in its evolution of thought and syntax and rendering them in modern English with fidelity to thought and expression. It is none too easy to maintain, on the one hand, the structural and lexical differences between Tamil and English and present lofty poetic thoughts with utmost economy and precision. It is not always possible to translate verbally some of those metaphysical conceits which are the unique features of classical Tamil. These problems notwithstanding, the translators have tried their best not to lose the spirit of the original; in other words, they have tried, and successfully too to get as near as possible to the poet without losing his poetic grace or beauty of words and figures of speech, his poetic sensibility. The stylistic features of the original are adhered to as much as possible. It is a commonplace remark that it is poetry that is lost in translation. It is true that it is well-nigh impossible to convey the unfathomable mystery of the original composition. Be that as it may, the four translators have, in their own ways, moved the reader towards the poet.

The Introduction to this anthology of poems is in three parts, written by the three translators: P.N. Appuswami, A.V. Subramanian and P. Pandian. This introduction is complete and comprehensive in every way. It contains every bit of information a lay reader needs to know. The rediscovery of the poem in recent times, the different editions available to us are discussed in detail. The date of composition of the poem, speculations about its authorship followed by a critical appraisal of the work – all these are done with sufficient thoroughness. How sad that we have been able to recover only 108 stanzas of this extraordinary poetic sequence! This excellent introduction will go a long way in helping

the reader towards a fuller understanding and appreciation of one of the finest classics of Tamil literature.

I am thankful to the department of translations of the Institute and the publication division for their help in bringing out this book. My special thanks are due in a large measure to Professor K. Ramasamy for the efforts he took in coordinating the work leading to the publication of this book.

The Hon'ble Chief Minister of Tamilnadu and Respectful Chairman of the Central Institute of Classical Tamil has written the foreword to this book. His foreword lends grace to this book. I feel most happy to express my gratitude to him.

Chennai

S. MOHAN  
*Director*

# INTRODUCTION

## I

*Muttollāyiram* is an old Tamil poem of considerable merit. It has been recognized as a literary classic by Ḫampūraṇar, Pērācīriyar, Naccinārkkiniyar and Guṇasāgarar, four of the famous commentators of the late middle period of Tamil. This quartet bridged with careful scholarship and sympathetic understanding, some of the great gaps in time, language and manners which lie between the ancient and the later periods of the development of Tamil. Those dedicated men, undoubtedly gifted with poetic imagination and insight, chose, however, to use their talents to interpret rather than to create, and they have, by their clear exposition of the ancient classics, made it easier for us to comprehend, in some measure, the life and thought of those far-off days. They have often used illuminating quotations from other works – some of which are not now available - in order to illustrate the points they were making.

The word *Muttollāyiram* is a compound word. It may mean “The Triple Nine Hundred”, implying that it was a composition of nine hundred versess in praise of the three kings of the ancient Tamil land, namely, Cēra, Cōḷa, and Pāṇṭiya, so famous in history, myth and legend. Or again, it may mean “The Three Nine Hundreds” suggesting that it was a poem of two thousand seven hundred lines. Scholars are not in complete agreement on this point – the pessimists preferring the latter meaning, so that they may grieve more over the loss of so much of a classic, and the majority holding that it was at best only nine hundred verses long and that we may try and be happy with what has been spared.

Apparently, the poem has not come down to us in its entirety. A little less than one eighth has survived up to our times, though the whole poem seems to have been in existence even as late as the twelfth century. It is an unfortunate fact that classics have been lost in all countries and in all languages, owing to the apathy of the public, the limited nature of their appeal and the perishable nature of the material on which they were used to be written. So it is that a fragment of the poem, a bare one hundred and ten verses, has



survived. These are all that is left of them, left of nine hundred. Only one eighth has shown up, like an iceberg above water. The rest of them have been submerged in the cold sea of oblivion and neglect and lost to us for ever. These are made up of (a) forty-four verses scattered in an anthology, classified, distributed, arranged under several heads and interspersed with quite a few verses selected from other ancient works; (b) a group of sixty-five poems on the theme of the love of a maid for a man, which are found at the tail end of the anthology; and (c) one poem not included in the anthology, but quoted by Iḷampūraṇar in one of his commentaries as from *Muttollāyiram*. The three bits put together total only one hundred and ten verses. We should be grateful to the anthologist and to the commentator for thus transmitting to us this heritage of the past.

In one sense we may say that we are beholden to the commentators, even more than we are to the anthologists, for their services to us. While the anthologists have merely collected the poems which would otherwise have been lost, the commentators have explained what might not have been understood and could therefore have remained a profitless collection. These learned commentators lived about six hundred years ago and formed the middle span of the bridge linking us with the anthologists of the past. But for their help, and the remarkable clarity of their writing, at least some of the poems composed some centuries earlier than their collection and written in the antique language of that earlier period, and dealing with the manner of life and modes of thought prevalent then, would have puzzled us a great deal.

The anthology which has helped to preserve some of the verses of *Muttollāyiram* is *Purattiraṭṭu*. *Muttollāyiram* is, according to the old commentators, a literary composition which belongs to the category of what the ancient grammarian Tolkāppiyar called *viruntu* by which he meant "fresh poetic composition in a new style". Such works often bore characteristic titles. Some titles were linked with the name of the protagonists, e.g. *Cīvaka cintāmaṇi*, *Maṇimēkalai*. Some were indicative of the subject matter, e.g. *Cilappatikāram* (The Lay of the Anklet). Some were related to the theme, e.g. *Takaṭūr-Yāttirai* (The Expedition against Takaṭūr) and *Muppāl* (one of the names of *Tirukkuraḷ*, as it deals with the three earthly human objectives, namely, *aram* (*dharma*), *poruḷ* (*artha*), and *inṭam* (*kāma*). Some titles denoted the size or quality, e.g. *Peruṇ-katai* (*The Great Story*, the story which deals with the romance of Udayana

and Vāsavadatta); and *Kuruntokai* (an anthology of short poems). Some were named after the metrical or prosodic mode adopted in the work, e.g. *Kali-t-tokai* and *Paripāṭal*. Some gave a clue to the number of verses contained therein, e.g. *Patirru-p-pattu* (The Ten Tens). Some had fancy titles e.g. *Narriṇai* (The Good Theme, which was no more than an anthology of love poems). Some were named from a combination of one or more of these, e.g. *Akanānūru*, *Puranānūru*, *Aiṅkurunūru*, *Cīvaka cintāmaṇi*. Some of the Sangam classics were also named after the total number of works forming a set, e.g. *Eṭṭu-t-tokai* (Eight Anthologies) and *Pattu-p-pāṭṭu* (Ten Long Poems).

### The Rediscovery

Till nearly seventy years ago, *Muttollāyiram* was, even to Tamil scholars, no more than the name of an old poem which some of the commentators on *Tolkāppiyam* had mentioned. The complete work seems to have survived down to the times of commentators since they refer to it and also quote from it. Pērācīriyar, commenting on cūtra 239 of *Tolkāppiyam* (in the section on prosody), says that *Muttollāyiram* is an example of a poetic composition in a new style and form. It was, therefore, a new poem consisting of several verses and written by a single author and was not an anthology or collection of poems written by several authors some time earlier as the Sangam poems were. Nacciṅārkkīṇiyar, another famous commentator, dealing with cūtra 118 of *Tolkāppiyam* (in the section on prosody) says that verses of four lines predominate in *Muttollāyiram*. The suggestion seems to be that it contained some verses of more than four lines, perhaps of five or six. Pērācīriyar confirms this inference when he states that the maximum number of lines in any verse of *Muttollāyiram* is six. Whatever it be, all the verses of *Muttollāyiram* which have come down to us contain only four lines and no more.

We do not know what the order was in which the author had set the verses in his poem—whether, for example, he had followed any classifications based on the themes of the verses, or had arranged them under the heads of the kings they dealt with, or had merely strung them as he made them, and in a more or less haphazard way. In the 109 poems selectively included in *Purattiraṭṭu*, love poems form the majority in the ratio of 65 to 44 and the commentator Pērācīriyar states that they formed the major portion of the complete

work as well. However, none of the manuscripts of *Purattirattu* now in existence contains any love poem and the sixty-five love poems we have now in the book are found only in the manuscripts entitled *Purattirattu-c-curukkam* (a condensation of *Purattirattu*). A condensation cannot contain poems not in the original. We have, therefore, to conclude that the portion of the original *Purattirattu* which contained the love poems was also lost.

We do not know the name of the author of *Muttollāyiram*, for none of the commentators mentions it. There is no internal evidence in the poems which have come down to us to tell us his name, or about the region in which he lived and wrote, or about any of his contemporaries. Many kings of the three royal lines are mentioned, and some cities too; but they are referred to in such general terms that no particular king of any clan is definitely indicated. The poet does not anywhere declare his loyalty to the king of any particular region, or to any specified city. So we do not know in which part of the Tamil country the poet lived, though perhaps it may be claimed that there are some indirect references of his loyalty to the Cōla kings.

Hazarding, on insufficient material, a tentative determination of the date of the poem, one may perhaps say that it may have been composed at any time between the fifth and the thirteenth centuries, and probably somewhere about the middle of these two limits. The period in which the famous commentators Ḥampūraṇar, Nacciṇārkkīṇiyar, Pērācīriyar and Guṇasāgarar, flourished should have been some centuries after *Muttollāyiram* was composed.

All that we know with some degree of dependability about the poem is that its author was most probably a devotee of the gods Siva and Muruga. This is an inference drawn by the manner in which he refers to them in three of the verses among those now available, namely verses 1,1464 and 1465 of *Purattirattu*, being numbers 1, 34 and 35 in this translation. The ideas expressed in some of the verses of *Muttollāyiram* and in some of the poems of the Vaishnavite and Saivite hymnists are similar. These similarities, however, cannot be depended upon to settle any claims of priority in date. It is very difficult to say who echoes whom, or whose is the original voice and whose is the echoing one, unless we can be sure of the definite priority of one to the other through other sources of information. And again, both could be echoes of still prior voices. Further, poets of different periods and localities, expressing



themselves in different languages, without any kind of links or contacts, resemble each other in sentiment and expression more often than we expect.

The style of the poem considered as a whole is somewhat antique, yet slightly different from the poems of the Sangam period. We notice in it a slightly larger proportion of Sanskrit words than in the very early works. Some of the grammatical forms seem to indicate that the poems may, perhaps, have been composed before the period of the hymnists. But none of these can be regarded as conclusive evidences to fix the date of its composition with any certainty.

### ***Purattirattu***

*Purattirattu* is an anthology of one thousand five hundred and fifty-seven poems from thirty-one definitely named sources and thirteen other poems from sources not named and not ascertainable at present, thus making a total of one thousand five hundred and seventy poems in all. The name of the compiler is not known, nor are any details about the period in which he lived, nor the conditions which prompted him to compile a work of such range and quality. One very helpful feature of the compilation is the mention of the name of the work from which the selection has been made. According to Prof. S. Vaiyapuri Pillai, who brought out a scholarly edition with the aid of several manuscripts (and noting variant readings), the anthology may have been compiled between the thirteenth and sixteenth centuries of the Christian era. The anthology consists of two major sections, which may be called 'The General Section' and 'The Section on Love'. All the verses included in the general section of this anthology have been grouped under eleven heads. The last or twelfth section deals with 'love' (the love of a maid for the king) and it contains poems from *Muttollāyiram* alone and there is no subgrouping. The grouping or classification of the general section is more or less similar to that followed in *Tirukkural*. The whole classification falls under twelve heads thus: (i) Benediction (1); (ii) Country (829,830,831); (iii) City (862,863,864); (iv) Dispraise of the Enemies' Country (1278-1282); (v) Tribute (1285-1288); (vi) Storming the Fort (1431); (vii) Cavalry (1380); (viii) Elephantry (1388-1397); (ix) Battlefield (1430-1433); (x) Victory (1457 and 1457); (xi) Fame (1464-1473); and (xii) Love (The love of a maid

for the king) (1506-1570). The numbers in brackets are the numbers which the verses from *Muttollāyiram* bear in *Purattirattu* (Madras University edition, 1938).

### **Editions of *Muttollāyiram***

The first edition of the surviving verses of *Muttollāyiram* was published in 1905 and reissued in 1935 by the Tamil Sangam, Madurai, a literary society for the preservation of Tamil and the promotion of Tamil scholarship. It was founded by *Pāṇṭitturai -t-Tēvar* (*Pāṇṭitturaicāmi Tēvar*), a scion of the royal family of Ramnad. The editor was Mahavidvan R. Raghava Aiyangar, also the editor of *Centamiḷ*, the monthly magazine of the society. He was an amazing scholar with a phenomenal memory and was also extraordinarily sensitive to the nuances, graces and beauties of ancient and later Tamil poetry. He had a charming personality, a melliflous voice and a most persuasive eloquence. His scholarship was very wide and deep and his intellect was acute. He was extraordinarily generous in appreciating the scholarship of others and did a great deal to encourage them. But curiously and inexplicably, his writing, though precise, was crabbed and stiff and difficult, perhaps because he loaded it with his scholarship. It may be said that he was almost an antithesis of Goldsmith, 'who wrote like an angel, but talk'd like poor Poll'.

This was followed, roughly thirty years later, by the appearance of these verses, not as a compact set (booklet) as the first edition was, but as separate verses scattered and grouped along with others under several heads in an anthology, *Perum-tokai* (literally, the Great Anthology), published by the Tamil Sangam of Madurai in 1935-36. It is stated in the Introduction to that anthology that what was then published had already appeared serially in the pages of *Centamiḷ*, the journal of the Sangam. The total number of verses included in the publication of nearly eight hundred pages was three thousand five hundred, which were classified under five heads or groups. Those verses had been culled from various sources, namely (a) the illustrative verses quoted by learned commentators on some of the ancient grammatical works such as *Tolkāppiyam*, *Yāpparuṅkalam*, *Yāpparuṅkalak kārikai*, *Vīracōliyam*, etc., (b) from some unpublished manuscripts, (c) from some edited copper plates published by the Archaeological Department and (e) sometimes

directly from the lips of learned Tamil scholars who had memorized them but were not able to indicate source.

The compilation, editing, writing of notes and comments, the subject index and index of first lines and a general and particular indication of their sources (given as footnotes) were by Vidvan M. Raghava Aiyangar, first cousin of Mahavidvan R. Raghava Aiyangar above referred to. M. Raghava Aiyangar too was a brilliant, widely read and discriminating Tamil scholar overshadowed only by his more brilliant cousin. He too had been associated with the Madurai Tamil Sangam and had served as a Junior Editor and later on as Editor-in-Chief of that magazine which did yeoman service in the early years of this century, when Tamil was almost a neglected language—that is, neglected by all but a few scholars who and whose work are not even remembered now. M. Raghava Aiyangar served for a term of years as the Chief Tamil Pandit on the staff of the Madras University's Tamil Lexicon. After that stupendous work was completed, he retired therefrom and served for some years as a Professor of Tamil in the University of Travancore. The verses of *Muttollāyiram* on general topics and those relating to the unrequited (one-sided) love of a woman for a man (It would perhaps be more right to describe it as the callow love of teenage girls for the gaily dressed, richly retained king of the land) are scattered over the whole of the anthology. Almost all the accredited verses of *Muttollāyiram* are, however, to be found in some part of the anthology or other.

The third publication of the verses was through the scholarly edition of *Purattiraṭṭu* issued by the University of Madras in 1938. The editor was Vaiyapuri Pillai who was then a Reader in its Department of Tamil. He had been a lawyer, was well-read in English, but far more widely and deeply in Tamil and in linguistics. His vision was clear and unprejudiced and his mind had no preformed opinions, and was fully open. He brought to bear on all the work he did an unclouded, acute, logical and incisive intellect. He had an almost scientific approach. He had carefully compared over a dozen manuscripts in the preparation of his edition of *Purattiraṭṭu* and had noted the variant readings when editing the text. The introduction and appendices to his edition show much scholarship and are very useful. But none of the manuscripts available to him could help him reconstruct verse 1397, which was so mangled and incomplete that no effective repair of it was possible.



The next edition of *Muttollāyiram* was that of T.K. Chidambaranatha Mudaliar in 1943, with an introduction, notes and comments. It had some colour and line drawings and was meant for the lay reader who loved poetry. T.K.C. Mudaliar too was a lawyer. He had a sensitive feel for poetry and a flair for exposition, particularly to lay audiences. He arranged the verses in groups of five and he suggested that each poem should be read aloud and that each group should be studied and relished lovingly and lingeringly and should serve for a whole day's enjoyment. He has not followed the order in which the verses occur in *Purattirattu*, and has mixed the general themes and the love theme together. He has not explained his reasons, if there were any, for such grouping. In the main part of his book, he has included ninety-nine of the verses, and has pushed off into an appendix nine verses as ununderstandable. He has omitted altogether the mangled verse 1397, and has not taken any note of the verse quoted by Iḷampūraṇar in his commentary as belonging to *Muttollāyiram*. He has made various emendations of his own in the verses, subjectively—emendations which are not supported by any of the available manuscripts and which rest merely on his authority.

Another edition of *Muttollāyiram* is a recent one published by the Tirunelveli South India Saiva Siddhanta Publishing Society with an introduction, notes and comments. The editor is Vidvan Seturaghunathan who was a lecturer in MDT Hindu College, Tirunelveli and who later served in a High School at Virudhunagar. He too has omitted the mangled verse (1397), but has included twenty odd other verses, as probably those of the author of *Muttollāyiram*. The inclusion is based mostly on subjective grounds and partly on the basis of the parallelisms of ideas and phrases – criteria which are not authentic. His edition thus contains one hundred and thirty verses. It is rather difficult to accept the additional verses in the absence of more authoritative evidence to prove their authorship and to accede to the claim that they really belong to *Muttollāyiram*.

Yet another edition was brought out in 1957 by Pari Nilayam, Madras. The editor is Sri. R. Muthuganesan. It contains notes and explanations and quite a few parallel passages.

There are one hundred and nine verses in all—an invocatory verse, twenty-two verses in praise of Cēra, twenty-nine in praise of Cōḷa fifty-six in praise of Pāṇṭiya and the fragmentary verse, which has been placed at the end and no attempt has been made to explain it.

## II

Studies on *Muttollāyiram* verses have shown that they could have been composed much later than the last works of what is known as the ‘‘Sangam’’ age in Tamil literature. Sangam represents in Tamilology, the ‘‘conclave’’ of poets convoked by the *Pāṇṭiyas*, the kings of Madurai in South India, for the general encouragement of creative works in Tamil. The conclave seems to have prospered for an astonishingly long period of 500 years, from 300 B.C. to A.D. 200, these dates and the duration itself being very much of an approximation. *Eṭṭuttokai* (Eight Anthologies) of short poems and *Pattuppāṭṭu* (Ten Long Poems) are the typical products of the heyday of this epoch, at the end of which a series of moralistic codes and a few love poems came to be composed which are collectively referred to as the *Paṭiṇeṅkīlkkāṇakku* (Eighteen Late Works). *Tirukkuraḷ* is the most notable work among these. *Aiṅṭinai aimpatu* and *Tiṅaimālai nūrraimpatu* are two books of love poems of this group.

### Metre of *Muttollāyiram*

The verses of *Muttollāyiram* are all composed in the *veṅpā* metre which is found used in the later works of the Sangam age. It might be noted that Tamil had a distinct prosodical structure similar to the system of syllabic *mātras* as in the case of the *Āryā* or the *gīṭī* metres in Sanskrit. In Tamil the unit is called *cīr* which can be represented by the word ‘‘foot’’; this unit regulates all the metres in use in Tamil. The earliest metres were *āciryappā* and *kalippā*, with the shorter *vañcippā*, which were not subject to any regulations concerning the number of lines; we have verses of 3 lines and poems of 800 lines in the *āciryappā*. The *veṅpā*, with which alone the poems of this work are composed, on the other hand, is a quatrain. Most of the metres which developed later are quatrains too. The *kuṛaḷ* metre in which the well-known *Tirukkuraḷ* has been composed has only two lines.

There are rules of assonance and alliteration binding Tamil verses. To put them briefly, the first two syllables of each pair of lines should be assonant. The first letter (at the start of a line) and the first letter after the caesura should be alliterative.

The four lines of the *veṅpā* metre have a structure that can be represented as below:

1 <sup>st</sup> line	–	4 feet
2 <sup>nd</sup> line	–	3 feet, caesura, one foot
3 <sup>rd</sup> line	–	4 feet
4 <sup>th</sup> line	–	3 feet

The assonance in the first two feet is carried to the last foot in the second line. Because of the way the last foot of the second line gets chanted as a separate unit after the caesura, poets usually put a term of address there, like “My handsome friend!” or “O friend decked with gold ornaments!” There is an alliteration in every line including the fourth, the first letter of the first foot and the first letter of the 3<sup>rd</sup> foot being alliterative.

### **Date of the work**

The fact that all the verses of *Muttollāyiram* are composed in the *venpā* metre and not in the *āciriyaṅpā* or *kalippā* is clearly indicative of their period of composition being later than that of the first libraries of the Sangam period, viz., the *Eṭṭuttokai* (The Eight Anthologies) and the *Pattuppāṭṭu* (Ten Long Poems) which contain no verse in the *venpā* metre. However, the concepts and the method of their presentation, indeed the very manner of the poet’s handling of the metre, are all so similar to the Sangam concepts and methods that they should be regarded as products of a period coeval with the later Sangam era or of that which immediately followed it.

There is another subtle device to detect the age of a Tamil work. The Sangam Tamils had an almost mystic trust in the efficacy of the character’s version, in its overwhelming superiority over the poet’s version. This is easy to infer from the fact that all their erotic composition is cast in the version of one of the involved characters, without exception. Now, a careful examination of the verses in this work will reveal the striking fact that all the sixty-five verses in it which deal with the erotic sentiment are set in the version of a character and not one is presented in the version of the poet. Indeed, it will be found that some of the worldly verses too (like 16 and 42) are cast in the version of a character. This striking peculiarity is a strong pointer to its early age, an age that cannot be much later than that of works like the *Aintinai aimpatu* (Fifty poems on love) which constitute members of the Sangam library of the *Patineṅ Kīlkanakku*.

Many of the concepts seen in the verses of this work appear to the reader as extensions and variations of ideas expressed in the earlier Sangam works. There is reference to the tips of elephants' tusks getting blunted through battering the walls and gates of enemy forts in *Puranānūru*; this concept has been worked up to yield a nicely rounded picture in verse 27 of the *Muttollāyiram*. Examples like this can be multiplied till one can trace a *puram* or an *akam* origin for most verses of this in the earliest works. This indebtedness indicates the later age of this work, that is to say, an age later than that of the *Eṭṭuttokai* believed to be the earliest of the Sangam works. At the same time, their expansion or projection is still kept within artistic bounds and not allowed to run away as in the cases of Tamil works of the second millennium after Christ. Nothing is far-fetched, in this exquisite work, though there is considerable hyperbole as, for instance, in stanza 24. If an illusive misreading of the moon as an enemy umbrella is presented, as in stanza 19, the illusion is shown to exist, not in the mind of man but in an elephant which makes it less incredible. This verse, incidentally, is one of the most beautifully crafted ones in the work where the last foot constitutes the essential punchline with the most significant word occurring at its very end. A similar construction can be seen and enjoyed in stanza 45 where, too, the most important word occurs at the very start of the piece. The overall point sought to be made is that while the debt owed to the *Eṭṭuttokai* proves this work to be posterior to them, the fact that the embroidery done on them is not excessive but a natural step forward indicates that its date of composition cannot be very much later.

The date of this poem could have been easily decided if any one of the three kings had been named and clear identifying details provided. But no, the poet uses only generic names while talking about them, names like *Māraṇ* and *Valuti* for the *Pāṇṭiya* king, *Kiḷli* and *Valavan* for the *Cōḷa* and *Kōtai* for the *Cēra*. Some scholars, however, see a specific reference in verse 100 in the *Nalaṅkiḷli* to a *Cōḷa* king who may have lived in the third century A.D. But there are difficulties in accepting this reference as signifying this particular king; for one thing, the *Nalaṅkiḷli* whom Sangam poets describe had *Pukār* as his capital while the *Cōḷa* capital frequently referred to in the *Muttollāyiram* is *Uṟaiyūr*, not *Pukār*. The fact that *Nalaṅkiḷli* has been panegyrised by Sangam poets like *Kōvūrkkilār* is another

obstacle to accepting this theory, as the author of the work under discussion must be posterior by a century or two to Sangam poets. One also has to bear in mind that the date of Nalaṅkiḷi is not determinable with any degree of certainty, the third century AD postulate being only a reasonable guess, at best. The date of the composition is still a wide open question which, perhaps, may never get answered to the satisfaction of all workers in the field.

### The Author

While the date of many Tamil and indeed of many Indian works is uncertain, their authorship is seldom in question. But the identity of the author of *Muttollāyiram* is an authentic puzzle and there is little hope of its ever getting solved. There is no mention of the author's name in the *Purattirattu*; no commentator who refers to the work and in some cases quotes from it names the poet who composed it. There is not the remotest hint about who he was and where he lived in any Tamil work available to us. Some attempts are being made to fit in one of the poets who sang about Nalaṅkiḷi, whose songs have been anthologized in the *Puranānūru*, as the one who should have composed this work.

An attempt has been made to ascribe the authorship of this work to Nakkīradēva Nāyaṅār whose compositions have been included in the Saiva canon. This is extremely difficult to accept for several reasons. To start with, the very logic used to establish the authorship is seriously at fault, as similarity of expressions is one of the planks in it. Nakkīradēva Nāyaṅār could have used some of the expressions in the *Muttollāyiram* in his works for the reason that he liked them; surely this does not establish common authorship. If this argument is advanced, Āṅṅāl, the Vaishnava lady saint, can also be postulated as the author of *Muttollāyiram* as she has lifted a whole set of words from one of its stanzas; and she was a whole lot nearer in age to this composition than the Nāyaṅār. The Saiva saint is so far different from the author of *Muttollāyiram* in temperament and poetical methods and style of expression (he uses a lot of Sanskrit words while our mysterious author, like all earlier writers, adopts a naturally pure Tamil style) that the ascription of its authorship to him seems to be more a confession of the helplessness of the world of scholars in solving

the problem than a serious attempt at building up a reasonable theory.

### **Extent of the Poem**

The list of uncertainties relating to this extraordinary work is not yet fully covered for, even the significance of its name and, as a correlated problem, its length offers a serious difficulty. The title *Muttollāyiram* yields the meaning, “three times nine hundred”, making 2700 stanzas in all. This is one interpretation; another interprets the part word ‘muth’ to refer to the three crowned heads and the work is one of a total length of 900 stanzas on all the three. While the first interpretation may well be true, the second is more satisfying as it cuts our losses, with only 108 stanzas of the work being available to us. There is a much better reason for preferring the second interpretation. The work is recognised as an *en-ceyyul* (a variety of poetry where the number of stanzas is limited to a particular figure and this figure is reflected in the title) and grammar restricts the length of works of this kind to a thousand stanzas. Hence we may lean towards the interpretation of the title that delimits the length to 900 stanzas in all, composed on the three great kings of *Tamilakam*.

### ***Muttollāyiram*: An Appraisal**

It is the high poetic quality of the verses that has preserved them (in part, at least) through the long, dreary centuries of neglect and indifference. The first and somewhat superficial merit of the unknown poet is his extreme felicity in manipulating the *venpā* metre which is quite the favourite choice of poets wanting to sing isolated verses. The musical potential of the metre has been realized to the full by our poet who uses the shortened fourth foot to telling advantage. An aspect of versification in Tamil that tells a lot about the versifier’s command over the language is the setting up of assonances at the start of every line (called *etukai*). Our poet manages this with effortless ease; his assonances are natural and not contrived and are very pleasing to the ear. It must, of course, be admitted that as he is dealing with kings, it is quite easy to come up with adjectives and attributes which can rhyme; but then, almost every poem of those days dealt with royalty, and the connoisseur



of Tamil poetry will confirm that the initial rhyming in the *Muttollāyiram* has been accomplished with distinction and without apparent contrivance.

The next factor is the poetic diction that has been employed. The level of language used in this work is clearly more “modern” than that found in the Eight Anthologies and, hence, simpler. Harsh-sounding words have been scrupulously avoided, even in the verses dealing with the martial valour of kings. As each stanza is a complete and self-contained unit, the poet has to furnish the entire picture he has in mind within the framework of a *veṇṇpā*. He accomplishes this successfully through very efficient use of words, without anywhere giving the impression of inartistic compression. Verses like 18, 20 and 36 have a fairly complex concept to unfold but the poet has been able to present them within the limits of the *veṇṇpā* metre, without making the reader realize the conscious effort of the poet at packing a big picture within a limited space. A supreme artist, whether at the trapeze or in the studio or at the desk, is unhurried while engaged in the production of excellence; it is only the amateur and the novice who sweat at the job, whose effort is very manifest.

One of the main processes by which a creative writer passes on his own subjective experience to the reader is the production of suitable images on the latter’s mental screen. The skill involved here is of a complex nature requiring the efficient use of a well-stocked vocabulary, even a sense of colour and line, a well developed sense of proportion and a feeling for detail. We should remember here that the scope offered for such image production in a *veṇṇpā* verse being strictly limited, the poet has quite a small compass within which to exercise this complex skill.

The success achieved by the poet of *Muttollāyiram*, despite these inbuilt limitations, is quite conspicuous. Let us study verse 15. The vassals of Pāṇṭiya king are anxious that the sovereign monarch should receive their tribute as otherwise they would incur his wrath and run a terrible risk of total ruin. So, the moment they descry the top of his white umbrella, they try to rush to his presence in their eagerness and naturally cancel out each other’s intentions. For the throng around the Pāṇṭiya becomes so impenetrable, most of the vassals are unable to go close enough to be noticed by him. Dissatisfied and worried they cry out, “Is this proper? Is this just that you do not enable us to approach you that we may pay the

tribute due to you?" The whole picture which would take a vast canvas to contain this crowd scene on the main street is presented to us in the space of a verse of four lines with consummate ease. The colour scheme is worth studying, too, with the garland of blue flowers worn by the king contrasted with the snow-white umbrella, not to speak of the many-splendoured attire of the royal throng.

Similar is the painting presented through stanza 51. Here, a theme familiar to Sanskritists is adopted by a Tamil poet and is exploited with distinction to produce a colourful canvas showing the women of Uṛaiyūr looking with eager eyes on the *Cōla* monarch, the quick-moving eyes being compared to fish caught in a net by fishermen. Apart from such crowd scenes, the poet can present more individualised pictures which are as captivating; witness the ease with which he paints the Kāvēri river (77) with very fat fish trying to climb the banks and slipping down to the water on account of their fat bodies. We must remember that every one of these paintings, besides being lovely and deeply satisfying to the aesthetic instincts has a poetic purpose to fulfil; in this stanza, the love-lorn girl is shown appealing to the stork to carry her message of love to the *Cōla* king; how very appropriate is her reference to fat-bellied fish in the Kāvēri at Uṛaiyūr which are bound to attract the fish-hungry bird to themselves like a magnet!

In stanza 106 is presented an action picture of an anxious mother trying to perform a ritual to exorcise the devil who she supposes has seized hold of her daughter. The sanctified ground, the sacrificial goat, the blood-stained place, the ritual of pouring water on the hapless girl are all painted with the fewest brush-strokes of a master painter. The second line of the poem is very effectively composed asking a rhetorical question, "Can she bathe away my love-disease?"

We cannot conclude this section without a reference to the gigantic painting, where the whole universe is caught in a magnificent metaphor. In verse 38 the *Cōla* emperor's white umbrella, the insignia of sovereignty, is presented as affording the cooling shade of a benign administration to the whole world; its top piece is provided by the moon itself and its fabric, by the wide firmament. There is undoubtedly more than an element of hyperbole in such pictures; but this is very much a feature of ancient Indian poetry, perhaps of all ancient poetry; and the unknown Tamil poet cannot be faulted

for this feature. Each age should be judged in accord with the standards applicable to it and not with those of a later age.

For the same reason, the stanzas presenting a blood-chilling picture of the lands vanquished and ravaged by the panegyrised kings should be accepted and evaluated in accord with the ethical standards of that age. Stanzas 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 25, 29, 30 and 41 all draw a gruesome picture of the ravage inflicted on the vanquished land; we of the present century who rain bombs on non-combatants have no right to criticise the ethical standards of that age; the poets obviously considered it a projection of their patrons' martial might to describe the ruthless despoliation of the lands they had conquered. The poetic value of these stanzas is, however, high, though they may rank below that of those depicting the love motif.

