



HAL
open science

Translating the dharma of Shiva in sixteenth-century Chidambaram: Maṛaiñāna Campantar's Civatarumōttaram

Margherita Trento

► **To cite this version:**

Margherita Trento. Translating the dharma of Shiva in sixteenth-century Chidambaram: Maṛaiñāna Campantar's Civatarumōttaram. UniorPress. Śivadharmaṁṛta: Essays on the Śivadharma and its Network, 2, 2021, Studies on the History of Śaivism, 978-88-6719-228-1. hal-03827485

HAL Id: hal-03827485

<https://hal.science/hal-03827485>

Submitted on 24 Oct 2022

HAL is a multi-disciplinary open access archive for the deposit and dissemination of scientific research documents, whether they are published or not. The documents may come from teaching and research institutions in France or abroad, or from public or private research centers.

L'archive ouverte pluridisciplinaire **HAL**, est destinée au dépôt et à la diffusion de documents scientifiques de niveau recherche, publiés ou non, émanant des établissements d'enseignement et de recherche français ou étrangers, des laboratoires publics ou privés.



Distributed under a Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International License

UNIVERSITÀ DI NAPOLI L'ORIENTALE
DIPARTIMENTO ASIA, AFRICA E MEDITERRANEO

THE ŚIVADHARMA PROJECT

Studies on the History of Śaivism
II

Śivadharmāmṛta
Essays on the Śivadharma and its Network

Florinda De Simini & Csaba Kiss (eds)



UniorPress
Napoli 2021

Śivadharmāmṛta
Essays on the Śivadharmā and its Network

UNIVERSITÀ DI NAPOLI L'ORIENTALE
DIPARTIMENTO ASIA, AFRICA E MEDITERRANEO

THE ŚIVADHARMA PROJECT

Studies on the History of Śaivism
II

Editor-in-Chief
Florinda De Simini

Editorial & Scientific Board

Peter C. Bisschop (Universiteit Leiden), Dominic Goodall (École Française d'Extrême-Orient), Kengo Harimoto (Università di Napoli L'Orientale), Csaba Kiss (Università di Napoli L'Orientale), Krishnaswamy Nachimuthu (École Française d'Extrême-Orient), Annette Schmiedchen (Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin), Judit Törzsök (École Pratique des Hautes Études), Margherita Trento (Centre National de la Recherche Scientifique), Yuko Yokochi (Kyoto University)



UNIVERSITÀ DI NAPOLI L'ORIENTALE
DIPARTIMENTO ASIA, AFRICA E MEDITERRANEO

THE ŚIVADHARMA PROJECT

Studies on the History of Śaivism
II

Śivadharmāmṛta
Essays on the Śivadharmā and its Network

Florinda De Simini & Csaba Kiss (eds)



UniorPress
Napoli 2021

UniorPress

Via Nuova Marina, 59 - 80133, Napoli

uniorpress@unior.it



This work is licensed under a Creative Commons
Attribution 4.0 International License

ISBN 978-88-6719-228-1

Stampato in Italia

Il presente volume è stato sottoposto al vaglio di due revisori anonimi

Table of Contents

<i>On how we got here</i> , by Florinda De Simini and Csaba Kiss	vii
<i>Diversity and organisation in early Śaivism</i> , by Hans Bakker	1
<i>The mantra in six syllables of the Śivadharma and its place in the early history of Śaivism</i> , by Florinda De Simini	19
<i>On mantrasaṃhitā, śivaikādaśikā and related expressions: A note on awareness of mantras of the Mantramārga in the Śivadharma corpus</i> , by Dominic Goodall	61
<i>Śaiva cosmography in the Śivadharmottara</i> , by Yuko Yokochi	73
<i>Translating the Dharma of Śiva in sixteenth-century Chidambaram: Maṛaiñāṇa Campantar's Civatarumōttaram With a preliminary list of the surviving manuscripts</i> , by Margherita Trento	101
<i>An enquiry into the authorship of the Tamil Civatarumōttaram and its commentary</i> , by Krishnaswamy Nachimuthu....	145
<i>'...not satisfied with the Mahābhārata...' (śrutvā bhāratasaṃhitām atrptaḥ): The function of the Vṛṣasārasaṃgraha in the Śivadharma corpus</i> , by Csaba Kiss	183
<i>Bāṇa is blessed, Kṛṣṇa is cursed: Instances of lay Śaiva devotion in Kashmir</i> , by Judit Törzsök	203
<i>The Umāmaheśvarasaṃvāda of the Śivadharma and its network</i> , by Nirajan Kafle	233
<i>The dharma of gleaners in the Umāmaheśvarasaṃvāda: Studies on the Śivadharma and the Mahābhārata 2</i> , by Kenji Takahashi	255
<i>A first look at an unpublished commentary on the Bhikṣāṭanakāvya</i> , by Alessandro Battistini	285
<i>Bibliography</i>	311
<i>Index</i>	339

Translating the Dharma of Śiva in sixteenth-century Chidambaram: Maṛaiñāṇa Campantar's Civatarumōttaram With a preliminary list of the surviving manuscripts

Margherita Trento

(Centre national de la recherche scientifique, Paris)

This article explores a foundational moment in the making of Caiva Cittāntam (= Śaivasiddhānta) in Tamil-speaking South India, coinciding with the literary activity of Maṛaiñāṇa Campantar in sixteenth-century Chidambaram.¹ According to traditional narratives, the southern version of Śaivasiddhānta acquired its definitive form in the fourteen *Meykaṇṭacāttirāṅkaḷ*, a corpus of Tamil scriptures dated to the twelfth to the fourteenth century.² These texts claimed continuity with the pan-Indian Sanskrit theology,

¹ I use the Tamil term Caiva Cittāntam instead of the more common Sanskrit Śaivasiddhānta following Eric Steinschneider (2017, 265 fn. 2), who in turn follows Ambalavanar (2006, ix). I do so to stress the local nature of the early modern religious tradition I discuss in this article, and to differentiate it from the earlier, pan-Indian and Sanskritic school of Śaivasiddhānta. For an overview of the relationship between the Śaivasiddhānta and the Tamil school of the same name, which clarifies many longstanding historiographical errors, see the preface in Goodall 2004. Research for this article was carried out as part of the ERC Project SHIVADHARMA (803624).

