

A Medieval Tamil Poem on Bhakti: *Tiruppāvai* by Āṇṭāl

Alexander DUBYANSKIY

Any piece of literature is a complex object consisting, speaking metaphorically, of certain “archaeological” layers which can be singled out and analysed from cultural, mythological, linguistic or other points of view. Such a procedure can help us to see specific features of a given composition, its function, origin, stages of formation etc. It certainly will be fruitful to consider from this point of view the famous piece of religious poetry *Tiruppāvai* by a medieval Tamil poetess Āṇṭāl (9th c.). The poem belongs to the Kṛṣṇaite branch of Hindu religious movement under the name of Bhakti. Of course, it contains a number of purely religious meanings, but the task to analyse them lies outside the scope of the given research and my competence.¹

Before dealing with the poem I think it proper to make some preliminary remarks of a general character. The story of the origin, formation and development of the cult of Kṛṣṇa in India is very complex and contradictory, what is typical for any important religious movement. The mythological cycle, connected with the complex figure of Kṛṣṇa developed for many centuries and seems to appear in the texts in a complete form rather late. For example, in the *Mahābhārata* Kṛṣṇa plays an important role as the king of the Yādava clan and possesses features of an epic hero, but famous episodes of Kṛṣṇa’s mythology connected with his amorous adventures with *gopīs*, the culmination point of the panindian Kṛṣṇaite Bhakti movement, is practically absent. The same can be said about the episodes of Kṛṣṇa’s childhood. Even in the *Harivaṃśa*, a later addition to the epic poem, the amorous adventures with *gopīs* occupy only 21 strophes (*Harivaṃśa* 63, 15-35). In the early literary works (like the anthology *Sattasāi*, the poems *Meghadūta* and *Raghuvamśa* by Kālidāsa, the dramatic pieces *Bālacaritanāṭaka* ascribed to Bhāsa and the *Pātātāḍitaka* by Śyāmilaka) passages mentioning Kṛṣṇa and *gopīs* are not numerous (in *Sattasāi*, for instance they are only three).² Nevertheless, it is reasonable to think that by the middle of the 1st millennium this episode was well known in literary circles in some parts of India, in Maharashtra and Ujjayini in particular (Hardy 1983: 65). Approximately at the same time the dance of Kṛṣṇa with shepherd girls was described in the Tamil poem *Cilappatikāram* (II.17). In a more elaborate manner the relationship of Kṛṣṇa and *gopīs* was shown by the purāṇic tradition—in the

¹ See, for instance, the work by D. Hudson (2010) who treats Āṇṭāl’s poems and her religious activity from the point of view of the Pāñcarātra school of Śrīvaiṣṇava tradition. F. Hardy in his book (1983) often turns to the Advaita-Vedānta ideas expressed in the works of Ālvārs.

² *Sattasāi* 89, 112, 113; *Meghadūta* 15; *Raghuvamśa* VI, 48-51; *Bālacaritanāṭaka* IV, 1-7; *Pātātāḍitaka* 65,4. See Hardy (1983: 56-65).

Brahmapurāṇa, the *Viṣṇupurāṇa* and, finally, in the *Bhāgavatapurāṇa* where the Kṛṣṇaite myth found its final and canonical version. The importance of the latter text, composed according to the opinion of scholars in the South around the 9th c., lies, among other things, in the fact that it was the first work in Sanskrit that represented the so-called “emotional bhakti” (Hardy 1983: 39).

Generally speaking, the idea of achieving God by a personal devotion to him, by belonging to him and loving him was formulated in Indian tradition rather early. It appeared for the first time, as some scholars state (Flood 1998: 153), in the *Śvetāśvatara Upaniṣad*. But the text where it was discussed and propagated on a large scale is no doubt the *Bhagavadgītā*, one of the most venerated texts in the Vaiṣṇava Bhakti movement. It is clear, however, that in this text the love for god is almost lacking the emotional component (apart, perhaps, from awe and fear). There is more rational than emotional attitude in it, for Kṛṣṇa himself insists on a devotee’s mental recognition of his belonging to the God, on his conscious readiness to serve him. It is significant that the *Bhagavadgītā* while discussing this matter uses the term *bhakti-yoga*, a self-restriction the adept should impose upon himself. Such religious service was defined by P. Hacker as the “intellectual bhakti” (see Hardy 1983: 40).

At the same time there was another religious movement based on simple human emotions of love and devotion of a devotee to the God, proclaiming a possibility to be on friendly, intimate terms with the God and to experience his love and grace. Importantly, the cultic forms of this movement included singing, dancing and other forms of ecstatic behaviour testifying to its aboriginal origin.

In the South this aspect of Bhakti (in its Vaiṣṇava form) was represented not only by the *Bhāgavatapurāṇa* but by a vast complex of devotional poetry called *Nālāyirattivviyappirapantam* (“the Four Thousand Divine *Prabandhas*,” where *prabandha* means “a coherent text”) collected in the 10th c. but created within a period of around five centuries (6th–9th cc.). The problem of the interrelation of the two very important and authoritative texts in the Vaiṣṇava community, that is, *Bhāgavatapurāṇa* and the *Nālāyirattivviyappirapantam*, was analysed by F. Hardy in his fundamental research (1983: 483-547) and will be only touched upon by me below.

As F. Hardy has clearly shown the story of the cult of Kṛṣṇa in the South is rather complicated. It was reconstructed by him in main features quite convincingly and there is no need to repeat it here. I will make only one remark concerning the names *māl* and *māyōṇ* (“the Black”), which being a common Tamil name for Viṣṇu and Kṛṣṇa (with some modifications, like *neṭumāl*, “Big *māl*” or *māyan*, “He who is black”) could be connected with the early layers of Dravidian culture, signifying the god’s connection with the dark, rainy season (Zvelebil 1977: 256; Dubianski 2000: 30).

When speaking about the Kṛṣṇaite part of Vaiṣṇavism we note that in the foundation of the two texts mentioned above there lies a myth about Kṛṣṇa which in remote times emerged among shepherd tribes in the region of Braj (near the city of Mathurā). According to T. Mahadevan (2008: 14–16), some Brahmanical clans migrating from the North of India to the South in the first centuries A.D. brought with them certain versions of *Mahābhārata* and some parts of the Kṛṣṇaite myth. The Prakrit and Sanskrit sources mentioned above and the early Tamil poetry (Caṅkam anthologies and the *Cilappatikāram*) testify that in the middle of the 1st millennium it was spreading over many parts of India including Tamil land (*tamiḷakam*). It is reasonable to suppose that it was here where it got saturated with ideas and forms of local cults and took the form of emotional Bhakti, which found its poetic expression in the poetry of the Āḷvārs.

Āṅṭāl was among the twelve Āḷvārs, the poet-saints, adepts of Viṣṇu, canonized by the tradition, which accepted the interpretation of the meaning of the word *āḷvār* as “submerged, plunged [in love for god],” from the verbal root *āl*, “to plunge, to be in the deep.” But recently it was convincingly shown by S. Palaniappan (2004) that initially the term in question was represented by the word *āḷvār* (from the verbal root *āl* “to rule”), which reads as “those who rule, lords”, and was applied in the texts, both Śaiva and Vaiṣṇava, to Śiva and Viṣṇu accordingly (pp. 66–70). In the course of time the term underwent the process of sound variation, took the form *āḷvār* and acquired the folk etymology which was accepted and fixed by the tradition. It is worth noting here that this interpretation agrees well with the meaning of the poetess’ nickname Āṅṭāl, which means “she who rules.”