The ability to conjure up effective comparisons or underscore a point or augment a sentiment is one of the most vital poetic devices in the armoury of a creative artist. Rhetoricians may subdivide it into many different figures of speech as Sanskritists have done, but essentially there should be an analogous element between the statement on hand and the comparison brought up. Our poet has displayed conspicuous ability in harnessing this potent device.

For instance, in stanza 40 the Pāṇṭiya king's reputation for martial valour is eulogised. The lesser kings all panic even when they see the Pāṇṭiyān's javelin in their dreams—such is his famed prowess in the field of battle. This is the panic caused to serpents by peals of thunder from rain clouds in the sky. The suggestion is that just as these terrified snakes bury themselves deep in their underground holes, so too the smaller kings all hide in panic after their nightmare. There is also the hint that just like the thunder, the Pāṇṭiya's armoury is also regarded as an act of God, not an equipment brought together by the hand of man.

If stanza 40 is on the king's war-making propensity, stanza 54 describes beautifully the effect of his personality on all the girls of his capital city. The girls all love him but contain their love for him at normal times like the lamp carried about in windy streets, kept inside a pot. But when the Pāṇṭiya comes out of his palace on a state ride, they can no longer keep it locked up inside their breasts; it manifests itself, demanding the attention of all onlookers like a forest conflagration on the top of a hill. The analogy has to be cherished, mulled over in the mind to yield its full potential for aesthetic delight.

The comparison furnished in stanza 84 is delightfully simple but has deeper implications. The girl's mother guards her with an earnest dedication like a hunter guarding a cage; only, the heart has left the girl's body for the lover and hence the mother is guarding only the insentient body; the hunter equally is unaware that he is guarding only an empty cage from which the bird has flown. The point of comparison is quite simple and direct but the implication is terrible and, one cannot help feeling, it is more than a little unfair to the mother. For the mother is compared to the hunter whose intention clearly is to slaughter the bird in due time. This is clearly not true and the mother's intentions are not homicidal, she believes she has the best interests of the girl at heart when she places all those restrictions on her. But truth is banal and aesthetically dull; it is not legal tender in creative literature. The girl in her frenzied passion for her lover believes that the mother is a ruthless killer and that is all that matters in poetry. We can also notice a note of challenge, even of triumph in the girl's analogy; the bird is now totally free and the hunter can do nothing to hamstring it; so too the girl is essentially free and out of the mother's clutches as her heart has united with her lover. It is these deeper intimations in poetry that account for our continued preoccupation with such pieces long after the first flush of delight at their surface appeal.

The analogy presented in stanza 94 is more involved; hence its aptness is less obvious. The point of comparison is the eagerness with which the oyster awaits the wave that will restore it to its home in the sea and the heart of the girl who awaits the message from her royal lover. The appropriateness which lends the analogy aesthetic artistry is that even as the oyster belongs rightfully to the sea despite its (temporary) sally onto the shore, the girl's heart rightfully belongs to the lover with whom it must reside for ever. Even if a little complex, the metaphor is beautifully drawn and the assonances in the Tamil original add much to the enjoyment of the piece.

Among all the analogies conjured up by our nameless poet, the best possibly is that set like a gem in verse 69. Here the girl wails pointing to the scandal that has spread everywhere about her conduct relative to the Cōla king and her mother's resultant chastisement of her with a rod all the time. She compares her plight to that of the toad which is generally accused by the people of having eaten the kernel of a coconut without breaking the hard shell. It is quite obvious

that the toad could not have got to the sweet kernel without breaking or at least cracking the shell which is too hard for it to tackle. The toad, in other words, is accused of a crime of which it is patently innocent. "But so am I!" wails the girl, "so have I not enjoyed union with the king. But the calumny has spread and mother tortures me all the time!" It would seem that if she had enjoyed intimacy with her royal lover, this scandal would not have pained her so. The analogy is most apt, it underscores the girl's mental state; incidentally it shows how the sophisticated poet is too canny to be prejudiced by the commonly held beliefs of his time.

There are two comparisons offered at the very end of the work which are very similar. In 91, the Cēra on a state ride is passing the girl's house when, urged by her love for him, she walks upto the door to gaze at him, but checked by her natural quality of bashfulness, she refrains from going out but instead closes the door. She now regrets shutting the door and is contemplating to open it when her bashfulness again exercises restraint. Thus there is a conflict in her mind between two tendencies: to go forth or to stay back. Her mental state is compared to that of a penurious man urged by his want to approach a richman for help but is checked by his feelings of delicacy and held back. The difference in social and financial status between the girl, a citizen of the country, and the king of the realm lends greater aptness to the analogy, where the difference in these fields between the suppliant and the intended patron is the significant feature.

In verse 95 there is apparently no metaphor, but the analogy that is latent lends life to the whole piece. The girl complains that her heart has gone out to meet the Cēra, but, as she does not seem to derive much pleasure from the situation, she concludes that it is even now standing in the long corridor waiting for a chance to see the king. In the meantime, as it is cold, and the heart has not furnished itself with wraps, it uses its hands as a blanket to ward off the cold. There is certainly a vivid personification here but there is an analogy too involved, as the heart is compared to a suppliant, a seeker of favours who meekly awaits the king's pleasure. The melancholy air of the piece beautifully presents the girl's mental state when her love continues unrequited.

These poetic devices handled adroitly by our anonymous poet enhance the aesthetic value of the poem. However, the claims of

our poet for immortality go deeper than this. For a poem is essentially a medium for the transference of emotion, and many of the poems of this anthology will be found to be expert conveyers of genuine sentiment and thus constitute excellent poetry. A girl is in love with the king of the realm and when it is announced that he is driving in state through the streets of the capital town, the girl is overjoyed. She is all set to gaze at him and drink in his beauty. But her mother has other plans, she feels that if the daughter in her love-lorn state was allowed to gaze at the king, there would be a lot of slander in the town. So she imprisons her daughter in a room and locks the door. As the time for the state visit draws near, the girl in the room undergoes untold torments. Seeing her plight, her foster-mother runs to her natal mother and excitedly remonstrates with her asking her to open the door so that the girl may not die of disappointment. The authentic feelings of the foster-mother are brought out in poem 45; the very urgency of the remonstrance squirts out of the poem and the reader is enrolled as a participant in the emotional situation.

Another girl in love with the king sickens with unrequital; the mother concludes that the sickness is due to the wrath of a god and starts active preparations to propitiate the angry god; these involve giving a ritual bath to the girl. The girl remonstrates spiritedly, "My illness is on account of my love for the king. Can it be washed away with a pail of water?" The poem (106) manages to convey the heartache of the girl nicely blended with angry contempt for a meaningless ritual.

In a similar (but delicately different) way, a girl shows her resentment at her mother's total lack of sympathy for her travails; she asks, "Was my mother always old and critical like this? Was she born old, without enthusiasm, without love? Or is it possible that she too was young once and she too had felt these attachments?" It is psychologically a most appropriate thing for a desperate girl to say about her carping mother and it is said in poem 80 with all the permissible bitterness.

There, again, are the poems like 49 and 52 where the distraught girl beseeches the mounts of the lover-king asking them to walk close to the window through which she would be gazing and walk with slow, deliberate steps. There, again, is poem 79 where she asks in bitter resentment, "My mother shuts the door that I may not gaze



at the king; but my love is well-known to the neighbours and will she be able to close their gossiping mouths?"

The poems addressed to the north wind (96, 99 and 100) are full of an anguished weariness and can serve as good examples of the role of indicators of the Indian tradition that lovers in separation do not tolerate cool winds. A recurrent motif is of bangles slipping through the emaciated wrists of girls separated from their lovers; this too is in the Indian tradition of love poetry and poets in all the Indian languages, inclusive of Sanskrit, have made extensive use of it in their works. There is considerable amount of oriental hyperbole involved as poets depict a sudden emaciation on the girl hearing of the possibility of separation and an equally sudden return to the old plumpness on the lover giving up his plans to travel, resulting on both occasions in a loss of bangles, some through slipping down and the others bursting on account of the instant plumpness.

The reader cannot miss the constant reference to bashfulness; this is a very important feminine quality and Indian authors, particularly the Tamil ones, place a lot of emphasis on it. In the Tamil literary tradition, though love precedes marriage, this quality of shyness stands up like a sentinel warding off the many young men trying to use the girl to satisfy their own animal craving: indeed it almost kills the incipient love that springs up between her and the suitable youth whom she will marry eventually. By slow stages, love overcomes this watchdog quality and the young people get married. Even after the wedding, some part of this tendency persists as witness to what happens when the girl is reunited with her husband after some months of separation, as in poem 101.

A subtle literary device adopted with great dexterity by the poet is to focus the beam of light not on the main characters, but on a trivial thing, on purpose; somehow the point of the poem, the emotional appeal comes out effectively, not in spite of this shifting of focus but actually on account of it. In one of the poems (47), the girl thanks the carpenter who had drilled a hole through which she could gaze at the king and draw sustenance; the depth of love of the girl, her despair on being confined to a room and her wonderful sense of fulfilment on discovering the hole all come out most artistically, helped by this device. In another (46), the poet concentrates his and the reader's attention on the vicissitudes of the hinges on the city doors: the doors were constantly opened by the

eager daughters and closed by the censorious mothers the day the king drove in state through the streets of the city; the poet draws the pointed attention of the readers to the wear and tear on the hinges of the front doors and somehow we get a vivid picture of the king who drove in state through the streets of the city; the poet draws the conflicting interests of the girls in love and their angry mothers. The device secures a certain delicacy and suggestiveness which enhance the artistic appeal of the poem.

The poems on war are on the whole at a somewhat lower literary level than those on love. This statement is true of all the Tamil works from the Sangam to the *Rāmāyaṇa* of *Kampan*; probably this is true in the case of all the world's literature. Yet there is a certain charm in the poems describing the exploits of the Tamil kings in the field of battle and how they are feared by other kings. Poems 8, 9, 10, 15, 21, 23, 27, 32 and 33 can be cited as good examples of these concepts, even though many of them are cast in the traditional mould and excellent verses on these self-same ideas can be cited from the earlier (Sangam) pieces.

### **Traditions of Sangam Poetry and *Muttollāyiram***

Literary conventions matter a great deal to poets anywhere, at any time. But Sangam poets had a tightly knit, all-embracing network of conventions to guide as well as to regulate them. And they have conformed to a remarkable degree to these conventions. Even though the *Muttollāyiram* does not follow quite a few of these conventions, it may be useful to study them as they have undoubtedly had a significant influence over all the poetry composed in the centuries immediately following the Sangam Age.

*Sangam akam* poetry set such a high value on the evocative role of the natural backdrop that they associated a stage or mood of love with each type of landscape; thus mountain slopes and premarital love are organically related; the desert walks are associated with long and anguished parting; the grassy meadows and seashore villages are associated with separation, but of lesser impact. The riverine plains serve as the background for marital misunderstandings arising out of the man straying from the narrow path of virtue. A little reflection will convince the reader how natural and logical these associations are.

We have referred to the misunderstanding between man and wife; a basic tenet of Sangam convention is that love is so strongly entrenched in their hearts, they cannot part for ever but have to come together. Neither one-sided love nor frustration arising from the death of one of the parties can be delineated in *akam* poetry.

Another important convention observed with ruthless fidelity by the love poets of the Sangam age is the total ban on the poets revealing the names or other identifying details of the characters. The ban is so total and has been observed so faithfully that poems delineating love have got consigned to the *puram* group solely for the reason that the names or the signs by which they can be recognised or identified have been mentioned in them. The reason for this ban has not been stated but it can be inferred by the intelligent critic. Names and identifying details turn out to be particularising factors which militate against the efforts of the poet to universalise the sentiment; and this process of universalisation is an essential precondition to the transference of emotion to the reader, which is the sole objective of all creative art.

An important convention universally observed in *akam* poetry relates to the question of who speaks, the poet himself or one of the characters. On the surface, it may not appear to make much of a difference as, in any case, even where a character speaks, the passage is composed by the poet. But the question of who speaks or whose version is presented is of vital importance, for the speaker's mental attitude very strongly influences the way a matter is presented. As literature is all about mental states and attitudes, the importance of this will become apparent to the intelligent reader. Deeply emotional and wholly subjective remarks can be made by a character that is involved in the situation and these remarks will look natural, indeed inevitable, in its version while they will sound unnatural in a poet's version. One example will suffice to make the point clear. In quite a few of the pieces, the girl in love anticipates parental objection and speaks in despair of her love dreams failing to materialise and of her gradual emaciation and death. In accord with the other convention referred to earlier, this cannot happen, the partners in the love episode cannot die and the reader knows this. But a high emotional impact is achieved by this statement of the girl and the ends of poetry are met. If the poet makes the statement, it must be true, and the girl would die without the love being requited which is an aesthetically wrong

message to put across. There are many other advantages to be secured out of a character's version but an account of them is quite beyond the scope of this Introduction.

A.V. SUBRAMANIYAN

## III

*Muttollāyiram* is an anthology weaving a fabric of great literary merit with myriad colours on a tenuous texture depicting social, political and economic scenarios of a bygone age of the Tamils. Its author is not clearly known. But a critical study of the content, format and architectonic style clearly shows that the author or authors should have commanded a most astounding knowledge of a body of Tamil language, literature and grammar texts.

The author was of such rich erudition that his pen-pictures served as guideposts to the noble and the rabble alike. That such a wonderful work was in existence has to be inferred by the quotations from them by the four great commentators Iḷampūraṇar, Pērāciriyaṛ, Nacciṇārkkīṇiyaṛ and Guṇasāgarar in their works. The edition by Tamil Sangam, and later by the University of Madras, is only a compilation of the available verses as quoted by commentators. The commentators had quoted them profusely here and there as points of reference in support of their views.

As these songs sing the glories of the three emperors of the South, namely, Pāṇṭiyas, Cōlas and Cēras, many are left to think that the original *Muttollāyiram* was of 900 verses each on the three emperors, thus making a total of 2700 verses in all. That such a great body of three literary pieces was available in the hoary past and had a large circulation among discerning scholars can rightfully be inferred by applying various yardsticks of literary measurement. But alas! What is now available to us is only 110 verses.

Virtue, wealth and love have been the anchors of Tamil literature. In *Muttollāyiram* we find all the three in ample measure.

According to the *Tolkāppiyam*, the ethical codes of love are divided sevenfold under three main divisions, known as *kaikkīlai*, *aintiṇai* and *peruntiṇai*.

*Aintiṇai* refers to themes of perfect love or the perfect union of hearts. The aspects of this love are five in number. They are union, separation, variance, waiting and lamentation.

Now the love depicted here in *Muttollāyiram* is termed *kaikkīlai*. *Kaikkīlai* refers to one-sided love, the other not requiting it. But the love picturised in this great work, though *kaikkīlai*, has all the ramifications of perfect love or *aintiṇai*! How? It is because the girl in love lives in a world of her own with her own fantasies and

dreams. Her dream world is so graphic and seems so realistic that it looks very much like reality. In *kaikkilai* love, one side is fully aware that the other side does not requite the love. Hence it stoops to certain extreme steps like riding a palmyrah-stem horse.

The king is completely unaware of the pining of the girl. He may not know that there is a girl falling in love with him. But only with this slender space available the poet enacts most bewitching plays of love.

The girls in love are all teenagers in their budding youth. The prince is young and handsome. He comes in a royal procession so that he may give a chance to all the subjects to have a heartfelt look at 'their dear prince'. The prince has to wear a very pleasant smile. And that is the royal custom. A girl looking at the prince with a broad smile will fall a prey to his sight. The king may also wave his hand while acknowledging the greetings of the viewers.

The girl builds her own world of fantasy imagining that the prince reciprocates her love. Thus the seeds of *aintinai* are sown. And action takes place on the stage of dream and imagination. The love scenes depicted in *Muttollāyiram* can compare well with the best love episodes in the history of literature throughout the world! Yet there is not a shred of transgression of universally accepted moral codes which we call *anpin aintinai*.

It is most heartening to come to know that

*Not only the cup is new*

*The cocktail too is a novel brew!*

Yes, the new blend with a combination of different spirits is sure to yield pleasure of lingering nature, even long after its consumption. That is why even today that fresh aroma soothes our nerves shattered by the vicissitudes of modern cares and worries.

We find that the kings of the Pāṇṭiya kingdom were known by the following appellations:

1. Potiyirkōmāṇ
2. Celiyaṇ
3. Kor̥kaikkōmāṇ
4. Kūṭalārmaṇṇaṇ
5. Kūṭal kōmāṇ
6. Kūṭalār kōmāṇ



7. Kūṭal perumān
8. Maturaiyār kōmān
9. Mākkaṭuṅkō
10. Māraṇ
11. Pañcavaṇ
12. Cēḷēka vaṇṇaṇ
13. Tamilar perumān
14. Tennan
15. Tennavaṇ
16. Tennavar kōmān
17. Vaiyaiyār kōmān
18. Vaḷuti

In the land of Pāṇṭiyas everywhere we see globular pearls. Even nature lends her hand to the production of globular objects like buds of the mastwood trees and areca palms.

The streets of Madurai are slippery thanks to the heady unguent thrown overboard by the lovers in a tiff in their luxurious bed chambers.

While the Madurians enjoy a life of plenty, they are alert when the call of war is sounded. Woe unto the very kings who heed not the warning note sent by Pāṇṭiyaṇ. Owls sing a lullaby to the babies of the enemy kings. For their territory is razed to the ground so that no building survives after an invasion.

Taking a cue, the subordianate kings should send their tributes to Pāṇṭiyaṇ in time, in due measure and in proper mode; failing, the goblins will find a shelter in their battered homes.

The celestials too are scared of the Pāṇṭiya kings. For one of their forebears defeated Intiraṇ, the Lord of the Heaven, with the club. From that day they too are afraid of setting their feet on the soil of the Pāṇṭiyas.

The custom of ceremonial worship of the royal parasol was prevalent prior to going on war against an enemy king. There was a hilarious instance. Once the king ordered such ceremonial worship of the parasol. When it was taken out, the enemy kings mistook that Pāṇṭiyaṇ intended to invade their lands, hence ran up and jostled with one another to pay their tribute far ahead of when it was due.

We see that there was the custom of fitting steel anklets with pointed knives to the ankles of the war elephants. The warring tuskers battered the garrison of enemies with their armed sturdy feet.

The *Cōla* kings are noted by the following titles:

1. Cēṇṇi
2. Cēpiyaṇ
3. Cōḷaṇ
4. Kāviri nīr nāṭaṇ
5. Killi
6. Kōkkilli
7. Kōḷikkōmāṇ
8. Pukārp perumāṇ
9. Nalaṅkilli
10. Puṇal nāṭaṇ
11. Uṇantaiyar kōṇ
12. Vaḷavaṇ

Men at work on the threshing floors used to stand on top of the mound of paddy sheaves and call their fellow men to work at dawn. They would shout, ‘*Nāvalō*’. On hearing this call, workmen thronged the threshing floor to resume the day’s work.

A similar war cry was made out in the battlefields standing on the tusker’s lofty back. Here they challenge the Death Lord to a duel. This picture is painted in verse 831 of *Purattiraṭṭu*.

The capital city Uṇantai was agog with trade and commerce. It seems there were huge supermarkets. There were exclusive flower markets too. The weavers of garlands nip off the unwanted portions of flowers while making garlands. The thrown-away waste made up of different colours of flowers was lying like a huge rainbow. (863)

The *Cēra* kings are noted by the following names and epithets:

1. Cēralar kō
2. Cēraṇ
3. Kōtai
4. Kuṭanāṭaṇ
5. Mākkaṭuṅ kō
6. Māntai nannāṭaṇ
7. Muciriyar kōmāṇ

8. Pūliyan
9. Pūliyar kō
10. Vāṇavaṇ
11. Vāṇavarkōmaṇ

The poet opens his gallery on the Cēra kingdom with a fantastically beautiful painting.

It is a fresh dawn. The sun peeps through the eastern horizon. Aquatic birds are out for early prey. They are looking for worms and feeding their young chicks on their catch through their dainty beaks. The young birds open their red mouths and gobble the feed from the mother birds.

The birds are feeding their chicks at the puddled fields where the worms abound. Red lilies are in large numbers there and in the nearby pond too. The shadows of the red lilies are black on the water before sunrise. The sun rises like a golden disc. Its magical rays light up the red lilies. Their shadows now falling on the field are red. It seemed the wet field has caught fire.

The chicks get frightened and begin to quake in fright. The mother birds hurriedly huddle the birds within their wings! When we arrange an exhibition of the scenes of *Muttollāyiram*, this scenic marvel should definitely find a place in *Purattirattu*.

In verse 1285 of *Purattirattu* the poet pays the highest tribute to the valour of the Cēra Emperors who held sway over even the celestials. Enemies can save their skin if they draw the insignia of the Cēra rule i.e., the bow. The poet very cleverly says that even the celestials were so terrified at the might of the Cēra rule that they did not want an invasion from the Cēra army. Hence they drew a giant bow, very colourfully across the sky and saved their dear lives. Yes, they drew the rainbow on the portico of the celestials' domain.

Such hyperbolic praise is showered on the Pāṇṭiyas too, when the celestials are said to be afraid of setting their feet on the earth (1286).

As a whole, *Muttollāyiram* is really the rarest of the rare finds of the *Sangam* lyrics for the following reasons:

1. On the genre of (*kaikkilai*) unrequited love, the poet brings out all the five facets of perfect love – *anpiṇ-aintiṇai*.
2. The heroic deeds of the Tamil kings are brought out most graphically as in *Kalīnkattup paraṇi* and *Puraṇānūru*.

3. The Tamils' ethics is depicted as had been followed in those golden days.
4. The moral codes of the rule of the Tamils are brought out beautifully.
5. We are able to visualise the fertility of the Tamil land as it existed then. In a nutshell, this is a super creation by an unknown author.

The translated section follows the following order: First there is the Tamil verse followed by its transliteration in English. Then, there are three translated versions of the poem, two in the poetic mode and one in prose. Of these, the first one is by A.V. Subramanian; the second one is by P.N. Appuswami excepting for the stanzas 2, 3, 19, 21, 30, 43, 45, 47, 48, 49, 51, 54, 57, 58, 66, 71, 78, 79, 80, 81, 84, 88, 89, 91, 92, 98, 100, 104, 106, 107, which have been translated by P. Marudanayagam; the prose versions of all the stanzas are by P. Pandian.

P. PANDIAN

# A System of Transliteration of Tamil

## Vowels

### Short

அ	a
இ	i
உ	u
எ	e
ஓ	o

### Long

ஆ	ā
ஈ	ī
ஊ	ū
ஏ	ē
ஔ	ō

ஐ ai

ஔ au

## Consonants

### Hard

க்	k
க்	c
ட்	t
த்	t
ப்	p
ற்	r

### Soft

ங்	ṅ
ஞ்	ñ
ண்	ṇ
ந்	n
ம்	m
ன்	ṅ

### Medial

ய்	y
ர்	r
ல்	l
வ்	v
ழ்	ḷ
ள்	ḷ

## Āytam

ஃ k

# Contents

Foreword	v
Preface	vii
Introduction	ix
A System of Transliteration of Tamil	xxxviii
Text, Transliteration and Translations	1

# MUTTOĻĀYIRAM

1. மன்னிய நாண்மீன் மதிகனலி யென்றிவற்றை  
முன்னம் படைத்த முதல்வனைப் – பின்னரும்  
ஆதிரையா னாதிரையான் என்றென் றயருமால்  
ஊர்திரைநீர் வேலி யுலகு.

*manniya nāṇmīn matikaṇali yenrivarrai  
munnam paṭaitta mutalvānaip – pinṇarum  
ātiraiyā nātiraiyān enreṇ rayarumāl  
ūrtirainīr vēli yulaku.*

## 1.1 The Universal Localised!

The world fenced in by the rolling sea  
Would identify the source of things,  
The progenitor of the sun and the moon  
And all the stars of the teeming heavens  
As the one who was born under the *Ādirai* sign  
As the one who was born under the *Ādirai* sign!

## 1.2 Invocation

Of the All – Highest  
Who first created  
The multitudinous stars and planets  
The moon, the fiery sun,  
And all else besides,  
A heedless world  
Fenced in by the rolling ocean wave,  
In after times,  
Surprisingly declares again and again,  
He was born  
Under the star *Ardra*!  
He was born  
Under the star *Ardra*!



## 2 *Muttollāyiram*

1.3 God created the sun, the moon, the fire, the stars and all else in the cosmos. His creations are multitudinous beyond numbers. He is the first cause of the space, wind, fire, water and earth and all that was made out of the five elements in different combinations. He is the Primal Cause, the Foremost. Yet the world bounded by the ever-moving waves calls him one born under *ātirai* star, the sixth in the lunar asterism.

2. அள்ளற் பழனத் தரக்காம்பல் வாயவிழ  
வெள்ளந்தீப் பட்ட தெனவெரீஇப் – புள்ளினந்தன்  
கைச்சிறகாற் பார்ப்பொடுக்குங் கவ்வை யுடைத்தரோ  
நச்சிலைவேற் கோக்கோதை நாடு.

*aḷḷar paḷanāt tarakkāmpal vāyaviḷa*  
*vellaṅṅantīp paṭṭa tenaverīp – puḷḷinaṅṅan*  
*kaicciṅṅakār pārpṅṅoṅṅukkuṅ kavvai yuṅṅaittarō*  
*naccilaivēr kōkkōtai nātu.*

### 2.1 This Is the Panic that Stalks the Land

Seeing the blood-red *āmbal* bloom  
In the muddy ponds, the water birds  
All panicked thinking the ponds were on fire  
And gathered under their protective wings  
All their fledgelings. This is the fear,  
This is the panic that stalks the land  
Of Kothai who wields a fearsome javelin.

### 2.2 The only Terror-Stricken Cry

In the muddy river  
The red *āmpal* blossoms.  
Fearing that the waters are on fire,  
The birds take their young ones  
Within their wing-arms –  
The only terror-stricken cry  
Heard in the Kingdom of Kōtai  
Wielding a poisonous spear.

2.3 The buds of red lilies open their mouths of vermilion hue, on slushy fields. A number of red lilies bloom at a time contiguously;

their colour too is reflected on the water below. At daybreak, it looks as if the great artist, Nature, has painted the whole surface red. In sunlight it looks as if the field is on fire. Young chicks are afraid. The startled birds try to calm down the clamouring of their chicks. They huddle them under their wings. Their spread wings serve as arms for them to hug the chicks and protect them from fear of fire.

3. நந்தி னிளஞ்சினையும் புன்னைக் குவிமொட்டும்  
பந்த ரிளங்கமுகின் பாளையும் – சிந்தித்  
திகழ்முத்தம் போற்றோன்றும் மெம்மற்றே தென்னன்  
நகைமுத்த வெண்குடையா னாடு.

*nanti nilāñcinaiyum punnai kuvimottum*  
*panta rilaṅkamukin pālaiyum – cintit*  
*tikaḷmuttam pōrrōnrum memmarrē tennan*  
*nakaimutta veṅkuṭaiyā nāṭu.*

### 3.1 Pearls Scattered Everywhere!

Strewn on the ground in the Pāndya land  
Where pearls of dazzling radiance  
Hang festooned to his umbrella  
Are the eggs of conchs and the *punnai* buds  
And the shiny beads from the areca-palm  
Projecting an illusion  
Of pearls scattered everywhere  
Ungarnered in the Pāndya land!

### 3.2 Pearls, Pearls, Pearls

The infant pearls  
Yielded by oysters,  
The closed buds of *punnai*  
The beads fallen  
From *kamuku* leaves,  
All look like pearls  
In the land of *Tennan*  
Whose canopy looks lustrous with pearls.

3.3 There are pearls everywhere, not only on the pearlfishing harbour and in the palaces and upon the wearers thereof but notably everywhere. Even the tender eggs of conches and oysters on the sands look like smiling pearls. Areca palms of young and tender shoots are found scattered. They too are pearl-shaped. Look here, even the white parasol of our dear king looks like a huge smiling pearl.

4. காவ லுழவர் களத்தகத்துப் போரேறி  
நாவலோஓ வென்றழைக்கு நாளோதை – காவலன்றன்  
கொல்யானை மேலிருந்து கூற்றிசைத்தாற் போலுமே  
நல்யானைக் கோக்கிள்ளி நாடு.

*kāva luḷavar kalattakattup pōrēri*  
*nāvalōō venṛalaikku nālōtai – kāvalanraṇ*  
*kolyānai mēliruntu kūrricaittār pōlumē*  
*nalyānaik kōkilli nātu.*

#### 4.1 Calls of Peace and Yells of War

Peasants that guard the harvested grain  
Climb at daybreak to the top of the haystack  
To send up their call to their fellow labourers;  
This morning-call from peasant throats  
Swells to the timbre of battle shouts  
Raised by the king's men in the field of battle,  
Seated on the backs of killer tuskers  
In the Chola country.

#### 4.2 The Joyful Shout

Ploughmen watching the corn  
Upon the threshing ground  
Climb upon the mounded sheaves  
And raise a joyful shout.  
*Nāvalō!* they cry  
In the fair domain  
Of King Killi,  
Lord of goodly elephant hosts;  
And their shout

Falls upon the ears of enemy kings  
Like the triumphant whoop  
Of the God of Death  
From upon the lofty backs  
Of the fierce war-elephants  
Of the king.

**4.3** In Killi's kingdom, the hay rick rises up like a hill. Farmers sleep on the threshing floor in the night to keep a watch over the paddy grains. When the day dawns, they climb over the hay rick and shout out to the farm workers. They shout "Nāvalō." The poet compares this scene to another in the battlefield where battle-cries are heard. In the battlefield the warriors call out the Death lord for a duel. In the threshingfield, the farmers call out and challenge Death caused by paucity of food.

5. களிகள் களிகட்கு நீட்டத்தங் கையாற்  
களிகள் விதிர்த்திட்ட வெங்கட் - ஔளிகலந்  
தோங்கெழில் யானை மிதிப்பச்சே றாகுமே  
பூம்பொழில் வஞ்சி யகம்.

*kalikaḷ kalikaṭku nīṭṭattan kaiyār*  
*kalikaḷ vitirttiṭṭa veṅkaṭ - ūḷikalana*  
*tōṅkelil yānai mitippaccē rākumē*  
*pūmpolil vañci yakam.*

### 5.1 Brimming Bowls of Fragrant Toddy

In the city of Vanchi, blossom-bowered,  
Fighters hand to one another  
Brimming bowls of fragrant toddy  
And they all drink after sprinkling drops  
By custom bound, on the earth of the street,  
Then herds of elephants churn the street -  
And the city of Vanchi turns out to be  
A city of mud, a city of mire!

## 6 *Muttollāyiram*

### 5.2 The Glorious Slush

Joyous revellers  
Pass the drink  
To their boon companions;  
And those carousers'  
Unsteady hands  
Spill the liquor;  
And those delicious drops  
All run together;  
And when tall and stately elephants  
Tread upon them,  
They form a slush  
In the heart of Vanchi  
The city of flowery groves.

**5.3** When a carousing party takes place, the drinkers usually spill the foaming punch, pouring a little to the earth as if it were an offering. Toddy, when fermented much, foams on the top of the containers. The drinkers blow away the top foams. Thus, also a few drops spill on the earth. Hence, the good earth becomes wet with different kinds of liquor. The elephants trample over them and make the whole mixture a slush in the heart of Vañci where floral gardens abound.

6. மாலை விலைபகர்வார் கிள்ளிக் களைந்தபூச்  
சால மிகுவதோர் தன்மைத்தாய்க் – காலையே  
விற்பயில் வானகம் போலுமே வெல்வளவன்  
பொற்பா ருறந்தை யகம்.

*mālai vilaipakarvār kiḷḷik kaḷaintapūc  
cāla mikuvatōr taṇmaittāyk – kālaiyē  
virpayil vānakam pōlumē velvalavan  
porpā ruṇantai yakam.*

### 6.1 Rainbows in the Street!

The flowers culled out at even fall  
By florists lie in such profusion  
They look like a rainbow in the street

At the break of day in the lovely city,  
The Urandai of the triumphant *Chola*.

