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ON A 1968 INCARNATION OF THE *PIŊKALAM*, A TRADITIONAL TAMIL THESAURUS

This article is an attempt at presenting in a not very technical manner some of the challenges which I have faced, during the past six months, while trying to create on the basis of existing books a technical object, namely an XML file¹ which should ideally be a representation of the content of the *Piŋkalam* (see section 1). Those challenges consist mostly in transforming into machine-readable statements the presuppositions of a human reader, who is the consumer/user (and also the re-creator, inside his mind) of a complex text transmitted by “tradition”, or, more precisely, by successive generations of scholars, a majority of them being anonymous. Those anonymous scholars are, to some extent, represented for us by the few whose names we know, and some of them are named in the bibliography. And because it has happened on several occasions that my colleague and friend Alexander Dubyanskiy has helped me discover some facets of the collective Human Face of Tamil Studies², I dedicate to him this “modeste récit de voyage autour du vocabulaire tamoul poétique” or, alternately, this “preliminary report on a journey into the realm of instruments for language knowledge”, with the strong hope of receiving from him sound advice concerning the continuation of what is very much a “work in progress”.

I. A BIRD’S EYE-VIEW OF THE *PIŊKALAM*

In 2005, I received as a gift a fascinating small blue volume in Tamil, which was one in a set of books pertaining to India, given to me by my colleague Marie-Louise Reiniche [1934–2008],³ who was in the process of distributing the library which she had accumulated during her academic career. That small blue book

1 At the time of my writing, that XML document, which is in practice divided in several files, contains a total of 154 979 tags, falling under 32 distinct (ELEMENT) types, enumerated in a DTD (i.e. “document type definition”), against which the XML document has been validated, making use of a XML-editor called “Oxygen”. The preliminary text was entered by Mrs TV. Kamalambal, on the basis of the 1968 (*Kaḷakam*) edition of the *Piŋkalam*, within the framework of an ERC grant called NETamil. I express here my thanks to Eva Wilden, Suganya Anandakichenin, Dominic Goodall, Victor D’Avella and Professor G. Vijayavenugopal for reading a preliminary version of this article and for making insightful suggestions. All errors are of course mine.

2 It is thanks to him that I was introduced to the works of Yuriy Yakovlevitch Glazov (1929–2000), of Alexander Moiseevitch Piatigorskij (1929–2009), and of Semion Germanovitch Rudin (1929–1973).

3 I am grateful to Shanti Manet and to Lyne Bansat-Boudon for providing me with the two dates: “3 Septembre 2008” and “2 Avril 1934”. See also: “http://data.bnf.fr/11921438/marie-louise_reiniche/”.

has a size appropriate for being easily carried in a small bag or in a large pocket and this fact has often allowed me to take it with me when travelling, with the (still unaccomplished) hope of mastering it completely some day. It is the 1968 edition⁴ of the *Piṅkalam*, the second oldest traditional Tamil thesaurus (or *nikaṇṭu*, or *kōśa*). It contains 4121 (versified) *sūtra*-s, totalling 6822 metrical lines (having, most of the time, four metrical feet each), and therefore one can estimate that it would require almost nine hours for a full recitation.⁵ That thesaurus, which should give those who study it a broad coverage of the Tamil vocabulary necessary for studying Tamil literature⁶, is divided into ten chapters, or main “divisions” (*vakai*), whose semantic organizational types can be said to fall roughly under three categories: A, B and C (see Chart 1, column 2).

Chart 1: Organisation of topics in the ten chapters of the *Piṅkalam*

1.	A	<i>vāṇ vakai</i>	“sky” (natural elements)	92 <i>sūtra</i> -s / 188 lines
2.	A	<i>vāṇavar vakai</i>	“celestials” (gods)	220 s. / 602 l.
3.	C	<i>aiyar vakai</i>	“rishis” (FIXED-SIZE COLLECTIONS ⁷)	135 s. / 357 l.
4.	A	<i>avaṇi vakai</i>	“earth” (places)	278 s. / 479 l.
5.	A	<i>āṭavar vakai</i>	“men” (humans)	376 s. / 659 l.
6.	A	<i>anupōka vakai</i> (20 sub-sections)	“enjoyment” (things, etc.)	657 s. / 1084 l.
7.	A	<i>paṇṇirceyalin pakuti vakai</i> (12 sub-sections)	“part on qualities and actions” (qualities & actions)	552 s. / 942 l.

4 See bibliographical item: *Piṅkalantai eṇṇum Piṅkala Nikaṇṭu*.

5 That estimation postulates a style of recitation/chanting (*ōtutal*) of the same type as the one used in the five CDs of the *Tolkāppiyam Muṟṟōtal* mentioned in the bibliography.

6 The popular notion that a thesaurus (or *nikaṇṭu*) should cover the whole range of the Tamil vocabulary is of course, from my point of view, only a working hypothesis, to be verified in the course of the research program for which this presentation is a preliminary report. Alternately, it can be estimated that the discovery of important gaps in the postulated universal coverage would also itself be a useful result.

7 I have briefly discussed this category in Chevillard (2014b: 158). To this could be added the observation that there is a special linguistic treatment for those fixed-size collections, which can be easily evoked for a Tamil grammarian by mentioning the technical expression *muṟṟummai*, which is explained in *sūtra* TC33c (*iṇaitteṇavarāinta ciṇaimutar kiḷavikku // viṇaippaṭu tokutiṇi ḡummai vēṇṭum*), which is the 33th *sūtra* inside of *Tolkāppiyam*, Collatikāram, as per the numbering of Cēṇāvaraiyar.

8 A remarkable feature of that collection is the fact that the 1077 head-words which it contains appear in alphabetical order. Whether this was originally the case is not known.