² The *Meykaṇṭacāttirāṅkaḷ*, literally 'Meykaṇṭar's treatises,' comprise fourteen works by different authors, including Meykaṇṭar Tēvar (thirteenth century) from whom they get their name. However, the author most represented is Umāpati Civāccāriyār (fourteenth century), who wrote eight out of the fourteen works of the corpus. An overview of all the fourteen texts of the corpus is in Dhavamony 1971, 175–334.

while at the same time refashioning it in many ways, such as the incorporation of Tamil devotional hymns in honour of Śiva collectively known as the *Tēvāram*.³ The religious tradition that these texts helped crystallise purportedly continued unchanged until the nineteenth century, when figures like Ārumuka Nāvalar (1822–1879) inaugurated an age of reforms ushering Caiva Cittāntam into modernity. Problematising this linear origin story, the following pages show how in the sixteenth century Maṛaiñāṇa Campantar, a teacher also known under the names Vedajñāna or Nigamajñāna, systematised a body of ritual, social and theological knowledge integral to contemporary and later visions of Caiva Cittāntam. His work of synthesis and reorganisation is particularly evident in his masterpiece, the *Civatarumōttaram*, a poetic translation of the early scripture for lay Śaiva devotees *Śivadbharmottara*. The existence of this translation was known, but had not received much attention besides the pioneering work of Mu. Aruṇācalam and, more recently, T. Ganesan.⁴ Yet the 1208 elaborate *viruttam* stanzas of the *Civatarumōttaram* cover an array of crucial topics for Tamil Śaiva devotees. What was the idea behind this ambitious translation project? What were the purpose and the audience of this new version of the text?

Despite the relative oblivion into which the *Civatarumōttaram* has fallen in recent years, its importance in the context of early modern and modern Tamil Śaivism is evident from its wide circulation. Soon after Maṛaiñāṇa Campantar composed the text, his student and nephew Maṛaiñāṇa Tēcīkar, alternatively known as Vedajñāna or Nigamajñāna II, wrote a commentary on it. Palm-leaf manuscripts of the *Civatarumōttaram*, often accompanied by this early commentary, are ubiquitous in archives in Tamil Nadu and Europe.⁵ The poem was also cited within other devotional and theological works in

³ A recent edition and translation of the *Tēvāram* corpus is Chevillard and Sarma 2007, based on the classical edition by Gopal Iyer 1984–85. The blending of Caiva Cittāntam and the Tamil *bhakti* tradition is the topic of Dhavamony's classical study (1971). The same topic, with special reference to the work of Umāpati, is discussed by Pechilis Prentiss 1999, especially chapter eight.

⁴ Ganesan 2009 is the most extensive study of the *Civatarumōttaram* and its author in English; Sanderson 2014, 4, mentions the translation in relation to a large survey of Śaiva literature in Sanskrit. In Tamil, both Mu. Aruṇācalam (1976/2005, 158–184) and Cōmacuntara Tēcīkar (1976, 54–66) dedicated long sections of their work to the author of the *Civatarumōttaram*, and also commented upon the text. Finally, Raghavan (1960, 231) mentions the text among the Tamil versions of the Purāṇas, a classification to which I will return while discussing the genre of this text. Among these contributions, the most detailed and useful is certainly that by Mu. Aruṇācalam (1909–1992), a literary scholar who also belonged to the Caiva Cittāntam tradition.

⁵ For a preliminary list, see the Appendix to this article.

Tamil, both within Caiva Cittāntam and other religious schools.⁶ Maṛaiñāna was in fact the first to reuse the *Civatarumōttaram* in the composition of his other Tamil works, like the *Aruṇakirippurāṇam*. Later on, Kacciappa Muṇivar—an eighteenth-century poet and intellectual associated with the Tiruvāṇatturūrai *ātīṇam*⁷—used the *Civatarumōttaram* as a theological reference point throughout his literary oeuvre, and summarised it in the ninth chapter of his *Taṇṭikaippurāṇam*. The nineteenth-century Vīraśaiva intellectual Pōrūr Citampara Cuvāmikaḷ often quoted the *Civatarumōttaram* as an authority in his commentary to his teacher Cāntaliṅka Aṭikaḷār’s refutation of violence, the *Kolaimaruttal*.⁸ More recently, the poem was printed twice in the nineteenth century, in 1867 and 1888, then again in 1938, and once in the late twentieth century in Kuala Lumpur. The latter edition is accompanied by a modern commentary, testifying to the centrality of the text even for the contemporary Tamil diaspora.⁹ In sum, from the moment Maṛaiñāna Campantar translated the *Śivadharmaottara* into the *Civatarumōttaram*, we see his translation copied, circulated, cited, abridged across media, regions, periods, institutional and sectarian affiliations.

And yet, little has been written about Maṛaiñāna Campantar and his *Civatarumōttaram*. Hence, the first section of this article is dedicated to collecting and organising the information currently available on this author,

⁶ The non-comprehensive list of examples that follows only refers to citations that I verified to be from the Tamil *Civatarumōttaram*. Certainly, other cases will emerge as members of the Śivadharma project continue to explore the circulation of both the Sanskrit and the Tamil version of the text.

⁷ The Tiruvāṇatturūrai *ātīṇam* and the other monastic institutions of the Kaveri delta, such as the Tarumapuram *atīṇam* and the Kāci *maṭam* in Tiruppānantāl, were crucial to the development of Caiva Cittāntam from the seventeenth century onwards. The way these institutions appropriated and transformed a tradition that had centred until then chiefly in Chidambaram, and their relationship with this sacred place, is an interesting question that still awaits to be answered. To date, the most comprehensive study of these institutions remains the PhD dissertation of Kathleen Koppedrayar (1990). The role of these institutions in the world of Tamil literature in the nineteenth century has been studied by Sascha Ebeling (2010).

⁸ On the *Kolaimaruttal* see Steinschneider 2016a, esp. 25–26. The text has been edited several times, including one edition by Āṅṅumuka Nāvalar.