There is an opinion that Āṅṭāl belonged to the 8th c. Judging by a calculation made on the basis of an astronomical event mentioned by her in the 13th strophe of the poem *Tiruppāvai* (NTP 486): the planet Venus is rising and Jupiter is setting. Such combination with the full moon was possible, the specialists say, in 731, December 18 (Maṇavāḷaṅ 1990: 12). But, as J. Filliozat (1972: x) remarks, it is doubtful that Āṅṭāl could have paid attention to the astronomic facts as such. Actually she might have lived in the 9th c. In this connection one more fact is revealing: Āṅṭāl’s poem bears close resemblance to a portion of the famous Śaiva composition *Tiruvācakam* by Maṇikkavācakar (9th c.). This part called *Tiruvempāvai* seems to have been formally modelled on Āṅṭāl’s creation, though it differs considerably from Āṅṭāl’s poem in terms of contents and its treatment.

Āṅṭāl’s life-story is represented by a legend which is very popular in Tamilnadu up to this day. It tells us about a Vaiṣṇava Brahman Viṣṇucitta who served in a Viṣṇu temple in Śrīvilliputtūr (also called Putuvai), a village in the district of Maturai. Once he found a baby-girl under a *tulasī*-shrub and adopted her as her daughter. He gave her the name Gōdā (Kōtai in Tamil) which means “She who gives cows, or wealth,” one of the names of Śrīdevī,

Viṣṇu's spouse (Maṇavālaṅ 1990: 13). No doubt, Viṣṇucitta brought the girl up in the spirit of Vaiṣṇava Bhakti tradition and she while growing up got more and more immersed in religious feelings which with the course of time became mixed with the erotic fantasies. In her dreams she imagined herself as a bride of Kṛṣṇa and thought of uniting with him.

As to her adoptive father, he himself was an outstanding poet and occupies a prominent place in the history of Tamil literature under the name of Periyālvār ("Great Ālvār"). The main achievement of Periyālvār, who composed the extensive poetic work *Tirumōḷi* (NTP 1–473), consists of an elaboration of Kṛṣṇaite mythology, connected originally with Northern parts of India. Firstly, he associated this mythology with some aspects of Tamil culture and life; secondly, he moved away from the aesthetics and formal rules of the previous Caṅkam poetic tradition—though did not reject it entirely—and turned to folk cultural forms; thirdly, he saturated mythological images with everyday emotions and usual human feelings, thus making mythological figures close and familiar. As F. Hardy (1983:411) puts it, "The mythical events are seen through eyes of the mythical actors, particularly Yaśodā, and their literary treatment stylizes them in such a way (by using genres of folk-songs) that a real mother can identify herself with these emotions, and can sing the songs, for example when playing with her child." Perhaps it is more important, that Periyālvār presented the mythological events as seen through his own eyes, that is, through the eyes of a witness, if not a participant. Thus, he elaborated a cardinal feature of Bhakti poetry, which can be defined as, let us say, the interiorisation of the myth.³ Indeed, Periyālvār managed to vividly express Yaśodā's maternal feelings, especially in the first parts of his opus magnum, the *Tirumōḷi* ("The sacred utterance"), which represents the early example of the popular Tamil mediaeval genre of *pillai-t-tamiḷ* ("a Tamil [poem] on [a hero as] a child"). Āṅṅāl apprehended the poetical method of her father and developed it further; only the main theme of her poetry was not maternal but erotic love. Generally speaking the erotic component is always inherent in Bhakti poetry but Āṅṅāl spoke about it quite openly and passionately.

There is a famous episode in Āṅṅāl's legendary life-story connected with a garland of flowers which she had to deliver to the statue of Viṣṇu/Kṛṣṇa. Her father did not bring the garland in time and she went to the temple with the garland that she herself wore. When Viṣṇucitta learned about this he was greatly distressed because he thought it was his daughter's unforgivable fault. But Viṣṇu appeared in his dream and told him that he needs Gōdā's garland and she herself was a garland for him. Periyālvār who was in a shock realized the profound character of Gōdā's religious feelings and said to her: "Oh Gōdā, by the force of your Bhakti you are ruling not only me but our Lord also." From this moment

³ Strictly speaking, he was not the first among Tamil poets who introduced this method of treating mythological events. One can recollect the early figure of the Śaiva poetess Karaikkāl Ammaiār who described the famous dance competition of Śiva and Pārvatī in Tiruvālaṅkāṭu as if seen by her own eyes.

on he called her “the Ruler” (*āṅṅāl*). Thus appeared the name under which she is universally known (Maṇavālaṅ 1990: 17-19).

The episode with the garland is of course full of a symbolical meaning. Accepting the garland from *Āṅṅāl* had overtones of a fragment of Indian matrimonial ceremony—the exchange of garlands by the bridegroom and the bride. For *Āṅṅāl* it was a vision which she described in one song of her poetic cycle called *Nācciyār Tirumōli* (“The sacred utterance of one who desires,” NTP 504–646):

mattaḷam koṭṭa varicaṅkam niṅṅūta
muttuṭait tāma niraitāḷnta pantarkīl
maittuṅaṅ nampi matucūtaṅ vantu eṅṅaik
kaittalam paṅṅak kaṅṅakkaṅṅēṅ toḷināṅ (Nācciyār Tirumōli 6.6 = NTP 561)

While drums were thundering, conches constantly roaring,
Under the canopy decorated with pearls and garlands
My cousin, my beloved Madhusūdana
Took my hand—I saw it in a dream, oh friend!

These lines are taken from the sixth part of the cycle which is exclusively devoted to a rather minute description of the marriage ritual of Kṛṣṇa and *Āṅṅāl*. The picture, of course, is the fruit of *Āṅṅāl*'s imagination, but the details of the ceremony are true to reality, including the reference to the specific relationship of the newly-weds.⁴ The whole cycle consisting of 14 parts gives a wide range of emotions of a girl in love (with Kṛṣṇa), with many nuances and mood aspects, thus being an outstanding specimen of religious love lyrics.

Formally these 14 parts are very characteristic of the Tamil Bhakti poetry, for each one represents the form of a *patikam*. The term is produced from the Sanskrit word *padya* which goes back to the Vedic hymns where it signified a poetical composition, a song. This is one, among some others, of the features which testify to the fact that Tamil Bhakti poetry preserved certain ties with a Vedic hymn.

The constitutional elements of the Tamil *patikam* are: 10 or 11 strophes, called *pacuram* in Vaiṣṇava poetry, united thematically but also formally by a refrain, consisting of a certain formula, sometimes of a whole line (another feature reminding of some Vedic *sūktas*) or the name of a temple to which the hymn is devoted. The last strophe contains the so called *śruti-phala* (a statement that those who listen or perform the *patikam* will gain certain spiritual benefits) and the name of the *patikam*'s poet.