9 Fourteen headwords require two *sūtra*-s each in order for all their meanings to be enumerated.

8.	A	<i>māppeyar vakai</i> (4 sub-sections)	“animal names” (animals)	339 s. / 447 l.
9.	A	<i>marappeyar vakai</i>	“plant names” (plants)	381 s. / 455 l.
10.	B	<i>orucor palporuḷ vakai</i> (10 varga-s [varukkam]) ⁸	“one-word-several-values” (POLYSEMY)	1091 s. / 1569 l. (1077 headwords) ⁹

Stated in a preliminary manner, category A is illustrated by eight topic-based chapters (see column 4, chart 1), which contain *sūtras* enumerating quasi-synonyms. In contradistinction to this, category B, for which the main concern (or the “master word”) is POLYSEMY,¹⁰ is represented by chapter 10, inside which 1091 *sūtra*-s enumerate the meanings of 1077 headwords, the total number of meanings adding up to 3733,¹¹ and the highest variety being reached for *ari*, with 41 distinct meanings¹² enumerated in the *Piṅkalam sūtra* Pi_3085. Finally, category C, is illustrated by chapter 3 of the *Piṅkalam*, in which most of the *sūtra*-s¹³ enumerate the members of some traditional (fixed-size) “collections” (or *tokai*-s), grouped together by ascending numbers of elements. In another *kōśa*, the *Tivākaram*, which is considered to be older and contains 2518 *sūtra*-s grouped together in 12 chapters, the same three categories also occur, albeit in a different order.¹⁴

2. PARSING THE TEXT OF THE *PIṆKALAM* AND FINDING HEADWORDS

After this very general presentation, I shall now examine some of the concrete interpretation problems encountered while trying to parse, using XML tags, the content of the *Piṅkalam*, as it is made available to us by the editors of the 1968 “small blue book”, who try to make explicit for their audience the type of information which they think it contains. The preliminary counts for that content, tentatively tagged using the A, B and C labels, are given in chart 2.

10 I have discussed in a recent article the treatment (and use) of **polysemy** in ancient Tamil poetry (taking as an example a poem of the *yamaka* type found in the *Tēvāram*) and the role played by traditional thesauri. See « <https://halshs.archives-ouvertes.fr/halshs-00933495> » (original English version) and see Chevillard [2014a] (published French translation).

11 These figures entail that the average number of meanings for a polysemic headword oscillates mostly between three and four.

12 The four *ex-aequo* nearest followers have 15 meanings each. They are : *īrai* (Pi_3183), *urai* (Pi_3214), *kaṭi* (Pi_3270) and *mā* (Pi_3949).

13 The exceptional *sūtra*-s are the first ten *sūtras* (from Pi_313 to Pi_322, although it could be argued that inside that small group Pi_314 falls under category C, being an enumeration of THE seven rishis (ēḷirutiṭai)).

14 Category A, B and C concern, respectively, chapters 1 to 10, chapter 11 and chapter 12. See Chevillard [2010a] for more details.

Chart 2: Preliminary partitioning of the *Piṅkalam*

A-label candidates ¹⁵ (2904 items)	quasi-synonymy	<i>sūtras</i> 1–312, <i>sūtras</i> 313 & <i>sūtras</i> 315–322 <i>sūtras</i> 448–3030	Chapters 1 & 2 Chapter 3 Chapters 4 to 9
B-label candidates (1091 items)	polysemy	<i>sūtras</i> 3031–4121	Chapter 10
C-label candidates (126 items)	collections	<i>sūtra</i> 314 (“Seven rishis”) <i>sūtras</i> 323–447	Chapter 3

When examining a *sūtra* from the **first group** (i.e. with **A-label**), which will be our **main focus** in this article, the first task which we face consists in identifying, if possible, a head-word, and in determining which are the items stated by the *sūtra* to be the quasi-synonyms for that head-word. That task is in fact extremely complex, but it has already been accomplished for us by the editors of the 1968 book, and our primary task consists, rather:

- 1. in recording their opinion
- 2. in explicitly noting down our possible disagreements with them
- 3. in deciding on a policy for **non-atomic**¹⁶ elements

I shall first illustrate this with an example for which no ambiguity seems possible, namely the *sūtra* 1249 of *Piṅkalam*, which consists of the following two metrical lines:

(1a) *karakamuṇ kōramum vaḷḷamuṇ cakaṭamuṇ // cikaramuṇ cākaiyum vaṭṭir
peyarē* (Pi_1249)

Undoing the sandhi, and making the coordinative clitic particle *–um* more visible, it is rather clear that the head-word is here *vaṭṭil*, and that the *sūtra* states

¹⁵ My use of the word “candidate” implies that not every item in this set will ultimately be labeled as A. For lack of space (and time), I shall not discuss here the many items (found in the chapters 1, 2 and 4 to 9) which should be called “C-label candidates”, because they contain enumerations. I have so far tagged as “ENUMERATION” 109 such *sūtra*-s (inside the XML document). See for instance the “ELEVEN dances” enumerated in Pi_1448, the “SEVEN seas” mentioned in Pi_585, the “SIX seasons” enumerated in Pi_303, the FIVE arrows of Kāmaṇ enumerated in Pi_148, etc. This is more than the count of 101 *sūtra*-s tagged as *TOKAI* (“fixed-size collection”) inside Chapter 3. The question which must of course be ultimately answered (but not here) is whether the tag *ENUMERATION* must be merged with the tag *TOKAI*.

¹⁶ My frequent use of the words “atomic” and “non-atomic” in this article is not meant to evoke Nuclear physics in the mind of my readers. It is inspired by the terminology of a programming language called LISP.

that the (domestic) object which is designated by the identifier *vaṭṭil*,¹⁷ can also be referred to by using any of the six words enumerated, which are said to be its “name(s)” (*peyar*).