⁹ My translations and analysis in this article rely on the first printed edition of 1867, but I have also consulted the 1888 edition for help with regard to metrical splits and identification of the type of verses. In both these editions, the text is accompanied by the old commentary attributed to Maṛaiñāna Tēcīkar. A list of editions and manuscripts of the *Civatarumōttaram*—with and without its commentary—that are currently known to us is included in the Appendix to this article. Critical editions of several chapters are under preparation by members of the Śivadharma project.

his work and his social context. In the second section, I turn to the analysis of some translation strategies at play in the *Civatarumōttaram*, both in relationship to the Sanskrit original and to the surrounding world of Tamil religion and literature. The third and last section of the article puts forward some hypotheses as to what might have been the audience of Maṛaiñāna Campantar's translation in the sixteenth century, on the basis of clues scattered within the text. The goal of such an initial foray is to suggest two useful angles from which to approach the poem.¹⁰ First, Maṛaiñāna Campantar's translation was an operation that implied a simultaneous synthesis and reorganising of the Caiva Cittāntam tradition. The logic of the *Civatarumōttaram* is similar to that of a compendium, and the novelty represented by this text lies in its ability to reorganise contents that originally belonged to the tradition of lay Śaivism organically with Caiva Cittāntam theology. At the same time, Maṛaiñāna's presentation of such content in a poetic form deeply transformed the śāstric logic of his Sanskrit source: while still pedagogical and doctrinal in purpose, his work became a site of Tamil connoisseurship and literary enjoyment.¹¹ Secondly, the *Civatarumōttaram* offers important clues for us to imagine the readers such a text might have had in the sixteenth century. These were likely students initiated in the tradition of the Caiva Cittāntam, who studied in the *maṭams* attached to Tamil temples, and whose efforts were split between the learning of religious and literary texts. Indeed, the two categories often overlapped, and the *Civatarumōttaram* presents us with the occasion to reflect upon the entanglement of the religious and literary curriculum in the Tamil country before the colonial intervention.¹²

¹⁰ The observations in this article reflect an early stage of our understanding of the *Civatarumōttaram*, a text requiring a depth and breadth of analysis better achievable, in my experience, through collaborative work. My own understanding largely derives from the weekly reading sessions organized within the framework of the Śivadharma project, and I thank the group of scholars who take part in those sessions—Florinda De Simini, Dominic Goodall, K. Nachimuthu, T. Rajarethinam, S. Saravanan, Indra Manuel, S.A.S. Sharma, and R. Sathyanarayanan—for sharing their knowledge and expertise so generously during our discussions.

¹¹ See the discussion later in this article on the role of poetry in the *Civatarumōttaram*.

¹² To understand the Tamil literary curriculum before and after the changes introduced by colonialism, the work of Sascha Ebeling (2010) is key. The question of the Śaiva canon in the early modern period and its later transformations in the nineteenth century is at the centre of Eric Steinschneider's recent work (2016a, 2016b, 2017). I propose some reflections on the connection and overlap between the two in the third section of this article.

Related to these points, before plunging into Maṛaiṇāṇa Campantar's life and literary oeuvre, I wish to highlight two broad aspects of the religious and cultural world of early modern South India. First, the Kaveri region saw at this time a competition for influence and patronage among Vaiṣṇava and Śaiva groups, as well as among the many schools of Śaivism in the region, such as Caiva Cittāntam, Śivādvaita, and Vīraśaiva.¹³ While the Caiva Cittāntam had already solidified around the works of the early canonical authors, the *Meykaṇṭacāttirāṅkaḷ*, teachers of this school were still actively creating a local identity by incorporating, adapting and reinventing a millennium-long Sanskrit tradition.¹⁴ They needed to do so primarily vis-à-vis other Śaiva groups, since debates among them were common, as demonstrated by books of controversy from this time.¹⁵

Furthermore, the making of regional religious and literary identities in this period involved the relationship between different linguistic and cultural traditions—Tamil, Persian, Arabic, Kannada, Telugu, and of course Sanskrit. In sixteenth-century Tenkasi, for instance, Ativīrārāma Pāṇṭiyaṅ translated into Tamil both Sanskrit religious texts such as the *Kūrmapurāṇa* and *Līṅgapurāṇa*, and a Sanskrit literary masterpiece like Śrīharṣa's *Naiṣadhacarita*.¹⁶ Roughly two centuries later, the Vīraśaiva teacher and

¹³ Elaine Fisher has analysed Smārta Śaivism in early modern South India as a sect within the umbrella of orthodox Hinduism; her book (2017, especially 31–56) offers a good introduction to the religious world of this period. A pointed history of patronage and competition between the worship of Śiva and Viṣṇu at Chidambaram in this period is sketched in Balasubramanyan 1931. The dissertation by Eric Steinschneider (2016a) focuses on sectarian differences within Tamil Śaivism, and the historical trajectory from many dissenting Śaiva sects to a monolithic Tamil Śaivism in the colonial period.

¹⁴ Besides the *Śivādharmottara*—that was not originally connected to the Śaivasiddhānta, but became a Caiva Cittāntam text in translation—at least two important Tamil translations of Sanskrit Śaivasiddhānta works were composed in the sixteenth century. One is the *Civanerippirakācam* by Śivāgrayogin, a poem that is a self-proclaimed abridgment of a Śaiva Āgama, most likely the *Sarvajñānottara*, since Śivāgrayogin belonged to a tradition connected to that text (see Aruṇācalam 1976/2005, 189 and 194–200). We have other Tamil translations of the *Sarvajñānottara* too, even though the author and time of translation are unknown (references to the edition are in the bibliography). The second translation is the *Pirāyaccittacamuccayam*, the Tamil version of the Sanskrit *Prāyaścittasamuccaya*, most likely by a disciple of Maṛaiṇāṇa Campantar (see fn. 27).

¹⁵ One example of controversy between members of the same religious group is the history of the reception of Maṛaiṇāṇa Campantar's own text *Muttinilayam* (addressed below). For disagreements and debates within Caiva Cittāntam adherents, see also Steinschneider 2017.

¹⁶ On the 'Tenkasi moment,' see Shulman 2016, 249–255.

Tamil poet Tuṛaimaṅkalam Civappirakācar translated from Kannada into Tamil the life of Vīraśaiva saint Allama Prabhu. Civappirakācar's translation, the *Pirapulīṅkalilai*, is at the same time a religious text and a literary tour de force, as are many of the Tamil Purāṇas written in honour of local sacred sites on the basis of Sanskrit originals. So, the period between the sixteenth and the eighteenth century was an age of translation, both within the Śaiva milieu and in the larger realm of Tamil literature, that brought about religious as well as poetical innovations.¹⁷ Maṛaiṅṇa Campantar translated an ancient text of lay Śaivism into Tamil verse in this context, and in doing so, he firmly placed the *Civatarumōttaram* within the intersecting worlds of Tamil Śaivism and Tamil literature.