## 6.2 A Rainbow on the Ground

Flower-sellers in the streets,  
Who vend woven garlands  
In the evening,  
Pinch and throw aside  
Defective blossoms.  
These discarded flowers make  
Such a delightful medley,  
That in the morning after,  
In the heart of lovely *Urantai*,  
The city of victorious *Valava*,  
It seems to the eye  
Like a rainbow  
On the ground.

**6.3** The poet wants to describe the opulence of *Uraiūr* city, the capital of *Cōla* Empire. The garland makers, while selecting flowers of different hues, nip off the unwanted portions with their nails. Such nipped waste flowers are heaped everywhere. When the sweepers come in the morning to clean the street, they find a huge rainbow on the streets. It looks like the land of the celestials.

7. மைந்தரோ டுடி மகளிர் திமிர்ந்திட்ட  
குங்கும வீர்ஞ்சாந்தின் சேறிழுக்கி – எங்குந்  
நடுமாற லாகிய தன்மைத்தே தென்னன்  
நெடுமாடக் கூட லகம்.

*maintarō tūṭi makalir timirntiṭṭa*  
*kunkuma vīrñcāntiṅ cēriḷukki – eṅkun*  
*naṭumāra lākiya taṅmaittē tennan*  
*neṭumāṭak kūṭa lakam.*

## 7.1 Lovers' Tiffs

The streets of *Madurai*, the *Pāndya* city  
Of high-rise mansions – how slipp'ry they get

## 8 *Muttollāyiram*

And unsafe for all the passers-by  
With the mire formed by the sandal paste  
Laced with saffron, thrown by the girls  
In moods of rage occasioned by  
Short-lived tiffs with their youthful lovers.

### 7.2 The Slippery Streets

When young women,  
Offended with their lovers,  
Petulantly  
Toss into the streets  
The offered sandal paste  
And coloured saffron,  
They form such slippery mires  
That men slither and fall  
In the heart of Kūdal  
The Southern King's  
City of lofty mansions.

7.3 In feigned anger the girls throw the unguent from their breasts applied by their lovers. The boys too retort. As a result the street is full of the sandal unguent. It makes the street slippery. The richness of the land is brought out. Its opulence is visible in its use and throw-away products which are too costly to dream of by ordinary mortals. Even mire in the street which is detestable becomes delectable because of its aroma.

8. கரிபரந் தெங்குங் கடுமுள்ளி பம்பி  
நரிபரந்து நாற்றிசையுங் கூடி – யெரிபரந்த  
பைங்கண்மால் யானைப் பகையடு தோட்கோதையைச்  
செங்கண் சிவப்பித்தார் நாடு.

*kariparan tenkuṅ kaṭumulli pampi*  
*nariparantu nārricaiyuṅ kūṭi – yeriparanta*  
*paiṅkaṇmāl yāṇaip pakaiyaṭu tōṭkōtaiyaic*  
*ceṅkaṇ civappittār nāṭu.*

### **8.1 A Dismal Fate for the Enemy's Lands!**

In the lands of kings that angered him,  
Angered the Chera, scourge of his foemen,  
There is charred ruin everywhere  
And thorny bushes grow apace  
And packs of jackals prowl around  
And raging fires greet the eye  
Wherever the eye is turned  
In the lands of kings that angered him!

### **8.2 He Was Provoked**

Charred desolation  
Stretches wide;  
Stinging shrubs of thorn  
Cluster thick  
All over the place;  
Jackals prowl everywhere;  
A spreading conflagration links  
The four quarters together;  
There in the country  
Whose people caused  
The red-veined eyes of Kothai  
To flush an angry red,  
Kothai whose shoulders' might  
Annihilates his foes.  
And the eyes of the lord  
Are ablaze with green fury.

**8.3** The poet describes the status of the countries where the kings dared to oppose the Cēra emperor and were the cause for the emperor's eyes to become red, streaked with wrath. The countrysides of the enemy kings lost agricultural operations and hence were barren. Everywhere the soot and dust of burnt charcoals were seen, reminding the onlookers that the kingdom was set on fire in the course of the invasion by Cēra's army. As a result, only wild growth of thorny bushes was there – weeds and prickly bushes were everywhere, and there was no sign of any crop.



9. வேரறுகை பம்பிச் சுரைபடர்ந்து வேளைபூத்  
தூரறிய லாகா கிடந்தனவே – போரின்  
முகையவிழ்தார்க் கோதை முசிறியார் கோமா  
னகையிலை வேல் காய்த்தினார் நாடு.

*vērarukai pampic curaipaṭarntu vēḷaipūt  
tūrariya lākā kiṭantaṇavē – pōrin  
mukaiyaviḷtārk kōtai muciriyār kōmā  
nakaiyilai vēl kāyttinār nātu.*

### 9.1 Lands that Roused the Chera Ire

In the lands which provoked the lustrous lance  
Of the lord of Musiri with the wreath of blooms,  
Where they roused the javelin,  
Elephant grass now spreads its roots,  
Jungle gourd covers the earth,  
And wild flowers bloom apace.  
There is indeed no indication,  
Now, in the jungle of once thriving cities,  
Cities which throve ere they roused the ire  
Of the Chera's javelin.

### 9.2 They Lie in Ruins

Thickly matted  
With rooting harialli grass;  
Overspread  
With wild calabash creepers;  
And overgrown  
With black-vailay in flower;  
Fair cities lay unrecognisable  
In the country of those  
Who in battle  
Provoked to flaming anger  
The bright lance with leaf-like tip  
Of the king of Musiri folk,  
Of Kothai who wears garlands  
Of blossoming flower buds.

**9.3** At the time of peace the Cēra king wears bud – unfolding jasmine garland. It exudes a heady fragrance and gives a fitting ambience for the royal court (durbar). The king is sitting on his throne granting audience to bards and advisers, ministers and officials. The whole atmosphere is calm and pleasant. When the kings refuse to pay tribute, the news reaches the emperor's ears; the whole scenario changes. The emperor starts on an expedition of war against the defiant kings. After the invasion is over, every enemy kingdom becomes desolate and barren. Only thickly grown grass and wild melons are found as vegetation. The roots are stuck so deep indicating no attempts to husband the waste track. The soil classification too, seems to have changed from arable to waste. That is the picture of the country if any king invited the fiery wrath of the spear of Kōtai ruling Muciri.

**10.** இரியல் மகளி ரிலைடுருமலு ளீன்ற  
வரியிலாஞ் செங்காற் குழவி – யரையிரவின்  
ஊமன்பா ராட்ட வுறங்கிற்றே செம்பியன்றன்  
நாமம்பா ராட்டாதார் நாடு.

*iriyal makali rilaiñemalu līnra*  
*variyaḷaṅ ceṅkāṛ kulavi – yaraiyiraviṅ*  
*ūmaṅpā rāṭṭa vuraṅkirrē cempiyanraṅ*  
*nāmampā rāṭṭātār nāṭu.*

### **10.1 In the Lands that have Roused Sembian's Ire**

In all the countries where Sembian's name  
Is not held up to rightful reverence,  
The new-born babes placed on dry leaves  
By the mothers who had fled are put to sleep  
At dead of night by the lullaby  
Orchestrated by the owls of the jungle.

### **10.2 The Owl's Lullaby**

The tender babe  
With soft, rose-hued feet,  
And soles marked with tiny lines,  
Which the fleeing women  
Gave birth to

In the wild  
 Upon a bed of fallen leaves,  
 Is lulled to sleep  
 By the hoot of the moping owl  
 In the middle night –  
 There, in the land of those  
 Who refused to honour  
 Chembian's royal name.

**10.3** The streets were forlorn. All households were devastated as though flattened by a terrible killer gale. We had already announced that old men, women, the sickly, all children, cows and learned men might leave the city. But a few foolish subjects mistook our warning. A few women stayed back there, protection duly guaranteed by their own men. Alas! Those who gave assurance too died on the battlefield. The pregnant ladies, who were allowed to leave unharmed, went to a nearby wood where they delivered their babies on the bed of dried leaves. They had none to look after them. Alas! The babies with their fresh limbs with beautiful streaks slept to the lullabies of owls.

11. வாகை வனமாலை சூடி யரசுறையும்  
 ஓகை யுயர்மாடத் துள்ளிருந்து – கூகை  
 படுபேய்க்குப் பாட்டயரும் பண்பிற்றே தென்னன்  
 விடுமாற்றங் கொள்ளாதார் நாடு.

*vākai vaṇamālai cūṭi yaracuṛaiyum*  
*ōkai yuyarmāṭat tuḷḷiruntu – kūkai*  
*paṭupēykkup pāṭṭayarum paṇpirrē tennan*  
*viṭumārraṅ kollātār nāṭu.*

### 11.1 This Picture and That

In the vaulting mansions where in the earlier days  
 The triumphant kings, the Pāndya's foes,  
 Had rejoiced, now perch the nightly owls  
 [After the foemen had turned a deaf ear  
 To the message of peace from the Pāndyan king].  
 The owls now hoot forth lullabies  
 To the infant ghouls that inhabit  
 The former halls of entertainment!

## 11.2 The Owl Sings a Lullaby

In those lofty mansions  
 Where victorious kings  
 Wearing gay chaplets  
 Of fragrant sirissa flowers,  
 Once sat enthroned in regal state,  
 And where joy reigned supreme,  
 The horned owl  
 Now hoots his doleful lullaby  
 To horrible goblins  
 In the land of those  
 Who did not bow  
 To the commands  
 Of the Southern King.

**11.3** It was once a home for victory. The king ruled wearing chaplets of bright flowers. From the terrace the ladies of the royal families used to loiter for a stint of fresh evening hours. But now that terrace became the breeding place for goblins. The mother goblins fondle the baby goblins and sing lullabies to them. The barn owls used to hoot a cry of an ill-omen. That was the sorrowful state of the palaces of kings who defied Pāṇṭiyān.

**12.** பறைநிறை கொல்யானைப் பஞ்சவற்குப் பாங்காய்த்  
 திறைமுறையி னுய்யாதார் தேயம் – முறைமுறையின்  
 ஆன்போ யரிவையர்போ யாடவர் யாயீன்ற  
 ஈன்பே யுறையு மிடம்.

*paṛainirai kolyāṇaip pañcavarṅkup pāṅkāyt*  
*tiraimuraiyi nuyyātār tēyam – muraimuraiyiṅ*  
*ānpō yarivaiyarpō yāṭavar yāyīnra*  
*īnpē yuraiyu miṭam.*

## 12.1 The Fate of the Routed Enemy's Lands

The land that fails to pay tribute  
 Held by usage as proper, as due  
 To the Pāndya king with a ferocious tusker  
 Whose movements are heralded by the beating of drums

## 14 *Muttollāyiram*

Is forsaken by its herds of cattle,  
Then by the women and then by the men,  
The only denizens that at the end remain  
Being infant ghouls!

### 12.2 The Pity of It

When they failed to pay  
In due form and mode  
Their tribute to the Pāndya,  
Lord of murderous war-elephants  
And of resounding war-drums,  
Their goodly land  
Was, step by step,  
Bereft of well-fed cattle,  
And of lovely women,  
And of manly men,  
Until, alas !  
It has now become  
A secure home  
For goblin mother and child.

**12.3** The kings had to pay tribute to the Emperor Pāṇṭiyan in due measure and proper mode. If they failed to do so woe to them and to their kingdom. Emperor Pāṇṭiyan had an excellent elephantry. All the pachyderms were trained to be merciless murderers in the war-front. The emperor's war-drum peeled like thunders of summer. If the subordinate kings failed to pay their tribute, they had to lose their cattle wealth. Also they lost their beautiful women. Able-bodied men too were lost. Their kingdoms became the home for the clan of goblins.

**13.** பல்யானை மன்னர் படுதிறை தந்துய்மின்  
மல்ல னெடுமதில் வாங்குவிற் பூட்டுமின்  
வள்ளிதழ் வாடாத வானோரும் வானவன்  
வில்லெழுதி வாழ்வர் விசும்பு.

*palyānai mannar paṭutirai tantuymin  
malla neṭumatil vāṅkuvir pūṭṭumin  
vallital vātāta vāṅōrum vānavan  
villeluti vāḷvar vicumpu.*

### **13.1 The Gods Paint a Bow in the Firmament!**

Hark, you kings with elephant corps  
Pay up the tribute you owe the Chera  
And paint the picture of a full-drawn bow  
On the lofty walls of your fortresses!  
Look at the heavens; the gods on high  
Paint a bow in the firmament  
And secure now from the Chera wrath  
They live forever, with none to fear!

### **13.2 If You Wish to Live**

Listen O kings,  
And lords of elephant hosts!  
Yield at once  
Your due tribute  
If you wish to live;  
And decorate  
Your long and mighty  
Fortress walls,  
With the beautiful sign  
Of the bended bow.  
Look! Even the celestial gods  
On whose lush garlands  
No petal ever fades,  
Have painted  
Up in the sky  
Vānavaṅ's heraldic bow  
That they may dwell secure.

**13.3** It is the army chief of Killi before the assembly of other kings. "Oh, kings! Owing elephant hosts! Hear me. Pay your tribute in time, in due form, in correct quantity, and submissively. Thus you can save your skin. On the top of the ramparts of your garrisons, inscribe well the figure of the bow, the royal insignia of Cēra. If we see the emblem of bow on your garrison, we know that you accept the suzerainty of Cēra and we will not harm you. The symbol of bow on the brows of your garrisons will add great beauty and

colour to your place and bestow a state of safety. I shall tell you a secret. Our emperor desired to invade the celestial kingdom of Intiraṅ. Our emperor ordered marching of troops. Intiraṅ came to know of the intention of our emperor. He immediately drew a giant bow across the sky and saved his celestial kingdom from destruction.’’

14. நேமி நிமிர்தோ ணிலவுத்தார்த் தென்னவன்  
காமர் நெடுங்குடைக் காவல னாணையால்!  
ஏம மணிப்பூ ணிமையார் திருந்தடி.  
பூமி மிதியாப் பொருள்.

*nēmi nimirtō ṇilavuttārt tennavan  
kāmar neṭuṅkuṭaik kāvala ṇāṇaiyāl!  
ēma maṇippū ṇimaiyār tiruntaṭi  
pūmi mitiyāp poruḷ.*

#### 14.1 The Gods Do Not Tread . . . . !

The Pāndya rules with his shoulders jewelled,  
And a lace of the whitest pearls on his chest  
Under a comely broad white umbrella.  
The Pāndya monarch rules the world!  
And the gods bedecked with gold and gems  
Guard themselves from the transgression  
Of treading with their handsome feet  
The Pāndya’s earth!

#### 14.2 Even the Celestials Dare Not

His mighty shoulders uphold  
His sovereign sway;  
Gleaming strands of pearl  
Shine upon his chest  
His white umbrella  
Is both wide and tall.  
By the imperial decree  
Of that Southern King  
The earth is inviolable

By even the feet  
Of the celestial gods  
Whose eyes never close  
And who wear golden jewels  
Set with priceless rubies.

**14.3** This is the royal decree of the Pāṇṭiyan king. Pāṇṭiyan shouldering the wheel weapon bears all the world as a sweet burden cast upon him by God. Therefore every inch in the globe on which one can set his foot belongs to the Pāṇṭiyan. For this simple reason, he is shouldering the globe on his shoulders. Hence the whole world belongs to Pāṇṭiyan. This is the royal decree. Moreover, his high white parasol assures protection to all the lives on earth. Even the bejewelled celestials avoid treading on the land of Pāṇṭiyan.

**15.** நிறைமதிபோல் யானைமே னீலத்தார் மாறன்  
குடைதோன்ற ஞாலத் தரசர் – திறைகொள்  
இறையோ வெனவந் திடம்பெறுத லின்றி  
முறையோ வெனநின்றார் மொய்த்து.

*niraimatipōl yānaimē nīlattār māraṇ*  
*kuṭaitōṇra ṅālat taracar – tiraikol*  
*iraiyō veṇavan tiṭamperuta linri*  
*muraiyō veṇaninrār moyttu.*

### 15.1 The Frenzy to Pay!

When the chieftains and the vassal kings  
Descry the moon-like umbrella  
Of the Pāndya with the wreath of the lilies blue  
Mounted on the royal pachyderm,  
They converge shouting, “Here we come,  
O king of kings, with the tribute due!”  
But finding the crowd near the elephant  
Too dense to pierce, they stand transfixed  
Lamenting at the edge of the throng,  
“Is this just? Are you fair to us?”



### 15.2 Their Ruse

When the royal umbrella  
 Of Māraṇ, who wears  
 Garlands of blue lilies,  
 Arose like the full moon,  
 High over his elephant's back  
 The princes of the earth  
 Came near, crying,  
 'Pray receive our tribute,  
 O sovereign lord!'  
 But the princely crowd  
 Was jammed so thick  
 That they could gain no access:  
 And so, they cried out,  
 'Justice! O we seek justice!'

**15.3** The emperor had just sent his royal parasol to its exalted house only for certain ceremonial worship. It is also usual to send the royal umbrella to its house on an auspicious day before going on war.

The subordinate kings mistook this act as an act of preparation for war. Hence they rushed to the emperor, one trying to pay earlier than the other. There was a melee to draw the attention of the emperor.

The emperor sending out the royal umbrella on a routine had caused a terrible consternation to the vassal kings, who mistook that the emperor set out to quell them. Hence they rushed to pay their tribute.

16. நின்றீமின் மன்னீர் நெருநற் றிறைகொணர்ந்து  
 முன்றந்த மன்னர் முடிதாக்க -- வின்றுந்  
 திருந்தடி புண்ணாகிச் செவ்வி யிலனே  
 பெருந்தண் ணுறந்தையார் கோ.

*ninrīmin manṇīr nerunaṛ riraikoṇarntu  
 munranta manṇar muṭitākka – vinrun  
 tiruntati punṇākiḥ cevvi yilaṇē  
 peruntaṇ ṇurantaiyār kō.*

### 16.1 The Chola's Temporary Indisposition

“Wait, O kings! And pay your tribute  
And do not mind a day's delay!  
For yesterday there was such a rush  
Of kings bowing low at the *Chola's* feet  
The latter, scratched by the crowned heads  
Are yet to heal; they still hurt him,  
The Lord of Uṛandai, the well-watered city;  
Wait, O kings, for his feet to heal!”

### 16.2 Wait a Little

Tarry awhile,  
O mighty kings,  
Who have come to pay  
Your due tribute.  
But yesterday,  
A host of kings  
So rushed to him  
With bended heads  
To lay their dues  
At his dainty feet,  
That their jewelled crowns  
Have chafed them raw.  
Racked with pain,  
And indisposed,  
He receives none  
In audience today —  
He, the king  
Of us, who dwells  
In our fair city of Uṛantai  
Broad and cool.

**16.3** The bodyguard of the Emperor *Cōla* addresses the milling crowd of kings who have come to pay their tribute: “Tarry, Oh kings! You have to take your chance and wait for a day. Yesterday, there was a similar melee of the kings paying their tribute. The kings prostrated before our emperor. The diamond crowns of the kings so prostrating chafed the manicured toes of our emperor. Hence today our emperor is not giving audience to any king.”

17. செருவெங் கதிர்வேற் சினவெம்போர் மாறன்  
உருமி னிடிமுர சார்ப்ப – அரவுறழ்ந்  
தாமா வுகளு மணிவரையி னப்புறம்போய்  
வேமால் வயிறெரிய வேந்து.

*ceruven̄ katirvēr cinavempōr māraṇ  
urumi niṭimura cārppa – aravuraḷn  
tāmā vukaḷu maṇivaraiyi nappurampōy  
vēmāl vayireriya vēntu.*

### 17.1 The Enemy on the Run!

When the Pāndyan war-drums thunder forth –  
The drums of the Pāndya with the javelin  
Who rages fierce in the field of battle,  
The enemy kings flee their fortress  
And crossing the hills where wild cows scatter –  
Resentment burning in their royal breasts  
Even like snakes at peals of thunder  
They scout to the safety of mountain hideouts.

### 17.2 Ignominious and yet Fuming

When the war-drums  
Of Māraṇ, who wages  
Angry and fierce war,  
Wielding his war-lance  
Which flashes fire,  
Reverberate like peals of thunder,  
The enemy kings flee  
Beyond the lovely hill-slopes  
Where wild cows gambol and leap;  
And there they lie in hiding.  
With bitter resentment  
Gnawing at their vitals,  
And their noble forms  
Meanly altered.

17.3 Māraṇ himself led the quelling of the revolt. His spear shines so brightly that it drives away darkness. It is blood-thirsty. His

war drum pounds peels of thunder. The army is on the march.

The very thunderous bang of the war-drum is enough. The enemies took to their heels like cobras rushing back to their holes at thunder.

The kings ran off to the farthest human habitable place. There wild animals jump hither and thither with no control.

Alas! The kings were among such wild cows. But lo! It is there that rare gems are struck in the mines.

18. நிரைகதிர்வேல் மாறனை நேர்நின்றார் யானைப்  
புரைசை யறநிமிர்ந்து பொங்கா – அரசர்தம்  
முன்முன்னா வீழ்ந்த முடிக ளுதைத்தமாப்  
பொன்னுரைகற் போன்ற குளம்பு.

*niraikatirvēl māraṇai nērninṅār yāṇaip  
puraicai yaṇanimirntu poṅkā – aracartam  
munmunṇā vīlnta muṭika lutaittamāp  
ponnuraikar pōṅra kuḷampu.*

### 18.1 The Golden-hooved Horses

The enemy kings that are arrayed against  
The Pāndya with the myriad javelins  
Shocked at the onslaught of his cavalry  
And tripped by the sundered ropes on the necks  
Of their elephant-mounts now roll on the field;  
And the Pāndyan horses during the course of the fray  
Acquire a golden sheen  
Like a touchstone on which gold has been tested,  
On all their hooves where they had struck  
Against the crowns of gold in the fateful field  
From the heads of the kings thrown out of their mounts  
By the fierce charge of the cavalry.

### 18.2 Are They Touchstones?

When the war-elephants  
Of those who dared to oppose Māraṇ,  
Whose lances gleam in serried rows,

Reared in fright,  
 And broke their saddle straps  
 As he charged,  
 The mounted kings  
 Toppled down from their back  
 Right in front of his army's van;  
 And the hoofs of his steeds  
 As they trod on their crowns  
 Glinted and sparkled  
 Like gold-flecked touchstones.

**18.3** Kings, who dared to come face to face with Māraṇ on their tuskers, had to scrape through. For Māraṇ's galloping steed pounced upon the face of the enemy's tusker and snapped the halters with their hooves. The kings on the sturdy elephants tumbled down. Māraṇ's stallion did not stop with that. It kicked the king's crown and rubbed it on the ground as if to find its real worth, like a goldsmith testing pieces of gold.

**19.** வீறுசான் மன்னர் விரிதாம வெண்குடையைப்  
 பாற வெறிந்த பரிசயத்தாற் – நேறாது  
 செங்கண்மாக் கோதை சினவெங் களியானை  
 திங்கண்மே னீட்டுந்தன் கை.

*vīrucāṇ manṇar viritāma veṅkuṭaiyaip*  
*pāra verinta paricayattār – rērātu*  
*ceṅkaṇmāk kōtai ciṇaven kaḷiyānai*  
*tīnkaṇmē nīṭṭuntaṇ kai.*

**19.1 The Elephant Tries to Grab the Moon!**

All day long the ferocious tusker  
 Of Kothai had raged in the battlefield  
 Seizing hold of the umbrellas  
 Dazzling white with pearl pendants  
 Of enemy kings and dashing them  
 To smithereens in the battle-ground.  
 Used to this practice the long day through,

When the orb of the moon now swims into view,  
Round and white, the pachyderm  
Deluded, shoots its eager trunk  
Skywards up.

## 19.2 The Lunatic Attempt

Habituated to the heroic deed  
of tearing vast canopies  
of mighty monarchs,  
the frenzied elephant  
of the red-eyed Kōtai,  
running amuck,  
extended its long proboscis  
towards the moon.

**19.3** The ferocious tusker, the mount of the emperor Cēra has cultivated a raging temper and imbibed a devastating force. It raged in the battle-field like a gale. It seized hold of the white parasols of the enemy kings which were dazzling bright with pendants of globular pearls. It dashed them on the ground and broke them into pieces. Madly, it stretches trunk towards the moon.

20. அயிற்கதவம் பாய்ந்துழக்கி யாற்றல்சான் மன்னர்  
எயிற்கதவங் கோத்தெடுத்த கோட்டாற் – பனிக்கடலுட்  
பாய்தோய்ந்த நாவாய்போற் றோன்றுமே யெங்கோமான்  
காய்சினவேற் கிள்ளி களிறு.

*ayirkatavam pāyntuḷakki yārralcāṇ manṇar*  
*eyirkatavaṅ kōtteṭutta kōṭṭār – panikkataluṭ*  
*pāytōynta nāvāypōr rōṇrumē yenkōmāṇ*  
*kāycinavēr killi kaḷiru.*

## 20.1 The Power-packed Pachyderm

The elephant of our warrior king  
Pounces on the door that bristled with spears  
Of the fortress of his skilful foeman  
And tearing it free of its hinges, the brute

Hoists the door from the tip of its tusk  
 When it rejoins the Chola army  
 Even like a ship with its sail atop  
 In the surging sea of the Chola fighters.

## 20.2 Ship With Sails Unfurled

Dashing against the fortress gates  
 Studded with spikes of steel,  
 And trampling on them;  
 And holding aloft  
 Impaled upon his charging tusks  
 The citadel doors  
 Of kings of renowned might,  
 The war-elephant  
 Of Killi, our king,  
 Whose lance flames in anger,  
 Seems like a ship  
 With crowded sails  
 Upon an ice-cold sea.

**20.3** Our royal tusker attacked the garrison of the enemy king. It tried to gore the massive gate and open the latch. It did not come off. The tusker in a mad frenzy of limitless strength uprooted the giant door of the fortress. First of all, it jabbed at it with its tusks stronger than tough steel. Probably, it got stuck up. As though to avenge the pain in the tusk, it pulled away the door and held it aloft. In the battlefield the tusker, with the door stuck up on its tusks and held by the trunk, looked like a ship with its mast hoisted up.

21. மருப்பூசி யாக மறங்கனல்வேல் மன்னர்  
 உருத்தகு மார்போலை யாகத் – திருத்தக்க  
 வையக மெல்லா மெமதென் நெழுதுமே  
 மொய்யிலைவேல் மாறன் களிறு.

*maruppūci yāka maraṅkanalvēl manṅnar*  
*uruttaku mārpōlai yākat – tiruttakka*  
*vaiyaka mellā mematen relutumē*  
*moyyilaivēl māraṅ kalirū.*

### 21.1 A Title Deed for all the Earth!

The elephant of the Pāndya king,  
Using its tusk as the writing style  
And the fearsome chests of the enemy kings  
Tough at battle, armed with javelins  
As the parchment for a title deed  
Writes the legend, “All this earth  
This bounteous earth is our own possession!”

### 21.2 The Elephant’s Writing

With its tusk as the quill,  
The intimidating chests of  
The heroic, furious, spear-wielding  
Kings as the scroll,  
The elephant of the mighty Māraṇ  
Will write:  
All the rich world  
Is ours.

21.3 Now about the valour and might of the elephantry of Māraṇ. The tusker of Māraṇ could perform dual function. It served as a fearless majestic mount for Pāṇṭiyan. That is one role. Its other role is to serve as a document writer, its stylus being its sharp tusks. For parchment it chose the rebel king’s chest and wrote:

“All the world under the sky  
belongs to Emperor Pāṇṭiyan!”

22. உருவத்தார்த் தென்னவ னோங்கெழில் வேழத்  
திருகோடுஞ் செய்தொழில் எண்ணில் – ஒருகோடு  
வேற்றா ரகல முழுமே யொருகோடு  
மாற்றார் மதில்திறக்கு மால்.

*uruvattārt tennava ṇōṅkelil vēlat  
tirukōṭuñ ceytolil eṇṇil – orukōtu  
vērrā rakala muḷumē yorukōtu  
mārrār matiltirakku māl.*



### 22.1 The Royal Elephant and its Fearsome Tusks

If we contemplate the tasks performed  
By the brace of tusks of Pāndya's elephant –  
The handsome mount of the king with the wreath –  
One of them ploughs all the time  
The chests of the enemy; and the other tusk  
Is pressed into service to ram the doors  
Of the fortresses of the foemen kings!

### 22.2 The Two Tusks

Increasing  
Is the loveliness  
Of the war-elephant  
Of the Southern king  
Who wears shapely garlands.  
Consider the work  
That its two tusks do.  
While one tusk ploughs  
The broad chests of those foemen  
Who stand up to the king in battle,  
The other tusk  
Rips a passage open  
Through the ramparts  
Of his besieged enemies.

22.3 Tēnnaṅ wears a beautiful garland. It is a great pleasure to look at it. It is verily a piece of art by the expert garland maker. The Emperor is seated on the neck of the tusker. It looks like a hill. It is so eye-catching that none can desist a gaze.

Now to count the assignments Tēnnaṅ's pachyderm is doing: with one of its tusks it tears asunder the enemy's broad chest and with the other tusk, it opens the closed garrison of the enemy.

23. கொடிமதில் பாய்ந்திற்ற கோடு மரசர்  
முடியிடறித் தேய்ந்த நகமும் – பிடிமுன்பு  
பொல்லாமை நாணிப் புறங்கடை நின்றதே  
கல்லார்தோட் கிள்ளி களிறு.

*koṭimatil pāyntirra kōṭu maracar  
mutiyārit tēynta nakamum – piṭimūṇpu  
pollāmai nāṇip purāṅkaṭai ninratē  
kallārtōṭ kiḷli kaḷiru.*

### **23.1 The Sad Plight of the Royal Tusker!**

The Chola's elephant stands without,  
It is bashful, hesitant, it does not want  
To let its mate observe the state  
To which its toils have reduced it.  
Its tusk had been broken in the fierce charge  
On the enemy's fortress, its toe-nails worn out  
In tripping over the heads of enemy kings!

### **23.2 The Glorious Disfigurement**

His tusks broken  
By repeated charging  
Against the bannered ramparts  
Of the foe,  
His toe nails worn off  
By frequent stubbing  
Against the crowned heads of kings;  
The war-elephant of Kiḷli,  
Whose shoulders are firm as a rock,  
Stands outside his stall,  
Ashamed to appear  
In his disfigurement  
Before his beloved mate.

**23.3** Oh! Friend! Our royal tusker of Emperor Kiḷli who has shoulders like hills, attacked the garrison of the enemy king and in the process, its tusks, though stronger than the toughest steel, cracked and the points were blunted. With its pillar-like feet it kicked at the crowns of the enemy kings and chafed them on the ground. In the process its nails were shortened. When it returned to its yard, it did not go to its wonted place where it was used to be tethered, but stood behind the elephant yard ashamed of a shoddy appearance before its love-mate.

24. கச்சி யொருகான் மிதியா வொருகாலால்  
தத்துநீர்த் தண்ணுஞ்சை தான்மிதியாப் – பிற்றையும்  
ஈழம் ஒருகான் மிதியா வருமேநங்  
கோழியர்கோன் கிள்ளி களிறு.

*kacci yorukāṇ mitiyā vorukālāl*  
*tattunīrt taṇṇuñcai tānmitiyāp – pirraiyum*  
*īlam orukāṇ mitiyā varumēnaṅ*  
*kōliyarkōṇ kiḷli kaḷiru.*

### 24.1 The Chola's Elephant Is on the March!

The Chola's elephant is on the march!  
The emperor's mount, one massive foot  
On Kanchi city, raises another  
And places that on cool Ujjain  
Where water cascades down the channels  
Then racing fast, it places another  
On distant Īlam – marches on  
The triumphant tusker of the Chola king!

### 24.2 How it Comes!

With a single mighty tread  
Trampling Kanchi down;  
And with another  
Trampling down cool  
Unchai where the rippling waters  
Splash on the shore;  
And then again,  
With one more tread  
Trampling Īlam down;  
Thus comes striding  
The war-elephant  
Of our King Killi  
Lord of Uṛaiyūr City.

24.3 In an expedition of war the tusker of Killi tramples over Kacci, by using one of its four massive feet.

The emperor returns triumphantly riding on the victorious elephant. Meanwhile, spies report that the northern kings under the leadership of the King of Uccai (Ujjain) are planning a revolt and refusing to pay the royal tribute. It is enough for an expedition to be justified. The Cōla Emperor marches towards the North on the ferocious pachyderm. There the tusker uses its second foot and razes Ujjain to the ground. The kings of the north pay their tributes submissively. On a triumphant return, a news warrants a military action against Īlam (Sri Lanka). It returns home sparing one foot for any emergent eventuality. In Sri Lanka, the royal tusker uses its third hind foot because Īlam is a small country. Hence a milder dose of force is enough!