- (1b) *karakam-um kōram-um vaḷḷam-um cakaṭam-um // cikaram-um cākai-y-um vaṭṭil+ peyar-ē* “*karakam, kōram, vaḷḷam, cakaṭam, cikaram* and *cākai* [are] name(s) of *vaṭṭil*.” (Pi₁₂₄₉)

Distinguishing the headword from the quasi-synonyms is not always so straightforward, because *sūtras* often make use of a simple enumeration format where all terms seem to have equal status, as is the case in examples (2) and (3), which list, respectively, four words meaning “garden” (*tōṭṭam*) and three words meaning “dust” (*puḷuti*):

- (2) *pātavan tuṭavai paṭappai tōṭṭam* “a, b, c, D” {i.e. “a [=pātavam], b [=tuṭavai] & c [=paṭappai] mean D [=tōṭṭam]”} (*Piṅkalam*, 709)
- (3) *poṭi-manṇ puḷuti* “a, b, C” {i.e. “a [=poṭi] and b [=manṇ] mean C [=puḷuti]”} (*Piṅkalam*, 555)

According to the 1968 editors, *tōṭṭam* is the head-word in Pi₇₀₉ and the three other terms (*pātavam*, *tuṭavai* & *paṭappai*) are other designations for a garden.¹⁸ Similarly, according to them, *puḷuti* is the head-word in Pi₅₅₅ and the two other terms (*poṭi* & *manṇ*) are alternate designations for dust.¹⁹ In both cases, the head-word chosen by the editors is the last element in the enumeration. I have represented here the 1968 modern editors’ opinion by making use of a capital letter for the deemed head-word. This can be confronted with the example (4), which follows and is also a simple enumeration. There, the modern editors have chosen another head-word and I am tempted to disagree with them:

- (4) *cāvakar arukar camaṇar amaṇar* “a, b, c, D” (My interpretation)²⁰ OR “a, b, C, d” (1968 edition interpretation)

17 Given the fact that this is a short article, I shall not try to answer here the question: what exactly was a *vaṭṭil*? It seems to have been a kind of vessel, but an examination of page 3471 in the MTL shows that it possessed many specialized meanings (including “clepsydra”).

18 I shall not discuss here the possibility of exact synonymy. I usually refer to the terms enumerated as “quasi-synonyms”. Others may prefer to call them “near synonyms”.

19 The 2004 edition does not separate *poṭi* and *manṇ* but takes *poṭi-manṇ* “powder-earth” to be a single (non-atomic) item. The 1890 *editio princeps* counts *poṭi* and *manṇ* as two distinct items, but does not separate them by a comma (on page 83), as is its normal usage. Professor Vijayavenugopal thinks that the 2004 reading (with one quasi-synonym) is preferable to the 1968 reading (with two quasi-synonyms).

20 The choice is between stating that “*cāvakar, arukar* & *amaṇar* are synonyms for *camaṇar*” and stating that “*cāvakar, arukar* & *camaṇar* are synonyms for *amaṇar*”. I shall come back to that point in section 5.

However, rather than going into a very detailed analysis, the primary need at this stage is to provide an order of magnitude of the lexicographic data contained inside the *Piṅkalam*, and this is what the following charts do, indicating, for each section of the *Piṅkalam*, the number of items which are currently tagged (inside the XML file) as quasi-synonyms of a head-word²¹.

*Chart 3: Magnitude of the thematic section
(A-label & C-label) in the Piṅkalam*

		Section title	Sutra count	Quasi-synonyms count
1.	A	<i>vāṇ vakai</i>	92	510
2.	A	<i>vāṇavar vakai</i>	220	1535
3.	C	<i>aiyar vakai</i>	135	726
4.	A	<i>avaṇi vakai</i>	278	1268
5.	A	<i>āṭavar vakai</i>	376	1462
6.	A	<i>anupōka vakai</i> (20 sub-sections)	657	1823
7.	A	<i>paṇṇirceyalin pakuti vakai</i> (12 sub-sections)	552	2515
8.	A	<i>māppeyar vakai</i> (4 sub-sections)	339	1169
9.	A	<i>marappeyar vakai</i>	381	955
		TOTAL	3030	11963

Summarizing this chart in a simplified manner and taking into account the fact that most *sūtra*-s in the *Piṅkalam* possess a head-word, we can consider that it is legitimate to add the figures which appear at the bottom of the fourth and the fifth columns, and conclude that the number of elementary items to be included in an index of the thematic section of the *Piṅkalam* is close to 15 000, although this does not mean that the *Piṅkalam* deals with 15 000 distinct words, because many strings occur more than once.

3. DEFINITION-GIVING AND THE ROLE OF NON-ATOMIC EXPRESSIONS

I have alluded, in the preceding section, to the fact that not every *sūtra* in the *Piṅkalam* possesses a head-word. This will be illustrated here by several examples, starting with an elementary one which should be usefully compared

21 Some of the headwords, however, are not atomic terms, as we shall see in the next section.

with example (1b) in section 2, where we had given the names of the (domestic) object called *vaṭṭil*, as per *sūtra* Pi_1249. That *sūtra* is followed immediately by Pi_1250, which gives us the names of the “small *vaṭṭil*” (*ciru vaṭṭil*) and which reads:

- (5) *kiṇṇam-um vaḷḷam-um ciru-vaṭṭil+ peyar* “*kiṇṇam* and *vaḷḷam* [are] name(s) [for a] small *vaṭṭil*.” (Pi_1249)

At this stage, we might be tempted to reformulate our earlier explanations based on synonymy and to propose that the most elementary operation in the thematic section of the *Piṅkalam* (or in other *nikaṇṭu*-s) is not the elementary statement of synonymy but that it is the statement of a “definition”, in which an identifier (or word, or “atomic expression”) is equated with an “expression”, which is not necessarily atomic, although this is very probably the most frequent case. The “expression” used in the definition may be short, consisting of two atomic elements (combined in accordance with the syntax of Tamil phrases) but it can also be longer, as seen in the following example, which contain expressions having respectively three and four atomic constitutive elements:

- (6) *kaḷakam paṭṭimāṇ kalvi payil kaḷam* “*kaḷakam* and *paṭṭimam* [are] learning-practicing-places” (Pi_706)
- (7) *caṅkītam pal-l-īyan taluvu pāṭal* “*caṅkītam* [is] many-instruments-embracing-song (i.e. song accompanied by many instruments)” (Pi_1437)

At this stage of my research, it is too early for me to state any conclusions concerning the magnitude of the phenomenon. I can only say, using technical jargon, that I have defined two (empty) boolean tags, which play somehow the same role as (XML) attributes, in order to ultimately obtain a more precise picture. One of these tags has been applied by me so far to 321 “non-atomic” headwords, such as the one seen in example 5. The other tag has been applied so far to 152 *sūtras*, which I perceived as “definition” *sūtras*, several of them containing rather long expressions, such as the following:

- (8) *oru-peruṇ kaḷiṟu m-oruperun tērum // puravi mūṇṟum paṭaiṇa r-aivarum // patāti y-enṟu pakara-p paṭumē* “one big elephant, one big chariot, three horses and five soldiers, that is called *patāti*” (Pi_1641)

A temporary conclusion would be to state (as hypothesis) that a headword is not a necessary component in a *Nikaṇṭu sūtra*, but that (almost) every *sūtra* contains terms which are explained (or defined). Further research is however necessary and it is certainly the case that no descriptive scheme can do without a

category of “exceptional *sūtras*”,²² although irregular *sūtras* appear sometimes, in retrospect, as explainable by enlarging the perspective.