1. *A sixteenth-century Caiva Cittāntam teacher*

The information available on Maṛaiṅṇa Campantar is oftentimes confusing, beginning with his name. In the first place, he should not be mistaken with an earlier Maṛaiṅṇa, who lived between the thirteenth and fourteenth century and was supposedly the teacher of Umāpati.¹⁸ He should also be distinguished from his most famous student and nephew, known as Maṛaiṅṇa Tēcikar in Tamil, but more often identified by his Sanskrit name of Vedajñāna II. According to the Tamil sources collected by Aruṅācalam, our Maṛaiṅṇa Campantar lived in the mid-sixteenth century, was affiliated to the Kukai ('cave') *maṭam* in Chidambaram, and was a prolific author in Tamil.¹⁹ He composed, besides the *Civatarumōttaram*, a compendium of Śaiva doctrine in *kuṛaḷ veṅṇpā* metre titled *Caivacamayaneri*, and two *talappurāṇam* on the sacred places of Aruṅakiri (Tiruvaṅṇāmalai) and Kamalāyalam (Tiruvārūr). He also wrote a number of smaller ritual and theological treatises, many of which remain unpublished.²⁰ The sev-

¹⁷ For instance, the genre of the Tamil *purāṇam* was born in relationship with Sanskrit and was predicated, in all its variety, on practices of translation. The classic work on the subject is Shulman 1980; Raghavan 1960 offers a list of Tamil *purāṇams* that are translations, and the recent dissertation by Jay Ramesh (2020, especially 111–157) explores this topic in some depth. Yet translation practices were by no means limited to a literary genre or a religious group, as appears clearly in Shulman's insightful overview of the early modern period in Tamil literature (2016, 249–283).

¹⁸ Zvelebil 1995, 418–19.

¹⁹ The information about his life has been collected in Aruṅācalam 1976/2005, 158–164.

²⁰ Many of his shorter works have appeared once, in the volume *Citamparam Kaṅkaṭṭimaṭam Śrī Maṛaiṅṇacampantanāyaṅār aruḷiceyṭa Caivaccirunūḷkaḷ* edited by Mīṇāṭcicuntaram Piḷḷai and published by the Tiruvāvatūṭurai *ātīṇam* in 1954. I have not yet been able to access this rare publication.

eral epithets that accompany his name in these accounts—*campantar*, *paṇṭāram*, *kaṅkaṭṭi*, and so on—are often traced back to anecdotes that refer to episodes of his life. For instance, according to one such anecdote, he was called *kaṅkaṭṭi* (‘eye patch’) allegedly because he covered his eyes with a piece of cloth to avoid distractions caused by external senses. Hagiographical undertones aside, such narratives are mostly supported by the information available in the paratexts accompanying Maṛaiṇāṇa’s works, and those of his disciples.

For instance, the laudatory introduction (*cirappuppāyiram*) of *Pati pacu pācap paṇuval* (‘Treatise on God, the Soul, and the Bond’), a work written most likely by a student or a colleague of Maṛaiṇāṇa Campantar, ably summarises all the standard tropes connected with the author’s life and intellectual activities:²¹

He stayed in the rare Kukai *maṭam* in that sacred place, i.e., Chidambaram, while people of all other places praised [him]; he was like the sun in this very world; he was like a second coming on earth of Meykaṇṭa Tēvaṇ in Tiruveṇṇeyallūr; because of his understanding of rare Tamil, like sage Agastya, he composed a perfect authoritative poem which is Śiva in essence; he was [another] king Bhoja with regard to perfect books in Sanskrit; he was like [Vyāsa’s disciple] Sūta due to his skill in composing *purāṇams*, beginning with the *Āti Kamalālaya* (*Kamalālayaccirappu*); he understood with great longing the whole corpus of songs of the ancient ones, beginning with the triad [of Appar, Sundarar and Sambandar]; using Tamil, he wrote the *Civatarumōttaram* along with many types of very good books; he was a teacher learned in the scriptures, and he understood without any confusion all the treatises (*cāttiram* = *sāstras*) which are praised by the rare ascetics; he [was] Maṛaiṇāṇa Campantar, endowed with asceticism [...].

appati taṇṇil aruṇ kukai maṭattil
eppatiyōrum ēttavum iruntōṇ,
ikam atu taṇṇiṭ kakaṇaiy oppāṇōṇ,
veṇṇeyam patiṇṇil meykaṇṭa tēvaṇ
maṇṇitai miṇṇum varutal oppāṇōṇ,
arun tamil uṇarvāl akattiya muṇiy eṇat
tiruntu tol kāppiyaṇ civamayaṇ ceytōṇ,
āc’ il vaṭa nūr pōcarācan,
āti kamalālaya mutar purāṇam
ōtu matiṇṇār cūtaṇaiy oppōṇ,
mūvar mutalā mutiyavar pātal
āvaluṭaṇēy aṭaṅkalum uṇarntōṇ,

²¹ I take this passage from Aruṇācalam 1976/2005, 161–162.

*nalamiku nūlkaḷ nānāvitattutaṅ
civatarumōttaram tamīlār ceytōṅ,
ākama paṅṅitaṅ, aruntavar pukalum
mōkam il cāttiramulutum uṅarntōṅ,
naṅṅiya tava maṛaiṅāṅa campantaṅ [...]*

This passage confirms that Maṛaiṅāṅa Campantar lived in the Kukai *maṭam* in Chidambaram, and stresses his familiarity with both Sanskrit and Tamil learning. On the Sanskrit side, Maṛaiṅāṅa is compared to the ‘king’ of poets and grammarians, Bhoja, and to Sūta, the narrator of several important Sanskrit Purāṇas. On the Tamil side, his counterparts are the initiator of the Caiva Cittāntam tradition Meykaṅṅa Tēvaṅ, and Agastya, the mythological sage traditionally held as the first grammarian of the Tamil language. Besides, the text claims that Maṛaiṅāṅa knew well the ‘songs of the ancient ones,’ namely the canonical corpus of Tamil devotional hymns known as the *Tēvāram*. These characters and texts are proverbial, and, taken all together, they convey the message that Maṛaiṅāṅa was at ease in the two traditions, and exceptionally qualified to create a synthesis between the two. This was the ultimate goal of his literary works, which were all nevertheless written using Tamil as a medium, as stressed in this introduction. The combination of the verb *cey* ‘to do’ and the instrumental case in the expression *tamīlāl ceytōṅ*, literally ‘he composed [books] by means of the Tamil language,’ indicates that Maṛaiṅāṅa took some content already available in Sanskrit and made it available in Tamil. This clearly points to his activity as a translator.²²