⁴ The words “my cousin” (*maittuṅaṅ nampi*) reflect the typical Dravidian custom of cross-cousin marriage. In the Southern variant of the Kṛṣṇaite myth Kṛṣṇa's wife, Nappiṅṅai, is the daughter of Kṛṣṇa's maternal uncle (see below).

Besides *Nācciyār Tirumoli Āṅṅāl* composed another piece of poetry called *Tiruppāvai* (NTP 474–503), which is much more popular and known better (due, perhaps, to the fact that the first one looks in Indian context too personal or even intimate). The *Tiruppāvai* preserves the main features of a *patikam* with the exception of the number of verses: it consists not of 10 but of 30 songs (containing 8 lines each in the meter *kalippā*). The event described in the poem is mentioned in a small fragment of the *Bhāgavatapurāṇa* (X.22) where the girls in Gokula worshipped the goddess Durgā/Kātyāyanī, represented by an idol made of sand. Āṅṅāl develops this episode into a cycle of songs put into the mouth of shepherd girls who in the early morning gather for ritual bathing and march along the village street summoning other girls to wake up and join them. Each song contains, besides appellative and descriptive passages, different names of Viṣṇu and Kṛṣṇa together with their epithets. Many of them function as a “condensed myth,” recalling famous actions of the God: *ōṅki yulakaḷanta uttamaṅ*, “the Highest who had risen and measured the world” (*Tiruppāvai* 3.1 = NTP 476.1); *pēymulai nañcuṅṅu | kaḷlac cakaṭam kalakkaḷiyak kālōcci | veḷḷat taravil tuyilamarnta vitt[u]*, “the Seed [of all] who is sleeping on the snake in the ocean, who raised his leg to destroy the false cart, who drank poison from breasts of the she-demon” (*Tiruppāvai* 6.3–5 = NTP 479.3–5), etc. Such epithets have the meaning of a latent praise, and each strophe in fact can be considered as a religious hymn of its sort. Even a light quarrel between the girls reproduced by Āṅṅāl with a humorous note in the strophes 15–16 (NTP 488–489), or details of everyday life given in many other places cannot screen the atmosphere of spiritual elevation and religious fervour which saturates the poetry of *Tiruppāvai*.

The first strophe (NTP 474), a preamble to the cycle, names the time of the action, its participants—small girls of the shepherds’ village, and its aim: Nārāyaṇa will give them the desired object (*parai*)⁵. The most important detail here is that Kṛṣṇa who is a member of a shepherds’ family is identified with Nārāyaṇa, the ruler and personification of the universe. Thus, from the very beginning two planes of understanding and feeling Kṛṣṇa—as a human being and as the Supreme cosmic God—are introduced.

mārkaḷit tiṅkaḷ matinirainta naṅṅāḷāl
nīrāṭap pōtuvīr pōtumiṅō nēriḷaiyīr
cīrmalkum āyppātic celvac cīrumīrkāl
kūrvēr koṭuntolilaṅ nantakō paṅkumaraṅ
ērārnta kaṅṅi yacōtai yiḷaṅciṅkam
kārmēṅic ceṅkaṅ katirmatiyam pōlmukattāṅ

⁵ The term *parai* is an enigmatic word in the poem. Its first meaning is “drum.” F. Hardy (1983: 513) calls it “the obscure symbol” and preserves the meaning “drum” (p. 514). J. Filliozat in his translation also gives “le tambour.” However, this meaning is difficult to understand as it seems to be out of place here. In the way of guessing one can suggest that, since the beating of the drum was known to accompany the declaration of king’s decrees, *parai* can designate “important utterance,” let us say “a promise, assurance.”

*nārā yaṇaṇē namakkē paraitaruvāṇ
pārōr pukaḷap paṭintēlō rempāvāy (Tiruppāvai 1= NTP 474)*

On auspicious day of *mārkaḷi*, when the moon is full,
You, who are going to bathe, won't you go, oh you with beautiful decorations,
Small beautiful girls from glorious shepherds' village!
So as the son of the shepherd Nanda with a sharp spear, whose work is hard,
The young lion of Yaśodā with beautiful eyes,
He, who has a dark body, red eyes and the face like the rays of moon,
Nārāyaṇa himself to give us the desired,
The way the people of the world will praise, accept [our rite], our *pāvai*!

Girls bathe in the water and ask the goddess to provide them with good husbands, progeny and prosperity. What is described by Āṅṅāḷ certainly is a typical rite of fertility well known in India from ancient up to our times.⁶ Rites of this type are well known in Tamilnadu as *pāvai nonṇu* (*nonṇu* means “suffering, self-restraint, asceticism” and *pāvai* “an image of a woman, a statue, a doll, a picture, also a woman or a goddess”). So, the term can be understood in two ways: austerity actions undertaken by women, or the same performed for the goddess, in front of her image. Caṅkam poetry gives several conspicuous details, showing how *pāvai* representing a goddess was venerated: girls are performing a circular dance *kuravai* around *pāvai* made of clay or sand (AN 269.19: *vaṅṅal pāvai*), decorate it with flowers (PN 11.3 and 243.2-3), put it into the water of a pond (AN 181.19). The girls also bathe in water which was an important part of the rite conducted during the full moon in the months of *mārkaḷi* (December-January) and *tai* (January-February).

Āṅṅāḷ certainly knew such rites and, as we can imagine, participated in them. So, there is no wonder that a happy idea came to her mind—to use the structure of this rite as a foundation for a cycle of songs devoted to Viṣṇu/Kṛṣṇa. She also made use of a cliché phrase obviously borrowed from the rite: *ēlōr empāvāy*, which being repeated in the end of each strophe, served as a formulaic refrain typical for a *patikam*. The phrase consists of the following elements:

- 1) the verbal root *ēl* (“to be suitable, convenient, just; ... to awake from sleep; ... to receive, welcome; ... to admit, accept, consent, concede”) with the imperative meaning;
- 2) *ōr*, an expletive, emphatic particle;
- 3) *em*, the oblique form of the pronoun *nām* (“we”) in the function of a genitive (“our”);
- 4) the word *pāvai* in the appellative form *pāvāy*.

⁶ See for instance Fruzzetti (1982: 85), Pintchman (2005: 42).

The phrase can be considered as an elliptic construction, if we take that the verb *ēl* needs an object, which will be—as we reasonably guess—our rite, our supplications. So, the following translation of the phrase may be proposed: “accept [our rite, our supplications], oh our goddess (*pāvai*)!” For the final variant I choose: “Accept [our rite], oh our *pāvai*!”⁷

However, apart from the word *pāvai*, *Āṇṭāl* did not mention the goddess at all, and we are justified to call this phrase a relic of the initial rite. In the poetic representation of the rite *Āṇṭāl* switched her attention, so to say, from *Durgā/Kātyāyanī* to *Viṣṇu/Kṛṣṇa*, putting him in the centre of the rite because here it is he who appears to be a donator of welfare, fertility and all other positive things, including religious goals.