4. VARIETIES OF MULTIPLE PREDICATION: CONDENSABLE OR NOT?

Our success in creating a machine-readable text on the basis of a human-readable text, or more precisely on the basis of a text which was once, in the not-so-distant past, actively used by Tamil poets, lies in our obtaining a clear image of its syntax. In Chevillard [2010a], I have described the syntax of the *Uriyiyal*, a chapter of the *Tolkāppiyam*, in which 120 (supposedly rare) lexical items, labelled U1 to U120,²³ euphemistically (or “appropriately”) called *uric col* “appropriate words”, have their meanings explained by means of 100 more familiar items, labelled P1 to P100.²⁴ When we go, however, from the *Uriyiyal* to the *Piṅkalam* (with most probably a passage²⁵ through the *Tivākaram*), we have a huge increase in complexity because:

1. the cardinality of the set of those items which are for the *Piṅkalam* the equivalent of what U-items are for the *Uriyiyal* is much higher. We can start with the preliminary estimation that every item listed in the right-most column of Chart 3 as a quasi-synonym for some head-word (or, alternately, as the target of a definition) is in that set. That leaves us with a preliminary list of roughly 12 000 items. When I extract that list from the global *Piṅkalam* XML file and run the (Unix) command called *UNIQ* on it, it shrinks down to a list of 7 892 unique strings, which is still 66 times longer than the *Uriyiyal* list of 120 U-items. The magnitude of the task is obviously different;
2. the cardinality of the core vocabulary which is the equivalent of the P-items of the *Uriyiyal* is also much higher, but I am not in a position at the moment to provide even an approximate value for that cardinality;
3. the role of non-atomic expressions, such as the ones seen in examples (6), (7) and (8) is very important (whereas it was almost inexistent in the *Uriyiyal*).

22 For instance, it seems very difficult to explain *sūtra* P1₁₃₇₀ as an instance of a general scheme. It rather appears as an abridgement of a small treatise, condensed to the dimensions of a long (36-lines) *sūtra*, which fact would explain why its first 12 lines contain a list of 28 *alaṅkāra*-s.

23 See the exhaustive list of those 120 items, which I refer to as U-items in Chevillard (2010a: 304–305).

24 See the exhaustive list of those 100 items, which I refer to as P-items in Chevillard (2010a: 306–307).

25 It is not currently clear to me whether, as seems to be the *opinio communis*, the *Piṅkalam* was compiled by someone who was using the *Tivākaram* as one of his sources.

There is however a feature already present in the *Uriyiyal* of the *Tolkāppiyam* which we have not yet discussed with respect to the *Piṅkalam*, although it is in fact implicitly present in our account of lists of quasi-synonyms. That feature has to do with the possibility (or impossibility) of obtaining a shorter form for a complex STATEMENT containing multiple predication (i.e. a coordination of simple statements). Those simple statements are (potentially) obtained:

- (Case a) in *sūtras* in which ONE (simple/atomic) term is explained by means of ONE other (simple/atomic) term, or
- (Case b) in *sūtras* in which ONE (simple/atomic) term is explained by means of one non-atomic expression (or phrase).

My current counts indicate that the thematic section of the *Piṅkalam* contains roughly one thousand simple statements, which is in fact almost exactly one third of that thematic section. I have illustrated **Case b** by examples such as (6), (7) and (8) and shall now, for the sake of completeness, provide examples of **Case a**, in the following examples.

(9) *noṭai-y-eṇ kiḷavi vilai-y-eṇa nuvalvar* “They declare that the linguistic item *noṭai* is [equivalent to] *vilai* (i.e. ‘sale’ or ‘price’)” (Pi_2293)²⁶

(10) *aṅcalikai vāval* “*aṅcalikai* [is] *vāval* (i.e. ‘bat’)” (Pi_2381)

I leave it to the reader to imagine how the examples given in (1b), (2), (3), (4) and (5) can be perceived as the condensed form of complex statements which are each obtained by coordinating simpler statements, similar to (10). An additional goal of mine, while initiating the current section was however to indicate that there also exist *sūtras* containing non-condensable multiple predications, such as the ones given in (11), (12) and (13) and that I have so far XML-tagged as such 32 *sūtras* inside the *Piṅkalam*.

(11) *ūr̥ti ciṅka m-uṇar-koṭi y-alakai // cūlam paṭai-y-eṇa-c colla-p paṭum-ē* “it is said that [her]²⁷ mount (*ūr̥ti*) is the lion (*ciṅkam*), [her] high banner (*uṇar-koṭi*) the *alakai*,²⁸ [and] [her] weapon (*paṭai*) the *cūlam*” (Pi_120)

26 A precise translation is impossible without a knowledge of ancient economy (including the role of “bartering”).

27 This is understood from the context as referring to the goddess Mākālī, whose 31 additional names are given in Pi_119.

28 There is no good English translation for *alakai*. Approximate English translations are “demon”, “ghost”, “goblin” or “vampire”. The Modern Tamil equivalent is “*pēy*”. One of the Sanskrit equivalents is “*vēṭāla*” (which is *vēṭālam* in Tamil). The word *alakai* was current at the time of the *Kuraḷ*, as evidenced by *Kuraḷ* 850, which explains that one who does not believe in the existence of something which everyone thinks to exist will be regarded as an *alakai* by others!