Another complex expression in this passage is *tiruntu tol kāppiyaṅ civamayaṅ ceytōṅ*, which I translate as ‘one who composed a perfect (*tiruntu*) authoritative (*tol*) poem (*kāppiyam*) which is Śiva in essence (*civamayam*).’ Mu. Aruṅācalam shows how this line could be interpreted in different ways, as referring to just one of Maṛaiṅāṅa’s works (the *Caivacamayaneri*), to two works (the *Civatarumōttaram* as the authoritative poem, the *Caivacamayaneri* as Śiva’s essence), or perhaps to all his works, collectively.²³ I lean towards the first option, namely the identification with the *Caivacamayaneri*, because the *Civatarumōttaram* is explicitly cited later in the passage, and because, barring the *Caivacamayaneri* and the *Civatarumōt-*

²² Reading a reference to translation in this passage is supported by the commentarial gloss *tamīl mōliyaṅ ceytal* explaining the verb *mōlipeyarrrtal*, ‘to translate,’ in *ḷampūraṅam ad Tolkāppiyam, Poruḷātikaram, marapiyal* 99. Here, as everywhere else in this article, I cite primary sources by title and verse number, with the exception of passages extracted from secondary literature, such as the one discussed above.

²³ Aruṅācalam 1976/2005, 161–162.

taram, none of Maṛaiñāṇa Campantar’s other works could be classified as a poem (*kāppiyam* = *kāvya*). The *Caivacamayaneri*, on the other hand, is a compendium of the Śaiva religion in the classical Tamil metre of the ancient ethical work *Tirukkural*.²⁴ Besides, the assonance between the first part of the compound *Caiva-camaya-neri*, ‘the path of Śiva’s religion,’ and *civa mayam*, ‘Śiva in essence,’ is likely intended. More generally, the aim of this turn of phrase seems to emphasize how Maṛaiñāṇa’s works were at the same time poetical—*tol kāppiyam*—and theological—*civamayam*. The expression *tolkāppiyam*, which has come to identify almost exclusively the oldest existing grammar of the Tamil language, and the comparison with Agastya, the first legendary grammarian of Tamil and a popular figure in Southern Śaivism, both strongly indicate that the interpretation hinges on the connection between the Tamil language and the Śaiva religion.²⁵

Similar themes appear in another verse in praise of Maṛaiñāṇa included in the *pāyiram* (‘preamble’) to the *Pirāyaccittacamuccayam* (‘Compendium on Expiatory Rites’), the translation into Tamil of Trilocanaśiva’s *Prāyaścittasamuccaya*, and clearly the work of one of Maṛaiñāṇa’s students.²⁶

The masters who composed the *Tiruvicaippā*, spreading gold in the world, and the sixty-tree [*nāyanmars*] to which [they] are connected insofar as

²⁴ The *Caivacamayaneri* is another text by Maṛaiñāṇa Campantar whose manuscripts are widespread in archives in Tamil Nadu; it has also been printed a first time in 1868 and reprinted several times afterwards, along with the commentary by Ārumuka Nāvalar (the title-page of the sixth edition of 1914, which is the one I consulted, is in the bibliography). Ganesan (2009, xiv fn.13) mentions the existence of another, unpublished commentary of the *Caivacamayaneri* by Vedajñāna II, showing the parallels between verses and the Āgamas and other scriptures. An English translation of the initial ninety-one verses of this poem has appeared serialized in two issues of the magazine *Siddhanta Deepika* (see Nallasami 1902a and 1902b), which testifies to its ongoing popularity in the early twentieth century.

²⁵ See Chevillard 2009.

²⁶ *Pirāyaccittacamuccayam*, v. 7. This Tamil version of the *Pirāyaccittacamuccayam* has been printed in Śri Lanka in the 1960s, but I am unsure about the exact publication date since the year should be *vikāri*, thus 1960, but the metadata in the *Nīlakam* website has 1964 (see: <https://noolaham.org/wiki/index.php/பிராயச்சித்தமுக்காமராவல்>). This edition contains the same text cited in Aruñācalam 1976/2005, 159. The edition also seems to transmit a text similar to that in IFP MS RE 109000, fols. 84–108. This manuscript is missing the first folio, and the very first line we have contains what seems a variant reading of part of the third and fourth lines of stanza 7 of the poem (substituting for instance *iṭu* with *pōṭṭu*): *māṭattillaikkukaiyittiraiṭṭuppaṅkamaravāl* [sic] *maṛaiñāṇacam* [. . . (unreadable *akṣaras*)]. Note that the long *ō* in *pōṭṭu* is clearly marked in the manuscript, which must have been copied pretty late in the nineteenth century, when

they are part [of them], and Maṛaiñāṇa Campantar, who translated the Śaiva scriptures into Tamil and lived without fault, with [his eyes] veiled, in a hermit's cell (*kukai*) in Tillai, where beautiful palaces touch the moon—these are our teachers.