The rite in question is clearly seen as belonging to a type recognized as a rite of passage. It is known to consist of three main stages:

- 1) a departure from a normal state;
- 2) a state characterized by tests, sufferings, observation of vows, change of usual manner of life;
- 3) returning back to the normal state, understood as cleansed and renovated.⁸

In verses 2 and 3 of *Tiruppāvai* the girls actually describe the first and the second parts of the rite which represent a departure from a normal state and a kind of an ascetic behaviour:

vaiyattu vālvīrkāl nāmumnam pāvaikkuc
ceyyuṅ kiricaikaḷ kēḷīrō pāṛkaṭalul
paiyat tuyiṅra parama ṇaṭipāṭi
neyyūṅṅōm pālūṅṅōm nāṭkālē nīrāṭi
maiṇṭiṭ ṭelutōm malaritṭu nāmmuṭiyōm
ceyyā taṇaceyyōm tikkuraḷai cenrōtōm
aiyamum piccayum āntaṇaiyum kaikāṭṭi
uyyumā reṅṅi yukantēlō rempāvāy (Tiruppāvai 2= NTP 475)

Oh you, who live in this spacious world! We also
 Undertake actions corresponding to the rite—won’t you listen about them?
 Having sung the Transcendental one, who sleeps on the hood of the snake,
 We do not eat meat, do not drink milk. In the beginning of the day
 We after bathing do not decorate our hair with flowers, do not blacken our eyes,
 We do not do improper things, do not utter, even by chance, evil words,

⁷ There are several translations of this phrase in different sources. Here are some of them: “Prends en considération notre vœu” (Filliozat 1972, see pp. 35-36 for his discussion of the phrase); “O, my *pāvai*” (Hudson 2010: 185); “Fulfill, O Song of our vow” (Dehejia 1990: 43-61).

⁸ The situation of separation in Tamil poetry understood as a *pāvai nonpu*, that is a rite of passage, is treated in Dubianski (2000: 138).

And giving alms, whatever good things we have,
We rejoice, thinking of salvation. Accept [our rite], oh, our *pāvai*!

In the third verse the aim of the rite is unambiguously stated:

ōṅki yulakaḷanta uttamaṅ pērpāṭi
nāṅkaḷnam pāvaikkuc cārriṇi rāṭiṅāḷ
tīṅkiṅri nāṭellām tiṅkaḷmum māripeytu
ōṅku peruñcenne lūṭu kayalukaḷap
pūṅkuvaḷaip pōtil porivaṅṭu kaṅpaṭuppat
tēṅkātē pukkiruntu cīrtta mulaipaṅri
vāṅkak kuṭamniṅraikkum vaḷḷal perumpacukkaḷ
nīṅkāta celvam niṅaintēḷō rempāvāy (Tiruppāvai 3 = NTP 476)

If we, singing the name of the Highest, who rose to measure the world,
Inform people that we are doing the rite and bathe,
The evil will perish and everywhere in the country triple rains come,
Crops will frolic amidst rich and high crops of rice,
Sparkling bees will drowse in flowers of lilies (*kuvaḷai*),
The earth will be full of never decreasing herds of cows
That lavishly, without a delay fill the pots with milk,
The moment herdsmen touch their udders. Accept [our rite], oh, our *pāvai*!

The final stage of the rite is also described in its main features—renovation, cooling off and, significantly, a feast, a joint meal, which symbolizes prosperity, well-being and fulfilment of all desires.

kūṭārai vellumcīrk kōvintā unraṅṅai
pāṭip paraikoṅṭu yāmpērum cammāṅam
nāṭu pukaḷum pariciṅāḷ nāṅrākac
cūṭakamē tōḷvaḷaiyē tōṭē cevippūvē
paṭakamē yenraṅaiya palkalaṅum yāmaṅivōm
āṭai yuṭuppō matanpiṅṅē pārcōru
mūṭaney peytu mulaṅkai vaḷivārak
kūṭi yiruntu kuḷirntēḷō rempāvāy (Tiruppāvai 27 = NTP 500)

Oh Govinda who has a merit to conquer those who do not join you!
On having sung you and completed the rite, we'll get your response,
Let it be so good that the whole country will praise it!
And we, putting arm-bracelets, earrings, feet-bangles
And other decorations on, clad in new clothes,
Shall pour lavishly—up to elbows—butter

Into the vessels full of rice and milk,
And together shall be cooled off. Accept [our rite], oh, our *pāvai*!

When discussing the episode of the Kṛṣṇaite myth, which Āṅṭāl took as a starting point of her composition, that is women's adoration of the image of Durgā/Kātyāyanī, we inevitably meet the problem of a correspondence between this episode in her poem and the analogous episode in *Bhāgavatapurāṇa* (22.1–6). Earlier I noted that this problem was successfully tackled with by F. Hardy (1983), who pointed out relevant passages in both texts and demonstrated their textual links (pp. 512–515). In fact he handled a considerable part of the texts created by Ālvārs (pp. 647–652), and came to the general conclusion that it is *Bhāgavatapurāṇa* that “utilizes the Ālvār and not vice versa” (p. 524). This conclusion sounds convincingly in general, though some questions still can arise. For instance, if we take the given episode, it is not quite clear what made the author (or authors?) of the *Purāṇa*, having Āṅṭāl's poem in their view, preserve a definite Śaivite bias of the rite (see Hardy 1983: 513). In my opinion, the interrelation of the two texts could be more complicated and not unambiguous. There must have been a stream of religious and mythological lore that could be considered as a common source of the texts, which can be interpreted as two ways (purāṇic and poetic) of the verbal fixation of a broad Vaiṣṇava religious tradition. In this case we can assume the existence of a common stock of images, motives, formulae which explains, at least in some cases, textual similarities.

However it might be, the episode in question is treated in Āṅṭāl's poem and *Bhāgavatapurāṇa* in many ways differently. First of all, Āṅṭāl chose not a narrative but a dramatic mode of its presentation making her poem a cycle of songs addressed to different listeners and partly taking the form of a dialogue. Then, she made a definite accent on some local traditional features.

In the *Bhāgavatapurāṇa* the Vaiṣṇava tune of the rite reveals itself in the goal the girls pursued: they asked to give them in marriage none other than Kṛṣṇa. The situation in Āṅṭāl's poem is different, since according to Tamil tradition Kṛṣṇa is already married. His spouse is Piṅṅai, or Nappiṅṅai (literally “a good girl”), his sister-cousin. In strophe 18 (NTP 491) she is called Nanda's niece (*maṛu makaḷ*), but actually she is the daughter of Yaśodā's brother, the shepherd Kumbhaka.⁹ Thus, she is not only Kṛṣṇa's wife but his relative (a cross-cousin, to be exact, the daughter of his maternal uncle). According to the Dravidian custom of cross-cousin marriage she is his *urimai-p-peṇ* (“a woman by right”). So, she is no rival to the girls. On the contrary, when waking her up they are asking her to help them to

⁹ Kṛṣṇaite mythological tradition of the South considers Nappiṅṅai (who in Sanskrit texts appears as Nīlā, the daughter of the cowherd Kumbhaka, Yaśodā's brother) as the incarnation of the goddess Bhūdevī, the Earth-goddess (see Filliozat 1972: xvii–xviii; Edholm & Suneson 1972: 52; Hardy 1983: 221–225). It is significant because in this way Kṛṣṇa is by the way of mythology connected with local tribal ethnos which later on was represented by Rādhā.

wake up Kṛṣṇa, her husband (*Tiruppavai* 19 = NTP 492). Thus, we have here a South-Indian variant of this fragment of the Kṛṣṇaite myth, which while taking the North-Indian mythological substrate adds South Indian features to it and fills it with some original details.