(12) *kai-vāḷ paṭai-vā kaṇaṇ-kalai y-ākum* “Hand-sword [is] [her]²⁹ weapon; [her] mount (*vākaṇam*) is a deer (*kalai*)” (Pi_125)

(13) *vākaṇaṇ kaḷutai vaṇ-paṭai tuṭaippaṇ // kākaṇ koṭi-y-eṇa-k kaḷaral vēṇṭum*
“It must be said that [her]³⁰ mount [is a] donkey (*kaḷutai*), [her] strong weapon [is a] broom (*tuṭaippam*), [her banner is a crow (*kākam*) (Pi_189)

As far as the classification of statements is concerned, I am currently working with a typology containing four tentative categories:

1. SINGLE statement
2. CONDENSED multiple statement
3. NON-CONDENSABLE multiple statement
4. NON-CLASSIFIABLE

Only the future will tell whether this classification is viable.

5. WHAT HAPPENS WHEN UNFAMILIAR WORDS (*PAYILĀTAVAI*) ARE BETTER KNOWN THAN FAMILIAR ONES (*PAYINRAVAI*)?

The time has now come for me to give the beginning of an explanation for one component (“1968 incarnation”) in the title of this article. Like the other elements discussed so far, the technical basis for this expression (and its non-technical discussion inside this section) is the existence of some tags inside the DTD³¹ which I have elaborated for the *Pinkalam* XML file. Those tags were created in order for me not to have to choose between being faithful to the *Pinkalam* and being faithful (in a different manner)³² to the 1968 “small blue book” through which I have had access to it. We have already had a first inkling of the nature

29 This is understood from the context as referring to the goddess Turkhai, whose 29 additional names are given in Pi_124.

30 This is understood from the context as referring to the goddess Mūtēvi, whose 10 additional names are given in Pi_187 and Pi_188.

31 See footnote 1.

32 Running the risk of appearing slightly incongruous or disconnected, but trying to elaborate on what the notion of a “faithfulness of a different kind” may mean, I shall venture to say that human beings can hope to understand human history only if they preserve respectfully at least a subset of the monuments of the past, and do not exclusively use the *Tabula Rasa* method. I am grateful to our friend Alexander Dubyanskiy for giving us a concrete example of this attitude when he guided us (my wife Eva Wilden and myself) to the small town of Ste-Geneviève-des-Bois (on the South-West side of Paris) where we visited for the first time the Russian cemetery, which is part, with its 5000 graves, of the external memory of Russia. Coming back to Tamil, when studying the distant past (i.e. here the period of the *Pinkalam*), the intermediate past (i.e. here the 1968 time, high tide for the *Kaḷakam* editions) must not be abolished, but must be, if possible, factored out in order for it to be understood.

of the phenomenon discussed in this session, when we examined example (4) and I (respectfully) dissented with the choice of head-word made by the 1968 *Kaḷakam* editors, who have preferred to use the word *camaṇar*, third item in the list, rather than *amaṇar*, fourth item, probably because *camaṇar* is perceived as more “standard” nowadays, whereas I postulate that it was different at the time of the *Piṅkalam*. One of the biggest difficulties, while trying to obtain a clear understanding of an ancient text, is that we often do not know, when confronted with two terms, which of the two was the better-known and which one was less frequent, at the time when the text was composed.

The type of adaptation which we now examine briefly, by means of a few examples, goes however much beyond the reordering problem encountered in (4). Inside the thematic section, I have so far listed (i.e. tagged) 112 cases where the 1968 editors, reporting on the content of the sūtra, use a different formulation, which can be an expanded form or a lexical substitution. The following chart lists a few of those changes, concentrating on those which are the more striking.

Chart 4: Ten examples of lexical substitutions in the 1968 edition of *Piṅkalam*

Sūtra number	Original word or expression	1968 substitute
585	<i>ikku</i>	<i>karuppaṇcāru</i>
149	<i>uṇmattam</i>	<i>perumayakku</i>
277	<i>kuṭam</i>	<i>kumpam</i>
1355	<i>tuyilum</i>	<i>uṇṇkum</i>
340	<i>paṭṭāṇku pēcal</i>	<i>uṇmaikūṇal</i>
1370	<i>pārāṭṭu</i>	<i>pukaḷcciyāṇi</i>
149	<i>mōkaṇam</i>	<i>puṇarccikk-iṇaṇkutaḷ</i>
1370	<i>viraviyaḷ</i>	<i>kalavaiyaṇi</i>
437	<i>viraimalar tūval</i>	<i>aruccittal</i>
277	<i>vil</i>	<i>taṇucu</i>

It should, I hope, be clear to the reader at this stage that the original *sūtra* is indeed present in the “little blue book”, with its original wording. The substitution takes place only in the paraphrase. The point of view which I adopt here is that this feature makes the “little blue book” itself into an interesting object of study, a bridge between different registers of Tamil. It must however be admitted that this pushes towards an even more distant point in the future the satisfactory completion of this “work in progress”, in the course of which we must also examine at some point the other editions at our disposal, starting with

the 1890 *Editio Princeps*, continuing with the 2004 edition (Cānti Cāṭaṇā) which is mentioned in the bibliography, not to mention of course all the palm-leaf MSS which are waiting for their future readers.

6. FUTURE TASKS

In conclusion, I shall now try to emphasize a few points that are possibly sometimes overlooked. The *Piṅkalam* and other similar texts are not very well-known nowadays because they are generally considered to have been superseded by the lexicographical work completed during the twentieth century, of which the Madras Tamil Lexicon (MTL) is the most impressive trace. It should however be observed that the only occasions when the MTL cites as authority a text such as the *Piṅkalam* (or other Nikaṇṭu-s) is when its compilers have not been capable of finding an illustration inside existing literature for a meaning given in the *Piṅkalam*. This gives a special visibility to the margins of that nikaṇṭu, but leaves its core invisible. We should ideally be capable of stating easily, for every important text

1. which part of its vocabulary is found in the *Piṅkalam*
2. which part is NOT found

and similar answers should be easily obtainable for other kōṣa-s, such as the *Tivākaram* and the *Cūṭāmaṇi Nikaṇṭu*.