*taṅkam ulakam paravi tiruvicaippāv uraitta talaivarum, aṅ
paṅkam eṇav urriṭum arupatt' oru mūvarum, ākaman tamil cey
tiṅkaḷ uriñcu maṇi mātat tillaik kukaiyir riraiyiṭṭup
paṅkam ara vāḷ maṛaiñāṇa campantaṇu nam patiy āvar*

The author of this stanza recognises as his teachers the writers of the *Tiruvicaippā*, a section of the ninth *Tirumurai* including songs by nine poets starting from Tirumālikaittēvar, along with the other poet-saints (*nāyanmār*) who sung hymns to Śiva; and Maṛaiñāṇa Campantar. The verse indirectly refers to Maṛaiñāṇa's connection to the *Kukai maṭam* in Tillai, that is Chidambaram, by playing on the word of *kukai* as meaning a cave, and by association a secluded space for meditation, as well as being the name of his home institution. The verb *tiraiyiṭṭu*, literally meaning that he covered himself, also seems a variation of Maṛaiñāṇa's standard attribute as *kāṅkaṭṭi*, wearing an eye-cover. Besides such oblique references, the stanza mentions that Maṛaiñāṇa translated the Śaiva scriptures into Tamil (*ākaman tamil cey*). The word *ākamam* (Sanskrit *āgama*) explicitly refers to the scriptures of the Śaivasiddhānta, to whose canon the *Śivadharmottara* belonged as a subsection (*upabhedā*) according to some classifications known in the South.²⁷ We find once again the verb *cey* ('to do') in com-

such distinction had become more common. The manuscript ends with the penultimate verse contained in the printed edition (301) and then declares the *Pirāyaccittacamuccayam* over, without any further information. The IFP catalogue attributes the text to Maṛaiñāṇa Campantar, probably because his name appears in this first available line—but we saw that this is not a colophon, rather a verse in praise of him written by a student, as also suggested by Aruñācalam. The existence of a Tamil version of the *Pirāyaccittacamuccayam* had already been noted in Satyanarayanan and Goodall (2015, 62–63) with reference to another manuscript (IFP MS RE 41567) that I could not consult, where the Tamil text should be accompanied by a commentary.

²⁷ The classification of the *Civatarumōttaram* as the eighth among the eleven *upabbedas* (*upapētam* in Tamil) of the *Cantāṇa Ākamam* (the Sanskrit *Santānāgama*), which in turn is listed as the twenty-fourth among the twenty-eight Āgamas in some Tamil lists (but appears as number seventeen in the list proposed by Goodall 2004, xx-iii–xxiv, as according to the *Kiraṇa*) appears in the title-page of the 1888 edition of the Tamil version: *caivākamam irupattēṭṭiṇuḷ 24-vatu Cantāna carvōttamattiṅ upapētam patiṇonriṇuḷ 8-vatu Civatarumōttaram*. Note that the *Śivadharmottara* was indeed known as a subsidiary scripture (*upāgama*) according to various lists of the Śaivasiddhānta canon transmitted in the Sanskrit Tantras that are attested in the South (see the

bination with the noun *tamiḷ*, which in this case, unlike in the previous verse we analysed, bears no case marker. One can imagine that an instrumental is intended, and that the literal expression ‘to re-make [a Sanskrit book] using Tamil’ is a way of talking about translation. In this instance, though, the lack of case marker, combined with the fact that the verb *cey* can also work as a verbaliser, is suggestive of another possibility, namely the coinage of a new verb *tamiḷcey* meaning ‘to make Tamil, to tamilise.’ The meaning of the new verb would refer to a process of taking roots. For *Maṛaiñāna*, tamilising the Śaiva scripture implied translating them into the Tamil language, as well as reorganising their content within a universe of new intertextual, cultural, geographical, and material references tied with the Tamil land.²⁸

Lingering on geography, *Maṛaiñāna* Campantar’s own poems do not mention the Kukai *maṭam*, but they do reveal a connection to the temple-city of Chidambaram. This is clear from the two stanzas in honour of Śiva in the *pāyiram* of the *Civatarumōttaram*:

Bowing to his feet, we cherish in our heart the one who delights in dancing in the gem-studded hall in Tillai, where gardens filled with fragrance shine, while Viṣṇu, Brahmā, the gods and also the great sages surround and praise [him]; the great one, who has himself taken a form, and who created the forms of the creatures; who protects, destroys, and liberates [them]; the immaculate one, Śiva. (1) / Those who worship the feet of Śiva, whose form is knowledge, who consists of the widespread teachings that end the power of *malam* for knowledgeable people, who is without blemish, matchless, who bestows his grace while the tiger and the snake [i.e., Vyāghrapada and Patañjali], those similar to the gods [i.e., the *dikṣitars* of Chidambaram], and the golden king [i.e., Hiraṇyavarman] praise [him], whose nature has no difference and who is joined to all creatures—they obtain the boons they desire according to their wishes. (2)

table attached to J. Filliozat’s introduction in Bhatt 1961). Moreover, our reading group noticed, during our first reading of chapter one of the *Civatarumōttaram* in Spring 2019, that the Tamil commentator refers to the *Civatarumōttaram* using exactly the expression *upāgama*, in the commentary to *Civatarumōttaram* 1.15 (on this point, see Goodall’s article in this volume, p. 62).

²⁸ As for other instances of a possible verb *tamiḷcey*, K. Nachimuthu brought to my attention the sobriquet name of Nammālvār as *Vētam tamiḷ ceyta māṛaṇ*, literally ‘The Saint who made the Vedas Tamil.’ In this case, *tamiḷ ceyta* does not refer to a translation, since Nammālvār never actually translated the text of the Vedas into Tamil. The verb rather means ‘to tamilise,’ as I suggested, and refers to the fact that Nammālvār composed beautiful devotional poems in Tamil, which are the expression of the essence of the Sanskrit scriptures in a Tamil poetical and cultural form (see Narayan 1994).

*tirumālum pōtināṇun tēvaru māmunivarumē cerintu pōṛṛa
maruv'ārum pōli ṇilavun tillaimaṇi manr'āṭaṇ makilvāṇ raṇṇai
uruv'ākit tāṇ uyirkaṭk'uruv ākkīy aḷitt'atakkīy uyyac ceyyum
perumāṇai nirumalāṇaic civaṇaiy aṭi paṇint'ulattir peṇuvāme (0.1)
ciṇmayāṇaic civaṇai, malavali tolaiya viṇṇāṇakalarkkuṇ ceppuṇ
conmayāṇait, tukaḷ iliyait, tulaiy iliyaiṇ, puliyaravuṇ curarkk'oppārum
ponmayāṇum pukaḷav aruḷ purivāṇaiy, aṇaitt'uyirum poruntip pētam
inmayāṇaiṇ patam paṇivār eṇiyavaram eṇiyapatīy eytuvārē (0.2)*