25. பாற்றின மார்ப்பப் பருந்து வழிப்படர  
நாற்றிசையு மோடி நரிகதிப்ப – வாற்ற  
அலங்கலம் பேய்மகளி ராட வருமே  
இலங்கிலைவேற் கிள்ளி களிறு.

*pārrina mārppap paruntu valippaṭara  
nārricaiyu mōṭi narikatippa – vārra  
alaṅkalam pēymakaḷi rāṭa varumē  
ilāṅkilaivēr killi kaḷiru.*

### 25.1 When the Chola's Elephant Sallies Forth

When the battle-elephant of the Chola king  
Who wields the lustrous javelin  
Sallies forth, the birds that live  
On carrion like vultures, eagles  
Keep company with their raucous cries  
And jackals leap and frisk about  
And ghouls keep up their devils' dance  
When the Chola's elephant sallies forth.

### 25.2 When His Elephant Goes Forth

Flights of vultures  
Scream aloud;  
Hovering kites

Follow all along its way;  
 Scurrying jackals  
 Run in every direction  
 Goblin maids  
 Decked with garlands  
 Dance the *Alangalam* measure  
 Whenever the war-elephant  
 Of Killi, who wields  
 The gleaming spear with leaf-like tip  
 Goes striding forth.

**25.3** A warrior extols the might of the royal tusker mount. Hey friend! Our Emperor Killi holds a spear in his hand. It sparkles the brightest. It is shaped like a pointed leaf. It is terrible to look at.

Now look at his royal mount. It gives the Emperor an excellent ride on its neck. It is as ferocious as the Lord of Death.

Once the tusker sets out on a military mission, the whole scenario changes. Eagles and vultures scream in joy and follow the royal convoy. They fly high in the air with their flocks as though like a canopy. For they are sure of fresh flesh for dinner. The goblins with their kith and kin dance in exultation and welcome the royal tusker's military expedition. Jackals and their herds crowd on the battlefield for stealthy flesh feed.

**26.** தோற்ற மலைகட லோசை புயல்கடாஅங்  
 காற்றி னிமிர்ந்த செலவிறறாய்க் – கூற்றுங்  
 குறியெதிர்ப்பைக் கொள்ளுந் தகைமைத்தே யெங்கோன்  
 எறிகதிர்வேல் மாறன் களிறு.

*tōrra malaikaṭa lōcai puyalkaṭāaṅ*  
*kārri nimirnta celavirraṅy – kūrruṅ*  
*kuṛiyetirppaik kollun takaimaittē yeṅkōṅ*  
*erikatirvēl māraṅ kaliru.*

### **26.1 The Killer Tusker and the God of Death**

The pachyderm of the Pāndya king  
 The king whose javelin throws out lustre

Looks a mountain and trumpets like  
The roaring sea: in heat secretes  
A generous must like raining cloud;  
It runs faster than the wind.  
It is so that even the god of death  
Finds the need to borrow from  
This pachyderm of the Pāndya king!

## 26.2 His Elephant

It looms like a mountain;  
And trumpets like the sea;  
While its must pours like rain:  
Oh ! Its sudden rush  
Is swifter than a gale's:  
Its ferocity is such  
That death himself  
Has often borrowed it.  
That is what it is –  
The elephant of our king,  
Māraṇ of the gleaming lance.

**26.3** Our king Māraṇ holds a sparkling spear in his hand. His elephant mount is hill-like in appearance. Its trumpeting is the roar of the waves in the sea. Its speed is that of a gale. No, no; even faster than that.

It can even challenge the God of Death. Hence the God of Death borrows the killing power from the Emperor's tusker.

For the sight, it is a mountain, the tallest and toughest thing on earth. For the ears, it is the roaring of the mighty sea. For the rutting, it is the rain from the heavens.

27. அடுமதில் பாய வழிந்தன கோட்டைப்  
பிடிமுன் பழகழிதல் நாணி – முடியுடை  
மன்னர் குடரால் மறைக்குமே செங்கனல்வேற்  
றென்னவர் கோமான் களிற்று.

*aṭumatil pāya vaḷintana kōṭṭaip  
piṭimun palakalital nāni – mutiyutai  
mannar kuṭarāl maraikumē ceṅkaṇalvēṛ  
rennavar kōmāṇ kaḷiru.*

### 27.1 The Bashful Elephant

Bashful, hesitant, filled with shame  
To show itself before its mate,  
With the point of the tusk now badly broken  
When ramming the fort of an enemy king,  
The elephant of the Pāndya monarch  
Whose javelin spurts out flames of red  
Hides the rump that is left of the tusk  
With the entrails of the enemy king!

### 27.2 His Lost Beauty

When the war-elephant  
Of the king of the Southern folks,  
Whose lance flashes  
Like a red tongue of fire,  
Charged with a rush  
Upon his enemy's ramparts,  
His tusks were broken  
By the impact.  
Ashamed to show himself  
In his disfigured beauty  
Before his beloved mate,  
He covered up the tips  
Of the broken tusks  
With the entrails of kings.

27.3 Pāṇṭiyān's mount stormed the enemy's garrison and also killed many guards. In the process its tusk was ruptured. But when it showed itself before its mate, in shyness it covered its broken tusk with the entrails of the enemies.

28. வெருவரு வெஞ்சமத்து வேலிலங்க வீழ்ந்தார்  
புருவ முரிவுகண் டஞ்சி - நரிவெரீஇச்  
சேட்கணித்தாய் நின்றழைக்குஞ் செம்மற்றே தென்னவன்  
வாட்கணித்தாய் வீழ்ந்தார் களம்.

*veruvaru veñcamattu vĕlilañka vĕlntār  
puruva murivukañ tañci – nariveriic  
cēṭkañittāy ninra<sub>l</sub>ai<sub>kku</sub>ñ cemmarrē tennavan  
vāṭkañittāy vĕlntār kaḷam.*

### 28.1 The Fear of the Jackals

In the awesome battle, those that happened  
To come within the range of the Pāndya's sword  
Fell with their javelins flashing bright,  
Their wrathful brows still locked in death –  
The knitted, frowning, fearsome brows  
That send tremors through the hearts of jackals,  
Which, standing afar, make the battlefield  
Resound with the notes of their plaintive howls.

### 28.2 Frightened Jackals

In the fierce battle  
Too awful to behold,  
Bright spears flashed  
And warriors fell dead.  
When jackals prowling among the slain  
Saw the angry set of their knitted brows  
They took fright,  
And howled from far and near  
Upon the glorious field of battle  
Where the warriors who came  
Too near the sweep  
Of the sword of the Southern king  
Were cut down straightaway.

**28.3** Pāñṭiyaṅ's blade swept thro' the battlefield. Soldiers who came within the sweep of Māraṅ's sword fell dead, their heads cut down.

Yet, look at their faces. Their eyebrows are knit close exhibiting their mood. Their lips are locked, biting their teeth. Their eyes are wide open. They are red and fire-emitting.



Prowling jackals are afraid of going near the dead soldiers. They mistake that they are still alive because they behold the fire in their eyes. They look like frozen statues. The jackals know not whether the warriors are alive or dead. Hence the young ones stand at a farther distance and howl to their mothers for help.

29. மரகதப்பூண் மன்னவர் தோள்வளை கீழா  
வயிரக் கடகக்கை வாங்கித் - துயருழந்து  
புண்ணுற் றழைக்குங் குறுநரித்தே பூழியனைக்  
கண்ணுற்று வீழ்ந்தார் களம்.

*marakatappūṇ mannavar tōlvalai kīlā  
vayirak katakakkai vāṅkit - tuyarulantu  
punnur ralaikkuṅ kurunarittē pūliyanaiḱ  
kannurru vīlntār kaḷam.*

### 29.1 The Plight of the Jackals

Youthful jackals bite and pull  
The jewelled hand of fallen princes  
Who wear emerald at their necks,  
When the clasp they wear at the shoulder, loosened,  
Falls on them and injures them,  
The jackals, anguished, cry and howl!  
And fill the field with the noise of their wailing –  
The field where the princes met the Chera  
And worsted in battle they were felled by his might.

### 29.2 Jackal Whelps

Upon the field of battle  
Where the warriors  
Who had no sooner glimpsed  
The lord of the Pūlis  
Than they fell dead,  
Slain by him,  
Little jackal whelps  
Sitting upon the bracelets  
On the shoulders

Of kings wearing emerald jewels,  
 And tugging hard  
 At their diamond braceleted forearms,  
 Are hurt by the armlets,  
 And writhing in pain,  
 Howl shrilly.

**29.3** A description of the battlefield of Cēra: The kings who opposed Cēra and fought against him were wearing diamond-studded bracelets. And on their wrists shining gem-set wristlets were twinkling and shedding light. There were jackals and foxes roaming for flesh. A whelp unable to gnaw at the chest of the kings, pulled down the dead king's arms. The diamond ornaments in the arms tore the jaws of the young jackal. They were yelling at their mother jackals for help.

**30.** முடித்தலை வெள்ளோட்டு மூளைநெய் யாகத்  
 தடித்த குடர்திரியா மாட்டு - யெடுத்தெடுத்துப்  
 பேய் விளக்கயரும் பெற்றித்தே செம்பியன்  
 சேய் பொருத களம்.

*mutittalai vellōṭṭu mūlainey yākat*  
*tatitta kuṭartiriyā māṭṭu - yetuttetuttup*  
*pēey vilakkayarum perrittē cempiyan*  
*cēey poruta kaḷam.*

### 30.1 In the Field where the King Had Battled in the Day

In the field of battle where the youthful Sembian  
 Fought during the day, with the setting of the sun  
 Ghouls make lamps of the skulls of kings;  
 The brain is the fat and the intestines  
 Serve as wicks. And they spend the night  
 Moving the lamps from place to place  
 On the field where the king had battled in the day.

### 30.2 The Ghosts' Gory Lamp-game

The skulls of crowned kings  
 Serving as lamps,  
 Their brains as oil,

And intestines as wicks,  
The ghosts on the battleground  
Where Cempiyaṅ's son had fought,  
Kept on playing  
The gory lamp-game.

**30.3** The goblins perform a dance of joy. They shout and shriek. The most pitiable thing is that the sight is so gruesome that no humans dare to look at it, and the battlefield is slushy with no place to set foot on. Even the nursing corps could not enter in. This is said to be the maiden war by Cempiyaṅ the prince of the *Cōla* monarch. Being young with strong and steel-like nerves and muscles, the young prince acts like a daredevil.

**31.** ஏனைய பெண்டி ரெரிமுழ்கக் கண்டுதன்  
றானையாற் கண்புதைத்தான் தார்வமுதி – யானையெலாம்  
புல்லார் பிடிபுலம்பத் தாங்கண் புதைத்தவே  
பல்யானை யட்ட களத்து.

*ēnaiya penṭi rerimūlkak kaṅṭutaṅ*  
*rānaiyār kaṅputaittāṅ tārvaluti – yānaiyelām*  
*pullār piṭipulampat tāṅkaṅ putaittavē*  
*palyānai yaṭṭa kaḷattu.*

### **31.1 The Plight of the Widows of Enemy Kings**

Seeing the wives of his slaughtered foes  
Jump into their husbands' funeral pyres  
The Pāndya covered his eyes with the hem  
Of his upper cloth. His war elephants  
Seeing the mates of pachyderms  
Which had been killed in the day's battle  
[O how many fell on that fateful field!]  
Seeing them lament, covered their eyes!

### **31.2 A Pitiable Sight**

When the widowed queens  
Of his slain foemen

Plunged into the fire,  
 Garlanded Valuti  
 Was unable to bear the sight,  
 And covered his eyes  
 With the hem of his robe.  
 His war-elephant too,  
 When it saw the mates  
 Of his enemies' war-elephants  
 Lamenting with piteous moans,  
 Covered its eyes  
 On the battlefield  
 Where so many elephants  
 Had fought and died.

**31.3** The widowed queens plunged into the funeral pyres of the slain kings. It moved Valuti's heart. He hid his eyes with the hem of his royal robe. At this sight he seemed as though he lost the battle. Yes, he lost the chance for peace. In the effort of peace-making he lost the game. His heart melted when he saw young widows embracing death on the funeral pyres of their husbands.

So too the tuskers felt shameful before the cow elephants which bemoaned the death of their erstwhile masters.

**32.** கொடித்தலைத்தார்த் தென்னவன் தோற்றான்போல் நின்றான்  
 மடித்தவாய் சுட்டிய கையாற் – பிடித்தவேற்  
 கண்ணேரா வோச்சிக் களிறணையாக் கண்படுத்த  
 மண்ணேரா மன்னரைக் கண்டு.

*koṭittalaittārt tennavan tōrrānpōl ninrān  
 maṭittavāy cuṭṭiya kaiyār – piṭittavēr  
 kaṇṇērā vōccik kaḷiraṇaiyāk kaṇpaṭutta  
 maṇṇērā manṇaraik kaṇṭu.*

### 32.1 The Victor Vanquished!

On the battlefield where the day had been won,  
 The Pāndya saw the foemen kings

Reclining on their elephant's sides  
 With puckered mouths, their lances raised  
 In careful aim at their foemen's eyes,  
 Their own eyes now closed in death,  
 The Pāndya whose banner floats at the top  
 Of his flagstaff saw and stood transfixed —  
 The triumphant victor of the day's battle  
 As though routed by his foemen's valour.

### 32.2 The Vanquished Victor

When the Southern King  
 Whose banner floats  
 In the army's van  
 Saw the kings who had refused  
 To yield their domain to him  
 Lying couched upon elephants  
 Their eyes sealed in death  
 And their teeth  
 Dug into their lips,  
 And the aimed lance,  
 Gripped tensely in their hands  
 And raised to eye-level,  
 He stood transfixed  
 Like one vanquished.

**32.3** It was a field where dauntless courage was shown and valour bloomed everywhere.

One of the kings was lying couched upon his elephant mount. His eyes stared through as of fire; yet motionless and without blinking, like a frozen statue. He bit his lips, teeth dug in. He had taken hold of the lance, aimed at his eye level. The lance was in his hand under firm grip.

Yet, before he could throw it, Pāṇṭiyān's javelin had stabbed him and had taken away his fleeting life instantly.

Pāṇṭiyān saw this scene of valour. Alas! He was standing as if he had lost the battle. He was so much moved by the valour of his enemy.

33. தொழில்தேற்றாப் பாலகனை முன்னிநீஇப் பின்னின்  
றழலிலைவேல் காய்த்தினார் பெண்டிர் கழலடைந்து  
மண்ணிரத்த லென்ப வயங்குதார் மாமாறன்  
கண்ணிரத்தந் தீர்க்கு மருந்து.

*toliltērrāp pālakanai munnirīp pinnin  
ralalilaivēl kāyttiṇār peṇṭir – kalalataintu  
maṇṇiratta leṇpa vayan̄kutār māmāraṇ  
kaṇṇirattan tīrkkū maruntu.*

### 33.1 Don't Fight but Supplicate!

If the anger of the Pāndya has to be quenched  
The only way that the wise advise  
Is for the wives of his enemy kings,  
Who roused his ire, to come to him  
Putting their children in front of them –  
Playful children at a helpless age –  
And fall at his feet and beseech him  
For the gift of the lands that once were theirs.  
In no other way can his ire be quenched,  
In no other way can their lands be gained!

### 33.2 The Only Medicine

The wives of those  
Who roused to anger  
The lance of mighty Māraṇ,  
Wearer of shining garlands,  
The lance which flashes fire  
From its leaf-shaped blade,  
Should let their innocent babes  
Stand in front,  
And keeping behind them  
Fall at his feet,  
And beg for the restoration  
Of their domain.  
This, they say,  
Is the only way

To cure Māraṇ's eyes  
Still blood-shot with anger.

**33.3** Pāṇṭiyaṇ's wrath did not subside. The widowed queens struck upon a strategy to get back their lost kingdoms. They sought an audience with Pāṇṭiyaṇ. They took care to see that their young boys untrained in martial art were set before him. They pleaded for forgiveness and prostrated at the feet of Pāṇṭiyaṇ to protect their young sons.

Pāṇṭiyaṇ's heart melted at the sight of the innocent boys. He readily gave back the kingdoms to the widows, so that they could bring up the boys well as warriors.

**34.** மடங்கா மயிலூர்தி மைந்தனை நாளுங்  
கடம்பம்பூக் கொண்டேத்தி யற்றால் – தொடங்கமருள்  
நின்றிலங்கு வென்றி நிறைகதிர்வேல் மாறனை  
இன்றமிழால் யாம்பாடும் பாட்டு.

*maṭaṅkā mayilūrti maintanai nāluṅ*  
*kaṭampampūk koṇṭētti yarrāl – toṭaṅkamaruḷ*  
*ninrilan̄ku ven̄ri niraikatirvēl māraṇai*  
*in̄ramilāl yāmpāṭum pāṭtu.*

### 34.1 God Muruga and the Pāndya King

Do we not worship Muruga who mounts  
The peacock that's known never to turn back,  
All the time with the *kadamba* blossom?  
In like manner do I laud  
The Pāndya monarch who wields a javelin  
Which wins for him in the battlefields  
Lasting victory over all his enemies –  
I panegyris the Pāndya king  
With songs that blossom in sweetest Tamil.

### 34.2 Songs of Praise

As we offer every day  
Words of high praise

To the son of God,  
 Who rides upon the peacock  
 The range of whose flight  
 No barrier can impede,  
 And offer him *cadamaba* flowers,  
 So we offer songs  
 In sweetest Tamil  
 In praise of *Māraṇ*  
 The renown of whose victories  
 In the wars he waged  
 Shines for ever,  
 And whose spear gleams  
 With a myriad beams.

**34.3** My song on King *Pāṇṭiyaṇ* can be equated with the daily song offering of *kaṭampa* flowers while eulogizing Lord Muruka, who has the mount of peacock, indefatigable in war.

**35.** செங்க னெடியான்மேற் றேர்விசய னேற்றியபூப்  
 பைங்கண்வெள் னேற்றான்பாற் கண்டற்றால் – எங்கும்  
 முடிமன்னர் சூடியபூ மொய்மலர்த்தார் மாறன்  
 அடிமிசையே காணப் படும்.

*ceṅka neṭiyānmēr rērvicaya nērriyapūp*  
*paiṅkanveḷ lērrānpār kaṇṭarrāl – eṅkum*  
*muṭimaṇṇar cūṭiyapū moymalarittār māraṇ*  
*aṭimicaiyē kāṇap paṭum.*

### 35.1 Pāndya Worshipped by all his Vassals

Did not Vijaya find the blooms  
 He had placed on stately Kṛṣṇa  
 All on the person of Siva who rides  
 The whitest bull with the shining eyes?  
 In like manner can be found  
 The flowers worn by crowned heads  
 All at the feet of *Māraṇ* who wears  
 A wreath of blooms that's sought by the bees.



### 35.2 Flowers at his Feet

As the flowers  
 Which Arjuna, chariot-warrior,  
 Strewed in worship on the Great Lord  
 Whose eyes are veined with red,  
 Were, for a wonder,  
 Seen to lie  
 Upon the Lord who rides  
 The white bull with sparkling eyes,  
 So the flowers worn  
 Upon the crests  
 Of the crowned kings of the earth  
 Are seen to lie  
 At the feet of Māraṇ  
 Who wears a garland of flowers  
 Thronging with bees.

**35.3** The chaplets that adorned the heads of other crowned kings are found at the feet of Māraṇ the Pāṇṭiya king. It is implicit that all the crowned vassal kings prostrate at the feet of Māraṇ while offering tributes.

**36.** கூந்தன்மா கொன்று குடமாடிக் கோவலனாய்ப்  
 பூந்தொடியைப் புல்கிய ஞான்றுண்டால் – யாங்கொளித்தாய்  
 தென்னவனே தேர்வேந்தே தேறுநீர்க் கூடலார்  
 மன்னவனே மார்பின் மறு.

*kūntaṇmā koṇru kuṭamāṭik kōvalaṇāyp*  
*pūntoṭiyaip pulkiya ṇāṇruṇṭāl – yāṅkoḷittāy*  
*teṇṇavanē tērvēntē tērunīrk kūṭalār*  
*mannavanē mārpīṇ maru.*

### 36.1 The King as Tirumāl Incarnate

Where is that mole on your chest, O King?—  
 The mole on the chest which could be seen  
 When you killed the horse, when as a cowherd  
 You danced the pot-dance, when you embraced  
 The girl with the wreaths. Where is that now?

How did you cover that, King of the south,  
Lord of well-watered Madurai city?  
How did you cover the mole on your chest?

### 36.2 The God in Disguise

On the day  
When in cowherd's guise  
You slew Kesi  
Who had assumed the form of a horse,  
And on the day  
When you danced the pot-dance,  
And again when you made love  
To the charming maid  
Who wore bracelets of flowers,  
You had a dark mole upon your chest.  
O Southern Chief,  
O King and chariot-warrior,  
O Lord of the folk of Kūdal city  
Which stands beside the limpid river!  
O Tell me truly  
Where and how  
You have hidden it now!

36.3 “Oh King of the Kūtal city with an assembly of wise men! When you killed the horse demon, and later performed pot dance in the city of Acura king Pāṇa, you had a dark mole on your chest. Now it is not seen. Where did you hide it?” So asks the poet. The king is believed to be the incarnation of Lord Krishna. Hence the poet asks him, “Where did you hide the beautiful freckle marks?”

37. வானிற் கு வையகம் வென்றது வானத்து  
மீனிற் கனையார் மறமன்னர் – வானத்து  
மீன்சேர் மதியனையன் விண்ணுயர் கொல்லியார்  
கோன்சேரன் கோதையென் பான்.

*vānirku vaiyakam venratu vānattu*  
*mīnir kaṇaiyār maramannar – vānattu*  
*mīncēr matiyānaiyaṅ viṇṇuyar kolliyār*  
*kōncēraṅ kōtaiyeṅ pāṅ.*

### 37.1 The Chera is Moon to the Vassals' Stars!

The Chera sovereign, Kothai, by name,  
Whose Kolli mountain scrapes the skies  
Surrounded by his vassal kings  
Is even like the moon amidst the twinkling stars.  
And his own kingdom, the boundless earth  
Is co-extensive with the firmament!

### 37.2 The Earth is More Glorious

The heavens are far surpassed  
By the earth's loveliness;  
Like the stars of heaven  
Are the earthly kings of might;  
And as glorious as the moon  
Moving among the stars of heaven  
Is he,  
The Chera called Kothai,  
The sovereign lord  
Of the people who dwell  
On Kolli Mountain  
Which towers up to heaven.

37.3 The earth is equal to the celestial world. The kings of the Cēra Empire who are brave rulers, are like the bright stars. Emperor Kōtai rules the Kolli hills. He is like the full moon surrounded by the star kings. Hence the empire ruled by the Cēra is very much like the celestial empire ruled by Intiraṇ. Regarding the expanse of the empire, the quarters four are its borders on the earth. He also rules all the mountains on the earth. Such are his possessions. At his command the moon comes in the night and sheds cool light.

38. மந்தரங் காம்பா மணிவிசும் போலையாத்  
திங்க ளாதற்கோர் திலகமா – எங்கணும்  
முற்றுநீர் வைய முழுதும் நிழற்றுமே  
கொற்றப்போர்க் கிள்ளி குடை.

*mantaraṅ kāmpā maṅivicum pōlaiyāt  
tiṅka ḷataṅkōr tilakamā – eṅkaṅum  
murrunīr vaiya muḷutum niḷarrumē  
korrappōrk killi kuṭai.*

### **38.1 The Umbrella of the Triumphant Chola**

The umbrella of the triumphant Chola  
That spreads a shade over the boundless earth  
(Bounded only by the oceans deep)  
Has the firmament as its canopy,  
The Mandara, its supporting rod,  
And the disc of the moon, its central dome.

### **38.2 The Shade's Sanctuary**

With the Mandara mountain  
For its buttressing staff  
And the sapphire sky  
For its canopy of leaf,  
And the orb of the full moon  
For a unique central disc,  
The royal parasol  
Of King Killi,  
Ever victorious in war,  
Affords its shade's sanctuary  
To every nook and cranny  
Of the entire earth  
Girt by the waters of the sea.

**38.3** Emperor Cōḷa rules the whole world. Hence his sceptre holds sway throughout the globe. Now Nature herself serves as his parasol. The Mantara mountain, the biggest in the world, serves as the handle. The blue sky enveloping the globe is its canopy leaf. And on the canopy at the centre is the full moon as its orb. Thus the entire globe comes under the protection of Cōḷa's parasol.

39. பார்படுப செம்பொன் பதிபடுப முத்தமிழ்நூல்  
நீர்படுப வெண்சங்கும் நித்திலமும் – சாரல்  
மலைபடுப யானை வயமாறன் கூர்வேற்  
றலைபடுப தார்வேந்தர் மார்பு.

*pārpaṭupa cempon patipaṭupa muttamīṇṇūl*  
*nīrpaṭupa veṇṇcaṅkum nittilamum – cāral*  
*malaipaṭupa yānai vayamāraṇ kūrveṇ*  
*ralaipaṭupa tārvēntar mārpū.*

### 39.1 Prosperity Ubiquitous

In Pāndya's kingdom the earth abounds  
In veins of gold; the sea around  
Yields bounteous harvests of silver conchs  
And of pearls. On his mountain slopes  
Range herds of elephants. His capital town  
Rings with Tamil that is thrice splendoured!  
And, round the tip of the Pāndyan javelin  
Cluster the chests of enemy kings!

### 39.2 In His Country

Under his land  
Red gold abounds,  
Inside his cities  
Triple-Tamil flourishes,  
Within the pure waters  
Of his sea  
White conchs and pearls are born,  
Upon his mountain slopes  
Herds of elephants swarm,  
And in the chests of kings  
On which many a garland swayed  
His keen lance-beads  
Lie imbedded.

39.3 Golden ores are struck in the Pāṇṭiya Kingdom. In the city the three-branched Tamil flourishes. And in the sea sparkling pearls and silver oysters abound. In the wooded hillslope tuskers abound.

But at the tip of the sharp javelin of Māraṇ, the rebellious kings' chests can be seen.

40. அருமணி யைந்தலை யாடரவம் வானத்  
துருமேற்றை யஞ்சி யொளிக்கும் – செருமிகுதோட்  
செங்கண்மா மாறன் சினவேல் கனவுமே  
அங்கண்மா ஞாலத் தரசு.

*arumaṇi yaintalai yāṭaravam vāṇat*  
*turumērrai yañci yolikkum – cerumikutōṭ*  
*ceṅkaṇmā māraṇ cinavēl kaṇavumē*  
*aṅkaṇmā ṅālat taracu.*

#### 40.1 The Pandya, the Scourge of Enemy Kings

The cobra with the jewelled head  
Dreads the flashes of forked lightning  
That cleave the skies: in mortal fear  
The reptile hides from the fury of the heavens.  
The kings of the earth likewise panic  
If they encounter in their dreams  
The angry javelin that the Pāndya wields,  
The red-eyed warrior with shoulders toughened  
By years of battle; the nightmare sends  
Panic tremors through the hearts  
Of all the kings of this boundless earth!

#### 40.2 Snakes and Kings

The dancing snake  
With a five-headed hood  
And a rare jewel  
Upon its crest,  
Hides in terror  
Frightened of the peal  
Of the majestice thunder of the sky.  
Even so, the fair kings  
Of this spacious earth,  
Even in their sleep,  
Dream in terror

Of the lance of wrath  
Of Māraṇ the Great,  
Whose eyes are red with anger  
And whose shoulders have been  
Victorious in many wars.

**40.3** The five-hooded cobras with rare gems in their heads, are mortified terribly at the peal of thunder and retreat to their hiding holes. Similarly, the foes of Māraṇ are so mortally afraid of his spear, that when Māraṇ's spear sets out in wrathful mood, red and fiery, all the kings of the earth are afraid of seeing the spear even in their dreams.

**41.** அரும்பவிழ்தார்க் கோதை யரசெறிந்த வெள்வேல்  
பெரும்புலவுஞ் செஞ்சாந்தும் நாறிச் – சுரும்பொடு  
வண்டாடும் பக்கமு முண்டு குறுநரி  
கொண்டாடும் பக்கமு முண்டு.

*arumpaviltārk kōtai yaracerinta velvēl*  
*perumpulavuñ ceñcāntum nāric – curumpoṭu*  
*vaṇṭāṭum pakkamu muṇṭu kurunari*  
*koṇṭāṭum pakkamu muṇṭu.*

#### **41.1 A Twofold Bouquet from the Chera Javelin!**

The Chera's javelin had felled his foemen  
And now it gave off a twofold bouquet –  
The scent of sandal paste smeared  
And the stink of flesh; there was the side  
Where bees and beetles had clustered round,  
And then the side of the javelin  
At which could be found jackals yapping!

#### **41.2 The Two Ends of the Lance**

The gleaming lance  
Of Kothai, wearer of garlands  
Of blossoming flower buds,  
The lance which was flung  
At enemy kings

And struck them down  
 Is redolent  
 Of raw flesh and red sandal paste.  
 Humming bees and black beetles  
 Hover thick  
 Around one end,  
 And around the other  
 Packs of jackals  
 Leap in joy.

**41.3** The Cēra emperor popularly called Kōtai wears a garland of bud-unfolding blooms. His spear is bright and it sparkles in brilliance. It has two sides. On one side sandal unguent wafts its fragrance. Blooming flowers are there too. Hence, bees are swarming them. On the other side there is the smell of flesh. There, young jackals are in great joy. His soldiers garland him. The tip of his spear too is swabbed with sandal paste to exude an agreeable smell. The other end is the battlefield. At this end jackals and their ilk are in great joy because they get sumptuous dinner of human flesh, very rare for them.

**42.** கண்ணார் கதவந் திறமின் களிறொடுதேர்  
 பண்ணார் நடைப்புரவி பண்விடுமின் – நண்ணாதீர்  
 தேர்வேந்தன் தென்னன் திருவுத்தி ராடநாட்  
 போர்வேந்தன் பூச லிலன்.

*kaṇṇār katavan tīramiṅ kaḷiroṭutēr*  
*paṇṇār nataippuravi paṇviṭumin – nannaṭīr*  
*tērvētan tennaṅ tiruvutti rāṭanāṭ*  
*pōrvētan pūca lilan.*

### 42.1 A Day's Respite!

Kings now ranged against us, hearken!  
 Open wide your fortress gates  
 And deck your elephants, chariots and horses —  
 Your horses that step in tune with music —  
 And let them scamper in gay abandon!  
 For today rules the *uttirāda*  
 The birth-star of the Pāndya, skilled in war;



And on this day he does not fight;  
Open your gates and celebrate!

#### 42.2 This is a Festive Day

O foemen bold!  
Fling open wide  
Your fortress gates;  
And deck your war-elephants,  
And your chariots of war;  
And put gayest panoply  
On your prancing steeds,  
And let them run free;  
For, today,  
When the star *Uttarada* rules  
Is the birthday  
Of our Southern King,  
The lord of chariots of war.  
Our chivalrous king  
Will war with none today.

42.3 It is usual to celebrate the birth star of kings with a lot of pomp and also by feeding the poor. On such dates all who seek alms are given gifts to their hearts' content.

Pāṇṭiyan Tennaṇ was born of *Uttirāṭa* star. On this day the King abjures all violence; no killing of any sort, not even for food.

Hence his chief of army announces, "Oh Ye foes! Be relaxed, give leave to your four-divisioned armed forces. No more drill of the uniformed men to the accompaniment of musical band."

43. அந்தண ராவொடு பொன்பெற்றார் நாவலர்  
மந்தரம்போன் மாண்ட களிறூர்ந்தா - ரெந்தை  
இலங்கிலைவேற் கிள்ளி யிரேவதிநா ளென்றோ  
சிலம்பிதன் கூடிழந்த வாறு.

*antaṇa rāvoṭu poṇperrār nāvalar  
mantarampōṇ māṇṭa kaḷirūrntā – rentai  
ilaṅkilaivēr killi yirēvatinaṅ ḷeṅrō  
cilampitaṅ kūṭilanta vāru.*

### 43.1 The Spiders lost their Gossamer Webs!

Brahmins were gifted cows and gold,  
Poets received pachyderms  
Large as the mountain Mandara.  
While all these happened on *Rēvati* day  
The birthday of the Chola who wields a spear,  
Something sad did occur too –  
The spiders of the city were rendered homeless!  
The spiders lost their gossamer webs!