Although such desires may appear to be “tall orders”, difficult to satisfy, they are important if we want to produce a really historical study of Tamil literature (without forgetting a historical study of the Tamil language). We fortunately live in a time when the computational power at our disposal allows us to contemplate that a certain amount of progress is possible. Therefore, it seems reasonable to state as a conclusion that the domain of Classical Tamil studies, which has been so aptly nurtured by our friend and colleague, professor Alexander Dubyanskiy, has a bright future.

பல்லாண்டா வாழ்க!

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34 This is the *Editio Princeps*. An exemplar is available in the IFP library.

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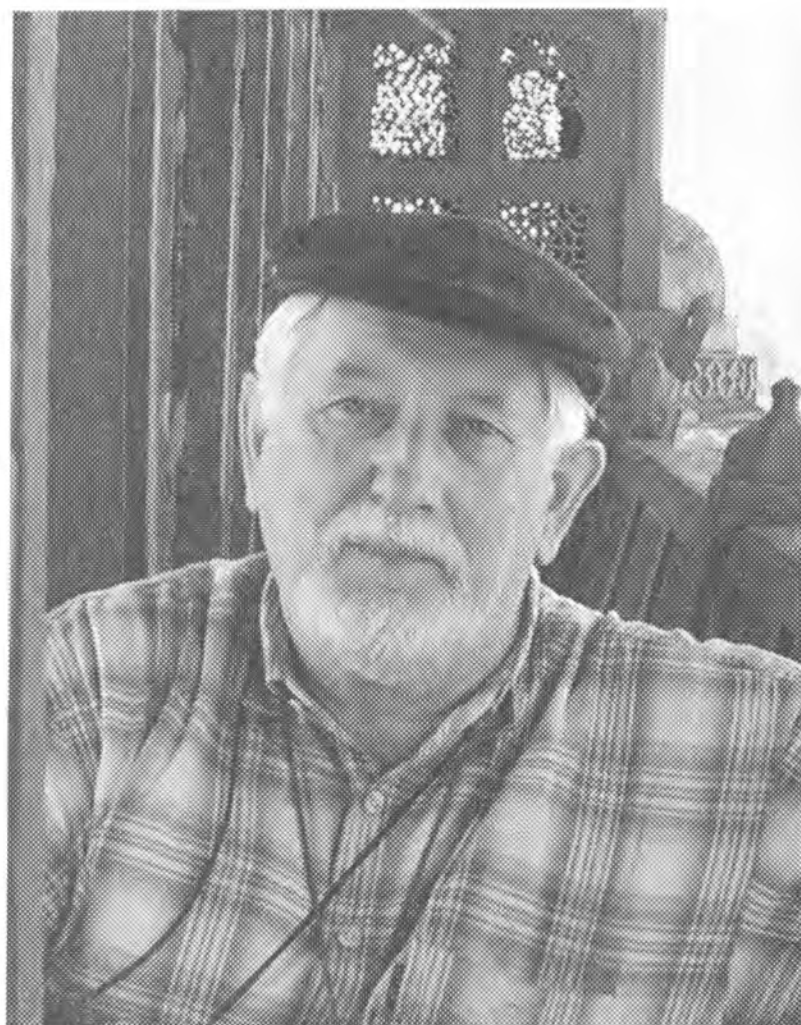
● Orientalia
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LXIII

தமிழ் தந்த பரிசு

Tamīl tanta paricu

Сборник статей в честь
Александра Михайловича Дубянского



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etClassica
Papers of the Institute of Oriental
and Classical Studies

Issue LXIII

Tamiḷ tanta paricu

The collection of articles
in honor of Alexander
M. Dubyanskiy

Compiled and edited by
O. Vecherina, N. Gordiychuk, T. Dubyanskaya

Moscow
2016

Российский
государственный гуманитарный
университет

● *Orientalia*
et *Classica*

Труды Института восточных культур
и античности

Выпуск LXIII

Tamīl tanta parīcu

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Редакторы и составители:

О. Вечерина, Н. Гордийчук, Т. Дубянская

Москва
2016

УДК 800(540)
ББК 8оя43
Т 153

Orientalia et Classica: Труды Института восточных культур и античности
Выпуск LXIII

Под редакцией И.С. Смирнова

Т 17 *Tamiḷ tanta paricu*: Сборник статей в честь Александра Михайловича Дубянского / Под ред. И.С. Смирнова; ред.-сост. О.П. Вечерина, Н.В. Гордийчук, Т.А. Дубянская. Серия «Orientalia et Classica»: Труды Института восточных культур и античности. — М.: Издательство «Перо», 2016. — 562 с.

ISBN 978-5-906862-53-2

Сборник статей российских и зарубежных исследователей-индологов посвящен 75-летию Александра Михайловича Дубянского — ведущего российского специалиста в области тамильской филологии, древней тамильской мифологии, автора многих работ по различным аспектам мифопоэтической картины мира древних и средневековых тамилы. В сборник вошли как статьи признанных исследователей в области тамилистики и индологии, так и работы учеников А.М. Дубянского, вот уже более 40 лет готовящего тамилистов на кафедре индийской филологии Института стран Азии и Африки Московского государственного университета им. М.В. Ломоносова и в Институте восточных культур и античности РГГУ.