These stanzas give us a first taste of the poem, and we will soon discuss some of its formal aspects. For now, besides the obvious reference to the form of Śiva as the lord of dance in the golden hall of Chidambaram, they contain several references to the temple's myths. Among the characters praising Śiva as he bestows his grace are the tiger and the snake, that is sages Vyāghrapāda and Patañjali; those similar to the gods, namely the three thousand Brahmins of lore who are the ancestors of the Chidambaram *dīkṣitars*, and the golden king Hiranyavarman. These are the main characters of the origin myths identified by Kulke in the *Cidambaramābhātmya*—indeed, the traditional name of Chidambaram in Sanskrit is Vyāghrapura—and they still play a central role in the way the priests and the devotees think of themselves and the temple today.²⁹

In addition to showing a connection to Chidambaram, albeit more ideologically than historically grounded, Maṛaiṇāṇa Campantar's texts are also crucial in determining the time of his literary activity. In the introduction to the *Kamalālayacciṛappu*, the author declares that he composed that work in the year 4647 of the *kali* era, which was a *parapāva* year within the 60-year cycle, corresponding to the year 1546 of the Gregorian calendar.³⁰ The introduction to Maṛaiṇāṇa's *Arunakirippurāṇam* includes a similar verse referring to the time of composition of this second poem (*nūl ceyta kālam*):³¹

[I am writing] as the current four thousand six hundred fifty-fourth year
among the four hundred thirty-two thousand years of the *kaliyuga* turns to

²⁹ The reference work for Chidambaram mythology is Kulke 1970, which identifies three main episodes centering around Vyāghrapāda, Patañjali and Hiranyavarman (the latter episode also including the history of the three thousand Brahmins). For a reevaluation of Kulke and further discussion on the role of Chidambaram under the Cholas, see Cox 2016a, 188–197; for a discussion of Chidambaram mythology as it emerges from Tamil sources, and an anthropological reflection on its role for present-day *dīkṣitars*, see Loud 1990 (especially 110ff)

³⁰ The text of the *Kamalālayacciṛappu* was recently reprinted by the Dr. U. Vē. Cāminātaiyyar Nūlnilayam in Chennai, but unfortunately I could not access a copy of this edition. I take this stanza from Aruṇācalam 1976/2005, 165–166.

³¹ *Arunakirippurāṇam*, 23.

an end, now, on the eleventh lunar day of the bright half of the *makaram* (=tai) [month] of the *piramāṭica* year, which is on Sunday, at the time when the *mān mākēntiram* star shines, during the *vaṇikam* division of time.³²

āṇṭu kaliyukattiṇukku nānūrru muppatt' irāyirattul
īṇṭ' uru nālāyiramum arunūrum aimpattu nāṅku nīnkav
īṇṭu pīramāṭicav āṇṭiṇ makaratt' eḷuvāy ēkā tēci
tīṇṭ' iravi vārattiṇ mān mākēntiram vaṇikan tikaḷum pōtil. (0.23)

The stanza, entirely occupied by an elaborate date indicating when the poet began to write his *purāṇam*, makes explicit reference to the year 4654 of the *kaliyuga*, corresponding to the Gregorian year 1553. According to these accounts, Maṛaiṇāṇa Campantar wrote his two Purāṇas in 1546 and 1553, and therefore was likely at the peak of his literary and intellectual activity in the central decade of the sixteenth century. The two dates are coherent with the date of his death, which we know from the Sanskrit sources cited below to be roughly ten years after the composition of the *Arunakirippurāṇam*, in 1563 or 1564.

Indeed, the introductions and colophons of the Sanskrit works of Maṛaiṇāṇa Campantar's homonymous student and nephew, Maṛaiṇāṇa Tēcikar, offer grounded and precise information on Maṛaiṇāṇa's life. Bruno Dagens, in the introduction to his edition of the *Śaivāgamaparibhāṣāmañjarī*, collected most of the passages available in the Sanskrit works of Vedajñāna II (Maṛaiṇāṇa Tēcikar), as Dagens calls him, on his teacher Vedajñāna I (Maṛaiṇāṇa Campantar).³³ First of all, the beginning of the *Śaivāgamaparibhāṣāmañjarī* gives the date of death of Vedajñāna I, and confirms many of the details available in the Tamil texts. It mentions a *maṭha* in Chidambaram where Vedajñāna I lived, and he is also described as a teacher and master of the Āgamas:³⁴

In the year of the Śaka kings that is reckoned in numbers as 1486 that wise man called Vedajñāna, who had crossed the ocean of the Śaiva *sāstras*, went

³² I would not have understood this complex date without the help of K. Nachimuthu (all imprecisions remaining are my own). He especially helped me to understand that *eḷuvāy* is equivalent with *vaḷarpiṇai* and refers to the bright half of the lunar month; that *iravi vāram* refers to the day of the week, *nāyirrukkilamai*, usually translated as Sunday in English; and that the word *vaṇikam* refers to an alternative division of the month in eleven *karaṇam* (instead of the thirty lunar days, *titi*, of which *ēkā tēci* is one).

³³ Dagens 1979, 6–15.

³⁴ *Śaivāgamaparibhāṣāmañjarī* 0.6–7: *lakṣite śakabhūpābde tadābhagyeti samkhyayā | śaṣṭyantime bhāyane ca tārtīyika rtau sudhīḥ || 6 || vedajñānābhīdhāno 'sau śaivaśāstrā- bdbhipāragah | kālabastīsvareṇātra pratiṣṭhām prāpitaḥ parām || 7 ||*. Text (with a French translation) in Dagens 1979, 52–53.

to the ultimate state [of liberation] through the grace of Kalahastīśvara when he was in the third season of his sixty-first year.

From this passage Dagens deduces that Vedajñāna I must have died in the year 1486 of the Śaka era, corresponding to the Gregorian year 1563 or 1564, and that he was sixty at that time. He was therefore born around 1503–1504, his life spanning the entire first half of the sixteenth century. Another relevant detail is the mention of the lord of Kalahasti, since that seems to have been Maṛaiñāṇa's divinity of choice, and Kāḷatti Maṛaiñāṇa Campantar was one of his names. Perhaps the richest source on Vedajñāna I, his family and institutional ties, is found in a passage at the end of the *Dikṣādarśa* again by Vedajñāna II:³⁵

In the sacred hill of Rudrakoṭi (Tirukkaḷukkuṅṅam) in the Toṅṭiramaṅḍala (Toṅṭainātu),³⁶ lived Vāmadeva, a great man, resident of glorious Vyāghrapura (Chidambaram), and belonging to [one of] the five spiritual lineages and well-known as an *ādiśaiva*. His younger brother was the great *yogin* Vedajñāna [I], the best among sages. Aiming for the Lord of the Great Hall, after reaching the holy Tillavana (i.e., Chidambaram)³⁷ along with many dis-

³⁵ The following is a provisional reconstruction of the text of the final verses of the *Dikṣādarśa*, based on the text given in Dagens 1979, 11 (= ed.), but also integrating some of the readings found in IFP T. 372, 1669–1670 (= cod.) and some emendations, including that proposed in Ganesan 2009, x–xi. Even though Dagens declared his source to be IFP T. 153B, 606–607, the text of this manuscript seems corrupted, and differs in places from the one reconstructed by Dagens.