The shepherd girl Nappiṇṇai is met with for the first time in the 17th chapter of *Cilappatikāram*, in which dances of *gopīs* with Kṛṣṇa are described. She is called Kṛṣṇa's younger sister and she is understood as his beloved. There is only a hint at their matrimonial relations here: Nappiṇṇai adorns Kṛṣṇa with a garland made of *tulasī* leaves. As to Āṇṭāl, she directly calls her Kṛṣṇa's wife.

The girls do not ask the Goddess to give them Kṛṣṇa as a husband but ask Kṛṣṇa himself to give them his grace, a success in performing the rite and a possibility to be his servants forever (in strophes 23 = NTP 496, 27 = 500, 28 = 501, 29 = 502). In the strophe 20 (493) in which they address Nappiṇṇai there is a passage (lines 7-8) which can be interpreted as a request to her to make her husband join them in bathing (*uṇ maṇāḷaṇai ippōtē yemmainī rāṭṭ[u]*). Here Āṇṭāl's poetry is echoing a motive characteristic for the earlier Tamil love-poetry (Akam): the hero and the heroine bathe together (a situation with obvious overtones of a fertility ritual). A good example is provided by lines from the anthology *Kalittokai*:

kāmār kaṭumpuṇal kalantemmō ṭāṭuvāl
tāmaraiikkaṇ putaittañcit taḷarntataṇō ṭolukalāṇ
nīṇāka naṇuntaṇṭār tayankap pāyntaruḷiṇāl
puṇāka muṇattalīp pōtantāṇ akaṇakalam
varumulai puṇarntaṇa eṇpataṇāl eṇtōḷi
arumalai taralvēṇṭil tarukirkum perumaiyaḷē

(*Kalittokai* 39.1–6, utterance of the heroine's friend).

When she was bathing with us in a beautiful, fast stream,
 Closing her eyes, resembling lotuses, fearing, weakening,
 And garlands of the high, cool *puṇṇai* [flowers] were swaying in the torrent,
 He gracefully jumped [into it] and firmly embraced her bosom,
 His wide and firm breast and her high breast united,—
 Because of this, if precious rain is needed,
 My friend possesses the greatness of being able to give it.

Another interesting reminiscence of Caṅkam poetry is represented by several strophes in Āṇṭāl's poem:

pullum cilampinākāṇ pullaraiyaṇ kōyilil
vellai viḷicaṅkiṇ pēraravam kēṭṭilaiyō
pillāy eluntirāy pēymulai naṅcuṇṭu

*kaḷḷac cakaṭam kalakkaliyak kālōcci
vellat taravil tuyilamarnta vittinai
uḷḷattuk koṇṭu muṇivarkaḷum yōkikaḷum
mella velun tariyeṇṇa pēraravam
uḷḷam pukuntu kuḷirntēlō rempāvāy (Tiruppāvai 6 = NTP 479)*

Hark! Birds are singing, white conches in the temple of the King of birds
Are roaring—don't you hear their sound?
Wake up, oh baby! The yogins and the ascetics have taken in their hearts
The One who drank poison from the she-demon's breasts,
Who destroyed the cart by a movement of his leg,
Who is sleeping on the Snake, who is the seed of everything,
Arising from their sleep they proclaim "Hari!"
This noise enters our hearts, cooling them off.
Accept [our rite], oh, our pāvai!

*pullinvāy kiṇṭāṇaiṇ pollā varakkaṇaik
kiḷḷik kaḷaintāṇaik kīrttimai pāṭippōy
piḷḷaika lellārum pāvaik kaḷampukkār
velli yeluntu viyāla muṇaṅkirru
pullum cilampiṇakāṇ pōtarik kaṇṇiṇāy
kuḷḷak kuḷirak kuṭaintunī rāṭātē
paḷḷik kiṭattiyō pāvāynī nannāl
kaḷḷam tavirntu kalantēlō rempāvāy (Tiruppāvai 13 = NTP 486)*

Singing the name of Him who tore the beak of the bird,
Who defeated and killed the evil Rākṣasa,
All young girls are going and entering the space of the rite.
Venus has arisen, Jupiter is asleep.
The birds are shouting, you see! Oh you with flower-eyes!
You are not bathing in the cool water of the pond,
You are resting on the bed, oh our doll! In these auspicious days
Leave aside the pretence, join us! Accept [our rite], oh, our pāvai!

*uṅkaḷ pulaikaṭait tōṭṭattu vāviyuḷ
ceṅkaḷunīr vāynekiḷn tāmpalvāy kūmpinakāṇ
ceṅkaḷ poṭikkūrai veṇpal tavattavar
taṅkaḷ tirukkōyil cankiṭuvāṇ pōkiṇṇār
eṅkaḷai muṇṇa meluppuvāṇ vāypēcum
naṅkāy eluntirāy nāṇātāy nāvūṭaiyāy
caṅkoṭu cakkara mēntum taṭakkaiyan*

paṅkayak kaṅṅāṅaiṅ pāṭēlō rempāvāy (Tiruppāvai 14 = NTP 487)

In the pond behind your house—look!—
The white lotus is closing its flowers, the red lotus is opening its buds.
Clad in ochre cloths, the ascetics with bright white teeth
Are bringing their conches to temples.
Oh you, who boasted to wake us early,
You are lacking shame, our sister! You do possess the tongue
To sing the One who holds the conch and disc in his huge hands,
Who has lotus-like eyes. Accept [our rite], oh, our *pāvai*!

In these strophes (as well as in some others) the praise of Viṣṇu/Kṛṣṇa is combined with a description of a dawn, replacing night. These verbal pictures expressively show the awakening of the nature and people but in the context of the ritual devoted to Viṣṇu/Kṛṣṇa they signify the time for the god to wake up. Such an appeal is reproduced, for instance, in the stanza describing how the girls standing in front of Kṛṣṇa's house ask him to rise from his bed:

*ēṙra kalaṅka ḷetirpoṅki mīṭalippa
māṙṙātē pālcoriyum vallal perumpacukkaḷ
āṙṙap paṭaittāṅ makaṅē arivurāy
ūṙra muṭaiyāy periyāy ulakiṅil
tōṙṙamāy niṅṙa cuṭarē tuyileḷāy
māṙṙā ruṅakku valitolaintuṅ vācaṙkaṅ
āṙṙātu vantuṅ ṅaṭipaṅiyu māpōlē
pōṙṙiyām vantōm pukalntēlō rempāvāy (Tiruppāvai 21 = NTP 494)*

Oh You, who has the ability to conquer those who are unfaithful to you
Oh You, the son of him, who is the owner
Of plenty of big and generous cows that give milk
Which is streaming over the rims of milk-vessels! Wake up!
Oh You, great and mighty, who has become the light of the world,
Arise from your sleep! Your enemies subdued their force,
And assembling at your doorway submissively
And eagerly desire to revere your feet. And we came like this
To adore and to praise You. Accept [our rite], oh, our *pāvai*!