### 43.2 Why Should the Spider Alone Suffer?

Brahmins were gifted cows and gold;  
Mounting mountainous elephants gifted,  
Poets departed; but, alas, on  
The *Rēvati* day, the birthday of  
My father, Kḷi wielding his  
Leaf-like spear,  
Why, on earth, should the spider  
Be robbed of its web?

43.3 On the day when Ceṅṅi's birth star Pisces comes, the king abjures violence. He gives largesse to all whoever go and seek them before him. The entire empire is in a festive mood. Men and women dress in their best attire and pray whole-heartedly that their sovereign emperor shall live long and prosper. Hence learned men of scriptures get cows and gold coins, poets receive elephants, which are like rising hills. Everybody received! But one life lost its dwellings. It is the spider. The people whitewash their homesteads. Alas! The spider's webs were destroyed.

44. செய்யா ரெனினுந் தமர்செய்வ ரென்னுஞ்சொல்  
மெய்யாதல் கண்டேன் விளங்கிழாய் – கையார்  
வரிவளை நின்றன வையையார் கோமான்  
புரிவளை போந்தியம்பக் கேட்டு.

*ceyyā reninun tamarceyva rennuñcol  
meyyātal kaṇṭēn viḷaṅkilāy – kaiyār  
varivaḷai ninraṇa vaiyaiyār kōmāṇ  
purivaḷai pōntiyampak kēṭṭu.*

#### 44.1 Only About Bangles!

Today I discovered the truth of the saying  
That where others fail, one's own kinsmen  
Do proffer help. For my bangles of conch  
That were sadly slipping from my thinning wrist,  
Hearing the conchs of the Pāndya blow,  
Rallied, stayed on round my wrist,  
How strong, my friend, are kinship bonds!

#### 44.2 Kinsfolk to the Rescue

Even now  
I saw the words come true,  
That one's kinsfolk  
Unfriendly though they had been before  
Would yet come and help  
In the hour of need.  
O Bright-jewelled maid,  
Look !  
My rare and fine-wrought  
Bangles of shell  
Which were beginning to slip  
From my wrists  
Now stay on them,  
When they hear  
The whorled conch  
Of the king of the Vaikai folk  
Come near and sound  
To herald his coming.

**44.3** “Oh! My friend! Your bangles are sparkling. I have realized the veracity of the proverb, ‘Our relatives will come to rescue in hour of need even if one had not helped them before.’

“You may ask how? I shall tell you. You know the whorled conch. It is from this, our bangles are made. Hence the bangles come from the family of conches. They are all one clan. You see my bangles are coming loose and a few fall on the ground because I am emaciated by my love for Māraṇ. But today the whorled conch blares out and heralds the royal procession of Māraṇ in our street! On hearing the sweet sound of the conch, my bangles stay tight and fitting on my hand.”

**45.** திறந்திடுமின் றீயவை பிற்காண்டும் மாதர்  
இறந்து படிற்பெரிதா மேதம் – உறந்தையர்கோன்  
தண்ணார மார்பிற் றமிழர் பெருமானைக்  
கண்ணாரக் காணக் கதவு.

*tirantitumin rīyavai pirkāṇṭum mātar  
irantu paṭirperitā mētam – urantaiyarkōṇ  
taṇṇāra mārpīr ramīlar perumāṇaik  
kaṇṇārak kāṇak katavu.*

#### **45.1 Open the Door and Let her Live!**

Open the door! The consequence  
Can be looked into in due time, later;  
Open the door! For the girl may die  
And the tongues of the town may lash us plenty  
Over the death of the girl from a broken heart!  
Open the door and let her gaze on  
And drink with her eyes the comeliness  
Of the wreathed chest of the lord of the Tamils!  
Open the door and let her live!

#### **45.2 Let not Ladies Die**

Open the doors –  
Let’s face the evil fallout later;  
If ladies are to die  
It’s a heinous crime –  
Letting them feast their eyes

On the ruler of Uṟantai,  
The great Tamil monarch  
Wearing cool wreaths on his chest.

**45.3** The Cōla monarch comes in royal procession in the evening. All matrons immediately close the doors of their houses to prevent their girls from having a look at him. They are afraid that the girls may fall in love with the monarch. It may result in unrequited love. The girls may become so emaciated that their bangles will come loose, ultimately they may also die of pining. Hence the matrons shut the doors of the houses. But an older matron gives a different piece of advice. She wonders that the girls might take sooner than expected extreme clandestine moves to look at the king. In such a case, it may cause gossip wild. Hence she requests all to open wide the doors of their houses. For she did not want the girl to die of disappointment which could be avoided. “If something bad happens after a heartfelt look at the monarch, we will find some other remedy.”

**46.** தாய ரடைப்ப மகளிர் திறந்திடத்  
தேயத் திரிந்த குடுமியவே – யாய்மலர்  
வண்டுலாஅங் கண்ணி வயமான்றேர்க் கோதையைக்  
கண்டுலாஅம் வீதிக் கதவு.

*tāya rataippa makalir tirantiṭat*  
*tēyat tirinta kuṭumiyavē – yāymalar*  
*vaṇṭulāan kaṇṇi vayamānrērk kōtaiyaik*  
*kaṇṭulāam vītik katavu.*

#### **46.1 The Plight of the City's Doors**

Mothers shut and their daughters opened  
The front-doors of houses in the capital town  
Of Kothai who wears a wreath on his head  
Who drives a chariot with the fleetest horses;  
Daughters to gaze at and mothers to stop them,  
Without respite the long day through.  
They were hard on the hinges on the day he drove by;  
Every hinge of every front door

Of every one of the city houses  
Got worn away on the hectic day  
He chose to drive through his capital town!

#### 46.2 The Worn-out Door Pegs

Again and again  
The matrons close,  
And as often again  
Do the maidens reopen  
The swinging street door  
Which commands a view  
Of the royal procession  
Of Kothai, who wears a chaplet  
Of choicest flowers  
Over which bees hover,  
And who rides a chariot  
Drawn by galloping steeds.  
So often have those doors  
Swung to and fro  
That the pivoting door-pegs  
Have worn out quite.

**46.3** The matrons close the door when the prince is on a state visit on the very finely decorated car drawn by steeds, looking majestic. The matrons do not want their wards to look at the prince, lest they may fall in love with him, who will not requite their love. But the girls stealthily open the doors. Again and again, the matrons shut and the daughters open the doors. In this repeated process, the pegs of the wooden doors get worn out.

47. காப்படங்கென் றன்னை கடிமனை யிற்செறித்  
தியாப்படங்க வோடி யடைத்தபின் – மாக்கடுங்கோன்  
நன்னலங் காணக் கதவந் துளைதொட்டார்க்  
கென்னைகொல் கைம்மா றினி.

*kāppaṭaṅken rannai kaṭimanai yircerit*  
*tiyāppaṭaṅka vōṭi yaṭaittapin – mākkatuṅkōn*  
*naṅṅalan kāṇak katavan tulaitoṭṭārk*  
*kennaikol kaimmā rini.*

### 47.1 Of the King and the Carpenter

“Remain confined, a prisoner, here!”  
My mother cried out and shut me in  
A guarded room in a guarded house.  
I cast about for anything  
That would set me free, would let me see him;  
And presto! Found a trial hole  
Abandoned for a better one,  
Through which to drink his comeliness.  
I was saved: but how shall I  
Ever repay the debt I owe  
To the carpenter that had drilled the hole?

### 47.2 How Do I Show My Gratitude to the Carpenter?

Directing me to obey, my mother  
Forced me into the house-prison,  
Ran to fasten the door firmly.  
How can I show my gratitude  
To the one who had drilled  
The hole in the door  
For me to view  
The handsome Kaṭuṅkōṅ?

47.3 “Obey my command. Stay indoors. Stir not out. I am closing all the doors”, shouted my mother preventing me from a fond gaze at Kaṭuṅkōṅ the Great. For a minute I was choked for a whiff of fresh wind of love. I was petrified. I did not know what to do. The king’s chariot had reached my house in the street. Panic-stricken I pulled at the door. Alas, it was locked, bolted heavily with a latch. I was angrily looking at the latch and wanted to burn it out with the fire of my eyes. Suddenly the keyhole I saw. Through it I directed my sight. Oh what a surprise! I had a grand focussed vision of the King through the keyhole! How shall I express my gratitude to the carpenter who made it?

48. துடியடித் தோற்செவித் தூங்குகைந் நால்வாய்ப்  
பிடியேயா னின்னை யிரப்பல் – கடிகமழ்தார்ச்  
சேலேக வண்ணனொடு சேரி புகுதலுமெஞ்  
சாலேகஞ் சார நட.

*tūṭiyāṭit tōrcevit tūṅkukain nālvāyp  
piṭiyēyā ninnai yirappal – kaṭikamaltārc  
cēlēka vaṇṇanoṭu cēri pukutalumeñ  
cālēkañ cāra naṭa.*

#### 48.1 A Prayer to the Pachyderm!

Cow-elephant with feet like drums  
Ears like shields, a pendant trunk  
And a mouth that hangs! I beseech you!  
When you carry the Pāndya king  
Of reddish hue with a fragrant wreath,  
When you enter the street I live in  
I beg of you to walk beside  
The window where I shall be standing rooted:  
Cow-elephant, I beseech you!

#### 48.2 Bring Him Close to Our Windows

This favour let me beg of you.  
With your drum-like foot, shield-like ear,  
Long proboscis and hanging mouth,  
When you carry the King  
Of *centūr*-complexion  
In a procession through my street,  
Walk close to our windows.

48.3 “Oh! Cow elephant! How beautiful you are! Your feet look like kettledrums. You have shield-like ears. You have a hanging lip. I beg of you, when you – bearing the fair complexioned king – come in our street, please walk slowly near our house. Let me have a close and heartfelt look at him through our latticed window” – so the girl in love-affliction requests the elephant.



49. எலாஅ மடப்பிடியே யெங்கூடற் கோமான்  
புலாஅ னெடுநல்வேல் மாறன் – உலாஅங்காற்  
பைய நடக்கவுந் தேற்றாயால் நின்பெண்மை  
ஐயப் படுவ துடைத்து.

*elāa maṭappiṭiyē yenkūtar kōmān*  
*pulāa neṭunalvēl māraṇ – ulāaṅkāṇ*  
*paiya naṭakkavun tērrāyāl ninpenmai*  
*aiyap paṭuva tuṭaittu.*

#### 49.1 The Elephant's Gait Unladylike!

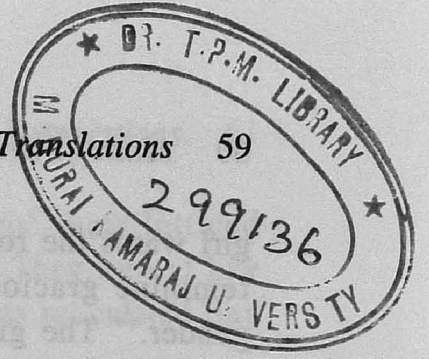
Cow-elephant! When Madurai's Lord  
Whose tip of the javelin is never without  
Pieces of the flesh of enemy kings,  
Rides in state and you carry him,  
You do not seem to have the wit  
To walk with gentle steps ; you scamper!  
Cow-elephant! Your hustling gait  
Is quite unseemly, it's unladylike!

#### 49.2 Your Womanhood is Suspect

When Māraṇ, the King of Kūṭal  
With his long, flesh-smelling spear,  
Goes in a procession  
On your back,  
Oh! My young elephant-friend!  
You don't know  
You have to walk slow.  
Your womanhood is suspect.

49.3 “When you come thro' our street, you must walk slowly and exhibit your feminine grace, so that we can have a sumptuous look at the broad chest of Pāṇṭiyaṇ, the ruler of Madurai.”

50. நீணீலத் தார்வளவ னின்மேலா னாகவும்  
நாணின்மை யின்றி நடத்தியா – னீணீலங்  
கண்டன்ன கொண்டல் வருங்கா விரிநாட்டுப்  
பெண்டன்மை யில்லை பிடி.



*nīnīlat tārvaḷava nīnmēlā nākavum  
nānīnmai yinri natattiyā – nīnīlai  
kaṇṭanna koṇṭal varuṅkā virināṭṭup  
peṇṭanmai yillai piṭi.*

### 50.1 Cow-elephant! This is Unlady-like!

Cow-elephant! You walk the streets  
With the Chola king with the blue-bell wreath  
Seated on your back and you do not feel  
Hesitant, bashful; with brazen steps  
You walk around! This is not the way  
Of the ladies born in the Kāviri country  
Where blue bells blossom after the manner  
Of the eyes of girls!

### 50.2 Unwomanly

Though King Vaḷava,  
Who wears long garlands  
Of blue lilies,  
Is seated upon your back,  
You walk with immodest haste,  
O cow-elephant!  
You have not a trace  
Of the modest deportment  
Of the women  
Of the land of the Kāviri  
Where the banking clouds in the sky  
Seem like long stretches  
Of blue lilies.

**50.3** A girl addresses the cow-elephant on whose neck Vaḷavaṅ rides in state procession. The girl addresses the cow-elephant, “Oh, you belong to the fair sex like me. Hence you know our travails. As per the convention for a female, we expect you to walk slowly, step by step with graceful movement. If you move slowly, we can have a close look at Vaḷavaṅ and our hearts will be content.” The

girl warns the royal elephant, “If you walk fast contrary to your feminine gracious demeanour, then I will have to doubt your gender.” The girl in love expects the royal elephant to behave with her like her confidante.

51. சுடரிலைவேற் சோழன்றன் பாடல மேறிப்  
படர்தந்தான் பைந்தொடியார் காணத் – தொடர்புடைய  
நீல வலையிற் கயல்போற் பிறமுமே  
சாலேக வாயிறொறுங் கண்.

*cutarilaivēr cōlanraṅ pātala mērip*  
*paṭartantāṅ paintoṭiyār kāṇat – toṭarpuṭaiya*  
*nīla valaiyiṛ kayalpōr piraḷumē*  
*cālēka vāyiroruṅ kaṅ.*

### 51.1 The Chola Monarch Drives in State!

When the Chola with the javelin drives in state  
Mounted on his horse, the eyes of girls  
Standing at the windows present the picture  
Of *kayal* darting to and fro  
Caught in the blue nets of the fisherfolk.

### 51.2 Eyes Roll like Fish

Holding his bright leaf-shaped spear  
The Cōḷa on his choice-steed Pāṭalam  
Passes in a procession;  
Wearing priceless bangles,  
Women watch the view.  
Behind every window  
Eyes roll like fish  
Caught in a black net.

51.3 Cōḷa holds a sparkling spear. He rides on his royal steed Pāṭalam and comes in state procession in the street for the delight of his subjects. On that occasion, on either side of the street, young girls peeped at the royal procession and their eyes glistened like

carps caught in the net. The girls looked thro' their latticed windows. Their eyes were moving left and right. They looked like shoals of carps entrapped within the net which has reticulated tiny holes at regular intervals.

52. போரகத்துப் பாயுமா பாயா துபாயமா  
ஊரகத்து மெல்ல நடவாயோ – கூர்வேல்  
மதிவெங் களியாணை மாறன்றன் மார்பங்  
கதவங்கொண் டியாமுந் தொழ்.

*pōrakattup pāyumā pāyā tupāyamā  
ūrakattu mella naṭavāyō – kūrvēl  
mativen̄ kaḷiyāṇai māraṇṇaṇ mārapaṇ  
katavaṅkoṇ ṭiyāmun tola.*

### 52.1 Not So Fast, You Royal Charger

Warhorse of the Pāndya king,  
Fleetest-footed on the battlefield!  
Can you not walk with gentle steps  
When he rides in state through the capital town?  
Can you not, with him atop,  
(The warrior king with the javelin,  
The master of hordes of frenzied elephants)  
Walk with gentle, deliberate steps  
When, half concealed behind the door,  
I can gaze with eyes of reverence  
At the broad expanse of his hero's chest?

### 52.2 Walk with Gentle Steps

O noble steed,  
Won't you cease to gallop  
As on the field of battle,  
And please walk gently  
With loving steps and slow  
Through our town,  
That we may,  
Standing by our doors,  
Admire and adore

The chest of Māraṇ,  
 Wielder of the keen lance,  
 And the lord of fierce hosts  
 Of frenzied elephants.

**52.3** The girl in mad love of Māraṇ addresses the steed on which he rides:

“Oh steed! How are you? We know that on the battlefield your speed defeats wind. Hail to you. But our street is not the battlefield. It is the city. When our dear king comes out in pomp and splendour, we have to drink on his handsome appearance. We must look at the king many times. The king has to look at me. Our eyes must meet. Therefore you must trot gracefully so that your movement will be slow. We can also, hiding behind our door, have a gleeful look at our ruler”

**53.** ஆடுகோ சூடுகோ வைதாக்க் கலந்துகொண்  
 டேடுகோ டாக வெழுதுகோ – நீடு  
 புனவட்டப் பூந்தெரியற் பொற்றேர் வழுதி  
 கனவட்டங் கால்குடைந்த நீறு.

*āṭukō cūṭukō vaiṭāk kalantukoṇ  
 ṭēṭukō ṭāka velutukō – nīṭu  
 puṇavattap pūnteriyar porrēr valuti  
 kaṇavattāṅ kālkuṭainta nīru.*

### **53.1 Cloud of Dust in the Pāndya's Wake**

The king has vanished, riding in state  
 On his famous horse: now what is left  
 Is the cloud of dust it has clouted up.  
 Shall I roll on or cover myself  
 With the dust of the street his horse has raised?  
 Shall I wear it as sacred ash,  
 Shall I mix it as unguent  
 And paint my chest with the aid of petals?  
 For what is left is the dust of the street

Which the hooves of the horse my Pāndya rides  
Have clouted up: only the filmy dust  
Now lingers on: he has vanished.

### **53.2 The Beloved Dust**

O what shall I do  
With the dust raised  
By the hoofs of the steed  
Of our royal Valuti,  
Who wears rounded garlands  
Of freshest flowers  
Picked from his garden,  
And who drives in a chariot of gold?  
Shall I wallow in that beloved dust?  
Or smear it on my forehead  
And sprinkle it on my hair?  
Or shall I  
Mix it into a paste  
And with a flower petal for a brush  
Draw delicate designs  
Upon my breasts?

**53.3** A girl was in love with the Valuti. Her love knew no bounds. She did not know whether Valuti requited her love. Yet her craze for him grew day by day. The much awaited king came in procession in her street. She expected fondly a tryst with him. At least she expected a heartfelt visual treat of the king. But what happened? The king came there on chariot. But alas! The chariot passed fast. The smell of the heady blooms the king was wearing wafted in the air and vanished. Everything disappeared as in a pantomime. But one thing remained. It was the dust raised by the king's steed, Kanavattam's hooves. The dust too smelt sweet. "Shall I apply the dust on my face? Shall I bathe in it? Or shall I mix it with unguent and apply on my plaited hair?" She ruminates.

54. குடத்து விளக்கேபோற் கொம்பன்னார் காமம்  
புறப்படா பூந்தார் வழிதி – புறப்படிண்  
ஆபுகு மாலை யணிமலையிற் றீயேபோல்  
நாடறி கௌவை தரும்.

*kuṭattu viḷakkēpōr kompannār kāmam  
purappaṭā pūntār valuti – purappaṭin  
āpuku mālai yaṇimalaiyir rīyēpōl  
nāṭari kauvai tarum.*

### 54.1 The Lamp and the Conflagration

Like lamps kept burning in earthen pots  
The passion of the girls for the Pāndya king  
Is held under check; they keep their secret!  
But when he starts to ride in state  
Their pent-up love now bursts into flame  
Even like the forest conflagration  
On the slope of a hill, of an evening,  
When herds of cattle come home from the pastures,  
A spectacle that spurs the citizens'  
Eyes to goggle, tongues to wag.

### 54.2 A Country-wide Commotion

The love of these ladies' tender as twigs,  
Like the lamp in a brass pot,  
Is invisible.  
The moment the garlanded Valuti moves out  
In the evening, when cows reach home,  
Its outburst  
Causes a country-wide commotion  
Like the fire on a mountain.

**54.3** The love of girls is not visible. It cannot be discerned even by a microscopic analysis. It is hidden like a flame inside a pot. But when the dusk has set in, the flower of love begins to shed its light. When Valuti comes in state procession in the street, the love hidden so far now glows bright like a fire on a hill.

55. வரைபொரு நீண்மார்பின் வட்கார் வணக்கும்  
நிரைபொரு வேன்மாந்தைக் கோவே – நிரைவளையார்  
தங்கோலம் வவ்வுத லாமோ வவர்தாய்மார்  
செங்கோல னல்ல னென.

*varaiporu nīṇmārpīn vaṭkāṛ vaṇakkum  
niraiporu vēṇmāntaik kōvē – niraivalaiyār  
taṅkōlam vavvuta lāmō vavartāymār  
ceṅkōla nalla nēna.*

### 55.1 Is it Proper? Is This Justice?

Lord of Māndai with chest like a mountain  
Whose rows of javelins force the foemen  
To pay obeisance! Is it proper,  
Is it just that you forfeit  
The feminine graces of those in love  
And thereby earn the sobriquet  
Of an unjust king from their irate mothers?  
Is it proper? Is this justice?

### 55.2 Is it Seemly?

O Māndai's king  
Whose broad chest  
Is as firm as a mountain,  
And who with your phalanx of spearmen  
Which stands in close and serrated rows,  
Make your enemies bow down to you,  
Is it meet and seemly  
Of you to rob  
The young and charming maids  
Of their fair loveliness  
Who wear on their slender wrists  
Nestling rows of bangles?  
Don't you hear  
Their mothers exclaim,  
'Fie upon him  
He does not hold  
His sceptre straight?'



**55.3** The king of Māntai has a lance legion. The array of the legion in rows, with their serrated lances gleaming bright, strikes terror in the eyes of the onlookers. The king's chest is like a solid hill. It is broad and handsome. When the king is confronted by the enemies, they naturally bow down sighing at the immensity of his army and the imposing stature of Māntai king. If perchance an enemy king does not bow suo moto, in a whiff the Māntai king's army pounces on the enemy and cows them down. "When such is your bravery, valour, and might, is it fair and just on the part of your majesty to rob the young and fair maidens of their bangles? Their mothers look down upon you as a king with no just sceptre."

**56.** வாமான்றேர்க் கோதையை மான்றேர்மேற் கண்டவர்  
மாமையே யன்றோ விழப்பது – மாமையிற்  
பன்னூறு கோடி யுறாதோவென் மேனியிற்  
பொன்னூறி யன்ன பசப்பு.

*vāmānrērk kōtaiyai mānrērmēr kaṇṭavar*  
*māmayē yanrō vilappatu – māmayiṛ*  
*pannūru kōti yurātōven mēniyir*  
*ponnūri yanna pacappu.*

### **56.1 The Loss and the Gain for the City Girls**

Girls like me who saw the king  
Drive in state through the capital city  
Have merely lost their complexion.  
But what we have gained – and isn't that worth  
A million times the loss sustained?  
What we have gained is a charming pallor,  
We who have seen the king drive by.

### **56.2 Tender Sprouts and Pale Gold**

Those maidens, who saw  
Kothai, Lord of chariot-hosts  
And of galloping steeds,  
As he drove by

In his horse-drawn chariot,  
 Lost but the lustre  
 Of their limbs  
 Which gleamed like tender mango sprouts;  
 But the pallid green  
 Now suffusing my body  
 Like pale gold,  
 Is its sheen not worth  
 A million times  
 The gleam of tender mango sprouts?

56.3 “Should maidens who look on King Kōtai riding on his mighty chariot lose their fair, mango-coloured complexion? Will not the pale gloss of the mango which I have acquired increase a hundred thousand crore times more?”

57. வழுவினெம் வீதியுண் மாறன் வருங்கால்  
 தொழுதேனைத் தோணலமுங் கொண்டான் – இமிழ்திரைக்  
 கார்த்தகடற் கொற்கையார் காவலனுந் தானேயால்  
 யார்க்கிடுகோ பூச லினி.

*valuvilem vītiyuṅ māraṅ varuṅkāḷ*  
*tolutēṅnait tōṅalamuṅ koṅṭāṅ – imiḷtiraik*  
*kārkkāṭar koṅkaiyār kāvalaṅṅun tāṅēyāl*  
*yārkkitukō pūca liṅi.*

### 57.1 If the King Offends . . . .?

I am guiltless; all that I did  
 Was to worship him when he rode in state  
 Through the street I live in; but he forfeits  
 My comeliness, my feminine graces;  
 Now he is the king, the sole protector  
 Of Koṅkai by the billowy sea.  
 If the king offends, to whom does the victim  
 Appeal for justice? Who protects  
 'Gainst the protector?

### 57.2 Whom can I Approach for Justice?

During Māran's visit  
 To our spotless street,  
 I had but bowed to him;  
 He stole my heart, my shyness,  
 My shoulders' lustre.  
 He being the protector of Kor̄kai  
 Beautified by its black sea,  
 To whom can I appeal for justice?

57.3 A lady-love opens her heart out to her confidante. “Oh my friend! The people in our street are virtuous. They have not committed any crime. Moreover, our locality is reputed for its observance of moral codes and ethics in business and social life. Therefore, none of our local people deserves any punishment. It is true that the king of Kor̄kai punishes the guilty and plunders the wealth and treasures of the enemy kings. Now a strange thing has happened. The king came in procession. I only worshipped him. I expected a reward from him; at least some largess, but alas! He robbed my bangles and the feminine fairness of my shoulders. Where shall I lodge my complaint, where the protector himself has turned a robber?”

58. கண்டன வுண்கண் கலந்தன நன்னெஞ்சந்  
 தண்டப் படுவ தடமென்றோள் – கண்டா  
 யுலாஅ மறுகி லுறையூர் வளவற்  
 கெலாஅ முறைகிடந்த வாறு.

*kaṇṭana vunkaṇ kalantaṇa nanneñcan*  
*taṇṭap paṭuva taṭamenrōl – kaṇṭā*  
*yulāa maruki luraiyūr vaḷavar*  
*kelāa muraikiṭanta vāru.*

### 58.1 My Eyes did Gaze and our Hearts did Mingle

My eyes did gaze and our hearts did mingle  
 But it is my shoulders that have been punished!  
 Mark this, my friend! In Uraiyūr city  
 Where the streets are designed for royal state drives

Everything is out of joint.  
There is no justice, no rectitude!

### 58.2 Vaḷavan's Justice

My eyes viewed him;  
My heart mingled with him  
But my big soft shoulders,  
Losing their lure,  
Have to pay the price,  
See how  
Vaḷavan of vast-spaced Uṟaiyūr  
Dispenses justice!

58.3 “If these two acts are deemed criminal, let the king punish my eyes and my heart. But he punished my shoulders which did nothing against the king. As a matter of fact they were prepared for a worshipful fold above my head. But alas! I lost myself in his good appearance, my eyes beheld the grandeur and my bosom merged completely in his. Why should the king punish my thin soft shoulders? They are now pining and they become emaciated. Is it a just rule? How can the king punish an innocent for the crime committed by some others?” This is her argument.

59. மன்னுயிர் காவல் தனதாயின் அவ்வுயிருள்  
என்னுயிரும் எண்ணப் படுமாயின் – என்னுயிர்க்கே  
சீரொழுகு செங்கோற் செழியற்கே தக்கதோ  
நீரொழுகப் பாலொழுகா வாறு.

*maṇṇuyir kāval. tanatāyin avvuyiruḷ  
ennuyirum eṇṇap paṭumāyin – ennuyirkkē  
cīroluku ceṅkōr celiyarkē takkatō  
nīrolukap pālolukā vāru.*

### 59.1 Bread and Stones

If he is the king, the protector  
Of all living things and me among them  
Then, is all this fair, is all this just? –  
This Pāndya famed as even-handed

Meeting out uneven justice,  
Discriminating among his subjects –  
Bread to a few, stones to the others?

### 59.2 Why Does He Discriminate?

If it is his duty  
To protect all who live  
Upon the earth,  
And if among those earthly lives  
Mine too is counted as one,  
Is it meet of sceptered Celiya –  
Whose rule is ever just –  
To discriminate thus  
Against me alone?  
Wouldn't it be  
Like water flowing  
From a feeding breast  
Instead of  
A flowing stream of milk?

**59.3** The lady-love to her confidante. “Oh my friend! Pāṇṭiyaṅ rules the world and protects all lives therein. If he protects all lives, I am one among them. It is inferred he gives assurance of safety to me also.

The king's justice is not impartial. His sceptre has faulted. He gives justice to others but not to me alone.”

A mother has two suckling babies. One child she feeds on the breast milk, but the other child she feeds with water only.

Our king also behaves like this pitiless mother.

**60.** என்னெஞ்சு நாணு நலனு மிவையெல்லாம்  
மன்னன் புனனாடன் வெளவினா – நென்னே  
யரவக லல்குலா யாறிலொன் றன்றோ  
புரவலர் கொள்ளும் பொருள்.

*eṇṇeñcu nāṇu nalanu mivaiyellām*  
*mannan punanāṭan vauviṇā – nennē*  
*yaravaka lalkulā yāriḷoṇ ranrō*  
*puravalār koḷḷum poruḷ.*

### **60.1 The Extortive Rule of the Chola King**

The lord of the country where the Cauvery flows  
Has forfeited my heart, my shyness  
All my graces, all my beauty.  
Handsome friend! Rulers collect  
A sixth part of a citizen's wealth.  
How come the Chola has taken all,  
Not one one-sixth, but all I have?

### **60.2 More Than His Due**

My fond heart,  
My maiden modesty,  
My fair loveliness,  
All, all of these  
Has he, the king  
Of this well-watered land  
Robbed of me.  
It is surprising,  
Beloved friend,  
How shapely are your hips,  
And how very broad  
Like the outspread hood of a snake!  
Tell me now:  
Are not a king's dues  
No more than a sixth?

**60.3** "Oh! My friend, the king of the Kāviri-flowing domain, robbed me of my heart, my feminine shyness, and all my tender fairness and all else. Oh! You have a narrow hip. The royalty we have to pay to the crown is only one-sixth of the produce. But how is it, the ruler has taken away everything from me?"

61. தானேற் றனிக்குடைக் காவலனாற் காப்பதுவும்  
வானேற்ற வையக மெல்லாமால் – யானோ  
எளியேனோர் பெண்பாலே னீர்ந்தண்டார் மாறன்  
அளியானே லன்றென்பா ரார்.

*tānēr ranikkutaik kāvalanār kāppatuvum  
vānērra vaiyaka mellāmāl – yānō  
ēliyēnōr penpālē nīrntanṭār māraṇ  
aliyānē lanrenpā rār.*

### 61.1 Who is There to Reprove Him?

The Pāndya is the sovereign emperor,  
The monarch who rules over all this earth  
Whose sway is total with none to challenge  
And I – poor I – am a humble subject,  
And a girl to boot. If the king denies  
Succour to me – the king who wears  
The cool and moist wreath of blooms –  
Who is there to counsel him,  
To bandy words with the sovereign of the realm?

### 61.2 Who can Argue with the King of the Realm?

He is the guardian king  
Whose royal umbrella  
Holds sole supremacy.  
And the entire earth  
Is under his watch and ward;  
While poor I  
Am but a trifling thing,  
A lone and helpless  
Feminine creature,  
If Māraṇ who wears  
Garlands, moist and cool,  
Will not deign  
To look on me with grace,  
Who is there to reprove him  
By telling him,  
'Now, this is not right'?

61.3 “Hey friend! My lover is the sole monarch of all the worlds. His domain extends all over the earth bound by the oceans. Not only that, even the celestial world is paying tribute to him, because he brought down Intiraṇ to his knees by throwing his famous missile (*ceṇṭu*).

Thus he is supreme in the world. Now, such a monarch has done me a wrong. He has not graced me with his love. My love is so much for him that no words can convey its depth or height or breadth.

I am, after all, a poor girl. I am also of little means. But he is the monarch. There is none above him to complain about him.

62. கனவினுட் காண்கொடா கண்ணுங் கலந்த  
நனவினுண் முன்விலக்கு நாணு – மினவங்கம்  
பொங்கோதம் போமும் புகாஅர்ப் பெருமானார்  
செங்கோல் வடுப்படுப்பச் சென்று.