ISBN 978-5-906862-53-2

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ОГЛАВЛЕНИЕ

От составителей	9
<i>Камакии</i>	
Многая лета (там. и рус.)	14
<i>J.-L. Chevillard</i>	
On a 1968 incarnation of the <i>Piṅkalam</i> , a traditional Tamil thesaurus	15
<i>G.L. Hart</i>	
Wealth in the <i>Akanāṇṇūru</i>	24
<i>N. Korneeva</i>	
The Āpastamba-dharmasūtra and Āpastamba-gr̥hyasūtra: Re-examining Textual Features	51
<i>I.V. Peterson</i>	
The Courtesan's Arts in the Tamil <i>viṇaliviṭutūtu</i> Poetic Genre: Translations from <i>Kūlappanāyakkaṇ viṇaliviṭutūtu</i>	64
<i>N. Świdzińska</i>	
Deification of Satī (Good, Righteous Wives) in the Tamil Tradition	84
<i>H. Tieken</i>	
<i>Cāru</i> , “festival”, in Caṅkam Poetry	101
<i>E. Wilden</i>	
Functions of the Verbal Root in Early Old Tamil Poetry	124
<i>J. Woźniak</i>	
The Poet as God's (Foster) Mother. Reading the Yaśodā Verses from Tirumaṅkaiyālvār's <i>Periya tirumoli</i> 10.7	140
<i>М. Альбедиль</i>	
Время и пространство в традиционной индийской культуре: отражение мифологических моделей	157
<i>Я. Васильков</i>	
Месопотамский и древнеиндийский мифы о потопе: случайны ли сходства?	172
<i>О. Вечерина</i>	
Образы поэтов-бхактов в реальности шиваизма и изобразительного искусства	199

А. Вигасин	
Южная Индия в трудах античных авторов	221
К. Воронина	
Границы для женщины в романе «Полуночная история» Сальмы	238
И. Глушкова	
Из склепа на пьедестал. Материализация чувствования, или Все смешалось в маратхском бхакти	248
Н. Железнова	
Джайны в Тамилнаде: свои среди чужих, чужие среди своих	270
С. Кулланда	
Разрыв традиции и преемственность культуры	285
С. Невелева	
Время в композиции и стилистике «Махабхараты»	295
М. Русанов	
Рассказы о мастерстве в древнеиндийской литературе	310
С. Серебряный	
Рабиндранат Тагор и Сергей Рахманинов: точка пересечения	321
А. Смирнитская	
Семантические переходы в дравидийских терминах коллатерального родства	337
ПЕРЕВОДЫ	
Н. Гордийчук	
Антология джайнской дидактической поэзии «Наладияр»	357
М. Павлова	
Избранные гимны Богу Шиве поэта Самбандара (сборник «Деварам») ...	461
А. Филатова	
Поэма Маниккавасахара «Тирувембавей»	493
Д. Холодников	
Памбатти Ситтар. «Сиддх-заклинатель змеи»	501
Список научных работ Александра Михайловича Дубянского	535
Abstracts	545
Сведения об авторах	558

CONTENTS

Preface	II
<i>Kamakṣī</i>	
Many Years!	13
<i>J.-L. Chevillard</i>	
On a 1968 Incarnation of the <i>Piṅkalam</i> , a Traditional Tamil Thesaurus	15
<i>G.L. Hart</i>	
Wealth in the <i>Akanāṇūru</i>	24
<i>N. Korneeva</i>	
The Āpastamba-dharmasūtra and Āpastamba-gr̥hyasūtra: Re-examining the Textual Features	51
<i>I.V. Peterson</i>	
The Courtesan's Arts in the Tamil <i>virāliṇṇutūtu</i> Poetic Genre: Translations from <i>Kūlappanāyakkaṇ virāliṇṇutūtu</i>	54
<i>N. Świdzińska</i>	
Deification of Satī (Good, Righteous Wives) in the Tamil Tradition	84
<i>H. Tieken</i>	
<i>Cāru</i> , “festival”, in Caṅkam Poetry	101
<i>E. Wilden</i>	
Functions of the Verbal Root in Early Old Tamil Poetry	124
<i>J. Woźniak</i>	
The Poet as God's (Foster) Mother. Reading the Yaśodā Verses from Tirumaṅkaiyālvār's <i>Periya tirumoli</i> 10.7	140
<i>M. Albedil</i>	
Time and Space in Traditional Indian Culture: The Reflection of Mythological Models	157
<i>Ya. Vassil'kov</i>	
Mesopotamian and Old Indian Flood Myths: Are Similarities Accidental? ...	172
<i>O. Vecherina</i>	
Images of Tamil Saint Poets in Reality of Śaivism and Fine Arts	199
<i>A. Vigasin</i>	
South India in Greek and Latin Sources	221

K. Voronina

The Boundaries for Women in the Novel

The Hour Past Midnight by Salma 238**I. Glushkova**Bhakti in Maharashtra: From a Grave onto a Pedestal,
or Sensitivity Materialized 248**N. Zheleznova**Jains in Tamilnadu: At Home among Strangers,
Strangers among their Own 270**S. Kullanda**

The Rupture of Tradition and Cultural Continuity 285

S. NevelevaTime in the Composition and Style of the *Mahābhārata* 295**M. Rusanov**

Stories of Craftsmanship in Ancient Indian Literature 310

S. Serebryany

Rabindranath Tagore and Sergey Rahmaninov: A Meeting Point 321

A. Smirnitskaya

Semantic Shifts in Dravidian Collateral Kinship Terms 337

TRANSLATIONS FROM TAMIL**N. Gordiychuk***Nālaṭiyār*: Anthology of Jaina Didactic Poetry 357**M. Pavlova**

Selected hymns to God Shiva by poet Sambandar (“Tēvāram”) 461

A. Filatova*Tiruvempāvai*, a Poem by Māṇikkavācakar 493**D. Holodnikoff***Siddha the Snake Charmer*, a Poem by Pambatti Cittar 501

A. Dubyanskiy: A List of Scholarly Works 535

Abstracts 545

Notes on the contributors 560

ОТ СОСТАВИТЕЛЕЙ

Вот уже почти полвека отечественная индология совершенно непредставима без Александра Михайловича Дубянского, которому 27 апреля 2016 года исполняется 75 лет. Счастливый случай и совет друга привели юбиляра в далеком 1965 году в Институт восточных языков (ныне — Институт стран Азии и Африки при МГУ им. М.В. Ломоносова). Закончив ИВЯ и аспирантуру, в 1974 году Александр Михайлович защитил кандидатскую диссертацию по древнетамильской (классической) тамильской литературе и начал свою научную и преподавательскую деятельность в стенах альма-матер, где он плодотворно работает и по сей день.