Obviously Āṅṭāḷ turns here to a well-known ancient poetic genre of a morning song, performed during the ritual of wakening a king who was always considered in India a sacred figure, a personification of god (or, rather, different gods) and was responsible for the well-being and security of his domain and people, for the vital energy of his land and, on the metaphysical level, of the world (the identification of the king with the sun is especially

important in this context). When asleep he was supposed to be submerged in the realm of darkness and death and it was necessary to bring him safely back to life, to stimulate his vital energy with the help of a special ritual in which musicians and singers were the key figures. The early testimonies to the existence of such rituals are found in the epic poems where the technical names of the performers are given: *sūta*, *magadha*, *vandin*, *vaitalika*. There were differences between them—*sūtas*, for instance, were story-tellers and *vaitalikas*' main duty was to proclaim the time of the day—but they all participated in this ritual which consisted mostly of praise and glorification of the king.

Sūtas, *magadhas* and *vaitalikas* are mentioned in the early Tamil poetry (*Maturaikkāñci* 670–671; *Cilappatikāram* 26.74–75) but they are absent from the poetry of the anthology *Puraṇānūru*, the main corpus of Tamil panegyric songs, which were performed by other figures (*pāṇar*, *porunar*, *viṛali*, etc.). These poets and singers also composed and performed morning songs known under the term *tiruppalli eḷucci* (“raising [the king] from the sacred bed”).

velliyu miruvicum pērtarum pullum
uyarciṇaik kuṭampaik kuraṛrōṛ riṇavē
poykaiyum pōtukaṇ vilittana paipayac
cuṭaruñ curuṅkiṇ rōḷiyē māṭelun
tiraṅkukuraṇ muracamotu valampuri yārppa
iravuppurāṅ kaṅṭa kālait tōṅri
ekkiru ḷakaṛru mēmaṇ pācaṛai
vaikaṛai yaravaṅ kēḷiyar palakōṭ
ceytār mārpa velumati tuyilenat
teṅkaṇ mākkiṇai teḷirppa vorri
netuṅkatait tōṅri yēṇē (PN 397, 1–11)

Beautiful Venus has risen in the vast skies,
While birds in their nests built in the tall branches
Are raising their voices.
The pools have partly opened the eyes of their [lotus] buds, and
The Moon's greenish light has gone; noise has arisen—
Drums are beating, and the roar of conches turned to the right is heard.
Morning has come that yet sees the back of the night. In a military camp
Where glittering spear heads are driving away the darkness
Behold the noise of dawn! O thee whose breast is adorned
With an intricate garland! Do rise from sleep!—
[Thus appealing] and beating the noisy fair-eyed *kiṇai* drum,
I approached thy high gates.

When comparing these lines with Āṅṅāl's strophes given above their correspondence appears quite clearly. Āṅṅāl certainly was acquainted with this form of Caṅkam poetry and used it to her own purpose. At the same time it also becomes clear that the tradition had elaborated the poetical canon of the genre, which appears to be as a set of definite and stable features. The praise of a patron is combined with a description of a dawn which consists of more or less the same motives, images, lexical formulae. This is convincingly confirmed by another *tiruppalli eḷucci* composed by Āṅṅāl's approximate contemporary: a poet-Ālvār known under the nickname Toṅṅaraṅippoṭi ("the dust under the slaves' feet"). In his composition (NTP 917-926) the motive of waking up a patron is woven into the picture of a huge congregation of gods, semi-gods and other heavenly figures in front of Viṣṇu's bed in the temple of Śrīraṅkam. The poem has the form of a *patikam* with 10 strophes of 8 lines, connected by the repeating formulae *paḷli eḷuntaruḷāyē* ("be graceful, arise from Thy bed"). Here are three fragments from it:

*katiravaṅ kuṅaticaic cikaramvan taṅaintāṅ kaṅaviru ḷakaṅratu kālaiyam poḷutāy
matuvirin toḷukiṅa māṃala rellām vāṅava raracarkaḷ vantuva ntīṅṅi
etirticai niṅaintaṅa rivaroṅṅum pukunta iruṅkaḷiṅ rīṅṅamum piṅiyotu muracum
atirtali lalaikaṅaḷ pōṅṅruḷa teṅkumaraṅkattam māpaḷli yeḷuntaru ḷāyē*

(*Tiruppalliyeḷucci* 1 = NTP 917)

The god with rays has arisen and stays in the eastern part,
The dark is moving away at this morn time,
Flowers open their buds, streaming the sweet nectar,
All dwellers of the heaven are coming and coming in crowds,
They filled all the space in front of the bed;
The herds of big elephants and she-elephants which came along
With roaring of drums look like the waves of the sea.
Oh the king of Śrīraṅkam! Be graceful, arise from Thy bed!

*pulampiṅa puṅkaḷum pūmpoḷil kaḷiṅvāy pōyirruk kaṅkul pukuntatu pulari
kalantatu kuṅaticaik kaṅaikaṅa laravam kaḷivaṅṅu miḷaṅriya kalampakam puṅainta
alaṅkalan toṅaiyalkoṅ ṅaṅiyiṅai paṅivāṅ amararkaḷ pukuntaṅa rāṅtali lammā
ilaṅkaiyar kōṅvaḷi pāṅucey kōyil emperu māṅpaḷli yeḷuntaruḷāyē*

(*Tiruppalliyeḷucci* 5 = NTP 921)

In blossoming groves birds are singing,
The dark of the night has gone, the dawn has come.
The noise of the sea can be heard from the eastern part.
Taking beautiful garlands of many flowers
In which drunken bees are murmuring,
The lofty people (i.e. Brahmins) are coming

To adore your feet in the temple

Where the king of Laṅkā adored you. Be graceful, arise from Thy bed!

*antarāt tamararkaḷ kūṭṭanka ḷivaiyō aruntava muṇivarum marutaru mivarō
intira ṇāṇaiyum tāṇumvan tivaṇō emperu māṇuṇ kōyiliṇ vācal
cuntarar nerukkavic cātarar nūkka iyakkarum mayāṅkiṇar tiruvaṭi toḷuvāṇ
antaram pāriṭa millaimaṇ ṛituvō araṅkattam māpalli yeluntaru ḷāyē*

(*Tiruppalliyeḷucci* 7 = NTP 923)

Crowds of gods of the heavens—here they are!

Also the *munis*, who performed great *tapas*, and the *marutas*,

And Indra on the elephant with his army—here he is!

Oh our Great! At the entrance of the temple

Beautiful dwellers of the heavens,

Vidyadharas and fascinated *yakṣas* are here.

There is no space in the heavens for those who came

To adore your sacred feet! Be graceful, arise from Thy bed!