*kaṇaviṇuṭ kāṇkoṭā kaṇṇuṅ kalanta*  
*naṇaviṇuṇ munvilakku nāṇu – miṇavaṅkam*  
*poṅkōtam pōlum pukāarp perumānār*  
*ceṅkōl vaṭuppaṭuppac ceṇru.*

### 62.1 There is no Check, There is no Justice!

If he comes in my dream my eyes are closed  
And if I meet the king in the waking state  
My bashfulness averts my face.  
My eyes and the quality of bashfulness  
Keep me far from a requital.  
Surely the king should be able to check  
These grave offences! The rule of the Chola  
Whose ships on the high seas cleave their way  
Is faulted now—There is no justice!

### 62.2 The Tarnished Sceptre

When I dream of him  
My eyes are closed in sleep, and so  
They do not let me see him;



And when I meet him  
 When I am awake,  
 My eyes avert themselves  
 Out of maiden modesty.  
 They have dented and tarnished  
 The upright sceptre  
 Of the lord of Pukār city  
 Whose fleets of fast ships  
 Cleave through the waves  
 Of the ocean swell.

**62.3** “Oh! What a surprise, the king came in my dream. He was right in front of me. I did not open my eyes lest he should escape. Later while awake, I was waiting for his chariot to arrive before our house. The king was right there. Oh fie on my feminine nature! My bashfulness prevented me from looking at him! My eyes and modesty do such atrocities to me. They have dented the sceptre, and are preventing me from rendering justice. The Pukār lord’s fleet cleaves over the boisterous waves of the ocean. Yet his sceptre is faulted by my eyes and female demureness.

**63.** தானைகொண் டோடுவ தாயிற்றன் செங்கோன்மை  
 சேனை யறியக் கிளவேனோ – யானை  
 பிடிவீசும் வண்டடக்கைப் பெய்தண்டார்க் கிள்ளி  
 நெடுவீதி நேர்பட்ட போது.

*tānaikon ṭōṭuva tāyirraṇ cenṅkōṇmai*  
*cēnai yariyak kilavēṇō – yānai*  
*piṭivīcum vaṇṭatakkaiṭ peytaṇṭārk kiḷḷi*  
*neṭuvīti nērpaṭṭa pōtu.*

### **63.1 The Excesses of the Chola King**

When Killi the king wearing a wreath of blooms –  
 Killi who showers gifts of elephants –  
 When Killi the long-armed drives in state,

I shall proclaim in the hearing of his men  
His iniquitous act, his carrying away  
The clothes I was wearing – I shall proclaim  
The way he rules, in the hearing of all,  
I shall proclaim in the king's way wide!

### **63.2 I Too Shall Proclaim**

When I meet him  
Face to face  
Upon the long highway  
Where he presents himself,  
Won't I proclaim  
That all his army would know  
The manner of his sceptre's rule,  
Of him who ran off  
With my garment,  
He, Killi  
Who wears cool garlands,  
And with a lavish hand,  
Generous and strong,  
Gives away  
Elephant bulls and cows?

**63.3** Killi our emperor came in royal procession in our street. I have heard that he is reputed in giving largess. Sometimes he gives away huge tuskers as gifts to the poets. His hands shower gifts like rain. But such a great king, who deems giving largess as his second nature, did something I am ashamed to tell you. Last night he came in my dream and robbed me of my garments and ran away! When did the ruler become a robber? I do not know. He will come again in a state procession tomorrow in our street. I shall shout and tell everyone what he did in my dream so that the whole army will come to know of his robbery.

64. தெண்ணீர் நறுமலர்த்தார்ச் சென்னி யிளவளவன்  
மண்ணகங் காவலனே யென்பரான் – மண்ணகங்  
காவலனே யானக்காற் காவானோ மாலைவாய்க்  
கோவலர்வாய் வைத்த குழல்.

*teṇṇīr narumalarttārc cenni yiḷavalavan  
maṇṇakaṅ kāvalanē yeṇparān – maṇṇakaṅ  
kāvalanē yānakkār kāvānō mālaivāyk  
kōvalarvāy vaitta kulal.*

#### 64.1 Wanted an Ordinance to Ban the Flute!

They all proclaim that Chenni the prince  
Is the lord absolute of all the earth,  
If he be the lord, can he not ban  
The cowherds playing on their bamboo flutes  
At the end of the day, at evenfall?  
If he be the lord, let him stop this,  
The playing on the flutes at the setting of the sun  
By homing cowheads.

#### 64.2 Is He a Protector?

They say that Chenni  
The young Vaḷava,  
Wearer of garlands  
Of fragrant flowers  
Which grow on limpid waters,  
Is the protector  
Of the spacious earth:  
But if he was really  
The protector  
Of the spacious earth,  
Wouldn't he have protected me  
From the notes of the reed-pipes  
Which cowherd swains  
Put against their lips  
At evening time?

64.3 The lady-love to her confidante: “Oh, my friend! Ceṇṇi our young prince has high reputation for protecting all lives in his domain. Good! It is really wonderful. But there is a doubt lurking in my heart. If he gives protection to all lives, I am also one among them. You see this; when dusk falls, the cowherd plays scintillating ditties on his flute. The liquid music fills the whole cosmos and sets an ambience for love. The nectar from his pipe invigorates all lives. But it kills me. Will the prince not give me the needed protection, so that my life too will be saved?”

65. அறைபறை யானை யலங்குதார்க் கிள்ளி  
முறைசெயு மென்பராற் றோழி – யிறையிறந்த  
வங்கோ லணிவளையே சொல்லாதோ மற்றவன்  
செங்கோன்மை செந்நின்ற வாறு.

*araiṇarai yānai yalaṅkutārk kiḷḷi*  
*muraiceyu menparār rōli – yiraiyiranta*  
*vaṅkō laṇivalaiyē collātō marraṇaṇ*  
*ceṅkōṇmai cenniṇra vāru.*

### 65.1 Trouble Again with Slipping Bangles!

They all confirm that Killi who wears  
A wreath of blooms, who owns elephants  
And drives in state to the beating of drums  
Does rule this earth with rectitude;  
My bangles finished with artistry  
Which keep slipping from these wrists of mine  
Will sure proclaim how the Chola rules,  
Will sure confirm his rectitude!

### 65.2 The Fraud Exposed

To the beat of drums  
Killi's war-elephant goes forth,  
And upon the king's chest  
Garlands sway,

And people declare  
 That he always does the right:  
 But, my friend  
 Wouldn't my lovely, fine-wrought bangles  
 Slipping from my wrists,  
 Wouldn't they proclaim  
 How righteous in real fact  
 Is his sceptre's rule?

**65.3** My friend, everyone speaks so high of Killi. His war-  
 elephants go forth keeping time with the beats of war-drums. On  
 his chest beautiful garlands sway, declaring that his rule is just.  
 And all say in unison that he does only right things. But, I have a  
 complaint to make. I thought of Māraṇ after seeing his beaming  
 flawless face and broad chest and strong hill-like shoulders. Without  
 my knowledge I fell in love with him. And my hands, already  
 tender, are now totally emaciated. My bangles are not fitting in  
 their due place. They come off loose. Will not this single act of his  
 proclaim how just his rule is!

**66.** களியானைத் தென்னன் கனவின்வந் தென்னை  
 யளியா னளிப்பானே போன்றான் – றெளியாதே  
 செங்காந்தண் மெல்விரலாற் சேக்கை தடவந்தேன்  
 என்காண்பே னென்னலால் யான்.

*kaḷiyānait tennan kaṇavinvan tennai*  
*yaḷiyā nalippāṇē pōnrān – reḷiyātē*  
*ceṅkāntaṇ melviralār cēkkai taṭavantēn*  
*eṅkāṇpē nennalāl yān.*

### **66.1 It all Proved an Empty Dream!**

The Pāndya king turned up one night  
 Moved by pity, in my dream  
 As if to caress and make me happy.  
 Half-awakened, I stroked his body  
 With my delicate fingers, red as the *kāntal*?  
 I woke up with a start only to find

None else but me in all that chamber  
And my fingers caressing  
The mattress on my bed!

## 66.2 Unlucky Me!

Tennan, owning virile elephants,  
Appeared in my dream,  
Compassionately conferred on me  
Conjugal pleasures.  
Misled by the illusion,  
I touched my bed with my tender  
Cenkāntal-like fingers.  
I could see none but the miserable me.

66.3 Tennan riding on rutting tusker came in my dream. He requited my love. I felt for him in my bed. Alas! There was none except myself.

The girl had so much infatuation for Tennan. The king came to her in dream. The dream was so realistic that she thought it happened during waking hours.

Alas, it was only a dream. And even in that dream she had no tryst with him.

The girl herself is conscious of her fingers being so beautiful and soft. They are dainty like the glory lily in bloom—five-petalled red and fair. Her fingers in addition to looking like the glory lilies, are also soft.

The quilt she is stroking is soft. We do not know which is softer, the velvet quilt or her fair fingers.

67. கார்நறு நீலங் கடிக்கயத்து வைகலும்  
நீர்நிலை நின்ற தவங்கொலோ – கூர்நுனைவேல்  
வண்டிருக்க நக்கதார் வாமான் வழுதியாற்  
கொண்டிருக்கப் பெற்ற குணம்.

kārnaru nīlaiṅ kaḍikkayattu vaikalum  
nīrnilai ninra tavaṅkolō – kūrnunaivēl  
vaṅṅirukka nakkatār vāmān valutiyaṛ  
koṅṅirukkap perra kuṇam.

### 67.1 The Lilies must have Done Penance

Fragrant lilies blue as clouds  
Should have been doing a hard penance  
Standing all day in the water of the pool;  
Surely thus have the blooms acquired  
Sufficient merit to earn the privilege  
Of getting chosen to be wreathed in a garland  
And worn by the Pāndya of the pointed lance  
Who rides a charger fleet of foot –  
Sufficient merit to be wreathed and worn  
As a garland on his chest that's sought by bees!

### 67.2 The Reward of Penance

Is it the merit  
Of the penance done  
By the fragrant blue lilies,  
Dark as rain-clouds,  
By standing through the live-long day  
In the cold waters  
Of the scented pool,  
That now they have  
The good fortune  
Of being taken and worn  
By Valuti,  
Wielder of the sharp-headed lance,  
Rider of galloping horses,  
And wearer of garlands  
Whose blossoms' smiles  
Invite the bees  
To come and stay?

**67.3** “King Pāṇṭiyaṇ is wearing a garland of blue lilies. How is it that the lilies have so much closer relationship with the King?” She wonders.

“The lilies stood on a single foot as though in the knee-deep pond and did severe penance. As a boon for the penance they earned the merit of adorning Tennavan's broad chest” – she realizes.

“Alas! I do not have the merit like the lilies” – she ruminates.

68. அறிவாரார் யாமொருநாட் பெண்டிரே மாகச்  
செறிவார் தலைமே னடந்து – மறிதிரை  
மாட முரிஞ்சும் மதுரையார் கோமானைக்  
கூட வொருநாட் பெற.

*arivārār yāmorunāṭ peṇṭirē mākaś  
ceṇṇivār talaimē naṭantu – maritirai  
māṭa muriñcum, maturaīyār kōmāṇaik  
kūṭa vorunāṭ pera.*

### 68.1 O for a Day with my Royal Lover!

Who is there to understand –  
Who can help me requite my love?  
For if there is, then I shall walk  
With lifted chin before the eyes  
Of my tormentors who keep me jailed  
In my house, I shall go forth  
To be with him for the space of a day  
As his wedded wife – as the Pāndya queen,  
The queen of Madurai where the waves from the river  
Caress the tops of high-rise mansions!

### 68.2 Who will Tell me How?

I am just a helpless woman.  
Will anyone who knows  
Tell me how  
I may go and meet,  
Some day or other,  
The lord of the people  
Of Madura city,  
Where the waves of the river  
Move to and fro  
And chafe against the storeyed mansions,  
Walking, if I have to,  
Over the heads  
Of the dense throngs of those  
Who so closely surround him?



**68.3** The girl loves the Lord of Kūṭal city. She wants to go and meet the King in his palace. But alas! Her matron is always watchful lest she gives the slip and goes away. Even if she escapes her matron's eagle eyes, how can she dupe the watchful guards at the palace gate?

Moreover, she has to cross the Vaiyai. Its waves dash against the walls of the mansions of that city. The city guards also will wake up when she stirs in its waters. "How am I to embrace Māraṇ's chest one day!" – she muses. The poet uses the phrase "how to walk over the heads" of the city! It may mean two things. First, – "how to give a slip to the watchful heads of the matron and mother who keep her confined at home". It may also mean "I would like to indicate my resolve to override their restrictions bursting their guard keeping me home-bound and make them feel ashamed." The poet subtly hints at the unflinching resolve of the girl to escape from the watchful eyes of all and finally reach the palace and attain Māraṇ's company.

**69.** அன்னையுங் கோல்கொண் டலைக்கு மயலாறா  
மென்னை யழியுஞ்சொற் சொல்லுவர் – நுண்ணிலைய  
தெங்குண்ட தேரை படுவழிப் பட்டேன்யான்  
திண்டேர் வளவன் நிறத்து.

*annaiyuṅ kōlkoṇ ṭalaikku mayalārā  
mennai yaḷiyuñcor colluvar – nuṇṇilaiya  
teṅkuṇṭa tērai paṭuvalip paṭṭēnyāṇ  
tiṇṭēr vaḷavaṇ rirattu.*

### **69.1 No Requitat but the Charge is Levelled!**

Mother spans me with a cruel rod  
The neighbours lash their deadly tongues;  
I am, indeed, in the same sad plight  
(In respect of the Chola king)  
As the toad accused of devouring,  
Without cracking the crusty shell,  
The inner kernel of the coconut.

## 69.2 Falsely Charged

My mother chases me  
 With a minatory stick,  
 And our neighbours  
 Wring my heart  
 With stinging words  
 That hurt me sore.  
 As the poor toad is falsely charged  
 With sucking the tender fruit  
 Of the coconut palm  
 Whose fronds are long and narrow,  
 So too am I falsely blamed  
 With regard to Valava  
 Who drives on a mighty chariot.

**69.3** The lady-love addresses her confidante: ‘‘My mother is always chastising me. She keeps a disciplinary stick in her hand and follows me threatening to beat me. Not only that; all my neighbours throw at me stinging words. They hurt me sore. The poor toad is charged unjustly for the frond becoming shrunk. They say that the toad has eaten it away in the tender coconut. The coconut became so because of a blight and not due to the toad.

70. நீரு நிழலும்போ னீண்ட வருளுடைய  
 ஊரிரே யென்னை யுயக்கொண்மின் – போரிற்  
 புகலுங் களியானைப் பூழியர்கோக் கோதைக்  
 கழலுமென் னெஞ்சங் கிடந்து.

*nīru niḷalumpō nīnta varuḷutaiya  
 ūrirē yennai yuyakkoṇmin – pōriṟ  
 pukaluṅ kaliyānaip pūḷiyarkōk kōtaik  
 kaḷalumeṇ neñcaṅ kiṭantu.*

## 70.1 The Shade of Trees on the Water of a Pond

Townsmen, save me from this direst peril!  
 Your nature so full of tender pity  
 Is even like a pond full with water  
 With trees around that cast a shade

Friendly, cool on the pond below!  
 My heart's aflame, set on fire  
 By Kothai, the lord of the Chera land  
 Whose elephant revels in skirmishes!  
 My heart's aflame, save me, townsmen!

### 70.2 O Save Me, Pray

O fellow-citizens,  
 Whose abiding loving kindness  
 Is like clear limpid water  
 And the cool shade of trees,  
 O save me, pray.  
 For my heart lies helpless  
 Consumed by a burning love  
 For Kothai,  
 King of the Pūli folk.  
 And whose frenzied elephants  
 Trumpet loudly in the fray.

**70.3** Oh! Ye men of grace and learning! This city is full of water sources and cool-shaded groves. Your good nature is as cool as the limpid waters and the pleasant shades of the luscious fruit trees. Kindly hear my complaint and redeem me from my grievances. The king of Pūli kingdom, who is fond of heroic battle, possessing rutting tusker-hosts is the accused and I am the accuser! He robbed me of my bosom. My mind is not with me. It has followed him. For his requited love, my heart is pining. What shall I do?

71. புலவி புறங்கொடுப்பன் புல்லிடினா ணிற்பன்  
 கலவி களிமயங்கிக் காணே – நிலவியசீர்  
 மண்ணாளுஞ் செங்கோன் வளவனை யானிதன்றோ  
 கண்ணாரக் கண்டறியா வாறு.

*pulavi purāṅkoṭuppan pulliṭiṇā nīrpan  
 kalavi kaḷimayaṅkik kāṇē – nilaviyacīr  
 maṅṅāluṅ cenkōṅ vaḷavanai yānitanrō  
 kaṅṅāarak kaṅṅariyā vāru.*

**71. 1 I am Frustrated all the Time!**

During lovers' tiffs I turned my back  
 On Vaḷavaṇ, the king that rules the earth,  
 When he came to me and embraced me  
 I could not face him out of my bashfulness.  
 During sports of love, I was inebriate!  
 And this is how I've been denied  
 Everytime we are face to face  
 The joy of gazing at the Chola king  
 The ecstasy of drinking him in.

**71. 2 My Eyes have Never had their Fill**

While sulking, I turn aside;  
 Shyness bows me down  
 When I am embraced;  
 In union  
 Ecstasy blinds me  
 My eyes have, therefore, missed  
 A full view of Vaḷavaṇ,  
 The famed and fair-minded ruler.

**71.3** My friend! I am telling you a secret. Do not tell anyone. I have not so far looked at Vaḷavaṇ's face even though I love him so much and he is my very life. He comes to me. He embraces me; I sulk in petulance. I turn back; he catches hold of me for an embrace. He does embrace me. I close my eyes, blissful. The orgy of love makes me blind. This is how that I never had an opportunity to see him directly face to face.

**72.** கைய தவன்கடலுட் சங்கமாற் பூண்டதுவுஞ்  
 செய்யசங் கீன்ற செழுமுத்தான் - மெய்யதுவு  
 மன்பொரு வேன்மாறன் வார்பொதியிற் சந்தனமால்  
 என்பெறா வாடுமென் றோள்.

*kaiya tavaṅkataluṭ caṅkamār pūṅṅatuvuṅ  
 ceyyacaṅ kīṅra celumuttāṅ - meyyatuvu  
 maṅporu vēṅmāraṅ vārpotiyiṅ cantaṅamāl  
 eṅperā vātumeṅ rōl.*

### 72.1 Surrounded by Things that Come from his Kingdom

On my wrists I wear bangles  
 Made of conchs from the Pāndya sea;  
 The wreath on my neck is of full-grown pearls  
 The yield of the oysters in the Pāndya sea;  
 On my person the unguent  
 Anointed is the sandal paste  
 From the Pāndya hills in the Pāndya kingdom.  
 What more do my shoulders need,  
 What is the lack they suffer from,  
 What is the want that's unrequited?

### 72.2 Why then do they Pine?

Upon my arms lie  
 Bangles made from the conchs  
 Which dwelt in his sea;  
 What I wear as jewels  
 Are glistening pearls  
 Born of the goodly oysters  
 Which abound there;  
 Upon my body  
 Lies the paste  
 Of the sandal which grew  
 On lofty Potiyil Hill  
 Of Māraṇ who wields the deadly lance  
 And wages wars with kings.  
 What then do my shoulders miss  
 That they droop and pine?

**72.3** "I enjoy everything from Māraṇ's kingdom. My bangles are made from the shells from his sea. The lace I wear is made of the pearls which are the products of his sea again. The sandal paste I apply on my breast comes from the sandal grown in Potikai Hills of Pāṇṭiyan. I have everything from Māraṇ. That being the case why should my shoulders droop? Why this pallor?" wonders the girl.

73. நாணாக்காற் பெண்மை நலனழியு முன்னின்று  
காணாக்காற் கைவளையுஞ் சோருமால் – காணேனான்  
வண்டெவ்வந் தீர்தார் வயமான் வழுதியைக்  
கண்டெவ்வந் தீர்வதோ ராறு.

*nānākkār penmai nalanaḷiyu munṇinru*  
*kānākkār kaivalaiyuñ cōrumāl – kāṇēnān*  
*vaṇṭevvan tīrtār vayamān vaḷutiyaik*  
*kaṇṭevvan tīrvatō rāru.*

### 73.1 Bangles, Again!

If I shake off my bashfulness  
And stand and gaze at the Pāndya king  
I shall have lost my feminine graces.  
But if I restrain my urge to gaze,  
The bangles may fall off from my wrists.  
I am in a fix: I do not see  
How I can drink in the person of the king  
Whose wreath fulfils the thirst of the bees;  
I do not see where I can find  
The surcease of my anguish, the end of my sorrow  
I do not see.

### 73.2 The Dilemma

If I am immodest  
And gaze at him  
The fair name of my womanhood  
Would be lost;  
But if I do not press forward  
To see him  
The bangles will slip  
From my thinning arms.  
Alas! I see no way  
To ease my heart-ache –  
My heart longs  
To gaze at Valuti  
Who rides a galloping steed

And wears garlands  
Whose flowers allay  
The hunger of honey bees.

**73.3** The girl falls in love with Valuti. She wants to look at him when he comes in royal procession. But her feminine nature prevents her from doing so. She is so bashful that she dares not look at his face. If, however, she does perchance, the world will speak ill of her as shameless. If she does not look at him, her bangles slip and drop down because she pines and becomes lean. Her hands thin out.

**74.** வாருயர் பெண்ணை வருகுரும்பை வாய்ந்தனபோ  
லேரிய வாயினு மென்செய்யுங் – கூரிய  
கோட்டானைத் தென்னன் குளிர்சாந் தணியகலங்  
கோட்டுமண் கொள்ளா முலை.

*vāruyar peṇṇai varukurumpai vāyntanapō*  
*lēriya vāyinu meṇceyyuṅ – kūriya*  
*kōṭṭānait tennaṅ kuḷircān taṇiyakalan*  
*kōṭṭumaṅ kollā mulai.*

#### **74.1 This, my Useless Beauty!**

My breasts are round and smooth and firm  
Like the budding fruits of the stately palm  
But in vain do they bear these attributes.  
Of what avail are my breasts to me  
When they cannot, in a tight embrace  
Of the Pāndya king who rides a tusker  
Rob the perfumed unguent  
From off his chest so broad and handsome –  
Of what avail are they to me  
Round though they are and smooth and firm?

#### **74.2 The Useless Loveliness**

What does it matter  
If my breasts are  
As luscious and beautiful

As the fruits  
 Of the tall and stately palm,  
 If they do not pick up  
 With their tip and base  
 The paste of sandal  
 Worn on the jewelled chest  
 Of the Southern King  
 Who rides an elephant  
 Whose tusks are sharp?

**74.3** In the games of love Kōtai is a superb one. In this game, the girl embraces her lover tightly and rolls over him. In this act she sees that the unguent of sandal on his chest is swiped away by her pointed breast as if by a ploughing act. Hence, though she has sharp and rounded tiny breasts they are useless unless they win in the love game.

**75.** ஏற்பக் குடைந்தாடி லேசுவ ரல்லாக்கால்  
 மாற்றி யிருந்தா ளெனவுரைப்பர் – வேற்கண்ணாய்  
 கொல்யானை மாறன் குளிர்முனல் வையையநீ  
 ரெல்லா மெனக்கோ ரிடர்.

*ērpak kuṭaintāṭi lēcuva rallākkāl*  
*mārri yiruntā ḷeṇavuraippar – vērkannāy*  
*kolyānai māraṇ kuḷirpunal vaiyainī*  
*rellā meṇakkō riṭar.*

### **75.1 The Pāndyan River, an Embarrassment to me!**

If I spend time plunging in  
 The cool waters of the Vaigai river –  
 The Vaigai of the Pāndya with the fierce elephant,  
 If I splash about and take my time  
 People lash their slanderous tongues.  
 But if I disdain to take my bath  
 Still they talk, now alleging  
 Concealment: my bright-eyed friend,  
 The Vaigai of the Pāndya has turned out to be  
 An embarrassment, all round, to me!



## 75.2 Trouble Both Ways

If I dive and plunge  
 In the waters of his river  
 And bathe with delight  
 They rail at me;  
 And if I do not,  
 Still they cry,  
 ‘She seeks to hide,  
 Her love for him.’  
 O friend!  
 Your eyes flash bright  
 Like gleaming spears!  
 The cool waters of the Vaigai  
 Of Māraṇ who rides a fierce elephant  
 Are full of trouble for me,  
 Whatever I may do.

**75.3** The girl loves Māraṇ. But she hesitates to let others come to know of it. She bemoans her lot with her friend. She wants to sport in the Vaiyai along with Māraṇ. When Māraṇ is sporting in the Vaiyai, if she too sports there her friends rail at her accusing her of shamelessness. If she refrains from watersport and sits or stands on the bank of the Vaiyai looking at the people sporting, her friends accuse her that she is hiding her love for Māraṇ. Thus for her, whether she bathes in the Vaiyai, or watches them who bathe and sport, the Vaiyai gives her a bad name.

**76.** கூடற் பெருமானைக் கூடலார் கோமானைக்  
 கூடப் பெறுவனேற் கூடென்று – கூட  
 லிழைப்பாள் போற் காட்டி யிழையாதிருக்கும்  
 பிழைப்பிற் பிழைபாக் கறிந்து.

*kūṭar perumāṇaik kūṭalār kōmāṇaik*  
*kūṭap peruvaṇēr kūṭenru – kūṭa*  
*liṭaippāl pōr kāṭṭi yilaiyātirukkum*  
*pīṭaippiṭ pīṭaipāk karintu.*

### **76.1 Let the Auguries be Auspicious!**

She sits before a square of sand  
Spread evenly: and muttering  
‘Let the ends of the circles drawn  
Coincide betokening  
My reunion with the Pāndya king!’  
She begins to draw on the even surface —  
But half way through she gives it up,  
She stops drawing on the square of sand —  
For if the circles fail to form,  
If the circles augur ill  
For their happy reunion,  
If they betoken a tragic end ...?

### **76.2 Geomantic Circles**

‘Do link up, O looping rings,  
If I should hold  
In love’s embrace  
The lord of Kūdal city,  
The king of the people  
Who dwell in Kūdal’.  
Thus she spoke  
And made as if to draw  
The linking circles close;  
But of a truth  
She drew them not.  
For she knew  
That should she fail  
So would  
Her expectations too.

**76.3** There is a habit among girls to test their luck. They go on drawing circles with their forefingers on the sand. The loops they make, if they make an odd number, they deem it ill luck. If it is an even number, they think they are lucky to join their loved ones to make a pair. But this girl puts her hand on the sand and does not

draw the loops. For she is afraid lest she may be unlucky. In Caṅkam literature we find such loop-making with the thread or rope. If it makes a perfect circle, it is deemed lucky. If there is a gap between the two ends, it is deemed ill luck. The girl wants to test her luck regarding her love. She freezes on account of fear of ill luck.

77. செங்கான் மடநாராய் தென்னுறந்தை சேறியே  
னின்கான்மேல் வைப்பனென் கையிரண்டும் – நன்பாற்  
கரையுரிஞ்சி மீன்பிறமுங் காவிரிநீர் நாடற்  
குரையாயோ யானுற்ற நோய்.

*ceṅkān maṭanārāy tennurantai cēriyē*  
*nin kānmēl vaippanen kaiyiraṇṭum – nanpār*  
*karaiyuriñci mīnpiraluṅ kāvirinīr nāṭar*  
*kuraiyāyō yānurra nōy.*

### 77. 1 The Crane Anointed Love's Messenger!

Youthful crane with crimson legs!  
If you are headed for Uṟaiyūr city  
I beseech you with both my hands  
In supplication on your legs.  
When you reach your destination  
Where on the Cauvery the fat fish climb  
And slip and climb the river bank  
In constant play, I beseech you  
To see the king and report to him  
The fell disease I suffer from,  
On his account all the time –  
Youthful crane, will you do this for me?

### 77. 2 Tell Him of my Malady

O young and artless  
Red-footed stork!  
I lay my hands upon your feet,  
And I pray to you,  
If you go

To southern Uṛaiyūr,  
Won't you please tell  
The king of the land  
Watered by the Kāviri  
Where the flouncing fish  
Knock against the fertile banks,  
Won't you tell him of the malady  
Which ails me?

77.3 Now she begins to address the stork: “Oh, young red-footed stork! It is good you are flying towards the south. If you happen to reach Uṛantai, where fishes flounce knocking against the banks of the Kāviri, please do me a favour’ I beseech you holding both your feet. Will you not tell the king of my love-sickness?”

78. என்னை உரையலென் பேருரைய லூருரைய  
லன்னையு மின்ன ளெனவுரையல் – பின்னையுந்  
தண்படா யானைத் தமிழ்நர் பெருமாற்கென்  
கண்படா வாறே யுரை.

*ennai uraiyalen pēuraiya lūruraiya  
lannaiyu minna ḷenavuraiyal – pinnaiyun  
taṅpaṭā yānait tamilnar perumārken  
kaṅpaṭā vārē yurai.*

### 78.1 Report to him my Sleepless Anguish!

“Do not reveal my name to him!  
Do not tell him where I live,  
Do not please communicate  
Anything that relates to me!  
Do not, my friend, describe to him  
How my mother is treating me!  
Just you tell him, the Lord of the Tamils,  
That there is a girl who cannot sleep,  
Who tosses all the long night through,  
In her sleepless bed for the love of him!”

### 78.2 Speak not of me but of my Sleeplessness

Don't speak of me;  
Mention not my name,  
Nor my place;  
Don't tell him  
What kind of mother I have.  
Inform the great Tamil king  
Riding a merciless elephant  
Only of my sleeplessness.

**78.3** A damsel falls in love with the ruler of Kūṭal. She wants to send a messenger to the king.

To the messenger she says, “Go to the King of Madurai. Tell him not my name. Please mention not my native place. Never open your mouth about the name of my mother. Never reveal my address. But tell him, ‘There a girl lost her sleep’. It is enough. He knows who I am.” In love convention, the name is not mentioned, especially so’ for the tender sex because their feminine nature and the culture of the Tamil people do not approve of it.

**79.** கடற்றானைக் கோதையைக் காண்கொடாள் வீணி  
லடைத்தா டனிக்கதவ மன்னை – யடைக்குமேல்  
ஆயிழையா யென்னை யவன்மே லெடுத்துரைப்பார்  
வாயு மடைக்குமோ தான்.

*katarrānaik kōtaiyaik kāṅkoṭāḷ vīṇi*  
*laṭaittā ṭanikkatava mannai – yaṭaikkumēl*  
*āyilaiyā yennai yavaṅmē leṭutturaippār*  
*vāyu mataikkumō tān.*

### 79.1 Who will Silence the Slandering Tongues?

That I mayn't gaze upon the Chera king  
Whose forces are boundless like the sea  
My mother shut the only door  
Giving access to the street outside.  
Surely, this is fruitless, of no avail!  
For, she can close the front door shut  
But can she close the mouths of those

That monger scandals 'bout him and me?  
She confines me, she closes the door  
But can she close these sland' ring mouths?

### 79.2 She can Shut the Door, Not the Slanderers' Mouths

To deprive me of the sight of Kōtai,  
Leading a sea-like army,  
Mother has shut the single door  
In vain.  
Dear damsel decked with jewels!  
Shutting the door,  
Can she shut the slanderers' mouths  
Associating me with him?

**79.3** The lover to her confidante: “Oh my friend! You are wearing choice jewels made of pure gold. Hear what I have to say. You know my love for Kōtai our king who has a large fleet of ships to conquer the world. The king came in procession through our street. Oh! My mother shut the only door of our house. It was a vain act. It was not going to yield her the desired effect. She could only prevent me from gazing at him. Alas! A sumptuous visual treat was denied to me. “Poor woman, does she know that the whole city was floating on gossip connecting me with him? Can she shut the mouths of the people of the city?”

**80.** வளையவாய் நீண்டதோள் வாட்கணா யன்னை  
யிளையளாய் மூத்திலள் கொல்லோ – தளையவிழ்தார்  
மண்கொண்ட தானை மறங்கனல்வேன் மாறனைக்  
கண்கொண்டு நோக்கலென் பாள்.