Всего в течение этих долгих лет были подготовлены и выпущены 10 групп индологов со знанием тамильского языка, выпускники которых работают сегодня в самых разных сферах¹. К сожалению, после блестящего начала в 60-е годы XX века отечественная тамилистика в силу целого ряда причин в некоторые периоды развивалась почти исключительно силами юбиляра. Как известно, созданная в конце 1950-х годов усилиями Юрия Николаевича Рериха московская школа классической индологии была практически разгромлена в начале 1970-х годов. Особенно пострадала отечественная тамилистика². После распада СССР те немногие места, в которых могли работать и работали по специальности выпускники кафедры индийской филологии — коллеги и ученики Александра Михайловича, — перестали существовать. Это, в первую очередь, издательства «Прогресс» и «Радуга», в которых выпускалось значительное количество переводной литературы на тамильском языке, и редакция тамильского вещания на Гостелерадио. Практически перестали издаваться и переводы классической и современной тамильской литературы.

Тем не менее, ручеек работ, посвященных древней и средневековой тамильской литературе, никогда полностью не пересыхал. Плодотворная деятельность А.М. Дубянского в стенах РГГУ, насчитывающая уже более

1 Восемь групп было выпущено в ИСАА, две — в РГГУ. А.М. Дубянский — выпускник первой группы (6 человек). Все остальные отечественные московские тамиллисты (около 60 человек) — его ученики. Две группы тамиллистов (8 человек) было выпущено в Ленинграде. См. <http://tamil.ivka.rggu.ru/article.html?id=2632243>.

2 Подробнее см. Дубянский А.М. *Дравидские литературы // Изучение литератур Востока. Россия. XX век. Москва: Восточная литература, 2002.* — <http://tamil.ivka.rggu.ru/article.html?id=572418>; Сомасундарам П. Советские тамиллисты [электронный документ]. — <http://tamil.ivka.rggu.ru/article.html?id=2627972>.

20 лет (сначала на Факультете теоретической и прикладной лингвистики, а позднее — в Институте восточных культур и античности), и особенно деятельность семинара по чтению древних тамильских поэтических текстов, существующего уже 9 лет, способствовали тому, что в Москве образовалась устойчивая группа профессиональных индологов-тамилистов — учеников юбиляра, которые каждую неделю собираются на кафедре истории и филологии Южной и Центральной Азии ИВКА РГГУ, чтобы совместно заниматься «медленным чтением» классической тамильской литературы.

Результаты изысканий неоднократно представлялись А.М. Дубянским и его учениками на различных конференциях индологов, одна из которых является особенно значимой для развития академической тамилистики в России. Это Зографские чтения в Санкт-Петербурге, начало которым было положено в 1980 году усилиями Георгия Александровича Зографа (1928–1993).

Ученики Александра Михайловича, его отечественные и зарубежные коллеги поздравляют юбиляра и преподносят ему с любовью и благодарностью этот сборник статей.

PREFACE

For nearly half a century Russian Indology has been unimaginable without Dr. Alexander Mikhailovich Dubyanskiy, who celebrates, on April 27, 2016, his 75th anniversary. Back in 1965, opportune circumstances and advice from a good friend brought him to the Institute of Oriental Languages (presently the Institute of Asian and African Studies of the Moscow State University). After his graduation, Alexander defended, in 1974, his doctoral thesis on Ancient Tamil literature. He continued his research and teaching activities in the same Institute — his alma mater — where he remains till date.

During the decades of his professional activities, he has taught Tamil to, in total, ten university groups of undergraduate students of Indology, the alumni of which are now working in education, journalism, diplomacy and other fields.¹ Unfortunately, after a brilliant start in the 1960s, Tamil studies in the USSR and in post-Soviet Russia, at certain periods, were continued and developed almost exclusively by Alexander's efforts.

As is well-known, the Moscow school of classical Indology, which was fashioned in the USSR in the late 1950s by Yuri Nikolaevich Roerich, was largely destroyed in the early 1970s, with Tamil studies suffering especially.² A few places where graduates of the department of Indian philology — colleagues and students of Alexander — could work also ceased to exist after the collapse of the USSR. These were, first of all, the publishing houses «Progress» and «Raduga», which published a considerable amount of translated literature in Tamil, and the Tamil broadcasting service at Gosteleradio. Translations of classical and modern Tamil literature into Russian stopped coming out as well.

However, a trickle of works devoted to ancient and medieval Tamil literature never died up. For more than 20 years, Dr. Dubyanskiy has been fruitfully working in the Russian State University for the Humanities, at first at the Department of

1 Eight groups of student majoring in Tamil graduated from Institute of Asian and African Studies, two other groups, from the Russian State University for the Humanities. Dubyanskiy was a graduate of the first group (6 people). All other university graduates majoring in Tamil (about 60 people) are his students. Two more groups of students (8 persons) studied Tamil and graduated in Leningrad. See. <http://tamil.ivka.rggu.ru/article.html?id=2632243>.

2 See. A. Dubyanskiy, *Dravidian literatures // Study of Literatures of the East. Russia. XX century*. Moscow: Vostochnaya Literatura (Oriental Literature), 2002.— <http://tamil.ivka.rggu.ru/article.html?id=572418>; P. Somasundaram, *Soviet Tamilists* [electronic document].— <http://tamil.ivka.rggu.ru/article.html?id=2627972>

Theoretical and Applied Linguistics, and later at the Institute of Oriental and Classical Studies. His workshop on reading ancient Tamil poetical texts deserves a special mention: it has been active already for 9 years, bringing together in Moscow a stable group of enthusiastic lovers of Tamil, who gather every week at the department of History and Philology of South and Central Asia (IOCS, RSUH) to jointly engage in the «slow reading» of classical Tamil literature.

The results of their researches have been presented, on a number of occasions, by Dr. Dubyanskiy and his students at various Indological conferences. One such academic event, The Zograf Readings in St. Petersburg, started in 1980 by the efforts of Georgij Alexandrovich Zograf (1928–1993), has proved to be particularly important for the development of Tamil studies in Russia.

Dr. Dubyanskiy's former students, and his Russian and foreign colleagues would like to congratulate him on his 75th birthday and, with great pleasure and gratitude, present him this Festschrift.