In other strophes ascetics, *yogins*, *yakṣas*, *siddhas*, musicians, dancers are also mentioned. Analysing this verbal picture we can discern three interrelated levels of its contents: one presents a court ritual aiming at waking up a king; then there are features of a similar ritual performed in the temple of Śrīraṅgam; finally there is a mythological scene depicting gods, heavenly dwellers and other sacred persons assembled in order to adore the great god lying in a grand, stately manner before them, and to recognize his central, universal role in the cosmos. A tradition to describe such scenes exists in Indian literature from the early period. We can find them in the *Mahābhārata* for instance, in the following passage:

“Continuing on to Gokarṇa, famed in the three worlds (...) where Brahmā, the Gods, the seers and ascetics, Bhūtas, Yakṣas, Piśācas, Kiṃnaras, great Snakes, Siddhas, Cāraṇas and Gandharvas, men and serpents, rivers and oceans wait upon the Consort of Umā (...)” (*Mahābhārata* III.83.22–24, van Buitenen transl.)

In Tamil poetry the theme of congregation of gods and heavenly beings is reflected in the poem *Tirumurukāṇṟuppaṭai* ascribed to Nakkīrar, in the third part of which (lines 126–176) crowds of them move in the air towards a place called Āviṇaṅkuṭi to have a look at Skanda/Murukaṅ. Āṇṭāḷ also introduces the theme of a gathering before the patron but on a different scale. She rejects the idea of depicting a mythological congregation entirely and in fact mentions only Kṛṣṇa’s enemies (*Tiruppāvai* 21.6 = NTP 494.6) and kings of the world (*Tiruppāvai* 22.1 = NTP 495.1) who come submissively to the gates of his dwelling. What she actually presents in her poem is a gathering of beggars at a king’s court, a theme minutely developed in traditional Tamil heroic poetry (*Puṛam*): a king’s subjects (represented in poetry mostly by singers and poets) come to the gates of his palace to receive his gifts. This

situation is expressed in Tamil terms as a dichotomy between *iravalār* (“those who beg [for gifts]”) and *puravalār* (“those who supply [gifts]” i.e. the donors) and is certainly reproduced by Āṅṅāḷ in her poem with one important difference: it is treated here in a purely religious clue. *Iravalār* are represented by a group of girls, who are *bhaktas*, while the generous patron and donor is Kṛṣṇa. Beginning from the 16th strophe (NTP 489) a motive of a service to the God in temple becomes more and more pronounced. The house of Nanda becomes the king’s palace and a temple (*kōyil*, see 16.2 and 23.6 = NTP 489.2 and 496.3). The culmination of this fragment, and seemingly of the whole poem, are strophes 22–24 (NTP 495–497), where Kṛṣṇa, as I mentioned earlier, is depicted lying in state and girls come to his couch “as the kings of the world.” The gifts they are asking for also have a religious meaning. They hope that “after singing the God with their mouth and thinking about him with their mind the faults both done and to be done will become garbage burning in the fire” (5.6–8 = NTP 478.5–6) and that “Nārāyaṇa will give the desired object (*paraī*)” (10.4 = NTP 483.4). They believe that “if You look at us the curse laid on us will fall down” (22.8 = NTP 495.8).¹⁰ They proclaim: “we have come to get the desired” (24.7–8 = NTP 497.7–8). They ask: “oh Lord, give us the desired” (28.8 = NTP 501.8). What is meant by “the desired” is on a large scale explained in the 29th strophe:

ciṙrañ ciṙukālē vantunṅaic cēvittu un
porrā maraiyaṭiyē pōrrum poruḷkēḷāy
perramēyt tunṅum kulattir piṙantunī
kurrēva leṅkaḷaik kollāmaṙ pōkātu
iṙraip paraikoḷvā nanrukāṅ kōvintā
erraiḱku mēḷēḷ piṙavikkum unṙaṅṅō
ṭurrōmē yāvō muṅakkēnā māṭceyvōm
marraināṅ kāmaṅkaḷ mārrēḷō rempāvāy (*Tiruppāvai* 29 = NTP 502)

In small hours (before the dawn) we have come to serve you,
 Listen about the reason of our adoration of your golden lotus-feet.
 You who was born in the family which lives by raising cattle,
 Do not leave us and our humble service [to you],
 Not only for the present day,—look, Govinda!
 But forever, in seven by seven births being close to you,
 We shall be servants only to you.
 Do change our other desires! Accept [our rite], oh, our *pāvai*!

¹⁰ The curse (*cāpam*), is obviously the chain of births, *saṃsāra*, which Hinduism considers as the main obstacle on the way to *mokṣa* (liberation from bodily life). Contrary to this traditional point of view, Āṅṅāḷ (and many other Āḷvār and Nāyaṅmār) asks Kṛṣṇa to give the *bhaktas* a possibility to live on the earth eternally in the presence of God (see *Tiruppāvai* 29 = NTP 502).

Even more generally the notion of “the desired” is expressed by one word constantly repeated in the poem. It is *aruḷ* (“the grace,” from the root “to give grace, be graceful”), a concept crucial—for the whole complex of Tamil Bhakti poetry in both its Vaiṣṇava and Śaiva branches which encapsulates the ultimate spiritual gift a *bhakta* strives to get from the God as reciprocation for his profound and emotional love to him.¹¹

From this point of view the walk of girls along the streets of Śrīvilliputtūr can be interpreted as a religious procession, a kind of a pilgrimage with the aim to wake up Kṛṣṇa and make him bathe with them (20.8 = NTP 493.8), not to speak of obvious desire to praise and glorify Kṛṣṇa. Taking into consideration that girls all the time appeal to other girls to join them we may suggest that Āṇṭāl had another form of old Tamil poetry in mind: the *ārṛuppaṭai*, a poem which contains an invitation to step on the way to a patron, a specific guide to him. The construction of the poem presupposes a certain route, a movement from a periphery to a sacred centre, that is the place where the patron dwells (the longer *ārṛuppaṭai* poems of the *Pattuppāṭṭu* collection, apart from *Tirumurukārṛuppaṭai*, are constructed in this way). Though Āṇṭāl’s composition lacks some formal characteristics of the genre it conforms to it in a general way and by its spirit. It justly can be defined as a kind of a religious *ārṛuppaṭai* (along with *Tirumurukārṛuppaṭai*).

I think we have received enough evidence for realizing the artistic method of Āṇṭāl, who built up her poem as a construction consisting of several layers which have close connection with previous Tamil religious and poetic traditions. A conspicuous feature of Āṇṭāl’s poem can be seen in the fact that she moves the action of this episode from Gokula on Yamunā river to her native village Śrīvilliputtūr—she herself announced it in the last strophe of the poem. Thus, the poem has two planes of representation: a real one, since a real rite performed by the girls of Śrīvilliputtūr is described, and a mythical one, since this rite is conceived as performed in Gokula, the place where the mythological Kṛṣṇa lives, by the local shepherdesses, *gopīs*. Such an easy concatenation of two planes accurately reflects the state of mind and soul of the God’s adepts who experience their proximity to the God in a very emotional, often ecstatic, way and transform themselves into figures close to him, and participate in his actions. On a general level such a process of mingling with the myth, “living” within it, can be termed the interiorisation of the myth. Both Āṇṭāl’s compositions (*Tiruppāvai* and *Nācciyār Tirumoli*) reflect this process perfectly well—though in different ways—and represent a good example of the poetry, expressing the psychology of a devotee, a *bhakta* of Viṣṇu/Kṛṣṇa.