*valaiyavāy nīṇṭatōḷ vāṭkaṇā yaṇṇai*  
*yilaiyalāy mūttilaḷ kollō – taḷaiyaviḷtār*  
*maṅkoṇṭa tānai maraṅkaṇalvēṇ māraṇaik*  
*kaṅkoṇṭu nōkkalen pāl.*

### 80.1 Was my Mother Ever Young?

Dear, my friend with the shoulder ring  
And shining eyes! Did not my mother

Grow from girlhood, grow from youth  
 Like everyone, to her hoary age?  
 For she forbids my looking at  
 The valorous Pāndya with the javelin!  
 Was she young and eager once  
 And did she grow to be old – this, my mother –  
 Or was she born old and weary  
 Was she never young, this mother of mine?

### 80.2 Was She Never Young?

My bangle-adorned, long-shouldered  
 Sword-eyed friend!  
 Did mother become old  
 Without ever being young?  
 She forbids me to view with my eyes  
 The garlanded, spear-holding leader  
 Of a winning army,  
 Māraṇ the great.

80.3 “O, you maid with bangled arm and elongated shoulder and sword-sharp eyes! Was my mother never young before becoming old? Why does she prevent me from seeing Māraṇ the conqueror of many lands wearing garlands and wielding his lance?”

81. கொடிபாடித் தேர்பாடிக் கொய்தண்டார் மாறன்  
 முடிபாடி முத்தாரம் பாடித் – தொடியுலக்கை  
 கைம்மனையி லோச்சப் பெறுவெனோ யானுமோர்  
 அம்மனைக் காவ லுளேன்.

*koṭipāṭit tērpāṭik koytaṇṭār māraṇ*  
*muṭipāṭi muttāram pāṭit – toṭiyulakkai*  
*kaimmaṇaiyi lōccap peruvenō yānumōr*  
*ammaṇaik kāva luḷēn.*

### 81.1 When, O When, shall I Pound Perfumes?

I am the prisoner of my carping mother!  
 When, oh when, shall I engage  
 In pounding perfumes with a jewelled pestle

Singing the while of the Pāndya's flag  
 Of the Pāndya's chariot, of his head, of his wreath  
 Of the lace of pearls on the Pāndya chest –  
 When shall I pound like all other girls  
 Perfumes with a pestle ringed with gold  
 I, a prisoner of my wrathful mother?

### 81.2 Mother's Custody

How can I sing,  
 While pounding *cunṇam*  
 In this small house,  
 The glory of the flag,  
 The chariot, the crown, the pearl-necklace  
 Of Māraṇ wearing garlands,  
 When I am under the custody of  
 An incomparable mother?

**81.3** When will I have the chance to sing the glory of the flag, the chariot, the crown and the pearl-garland of the courageous Māraṇ as I pound with a pestle sweet smelling herbs; I, who am guarded in a small house by my senseless mother?

This girl loves Māraṇ. Naturally, she likes to sing a eulogy on Māraṇ's banner. She loves the garland on his chest. Hence she likes to sing a song on it. She likes to praise the king's crown. But alas! if she sings with such a theme then others may come to know of her love. "It is a small house. In a small enclosure, if she sings the mother will come to know. If it is a spacious house, at one corner she can sing her heart out. What to do in a cramped household?" she bemoans her lot with her friend.

**82.** குதலைப் பருவத்தே கோழிக்கோ மானை  
 வதுவை பெறுகென்றா ளன்னை – யதுபோய்  
 விளைந்தவா வின்று வியன்கானல் வெண்டேர்த்  
 துளங்குநீர் மாமருட்டி யற்று.

*kutalaip paruvattē kōlikkō mānai*  
*vatuvai perukenrā laṇnai – yatupōy*  
*viḷaintavā viṇru viyaṅkānal veṇṭērt*  
*tuḷaṅkunīr māmaruṭṭi yarru.*



## 82. 1 Where Hopes have Proved Liars

When I was young, a mere toddler,  
 My mother used to say, ‘‘May you marry  
 The lord of Kōḷi!’’ She did say this!  
 But now? How hopes are metamorphosed!  
 They are even like a mirage in the desert wastes  
 Teeming with chariots, with waves rolling by  
 Where animals driven by thirst approach  
 And get frustrated, disenchanted.

## 82. 2 A Mirage Indeed

In that innocent age  
 When I lisped as a child  
 My mother said to me,  
 ‘You shall be the bride  
 Of the King of Kōḷi city.’  
 Alas! Gone are those times  
 And look now  
 At what has happened.  
 It lies revealed  
 As the false allure  
 Which the rippling water  
 Of a mirage  
 In a vast desert  
 Holds out to innocent deer.

**82.3** A girl in love with Cōḷaṅ speaks to her bosom: ‘‘Oh my heart, when I was lisping as a child our mother used to proclaim, ‘May you be the bride for the king of Uṛaiyūr.’ But now that I have matured to be a girl of marriageable age, our mother chides me, ‘You shall not go out to behold the grandeur of Cōḷa’s stately procession.’ What! Is our mother so unsteady in her blessings that she cannot affirm and stand by the word she gave me when I was a child? What if I behold Cōḷa? Cōḷa’s name is ingrained in my heart. His figure comes to me in my dreams. If he comes in procession our mother does not allow me to have a look at him. A heartfelt visual treat of Cōḷa king has become a thing impossible.’’

83. அலங்குதார்ச் செம்பிய னாடெழிற்றோ னோக்கி  
விலங்கியான் வேண்டா வெனினு – நலந்தொலைந்து  
பீர்மேற் கொளலுற்ற பேதையர்க் கென்வாய்ச்சொல்  
நீர்மே லெழுந்த நெருப்பு.

*alaṅkutārc cempiya nātelirrō ṇōkki  
vilāṅkiyān vēṇṭā veninu – nalantolaintu  
pīrmēr koḷalurra pētaiyark kenvāyccol  
nīrmē leḷunta neruppu.*

### 83.1 The Mother and the Daughter

I tried my all to keep my daughter  
From gazing at the king, the Sembian.  
When he drove in state with his dangling wreath  
And his well-formed shoulders moving up and down  
In tune with the steps of the horse he was riding  
She didn't listen, she went and gazed  
And all her graces have forsaken her,  
She has turned deathly pale.  
My words to her seem as rewarding  
As efforts to light a wick in water!

### 83.2 Like a Flame Lit on the Water

When I looked at  
The battle-worthy shoulders  
Of Chembiyan,  
Wearer of swaying garlands,  
I warned the girls  
And told them,  
'Do not go and look at him.'  
But in the ears of those  
Fond foolish maidens,  
Who, now sick with love  
Have lost their beauty,  
And whose body  
Is covered over  
With a pale and sickly hue,  
The colour of a ribbed gourd flower,

My futile words fell  
Like a flame on the water.

**83.3** The foster-mother to herself, “Oh! My heart! I ran to her and shouted at her and stopped her from gazing at Cempiyaṅ. Alas! My words of caution became a lamp lit on water. The poor girl somehow or other, stole an escape from my watchful guard. And she had a heartfelt gaze at Cempiyaṅ wearing swaying garland on his handsome shoulders. What happened now? She fell in love with him. Pallid hue has spread all over her body. She now looks like a ribbed gourd flower.”

**84.** கோட்டெங்கு சூழ்கூடற் கோமானைக் கூடவென  
வேட்டாங்குச் சென்றவென் னெஞ்சறியாள் – கூட்டே  
குறும்பூழ் பறப்பித்த வேட்டுவன்போ லன்னை  
வெறுங்கூடு காவல்கொண் டாள்.

*kōṭṭenku cūlkūṭar kōmāṇaik kūtavena*  
*vēṭṭāṅkuc cenraven neñcariyāl – kūṭṭē*  
*kurumpūl parappitta vēṭṭuvanpō lannai*  
*veruṅkūṭu kāvalkon ṭāl.*

#### **84.1 The Bird has Flown, the Cage is Empty!**

My mother doesn't reckon how my heart  
Has fled the body, thirsting deeply  
For union with the Pāndya king,  
The lord of Madurai fringed by  
Palm trees laden with nuts in clusters.  
She mounts guard over my lifeless body  
An empty tenement like the feckless hunter  
Carefully guarding the cage where once  
His hunting falcon had been kept  
But now has fled.

#### **84.2 The Hunter's Empty Cage**

Unaware of the flight of my heart  
Eager to get united  
With the ruler of Kūṭal

Surrounded by coconut trees,  
 Mother is guarding my body  
 Just as the hunter,  
 Ignorant of hawk's escape,  
 Cherishes the empty cage.

**84.3** The young beautiful girl fell in love with Māraṇ when he came in royal procession on a chariot. The mother sensed a 'danger'. Hence she shut her within the confines of the home, never leaving her even for once, lest she goes to the palace to meet the king. The mother is happy that she has succeeded in keeping her daughter at home.

Hunters capturing birds use a captive quail which invites its species to join it. And in the process the new preys are trapped. But sometimes even the captive quails burrow through the soil and escape unnoticed by the bird catcher. The bird catcher will be guarding only the empty basket.

Similarly, the mother guards only her empty frame. Her heart has already flown like a free bird and joined its lover in sweet embrace.

**85.** புன்னாகச் சோலை புனற்றெங்கு சூழ்மாந்தை  
 நன்னாக நின்றலரு நன்னாடன் – என்னாகங்  
 கங்கு லொருநாட் கனவினுட் டைவந்தான்  
 என்கொ லிவரறிந்த வாறு.

*punnākac cōlai punarreṅku cūlmāntai  
 nannāka ninralaru nannāṭan – ennākaṅ  
 kaṅku lorunāṭ kanavinuṭ ṭaivantān  
 eṅko livararinta vāru.*

### 85.1 How did They Learn of this Dream Tryst?

The Chera, lord of fertile Māndai  
 Abounding in palms and the spreading *punnai*  
 And the *nāka* trees that flower apace  
 Came in my dream one scented night  
 And gently stroked my heaving breast.  
 That did happen; but how in the name

Of all that is wondrous did these friends of mine  
Learn of this meeting, this dream tryst?

### 85.2 How Did They Know?

On Māndai's environs lie  
Groves of mastwood trees  
And a spread of cool waters,  
And groves of coconut palms;  
The long-leaved gamboge too  
Stands there in bloom.  
Look! It was but once,  
And in the dark night,  
And in a mere dream,  
That the lord of that fair land came  
And gently stroked my limbs.  
How in the world  
Did they know of it?

85.3 “Oh, my heart! This land is well-irrigated, replete with groves of mastwood, and coconut groves dotting everywhere as its agricultural wealth; it is ruled by Cēraṅ having Māntai as his capital. Long-leaved gamboge trees too form groves and give good shade. Their flowers exude aroma around the land. The king of this fertile mountainous region one day came in my dream and entered my heart and found a warm residence for him. He embraced my tender frame with his fragrant hand. How did my friends come to know of this secret tryst?”

86. களியானைத் தென்ன னிளங்கோவென் றெள்ளிப்  
பணியாரே தம்பா ரிழக்க – வணியாகங்  
கைதொழு தேனு மிழக்கோ நறுமாவின்  
கொய்தளி ரன்ன நிறம்.

*kaliyānait tenna nilāṅkōven rellip  
paṇiyārē tampā rilakka – vaṇiyākaṅ  
kaitolu tēnu milakkō narumāvin  
koytali ranna niram.*

### **86.1 Is This Justice? Is he Fair?**

It is but meet the kings who thought  
Lightly of the Pāndya as a mere stripling  
Lost their kingdoms to the lord of tuskers.  
But I – I bowed to his jewelled chest  
And I've lost my grace, I've lost my looks,  
And the colour of skin that resembled  
A tender shoot of the mango tree –  
I bowed to him when he drove in state  
And still I lost my all to him!

### **86.2 Why Should I Lose?**

It is but just  
That those who scorned  
The Southern King,  
Lord of frenzied elephant hosts,  
Thinking that the prince  
Is a mere stripling,  
And so did not  
Bend their knee in submission,  
Should lose their fair domain;  
But why should I  
Who worshipped with folded hands  
His beautiful and jewelled chest,  
Why should I lose  
My lovely complexion  
Fair as the new sprouts  
Fresh and tender  
Of the fragrant mango?

**86.3** The girl reasons out. “The kings who did not bow before *Tennaṅ* lost their kingdoms by the wrath of *Pāṅṭiyaṅ*. It is as per the rules of administration. But how is it, I who worship him should lose my fair complexion like the tender mango shoots and get the pallid hue? It is not just!” – she wonders.

87. கனவை நனவென் றெதிர்விளிக்குங் காணு  
நனவி லெதிர்விழிக்க நாணும் – புனையிழா  
யென்க ணிவையானா லெவ்வாறே மாமாறன்  
தன்க ணருள்பெறுமா தான்.

*kaṇavai naṇaven retirviḷikkun kānu  
naṇavi letirviḷikka nānum – punaiyilā  
yenka ṇivaiyānā levvārē māmāran  
tanka narulperumā tān.*

### 87.1 How will my Love get Requited?

When I do sleep and dream of him  
My eyes speak up, reveal my heart  
Mistaking this mere dream  
As wakefulness, as reality!  
In real life when the king drives by  
My eyes look down in bashfulness.  
How then, my friend, can I win his grace,  
How will my love get requited?

### 87.2 My Unhelpful Eyes

Imagining my dream  
To be the real thing  
My eyes met him boldly  
When he looked at me:  
But when I was really awake  
And stood before him,  
They were too shy  
To meet his gaze.  
O Friend,  
How lovely are the jewels you wear!  
If this is how  
My eyes will behave  
How can I ever hope  
To find favour,  
In lordly Māraṇ's eyes?

**87.3** I dreamt of him. He came in my dream and stood before me. I thought it was happening during my waking hours. Hence I was ashamed of looking at his face. Emboldened, I thought I could trap him within my eyes. Hence, I opened them. Alas! it was a dream. *Māraṇ* was not there. What a pity! During the stately drive in the royal highway he came to me face to face. What a sweet opportunity! But my feminine nature prevented me from gazing at him. I was looking at the earth drawing lines with my toes. *Māraṇ* passed by me! What a pity! I could not behold him either in dream or during my waking hours.

**88.** தளையவிழும் பூங்கோதைத் தாயரே யாவி  
களையினுமென் கைதிறந்து காட்டேன் – வளைகொடுபோம்  
வன்கண்ணன் வாண்மாறன் மால்யானை தன்னுடன்வந்  
தென்கண் புகுந்தா னிரா.

*talaiyaviḷum pūṅkōtait tāyarē yāvi*  
*kaḷaiyinuṁeṇ kaitirantu kāṭṭēṇ – vaḷaikotuṇpōm*  
*vaṅkaṇṇaṇ vāṇmāraṇ mālyānai taṇṇuṭaṇvan*  
*tenkaṇ pukuntā nira.*

### 88.1 He Resides in my Eyes!

Mothers with blooming flowers wreathed!  
Even if it costs me my life, I shan't  
Take off my hands from over my eyes.  
For the Pāndya king the thief of my bangles  
Came riding his tusker, sword upraised,  
He did come, O mothers, last night  
And enter my eyes; he is in there now!  
And nothing can make me take my hands  
Off my eyes with him inside!

### 88.2 I Won't Lose Him

Fresh, fragrant wreaths  
You have brought me, foster-mothers!  
You may take out my life;  
I won't take my hands



Off my eyes;  
 Māraṇ, fearless and armed,  
 Along with his mighty elephant  
 Got into my eyes last night.

**88.3** ‘Oh mother, he robbed me of my bangles! The robber is the ruler of the Kingdom! He entered my bosom last night, through my eyes. I shall not open my eyes relaxing my palms, even if it costs my life; I have trapped him forever!’

**89.** ஓராற்றா னென்க ணிமைபொருந்த வந்நிலையே  
 கூரார்வேன் மாறனென் கைப்பற்ற – வாரா  
 நனவென் றெழுந்திருந்தே நல்வினையொன் றில்லேன்  
 கனவு மிழந்திருந்த வாறு.

*ōrārrā nenka ṇimaiporunta vannilaiyē  
 kūrārvēṇ māraṇeṇ kaipparra – vārā  
 nanaven reluntiruntē nalvinaiyon rillēn  
 kaṇavu miḷantirunta vāru.*

### 89.1 I Lose Even the Dreamland Tryst!

My eyes somehow did close for a moment  
 And the Pāndya with the javelin caught hold of my hands.  
 I took this all to be reality,  
 I got up in a hurry – luckless I –  
 Only to find that the dream had vanished  
 That I had lost even the dreamland tryst!

### 89.2 Dream and Reality

My sleepless eyes closed for a moment;  
 At once appeared Māraṇ,  
 Armed with his pointed spear,  
 And held my hands.  
 Taking it to be true,  
 I shook myself up.  
 Alas! Sinful me!  
 I lost my dream also.

**89.3** The girl pining in love lost her sleep. She was always thinking of her lover. She was brooding throughout the night. At an unguarded moment, she dozed off and had just a wink of sleep. In that instant, she had a dream. In that dream Māraṅ held her hands. The girl was overjoyed and woke up instantly. Alas! It was a dream only and Māraṅ was not there! What a pity, even during dream she lost the tryst and the fond embrace of Māraṅ.

**90.** ஊட லெனவொன்று தோன்றி யலருறாஉங்  
கூட லிழந்தேன் கொடியன்னாய் – நீடெங்கின்  
பாளையிற் றேன்றொடுக்கும் பாய்புன னீர்நாட்டுக்  
காளையைக் கண்படையுட் பெற்று.

*ūṭa leṇavoṅru tōṅri yalarurūuṅ*  
*kūṭa liḷantēṅ koṭiyannāy – nīṭeṅkiṅ*  
*pālaiyir rēṅroṭukkum pāypuna nīrnāṭṭuk*  
*kālaiyaik kaṅpaṭaiyuṭ perru.*

### **90.1 There was no Joy in the Dreamland Tryst!**

Lissom maid! The youthful king,  
The lord of the land where honey bees  
Build their hives on the coconut palm  
Came in my dream, but luckless me!  
Between us rose a lovers' tiff  
Which ruined all that nightly meeting.  
There was no bliss in our coming together  
There was no joy in our dreamland tryst!

### **90.2 My Petulant Sulk**

My friend,  
You are as lissome  
As a swaying creeper!  
When I saw in my dream  
The prince of the land  
Watered by running brooks,  
And where bees build  
Their hives of honey

On the broad spathes  
Of tall coconut palms,  
I sulked in petulance,  
And so  
I lost the delight  
Of my blossoming love.

**90.3** The heroine to her confidante, “Oh, you who have a creeper like sway in your gait! Your hip is too narrow.

I loved the prince of the Cōla emperor. He came in my dreams. I was about to have a close embrace, but my petulant sulking came as a hindrance. But unfortunately the tiff prolonged. Hence I lost my tryst of love with him.

What shall I do now?”

She sees tall coconuts. On their lush branches bees have built their combs. It looks beautiful. She pays rich tribute to the Cōla empire where such scenes abound.

**91.** ஆய்மணிப் பைம்பூ ணலங்குதார்க் கோதையைக்  
காணிய சென்று கதவடைத்தேன் – நாணிப்  
பெருஞ்செல்வ ரில்லத்து நல்கூர்ந்தார் போல  
வருஞ்செல்லும் பேருமென் னெஞ்சு.

*āymaniṅ paimpū ṇalaṅkutārk kōtaiyaik  
kāṇiya cenru katavataittēṅ – nāṅiṅ  
peruñcelva rillattu nalkūrntār pōla  
varuñcellum pērumen neñcu.*

### **91.1 Tensed is my Heart in Ceaseless Conflict**

Thirsting to gaze at Kothai who wears  
A dangling garland and ornaments  
Made of gold and set with diamonds  
I made towards the door but my bashfulness  
Forced me to close it; indeed I was  
Even like the poor before the homes of the rich,  
With my love for him that urged me on  
And my bashfulness that held me back;

Pulled by my love and checked by my shyness,  
Tensed is my heart in ceaseless conflict.

## 91.2 My Vacillating Heart

I rushed out for a glimpse of Kōtai  
adorned with gold and garland  
but closed the door,  
overcome by coyness;  
my heart, like the poor  
at the doorsteps of the rich  
goes and comes back  
vacillating endlessly.

91.3 The lady-love's friend asks her: "Did you see our king Kōtai when he came in a state procession?" She replies: "I understand that he was wearing dangling garlands on his chest. I rushed to the door to see him. I wanted to have a close look at his figure wearing choicest gems. But, alas! My feminine shyness born with me as my second nature pulled me back as I approached the door. Yet my heart's desire was really more powerful than my feminine instinct of demureness. Hence, propelled by the love for him, I rushed to the door, like the poor rushing to the rich for largesse. But, alas! I was pulled back again by my modesty. Meanwhile, the state procession of the king came and went past my home. What shall I do?"

92. நானொருபால் வாங்க நலனொருபா லுண்ணெகிழ்ப்பக்  
காமருதோட் கிள்ளிக்கென் கண்கவற்ற – யாமத்  
திருதலைக் கொள்ளியி னுள்ளெறும்பு போலத்  
திரிதரும் பேருமென் னெஞ்சு.

*nāṇorupāl vāṅka nalaṇorupā luṇṇekilppak  
kāmaruṭōṭ kiḷḷikken kaṅkavarra – yāmat  
tirutalaik kolliyi nullerumpu pōlat  
tiritarum pērumen neṅcu.*

## 92.1 Like an Ant in a Burning Faggot

I have lost my heart to the handsome-shouldered  
Killi the king of the Chola land

But I am harried by two powerful forces  
 Pulling me in opposite ways:  
 My bashfulness that restrains me  
 And my womanly grace which shall forsake me  
 If, responding to this bashfulness  
 I deny myself my requital.  
 I'm even like an ant that finds itself  
 Puzzled, helpless in the middle of a faggot  
 That is lit and burning, at both its ends!

### 92.2 Between the Devil and the Deep Sea

Pulled in one direction by shyness.  
 in the other by passion,  
 Urged by the eyes anxious  
 to view the broad-shouldered Kḷi.  
 my heart, at the middle of night,  
 agonized like the ant  
 caught inside a bamboo pole  
 burning at both ends.

92.3 Fortunately for her, the prince came on a state visit in all pomp. Everywhere there was loud music, the herald announcing the approach of the chariot. Her heart throbbed with excitement. At last the prince's car came and stood in front of her house. Alas! At that time her feminine demureness pulled her back from moving forward to have a look at him. But her deep love for him dragged her from the front. This tug-of-war went on like an ant trapped on a stick when either side was afire.

93. வரக்கண்டு நாணாதே வல்லையா நெஞ்சே  
 மரக்கண்ணோ மண்ணாள்வார் கண்ணென் – நிரக்கண்டாய்  
 வாளுமுவை வெல்கொடியான் வண்புனளிர் நாடற்கென்  
 தோளமுவந் தோன்றத் தொழுது.

*varakkaṇṭu nāṇātē vallaiyā neñcē*  
*marakkannō maṇṇālvār kaṇṇen – rirakkaṇṭāy*  
*vāluluvai velkoṭiyān vaṇpuṇaṇīr nāṭarken*  
*tōḷaluvan tōṇrat tolutu.*

**93.1 Are the Eyes of Kings Real, Seeing Eyes?**

My heart! When the Chola with a tiger on his flag  
Seeks your company, do not give way  
To bashfulness; you have the strength.  
Talk to the lord of watered lands,  
Taking care to point out  
How my shoulders are emaciated  
Taking care to question him,  
'Are the eyes of kings real, seeing eyes  
Or are they made of insentient wood?'

**93.2 Be Brave**

Be brave  
Dear my heart,  
And do not feel too shy  
When you see him come near,  
Say to him,  
'Are the eyes of the kings of the earth  
But mere blocks of wood ?'  
And beg for gracious love  
From him  
Whose victorious banner  
Is a tiger burning bright,  
And who is the king of the land  
Of bounteous streams;  
And bow down to him  
And let him see  
How full my shoulders are.

**93.3** A girl in love-tangle sends her heart as the messenger of love. "Oh! My heart! You are really strong, I know it well. Yet when that Cōla prince comes near you, do not feel shy. Meet him who has the banner of the tiger. He has kingdom ever fed by the perennial Kāviri. You must tell him in such a way that he understands the entire status of my shoulders. Bow before him and plead, 'May you not shower your grace on this girl? Are his eyes wooden,' she asks herself.

94. உகுவாய் நிலத்த துயர்மணன்மே லேறி  
நகுவாய்முத் தீன்றசைந்த சங்கம் – புகுவான்  
திரைவரவு பார்த்திருக்குந் தென்கொற்கைக் கோமான்  
உரைவரவு பார்த்திருக்கு நெஞ்சு.

*ukuvāy nilatta tuyarmaṇaṇmē lēri*  
*nakuvāymut tīṇracainta caṅkam – pukuvān*  
*tiraivaravu pārṭtirukkun tenkorṅkaik kōmān*  
*uraivaravu pārṭtirukku neñcu.*

#### 94.1 My Eager Heart Lies Await

The oyster climbs to the top of the mound  
And deposits a lustrous pearl;  
It then waits for the wave on which  
To ride back to the sea its happy home.  
In like manner my eager heart  
Lies await for a message from  
The lord of Korṅkai.

#### 94.2 My Heart Waits for a Reply

Climbing up  
On to a high sand-dune,  
From the shelving shore  
Battered by the waves of the sea,  
The oyster  
Which has just given birth  
To a shining pearl,  
Crawls away a little  
And lies exhausted,  
Eagerly awaiting  
An incoming wave  
To re-enter the haven of the sea.  
My heart, likewise,  
Awaits the coming  
Of a reply to my message  
From the lord  
Of Southern Korṅkai.

94.3 A beautiful lass loves the king of Kūṭal. She thinks that the king knows her love for him and hence waits for a word of requital from him. She is walking on the seashore of Pāṇṭiyaṅ and is ruminating on her love. The girl identifies herself with a conch. The pearl is her love for Pāṇṭiyaṅ. The wave from the sea is the message from the king to take her back into his domain. A beautiful scene of an oyster laying a bright pearl on a raised dune is described.

95. கடும்பணித் திங்கட்டன் கைபோர்வை யாக  
நெடுங்கடை நின்றதுகொ ரோழி – நெடுஞ்சினவே  
லாய்மணிப் பைம்பூ ணலங்குதார்க் கோதையைக்  
காணிய சென்றவென் னெஞ்சு.

*kaṭumpanit tiṅkaṭṭaṅ kaipōrvai yāka  
neṭuṅkaṭai ninratuko rōli – neṭuñcinavē  
lāymanip paimpū ṇalaṅkutārk kōtaiyaik  
kāṇiya cenraven neñcu.*

### 95.1 My Heart Goes out to Gaze at Him

My heart went out to gaze at him  
The Chera king with the lustrous javelin  
With a dangling garland and ornaments  
Made of gold and set with diamonds  
But it tarries long; perhaps it's standing  
This frosty day with the hands for a shawl  
In front of his door where many throng  
Thirsting to meet him; my heart's away  
Quite a long time now, it does not return.

### 95.2 Under the Cold Moon

Tell me, dear friend,  
Does my heart  
Which went out to see  
Kothai who wields  
A long and angry spear,  
And wears jewels of yellow gold  
Set with choicest gems,  
And garlands swaying to and fro,



Does my heart stand waiting  
 At his tall fortress gate  
 Under this bitterly cold moon,  
 With but its hands  
 For a wrap?

**95.3** “Hey my confidante! I sent my heart as messenger of love to Kōtai, you know? My eyes had a heartfelt visual treat of his hand holding a spear, sparkling like the young moon. My eyes next went to his broad and handsome chest. There he was wearing a golden lace, studded with choice gems of rare varieties, selected by experts in assessing diamonds and rare gems. His lace was swaying on his chest. Normally my heart too followed Kōtai invisibly following his route to the palace. Mist is falling like a thin muslin cloth. It is freezing cold. My heart, unable to bear the cold, is wrapping its bosom with its bare hands. Is it trembling there in the cold? Because of the biting cold its teeth is making a clattering sound. Has it gone inside to have a tryst with the king? Or, is it still standing there at the portal of the palace, unmindful of the mist, and excruciating discomfort waiting for a word from the king for an invitation to go in?”

**96.** மாறடுபோல் மன்னர் மதிக்குடையுஞ் செங்கோலுங்  
 கூறிடுவாய் நீயோ குளிர்வாடாய் – சோறடுவார்  
 ஆரத்தாற் றீமூட்டு மம்பொதியிற் கோமாற்கென்  
 வாரத்தாற் றோற்றேன் வளை.

*māraṭupōl mannar matikkuṭaiyuñ cenkōluṅ*  
*kūriṭuvāy nīyō kuḷirvāṭāy – cōraṭuvār*  
*ārattār rīmūṭṭu mampotiyiṛ kōmārken*  
*vārattār rōrrēn valai.*

### **96.1 I Lost My Bangles, He Forfeited Them!**

North wind! Go, remind the king,  
 He has an umbrella white as the moon

And a sceptre to rule by; cold wind! Blow  
Southwards to find him in the Potiyam region  
Where food is cooked with sandal faggots;  
Go and tell him that for the love of him  
I lost my bangles: he forfeited them.

## **96.2 Lost Through Love**

Please, will you  
O cold north wind,  
Remind the king  
Who wages deadly wars  
Against his foes,  
Will you please remind him  
Of his royal umbrella  
Which is like a moon,  
And of his upright sceptre too?  
For I have lost my bangles  
Through my love  
For the lord of lovely Pothiyil Hill,  
Where those who cook their food  
Feed the fire  
With twigs of sandal.

**96.3** A high-born lass falls in love with Māraṇ, the emperor of the southerners – the benevolent ruler who has a melting heart of grace. She wants to send a messenger to unfold her love for Māraṇ. It is usually the pigeon a girl chooses to send word of her love through. The parrot is another messenger which can repeat the message several times till the message is understood clearly. But the girl was woken up from bed by the cold northerly wind. She is amazed, “Oh ! It is you! Cold wind!” She welcomes it, though it jabs at her frame. “If you happen to go south to the land of Potikai, meet Māraṇ and tactfully tell him that on account of him, a girl has lost her bangles!”

97. புகுவார்க் கிடங்கொடா போதுவார்க் கொல்கா  
நகுவாரை நாணி மறையா – விசுகரையின்  
ஏமான் பிணைபோல் நின்றதே கூடலார்  
கோமான்பின் சென்றவென் னெஞ்சு.

*pukuvārk kiṭaṅkoṭā pōtuvārk kolkā  
nakuvārai nāṇi maraiyā – vikukaraiyiṅ  
ēmān piṇaipōl ninṛatē kūṭalār  
kōmānpin cenṛaven neṅcu.*

### 97.1 My Mind Stands at the Palace Gate

My mind stands at the palace gate  
Like a wounded doe at a shallow ford.  
When the lord of Madurai drove in state  
My mind followed but at the palace gate  
Stood still, letting the comers enter  
And those leaving, go out of the palace,  
Hiding at times to escape banter;  
Irresolute, it stands at the gate!

### 97.2 Like an Arrow-stricken Doe

Even as a gentle doe  
Standing broken-hearted  
Upon the crumbling ford  
Near a water hole  
Draws back a little  
To let some animals go in  
And shrinks her body  
To let others come out  
And seeks to hide  
From those who scoff at her,  
So too does my smitten heart  
Which has gone after  
The lord of the people of Kūdal,  
Stand, hurt and helpless.

- 97.3 Her heart goes in but she with her body has to remain outside.  
She gives way to them who go in and also wriggles herself out

giving way to them who exit. But she alone is not going inside. She compares her predicament to a doe wounded by the arrow of a hunter, hiding now at one side of the narrow ford. If chance comes the doe will jump over to the safe side. But alas! The ford is narrow. It is standing at the narrow strip connecting the land mass. Already it is crowded. Hence it has to hide from others. It is eagerly waiting for a chance, darting its stealthy looks at the ford for a split second interspace in between the entrants. Likewise, she too peeps into the royal enclave for a lucky sight of the prince who, in all probability, will beckon her to come in.

98. பிணிகிடந் தார்க்குப் பிறந்தநாட் போல  
வணியிழை யஞ்ச வருமால் – மணியானை  
மாறன் வழுதி மணவா மருண்மாலைச்  
சீறியோர் வாடை சினந்து.