¹¹ The idea of a grace received from a patron is known to Caṅkam poetry. Many poets state that they value the king’s benevolence higher than a material gift and they won’t accept it unless it is given with a willing heart (see Dubianski 2000: 65–66).

ABBREVIATIONS

| | |
|-----|------------------------------------|
| AN | <i>Akanāṇūru</i> |
| NTP | <i>Nālāyirattivviyappirapantam</i> |
| PN | <i>Puraṇānūru</i> |

REFERENCES

TEXTUAL SOURCES

Bhāgavatapurāṇa. *Bhāgavata Purāṇa of Kṛṣṇa Dvaipāyana Vyāsa. With the Sanskrit Commentary Bhāvārthabodhinī of Śrīdharasvāmin.* Edited by J. L. Shastri. Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass, 1983.

Cilappatikāram. *Ācīriyar Iḷaṅkōvaṭikaḷ iyarriyarūḷiya Cilappātikāram.* Ed. and comm. by Po. Vē. Cōmacuntaraṇār. Tirunelvēli & Ceṇṇai: Tirunelvēlit Teṇṇintiya Caivacittānta Nūrpattippuk Kaḷakam, 1969.

Kalittokai. *Eṭṭuttokai nūlkaḷuḷ onṛākiya Kalittokai. Nacciṇarkkiṇiyar uraiyum.* Ed. by Po. Vē. Cōmacuntaraṇār. Tirunelvēli & Ceṇṇai: Tirunelvēlit Teṇṇintiya Caivacittānta Nūrpattippuk Kaḷakam, 1969.

Harivaṃśa. *The Harivaṃśa. Being the Khila or Supplement to the Mahābhārata.* For the first time critically edited by Parashuram Lakshman Vaidya. 2 vols. Pune: Bhandarkar Oriental Research Institute, 1969–1971.

Nācciyār Tirumoli. See Nālāyirattivviyappirapantam.

Nālāyirattivviyappirapantam. *Nālāyirattivviyappirapantam.* Ed. by Ki. Vēṅkaṭacāmi Reṭṭiyār 3rd ed. Ceṇṇai: Tiruvēṅkaṭattāṇ Tirumaṇṇam, 1973.

Mahābhārata. *The Mahābhārata.* For the first time critically edited by Vishnu S. Sukthankar et al. 19 vols. Poona: Bhandarkar Oriental Research Institute, 1933–1966.

Mahābhārata. *The Mahābhārata. 2. The Book of the Assembly Hall. 3. The Book of the Forest.* Translated and edited by J.A.B. van Buitenen. Chicago & London: University of Chicago Press, 1975.

Pattuppāṭṭu. *Pattuppāṭṭu. Mūlamum uraiyum. Mutal pakuti.* Ed. and comm. by Po. Vē. Cōmacuntaraṇār. Tirunelvēli & Ceṇṇai: Tirunelvēlit Teṇṇintiya Caivacittānta Nūrpattippuk Kaḷakam, 1962.

Puraṇānūru. *Puraṇānūru. Mūlamum paḷaiya uraiyum.* Ed. by U. Vē. Cāminātaiyar. Ceṇṇai: U. U. Vē. Cāminātaiyar Nūlnilaiyam, 1971.

Tirumurukārruppaṭai. See Pattuppāṭṭu.

Tiruppāvai. See Nālāyirattivviyappirapantam.

Tiruvācakam. *The Tiruvāçagam or 'Sacred Utterances' of the Tamil Poet, Saint and Sage Maṇikka-Vāçagar*. The Tamil Text of the fifty-one Poems with English Translation, Introduction and Notes. By G.U. Pope. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1900.

Tiruvempāvai. See *Tiruvācakam*.

SECONDARY LITERATURE

DEHEJIA, Vidya (1990). *Āṇṭāl and Her Path of Love: Poems of a Woman Saint from South India*. State University of New York Press: Albany.

DUBIANSKI, Alexander M. (2000). *Ritual and Mythological Sources of the Early Tamil Poetry*. Groningen: Egbert Forsten.

EDHOLM, Eric Af & Carl SUNESON (1972). The Seven Bulls and Kṛṣṇa's Marriage to Nīlā/Nappiṇṇai in Sanskrit and Tamil Literature. *Temenos* 8, 29–53.

FILLIOZAT, Jean (1972). *Un texte tamoul de dévotion vishnouite. Le Tiruppāvai d'Āṇṭāl*. Pondichéry: Institut français d'indologie (PIFI; 45).

FLOOD, Gavin (1998). *An Introduction to Hinduism*. New Delhi: Cambridge University Press.

FRUZZETTI, Lina (1982). *The Gift of a Virgin: Women, Marriage, and Ritual in a Bengali Society*. New Brunswick, N.J.: Rutgers University Press.

HARDY, Friedhelm (1983). *Viraha-Bhakti. The Early History of Kṛṣṇa Devotion in South India*. Delhi: Oxford University Press.

HUDSON, D. Dennis (1982). Pinṇai, Kṛṣṇa's Cowherd Wife. In Hawley, John Stratton & Donna Marie Wulff (eds.), *The Divine Consort. Rādhā and the Goddesses of India* (pp. 238–261). Boston: Beacon Press.

———— (2010). Āṇṭāl Ālvār: A Developing Hagiography. In Hudson, Dennis, *Krishna's Mandala. Bhagavata Religion and Beyond* (pp. 175–208). New Delhi: Oxford University Press.

MAHADEVAN, Tennalipuram P. (2008). On the Southern Recension of the *Mahābhārata*, Brahman Migrations, and Brāhmī Paleography. *Electronic Journal of Vedic Studies* 15(1), 1–131. [<http://www.ejvs.laurasianacademy.com/>]

MAṆAVĀLAN, K. A. (1990). *Āṇṭāl*. New Delhi: Sahitya Akademi.

PALANIAPPAN, S. (2004). Ālvār or Nayanār: The Role of Sound Variation, Hypercorrection and Folk Etymology in Interpreting the Nature of Vaiṣṇava Saint-Poets. In Chevillard, Jean-Luc et al. (eds.), *South-Indian Horizons. Felicitation Volume for François Gros on the Occasion of his 7th Birthday* (pp. 63–84). Pondichéry: Institut français de Pondichéry & École française d'Extrême-Orient (Publications du Département d'Indologie; 94).

PINTCHMAN, Tracy (2005). Domesticating Kṛṣṇa: Friendship, Marriage and Women's Experience in a Hindu Women's Ritual Tradition. In Beck, Guy L. (ed.), *Alternative Kṛṣṇas. Regional and Vernacular Variations on a Hindu Deity* (pp. 42-64). State University of New York Press: Albany.

VARADACHARI, R.C. (1966). *Alvars of South India*. Bombay: Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan.

ZVELEBIL, Kamil V. (1977). The Beginnings of Bhakti in South India. *Temenos* 13, 223–257.