*pinikītan tārkkup piṛantanāṭ pōla  
vaṇiyīlai yañca varumāl – maṇiyānai  
māraṇ valuti maṇavā maruṇmālaic  
cīriyōr vāṭai cinantu.*

### 98.1 The Northern Wind, in Anger Blows

For the luckless one that cannot be  
With the Pāndya chief, the lord of the elephant  
Enjoying a bliss-filled evening  
The northern wind, in anger, blows;  
And the girl now learns to fear the wind,  
Even as a person ill for long  
Dreads his birthday; to the lonely girl  
How dreadful blows the northern wind!

### 98.2 The Terror of the North Wind

Just as the approach of the birthday,  
Aggravating the agony,  
Threatens the diseased with death,  
My jewelled friend!

The furious cold wind from the north  
 In the love-tormenting evening,  
 When I am away from Māraṇ valuti  
 Strikes terror in my heart.

**98.3** When she is already in loneliness a gust of northerly cold wind wafts. She is terribly annoyed. The cold wind will be welcome if her lover is at her bedside. Sometimes the cold wind adds pep to the lovers. But when one is alone without the other partner, nothing can be more disturbing than the cold wind.

On birthdays, one is careful, and tries to avoid all hazardous attempts. But the cold wind is considered as one trying to take away the life of the afflicted.

The cold northerly wind by itself is detestable. With it, speed too has combined. Not only that, its killer mood is at its worst – all put together forming a formidable force. The force has chosen her weakest moment, when she is pining in love affliction.

**99.** பேயோ பெருந்தண் பனிவாடாய் பெண்பிறந்தா  
 ரேயோ உனக்கிங் கிறைக்குடிகள் – நீயோ  
 களிபடுமால் யானைக் கடுமான்றேர்க் கிள்ளி  
 அளியிடை அற்றம்பார்ப் பாய்.

*pēyō peruntaṇ panivātāy peṇpirantā*  
*rēyō unakkiṅ kiraikkūṭikaḷ – nīyō*  
*kaḷipaṭumāl yānaik kaṭumānrērk killi*  
*aliyiṭai arṛampārp pāy.*

**99.1 Frosty North Wind! Are You a Ghoul?**

Frosty north wind! Are you a ghoul?  
 Are only the girls your subject people  
 Whom you torment for taxes due?  
 Here am I, despondent, sore  
 At the king's failure to requite my love –  
 At the cruel neglect at the hands of the king  
 The lord of elephants and chariots  
 Pulled by horses of the fleetest feet –

And north wind, you choose this precise moment  
To torment me in lonely anguish?

**99.2 Are You a Vampire?**

O north wind,  
O utterly cold and chill  
North wind!  
Are you a blood-sucking vampire?  
And is it only women born  
Here upon this earth  
Whom you make your vassals,  
To extort from them harsh tribute?  
O You ever lie in wait  
Watching for a chance to hurt,  
And for the slightest rift  
In Killi's abundant love,  
Killi, lord of frenzied elephant hosts  
And of many a battle-car  
Drawn by swiftly coursing steeds.

**99.3** “Oh! Northerly wind! Oh! Oh! Are you a devil? You, the terrible freezing wind! You break open the door and attack me the poor defenceless young girl in loneliness. Do you think that we, the members of the tender sex, are your subjects paying tributes? You have chosen my unguarded moments especially when I don't have my love-partner. You choose to strike me, this poor defenceless girl. Do not think that I have no guard at all. If Killi comes, beware! He has steeds faster than you! His stately tusker is like a hill on the move. You cannot escape unhurt, when you attack me when my companion is at my bedside.” So she broods.

**100.** நாம நெடுவேல் நலங்கிள்ளி சோணாட்டுத்  
தாமரையு நீலமுந் தைவந் - தியாமத்து  
வண்டொன்று வந்தது வாரல் பனிவாடாய்  
பண்டன்று பட்டினங் காப்பு.

*nāma neṭuvēl nalaṅkilli cōṇāttut*  
*tāmaraiyu nīlamun taivan - tiyāmattu*  
*vaṅṭonru vantatu vāral paṇivāṭāy*  
*paṅṭanru paṭṭinaṅ kāppu.*

### 100.1 Frosty North Wind! Do Not Blow!

Frosty north wind! Do not blow!  
A beetle came in the night to me  
From the land of the Chola with the fearsome javelin  
It came in the night, having tarried long  
Over the lotuses and the bluebells there.  
Frosty north wind! Do not ever  
Enter this city as of old!  
It is battlemented with everywhere  
Guards on duty! Do not blow!

### 100.2 The Beetle-Messenger

Of the Cōla Kingdom of Nalaṅkiḷi.  
who wields a long terrifying spear,  
a beetle, at midnight, came to me,  
enjoying on the way lotus and *kuvaḷai*.  
Oh! Cold winter wind!  
Never near this place,  
Which is well-protected  
Unlike in the past.

100.3 “Oh! Freezing cold wind from the north! This city is now guarded with increased alacrity and diligence. Dream not of the olden days when the watch-and-ward soldiers were not so strict and the enforcement not so strong and effective. If you dare come, Nalaṅkiḷi has an awe-striking lance in his hand. Beware! Even at this dead of night, he has sent his messenger of love. Look at that beautiful winged bee. I understood that he has sent the messenger during the day. But the bee, after all, had to satisfy its basic wants and play to its instincts. En route, it hovered over red lotuses and blue lilies. Hence the delay. Indications are that Nalaṅkiḷi will come riding on his horse faster than a gale. Before he arrives, you can escape by taking to your heels!”

101. மாணார்க் கடந்த மறவெம்போர் மாறனைக்  
காணாக்கா லாயிரமுஞ் சொல்லுவேன் - கண்டக்காற்  
பூணாகந் தாவென்று புல்லப் பெறுவேனோ  
நானோ டுடன்பிறந்த நான்.

*mānārk katanta maravempōr māraṇaik  
kāṇākkā lāyiramuñ colluvēṇ – kaṇṭakkār  
pūṇākan tāvenru pullap peruvēṇō  
nāṇō tuṭanpiranta nāṇ.*

### 101.1 When He Comes, I Stand Tongue-tied!

When he was away to fight his foes  
Executing feats of valour  
How I longed to ask of him  
All the favours I dreamt about!  
But when he's back, do I demand  
(As one of the favours love expects)  
A tight embrace with his jewelled chest?  
No, I find now I cannot utter,  
This bashfulness, twin-born with me  
So tangles up my eager tongue!

### 101.2 The Impeding Modesty

When he, Māraṇ  
The conqueror of foes  
In open battles murderously waged,  
Is not by my side,  
I intend to say to him  
A thousand, thousand loving things;  
But when I meet him face to face,  
I wonder,  
If I shall ever be able to say  
'O Give me, pray,  
Your jewelled chest;'  
And if I shall  
Realise the delight  
Of his close embrace.  
Alas! Why was I born  
With modesty as my twin?

**101.3** She loves Māraṇ, the great warrior who is capable of winning battles. Māraṇ's valour attracted her. His manliness and sinewy form left an indelible impression in her heart. She used to tell herself "I shall have a thousand love-making to him when I am close to him."



She goes on talking to herself this way. Luckily Māraṇ came to her and stood before her eyes just in front of her. She was dumbfounded. Bashfulness overtook her. She wanted to ask for the prince's lace, so that it could always touch her breast when she wore it. But she could not open her mouth because of exceeding shyness.

102. வருக குடநாடன் வஞ்சிக்கோ மாணென்  
றருகல ரெல்லா மறிய – வொருகலாம்  
உண்டா யிருக்கவவ் வொண்டொடியாள் மற்றவனைக்  
கண்டா ளொழிந்தாள் கலாம்.

*varuka kuṭanāṭaṇ vañcikkō māṇeṇ  
rarukala rellā maṛiya – vorukalām  
uṇṭā yirukkavav voṇṭoṭiyāḷ marravaṇaik  
kaṇṭā ḷoḷintāḷ kalām.*

### 102.1 Just Let Him Come, the King of Vanchi!

“Let him approach, the lord of the west  
Just let him come, the king of Vanchi!”  
Thus was she raging, noisy, vengeful,  
Full of wrath before all her friends.  
The king then happened to pass that way,  
And presto! Her anger, her nameless threats  
Of moments ago had all been stilled  
And silence reigned!

### 102.2 The Vanished Resentment

‘Let him come here if he dare,  
The king of the western country,  
Lord of Vanchi City!’  
So cried she,  
The bright-bangled maiden,  
And she let all who were near her  
Know of her anger,  
But, when he came  
And she saw him,  
At that instant,

All her resentment fled.

**102.3** The lady was bragging aloud: “Let the king of the western land, the lord of Vañci come. I will accost him.” She cried as though she was going to wreak vengeance on him for her prolonged wait. All her neighbours had come to know that she was madly in love with the prince and that she might even shout aloud when she would meet him and create a flutter among the royal personages of high dignity and decorum. The prince’s arrival was heralded. Everyone was expecting some unbecoming scene that the girl might create. The royal chariot arrived. The prince was seated in all his glory. All ornaments of gold and diamond got their worth because they were worn by the prince. The girl saw the prince. The next minute she was dumbfounded. No resentment of any sort was there.

**103.** புல்லாதார் வல்லே புலர்கென்பர் புல்லினார்  
நில்லா யிரவே நெடிதென்பர் – நல்ல  
விராஅமலர்த் தார்மாறன் வெண்சாந் தகல  
மிராவளிப் பட்ட திது.

*pullātār vallē pularkenpar pulliṇār  
nillā yiravē neṭitenpar – nalla  
virāamalart tārmāraṇ veṇcān takala  
mirāvaḷip paṭṭa titu.*

### **103.1 The Night Indeed Deserves Our Pity!**

The night indeed deserves our pity!  
For the girls who cannot embrace the king’s  
Handsome chest all painted over  
With sandal paste and decked with garlands  
Wish for the dawn which ends the night,  
While those that are locked in tight embrace  
Long for the night to stay on for ever!  
The night indeed deserves our pity!

### **103.2 The Night’s Dilemma**

Those who do not hold him  
In close embrace

Cry, 'Come quick, O Dawn!  
 But those who fondly clasp him in Love's embrace,  
 Cry, 'Stay, O Night! And linger long!  
 How handsome is the chest,  
 White with sandal-paste,  
 Of Māraṇ, who wears garlands  
 Woven of a medley of flowers!  
 So the night  
 Is both cursed and blessed too.

**103.3** They who had a chance for a tryst with Pāṇṭiyaṇ had such a goodly embrace of his chest that not even wind could pass through. The girl who desires to enjoy Pāṇṭiyaṇ's company as long as possible does not want to relax her hold over Pāṇṭiyaṇ's chest; she asks the night to go slowly and never to dawn. She has already got the assent of Pāṇṭiyaṇ to spend the night with her.

The girl who has not yet enjoyed Māraṇ's company wants to drive away the present night as fast as it can. Hence she requests the night, 'Please go fast now and come earlier tomorrow.'

This is how the night fared!

**104.** இப்பியீன் றிட்ட வெறிகதிர் நித்திலங்  
 கொற்கையே யல்ல படுவது – கொற்கைக்  
 குருதிவேன் மாறன் குளிர்சாந் தகலங்  
 கருதியார் கண்ணும் படும்.

*ippiyīṇ riṭṭa verikatir nittilan*  
*korkaiyē yalla paṭuvatu – korkaik*  
*kurutivēṇ māraṇ kulircān takalan*  
*karutiyār kaṇṇum paṭum.*

#### **104.1 Tear-drop Pearls in the Eyes of Girls**

Pearls which throw off beams of lustre  
 Are not produced by oysters only,  
 Are not confined to Korkai city.  
 They can be seen in the eyes of those  
 Who long for an embrace with the Pāndya's chest  
 Painted over with sandal paste –

The chest of the Pāndya, lord of Kor̥kai  
Whose javelin is blood-encrusted.

### 104.2 Pearls and Tears

Kor̥kai is not the only place  
For bright pearls born of oyster.  
They may also be seen  
In the eyes of ladies  
Who have contemplated  
The broad, sandal-paste-smeared chest  
Of the blood-stained-spear-wielding  
Māraṇ of Kor̥kai.

**104.3** He is a virtuous ruler who does not even dream of other women. Hence woe unto them who dream of playing upon his shoulders. The girls who loved him and desired his shoulders and chest have to shed tears, pining in love affliction. The tear drops are crystal clear like pearls. The poet now describes the tears of the girls. They look like gleaming pearls. He says not only in Kor̥kai does pearl-fishing take place, but also at the fair eyes of buxom girls who fall in love with Pāṇṭiyaṇ.

**105.** இவனென் னலங்கவர்ந்த கள்வ னிவனெனது  
நெஞ்சம் நிறையழித்த கள்வனென் – றஞ்சொலாய்  
செல்லு நெறியெலாஞ் சேரலர்கோக் கோதைக்குச்  
சொல்லும் பழியோ பெரிது.

*ivanen nalaṅkavarnta kaḷva nivanenatu  
neṅcam niraiyalitta kaḷvanen – raṅcolāy  
cellu neriyelāṅ cēralarkōk kōtaikkuc  
collum paḷiyō peritu.*

### 105.1 Grievous is the Charge, Great is the Clamour

Friend with the honeyed word! I find  
Everywhere in all the streets  
Unfriendly things being said of him,

Of Kothai the king of the Chera people.  
 They say, ‘He is the thief that stole  
 My feminine graces, the cunning felon  
 That led my mind to rack and ruin!’  
 Grievous is the charge, great the clamour  
 And many are those that denounce the king!

### 105.2 Very Grave Charges

‘He is the thief  
 Who stole my comeliness!’  
 ‘He is the robber  
 Who broke down  
 The ramparts of my modesty!’  
 Thus the maidens cry,  
 My friend, whose speech  
 Is so delightfully sweet!  
 Wherever he goes  
 He, Kothai,  
 King of the Chera folk.  
 Grave, very grave  
 Are the charges  
 Made against him.

**105.3** She to her friend: ‘‘Oh lispng-tongued! Your speech is a delight to the ears. I have seen something unique. Wherever I go, young and beautiful girls complain about Cēraṅ. One girl’s outburst was, ‘He is the robber. He plundered my fairness.’ Another girl said, ‘I was very firm in my modesty. My modesty was rock-firm. But Kōtai broke it to smithereens with his single glance at me.’ A third girl opined, ‘My feminine quality was guarded by my firm mind and virtues serving as bulwark. King Kōtai stormed into my fortress and captured my heart! What shall I do?’ Everywhere I go, I hear similar complaints against Kōtai. These grave charges against the emperor fill the air in our city.’’

**106.** காராட் டுதிரந்தூஉ யன்னை களனிழைத்து  
 நீராட்டி நீங்கென்றால் நீங்குமோ -- போராட்டு  
 வென்று களங்கொண்ட வெஞ்சினவேற் கோதைக்கென்  
 னெஞ்சங் களங்கொண்ட நோய்.

*kārāṭ ṭutirantūu yaṅṅai kaḷaṅilaittu  
nīrāṭṭi nīnkenṛāl nīnkumō – pōrāṭṭu  
venṛu kaḷaṅkoṅṭa veṅciṅavēṛ kōṭaikken  
neṅcaṅ kaḷaṅkoṅṭa nōy.*

### **106.1 Can She Bathe Away My Love Sickness?**

In a spot made fit for a ritual bath  
She sprinkles drops of goat's blood round  
And taking the water that's consecrated  
She hopes to bathe my illness away!  
It's no use; can all these rites  
Wash away my love disease?  
My love disease that has found asylum  
In the core of the heart for the Chera king  
Who has won the field against all his foemen?  
With ritual water can she bathe away  
The love disease I nurse in my heart?

### **106.2 Can She Cure the Disease of Love?**

Sprinkling the blood of a black goat  
At a chosen spot,  
And giving me a bath,  
My mother bade my madness depart.  
But, when it is love for Kōtai,  
Who with his vengeful spear,  
Has won many a battle,  
Will my deep-rooted disease disappear?

**106.3** The lady-love to her confidante: “My mother's attempt to appease the evil spirit is laughable! Hey, my friend! You know the deep love I have for Kōtai. The frenzy of my love which is misconstrued as an evil spirit will leave only if Kōtai requites my love and embraces me. Other than that, all other attempts are futile. Look at what our mother does. She sanctified a spot. She sprinkled a few drops of the blood of a black goat and then she bathed me in cold water. Then she shouted, ‘Go away! Leave this young lass!’ Will the spirit of my love for Kōtai leave?”

107. யானூடத் தானுணர்த்த யானுணரா விட்டதற்பின்  
றானூட யானுணர்த்தத் தானுணரான் – தேனூறு  
கொய்தார் வழி குளிர்சாந் தணியகல  
மெய்தா திராக்கழிந்த வாறு.

*yānūtat tānuṇartta yānuṇarā viṭṭatarpin  
rānūta yānuṇarttat tānuṇarān – tēnūru  
koytār valuti kulircān taṇiyakala  
meytā tirākkalinta vāru.*

### 107.1 I Was Angry, I Would not Listen

I was angry, I would not listen  
To his explanations long protracted.  
Then he got angry and I in turn  
Began to appease him, but to no avail,  
For he continued to harbour dudgeon;  
Thus was the long night dissipated  
Without requital – I could not get  
The Pāndya's chest, painted, jewelled  
With a wreath of flowers oozing with honey,  
I could not embrace his hero's chest  
And the joyless night thus wore away.

### 107.2 The Loss of the Night

I sulked; he solicited;  
I did not yield,  
He sulked; I solicited;  
He did not yield.  
This is how,  
Without my reaching Valuti's chest,  
Broad, garlanded, sandal-paste-smearred,  
The whole night passed.

107.3 She and her lover are in the bed chamber. With a purpose of pepping up their love, the girl sulked petulantly. The lover cringed before his love and began to dote. But she again sulked. He was peeved. He sat silently with no love overtures. Then she got the mood for love and made some moves to invite love-acts. Thus the

whole night was wasted in sulking by her and him alternatively. Alas! The night opportune was wasted away like this. Thus there was no chance for embracing the fair chest of Valuti, wearing choice spring flowers. “Alas! What shall I do for this?” So broods the girl who lost the chance.

**108.** மல்லனீர் மாந்தையார் மாக்கடுங்கோக் காயினுஞ்  
சொல்லவே வேண்டும் நமகுறை – நல்ல  
திலகங் கிடந்த திருநுதலா யஃதால்  
உலகங் கிடந்த இயல்பு.

*mallaṅṅīr māntaiyār mākkāṭuṅkōk kāyiṅṅuṅṅ  
collavē vēṅṅṅum namakurai – nalla  
tilakaṅ kiṅṅanta tirunutalā yaṅṅtāl  
ulakaṅ kiṅṅanta iyalpu.*

### 108.1 We have to Utter, to Speak out our Mind!

Dear friend, with the handsome mark  
On your comely forehead! It's the way of the world  
That even in the case of the Chera king,  
The Lord of Māndai, fertile green  
We have to spell out in the clearest terms  
What bothers us, what we need from him;  
We have to utter, to speak out our mind.  
Even in the case of the king of the realm,  
To fulfil ourselves, – it's the way of the world!

### 108.2 The Way of the World

To that great  
And fierce king  
Of the land of Mānthai folk  
Rich with waters' abundance:  
O Friend,  
How lovely is the *tilak*  
Upon your brow.  
To him in person



We must needs complain  
Our woe.  
Since that seems to be  
The way of the world today.

**108.3** The girl who fell in love with *Kuṭṭuvan Kōtai* bemoans her lot to her confidante. “Oh, My bosom friend! How fitting is the round caste mark on your bright brow! I have come to know the way of the world. Justice does not seem to take its own regular course for delivery. It has to be goaded now and then, so it seems. The wonder among the wonders is that it is the case even with *Mākkaṭuṅkō*, our emperor, the dispenser of justice. Here is the case where the dispenser of justice himself seems to be in the dock. He is the accused in our case. We have to petition to him to redress our grievances.”

## Glossary of Culture-Specific Terms in *Muttollāyiram*

- Ardra* : The 6<sup>th</sup> lunar asperism.
- A Rudra* : “A” represents the ever expanding vowel, which again denotes the primordial sound (Aum) the first syllable. “A” connotes the endless cosmic body of ebullious ether. The wise are still at a loss to find a name. hence they are amazingly and awefully baffled. Also A (short) – Static energy A (long) – Kinetic energy.
- Betelgeux-in-orion* : Constellation 25 million times bigger than the sun. It is but proper that the biggest star with the greatest power is named after lord Civā. Lord Civā here is only identified with the star. He is not born of a womb, neither does he die.
- Koṛkai* : A pearl fishing harbour at the mouth of Tamaraparani. It now lies 3 kms. inside the sea submerged. The port was mentioned by Periplus and Ptolomy. A flourishing trade existed between Rome and Tamilnadu long before Christ.
- Kūtapperal* : This refers to the game of divining one’s luck. The girl draws circles on the sand with her forefinger. If the number is odd. It is sign of failure, but if even then success.
- Nālōtai* : On the paddy thrashing floor, ricks are heaped like a hill. At dawn ploughman stands on top of it and calls his men for the day’s work. He uses his palms as a megaphone close to his mouth and calls out ‘Nāvalō’ .
- Ōtam* : Moisture, stands here for high waves.
- Piṛantanāl* : Any reflection on one’s birthday or star it is believed to aggravate one’s health condition. Hence risk is not undertaken on such days.
- Poṅku* : boisterous.

- Pū* : Flower stands here for wreath worn as crown; an insignia of the royal dynasty.
- Uttirāṭa* : Psi Sagittarii. Its sign is 8, symbol, translation, archer, Unicode display Unicode 9808.
- Venkuṭai* : White-domed parasol represents just and fair rule and protection for the virtuous.
- Viṭumārram* : It explains the behaviour of the messenger carrying the message to another king. The genius of the envoy lies in his pleasant manner of delivery of the message of far-reaching consequences, without wounding the honour of the recipient king.

**முத்தொள்ளாயிரம்**  
**செய்யுள் முதற்குறிப்பகராதி**  
(எண்: செய்யுள் வரிசை எண்)

*Mutaṅkurippakarāti*

அடுமதில் பாய	27	<i>aṭumatil pāya</i>
அந்தண ராவொடு	43	<i>antaṅa rāvoṭu</i>
அயிற்கதவம் பாய்ந்துழக்கி	20	<i>ayirkatavam pāyntuḷakki</i>
அரும்பவிழ்தார்க் கோதை	41	<i>arumpaviḷtārk kōtai</i>
அருமணி யைந்தலை	40	<i>arumaṇiyaintalai</i>
அலங்குதாரச் செம்பிய	83	<i>alaṅkutārc cempiya</i>
அள்ளற் பழனத்த	2	<i>aḷḷar paḷanatt</i>
அறிவாரார் யாமொருநாட்	68	<i>aṟivārār yāmorunāṭ</i>
அறைபறை யானை	65	<i>aṟaiparai yānai</i>
அன்னையுங் கோல்கொண்	69	<i>annaṇiyuṅ kōlkoṅ</i>
ஆடுகோ குடுகோ	53	<i>āṭukō kūṭukō</i>
ஆய்மணிப் பைம்பூ	91	<i>āyamaṇip paimpū</i>
இப்பியின் றிட்ட வெறிகதிர்	104	<i>ippiyīṅ riṭṭa verikatir</i>
இரியல் மகளி	10	<i>iriyal makaḷi</i>
இவனென் னலங்கவர்ந்த	105	<i>ivanēṅ ṅalaṅkavarnta</i>
உகுவாய் நிலத்த	94	<i>ukuvāy nilatta</i>
உருவத்தார்த் தென்னவ	22	<i>uruvattārt teṅṅava</i>
ஊட லெனவொன்று தோன்றி	90	<i>ūṭa leṅavoruṅ tōṅṅri</i>
எலாஅ மடப்படியே	49	<i>elāa maṭappaṭiyē</i>
என்னெஞ்சு நானு	60	<i>eṅṅeṅcu nāṅu</i>
என்னை உரையலென்	78	<i>eṅṅai uraiyalēṅ</i>
ஏற்பக் குடைந்தாடி	75	<i>ēṟpak kuṭaintāḷi</i>
ஏனைய பெண்டி	31	<i>ēṅaiya peṅṅi</i>
ஓராற்றா னென்க	89	<i>ōṟāṟṟā ṅeṅka</i>
கச்சி யொருகான்	24	<i>kacci yoruṅkāṅ</i>
கடற்றானைக் கோதையைக்	79	<i>kaṭaṟṟāṅaik kōtaiyaik</i>
கடும்பனித் திங்கட்டன்	95	<i>kaṭumpaṅit tiṅkaṭṭaṅ</i>

கண்டன வுண்கண்	58	<i>kaṇṭana vunṅaṇ</i>
கண்ணார் கதவந்	42	<i>kaṇṇār katavan</i>
கரிபரந் தெங்குங்	8	<i>Kariparan teṅkuṅ</i>
களிகள் களிகட்கு	5	<i>kaḷikaḷ kaḷikaṭku</i>
களியானைத் தென்னன்	66	<i>kaḷiyānait teṅṅaṇ</i>
களியானைத் தென்ன		<i>kaḷiyānait teṅṅa</i>
னிளங்கோவென்	86	<i>niḷaṅkōveṅ</i>
கனவினுட் காண்கொடா	62	<i>kaṇavinuṭ kaṅkoṭā</i>
கனவை நனவென்	87	<i>kaṇavai naṇaveṅ</i>
காப்படங்கென் றன்னை	47	<i>kāppaṭaṅkeṅ raṅṅai</i>
கார்நறு நீலங்	67	<i>kārṅaru nīlaṅ</i>
காராட் ஓதிரந்தூஉ யன்னை	106	<i>kārāṭ ṭutirantūu yaṅṅai</i>
காவ லுழவர் களத்தகத்துப்	4	<i>kāva luḷavar kaḷattakattup</i>
குடத்து விளக்கேபோற்	54	<i>kuṭattu viḷakkēpōṛ</i>
குதலைப் பருவத்தே	82	<i>kuṭalaip paruvattē</i>
கூடற் பெருமானைக்	76	<i>kūṭar perumāṅaik</i>
கூந்தன்மா கொன்று	36	<i>kūntaṅmā koṅṅru</i>
கொடித்தலைத்தார்த்	32	<i>koṭittalaittārt</i>
கொடிபாடித் தேர்பாடிக்	81	<i>koṭipāṭit tērpāṭik</i>
கொடிமதில் பாய்ந்திற்ற	23	<i>koṭimatil pāyṅṅtirra</i>
கோட்டெங்கு சூழ்கூடற்	84	<i>kōṭṭeṅku cūḷkūṭar</i>
கைய தவன்கடலுட்	72	<i>Kaiya tavaṅkaṭaluṭ</i>
கூடரிலைவேற் சோழன்றன்	51	<i>cuṭarilaivēṛ cōḷaṅraṅ</i>
செங்க ணெடியான்மேற்	35	<i>ceṅka ṅeṭiyāṅmēṛ</i>
செங்கான் மடநாராய்	77	<i>ceṅkāṅ maṭaṅārāy</i>
செய்யா ரெனினுந்	44	<i>ceyyā reṅiṅuṅ</i>
செருவெங் கதிர்வேற்	17	<i>ceruveṅ katirvēṛ</i>
தளையவிழும் பூங்கோதைத்	88	<i>taḷaiyaviḷum pūṅkōṭait</i>
தாய ரடைப்ப மகளி	46	<i>tāya raṭaippa maḷaḷi</i>
தானேற் றனிக்குடைக்	61	<i>tāṅēṛ raṅikkūṭaik</i>
தானைகொண் டோடுவ	63	<i>tāṅaikōṅ ṭōṭuva</i>
திறந்திடுமின் நீயவை	45	<i>tiraṅṅṭiṭumiṅ riṅyavai</i>
துடியடித் தோற்செவித்	48	<i>tuṭiyaṭit tōṛcevit</i>
தெண்ணீர் நறுமலர்த்தார்ச்	64	<i>teṅṅṅīṛ naṅumalarttārc</i>
தொழில்தேற்றாப் பாலகனை	33	<i>toḷiltēṛrāp pāḷakaṅai</i>
தோற்ற மலைகட லோசை	26	<i>tōṛra malaikaṭa lōcai</i>

நந்தி விளஞ்சினையும்	3	<i>nanti niḷaṅcinaiyum</i>
நாணாக்காற் பெண்மை	73	<i>nāṅākkār peṇmai</i>
நாணொருபால் வாங்க	92	<i>nāṅorupāl vāṅka</i>
நாம நெடுவேல் நலங்கிள்ளி	100	<i>nāma neṭuvēl nalankiḷli</i>
நிரைகதிர்வேல் மாறனை	18	<i>niraiakatirvēl māraṇai</i>
நிறைமதிபோல் யானை	15	<i>niraimatipōl yānai</i>
நின்றீமின் மன்னீர்	16	<i>ninrīmiṅ manṇīr</i>
நீணீலத் தார்வளவ	50	<i>nīṇīlat tārvaḷava</i>
நீரு நிழலும்போ வீண்ட	70	<i>nīru niḷalumpō nīṇṭa</i>
நேமி நிமிர்தோ	14	<i>nēmi nimirtō</i>
பல்யானை மன்னர்	13	<i>palyānai maṇṇar</i>
பறைநிறை கொல்யானைப்	12	<i>parainirai kolyāṇaip</i>
பார்படுப செம்பொன்	39	<i>pārpaṭupa cempon</i>
பாற்றின மார்ப்பப்	25	<i>pārrina mārpap</i>
பிணிகிடந் தார்க்குப் பிறந்தநாட்	98	<i>piṅikiṭan tārkkup piraṅtanāṭ</i>
புகுவார்க் கிடங்கொடா	97	<i>pukuvārak kiṭaṅkoṭā</i>
புல்லாதார் வல்லே	103	<i>pullātār vallē</i>
புலவி புறங்கொடுப்பன்	71	<i>Pulavi puṅaṅkoṭuppan</i>
புன்னாகச் சோலை	85	<i>punnākac cōlai</i>
பேயோ பெருந்தண்	99	<i>pēyō peruntaṅ</i>
போரகத்துப் பாயுமா	52	<i>pōrakattup pāyumā</i>
மடங்கா மயிலூர்தி	34	<i>maṭaṅkā mayilūrti</i>
மந்தரங் காம்பா	38	<i>mantaraṅ kāmpā</i>
மரகதப்பூண் மன்னவர்	29	<i>marakatappūṅ maṇṇavar</i>
மருப்பூசி யாக	21	<i>maruppūci yāka</i>
மல்லனீர் மாந்தையார்	108	<i>mallanīr māntaiyār</i>
மன்னிய நாண்மீன்	1	<i>maṇṇiya nāṅmīṅ</i>
மன்னுயிர் காவல்	59	<i>maṇṇuyir kāval</i>
மாணார்க் கடந்த மறவெம்போர்	101	<i>māṅārk kaṭanta maravempōr</i>
மாலை விலைபகர்வார்	6	<i>mālai vilaiyakarvār</i>
மாறடுபோல் மன்னர்	96	<i>māraṭupōl maṇṇar</i>
முடித்தலை வெள்ளோட்டு	30	<i>muṭittalai vellōṭṭu</i>
மைந்தரோ டீடிமகளிர்	7	<i>maintarōṭṭīṭimakaḷir</i>
யானூடத் தானுணர்த்த	107	<i>yānūṭat tāṅuṅartta</i>
வரக்கண்டு நாணாதே	93	<i>varakkaṅṭu nāṅātē</i>
வருக குடநாடன்	102	<i>Varuka kuṭanāṭaṅ</i>

வரைபொரு நீண்மார்பின்	55	<i>Varaiporu nīṇmārpīṇ</i>
வழுவினெலம் விதியுண்	57	<i>vaḷuvilem vītiyuṇ</i>
வளையவாய் நீண்டதோள்	80	<i>vaḷaiyavāy nīṇṭatōl</i>
வாகை வனமாலை	11	<i>vākai vaṇamālai</i>
வாமான்றேர்க் கோதையை	56	<i>vāmāṇṇērk kōtaiyai</i>
வாருயர் பெண்ணை	74	<i>vāruyar peṇṇai</i>
வானிற்கு வையகம்	37	<i>vāṇirku vaiyakam</i>
வீறுசான் மன்னர்	19	<i>vīrucāṇ maṇṇar</i>
வெருவரு வெஞ்சமத்து	28	<i>veruvaru veñcamattu</i>
வேறுகை பம்பிச்	9	<i>vēraṇukai pampic</i>