[...] *toṅṭinamaṅḍale tasmīn rudrakoṭimabāsthale | ādiśaiva iti khyātaḥ pañcagocaravartitaḥ* (em. Ganesan 2009, xi fn. 9; *pañcāṅgācāravartitaḥ* ed.) || *śrīvyaḅhrapurānīvāsī vāmadevo mahattaraḥ* (em.; *mahattataḥ* ed.) | *tasyānujo mahāyogī vedajñānamunīśvaraḥ* || *brhatsabbheśam uddiśya anekāśīyakais saha | śrīmattillavanam prāpya ciraṃ kālam avarbhata* (cod.; *avardhanat* ed.) || *sadāśīvamahārāje prthivīpālanakṣame | ālayānām anekeśāṃ gopurādīny akalpayat* || *vedajñānamuniḥ śrīmān drāviḍādīny anekāśaḥ | śivadharmottarādīni śāstrāṇi paryakalpayat* || *śrīmattillavane caiva hy aruṇādrau mahatsthale | śrīvṛddhbācalasamjñe ca madhyārjunamahatpure* || *śvetena pūjitaṃ yatra śvetārāṇye ghaṭe pure | anyeṣu anekasthāneṣu sthāpayāmāsa cāgamān* || *tasya jyēṣṭhasutaḥ kaścīt tannāmāṅkitapaṅḍitaḥ | dikṣādarśaṃ mahadgranthaṃ paddhatīm ca mahattarāṇam | dakṣiṇāmūrtikṛpayā hy akarot sāmpradāyikām* ||

Previous to the passage cited here, the text talks about a Saundārācārya, since Vāmadeva likely came in his lineage (see Ganesan 2009, x, fn. 7 and 8).

³⁶ The toponym Toṅṭinamaṅḍale (Toṅṭainātu) refers to a region roughly occupying the north-eastern part of today's Tamil Nadu. For the classical discussion of Tamil Nadu's historical geography, especially the *nātu* division, see Stein 1977.

³⁷ Here the Sanskrit Tillavana is a borrowing from the Tamil toponym Tillaivaṅgam (which already used the Sanskrit word vana/vaṅgam), literally meaning 'the mangrove

ciplēs, [Vedajñāna I] spent a long time there. During the reign of the great king Sadāśiva, who was skillful in protecting the world, he (i.e., Vedajñāna I) built *gopuras* and other [structures] of countless temples. The venerable sage Vedajñāna [I] rewrote innumerable [Sanskrit] treatises (*śāstras*), such as the *Śivadharmottara*, into Tamil and so on.³⁸ He also established (*sthāpaya-māsa*) the Āgamas in Tillavana as well as in the sacred hill of Aruṇādri (i.e., Tiruvaṇṇāmalai), on [the hill] called Vṛddhācala (i.e., Viruttāccalam), in the great city of Madhyārjuna (i.e., Tiruviṭaimarutūr), in Śvetāraṇya (i.e., Tiruveṅkāṭu) where the white [elephant] performed worship, as well as in Ghaṭapura (i.e., Kumpakōṇam), and in many other places.³⁹ His (i.e., Vāmadeva's) best son was a learned man carrying the same name as him (i.e., Vedajñāna); by the grace of Dakṣiṇāmūrti, he composed the *Dikṣādarsa* and a great book of ritual instruction, both of them excellent and following the tradition.

This passage places Vedajñāna I's older brother Vāmadeva in Rudrakoṭi, that is the sacred site of Tirukkaḷukkuṇṇam in Chengalpattu district. This contrasts with the information by Aruṇācalam on the early life of Maṛaiñāna Campantar, who allegedly was born in Kaḷantai/Kaḷattūr, south-west from Paṭṭukkōṭṭai, and studied at Kalahasti.⁴⁰ Certainly, though, both brothers were connected to Chidambaram. There, Maṛaiñāna Campantar spent the last decades of his life, coinciding with the rule of Tuluva king Sadāśiva.⁴¹

forest.' This is one of the names of Chidambaram, as the temple-city is located in an area that was formerly a *tillai* grove, and a mangrove forest still surrounds it.

³⁸ Notice the *ādi* in *drāviḍāḍini*, an interesting expression since we are not aware of Maṛaiñāna writing in any language other than Tamil.

³⁹ I added the Tamil equivalent to each Sanskrit toponym in this sentence with the help of Ganesan (2009, x–xi). Notice how the toponyms in the two languages often refer to the same myth and, in some cases, the Sanskrit toponym seems to be a translation of a well-established name. This is the case of Gaṭhapura, 'The city of the pot,' that might well be Vedajñāna's re-translation of Kumpakōṇam, 'The pot's corner,' originally a Sanskrit compound, but also a current toponym in Tamil. In other cases, the two names likely refer to the parallel development of South India toponomastics in Sanskrit and Tamil, in connection with the same mythological corpus; this seems the case, for instance, of the Sanskrit Śvetāraṇya and its Tamil equivalent Tiruveṅkāṭu. The classical study of Tamil toponomastics is Cetupillai's 1946 book *Tamilakam, Ūrum Pērum*. Many other works have appeared since then, but I don't know of a study considering both the Sanskrit and Tamil tradition with equal attention.

⁴⁰ Aruṇācalam 1976/2005, 158–159.

⁴¹ Sadāśiva Rāya was the last king of the Tuluva dynasty and reigned from ca. 1542 until 1570, albeit under the strong influence of his chief minister Rāma Rāya who later founded the Aravidu dynasty (see Heras 1927, esp. 13–53). For an overview of the patronage of Vijayanagara kings in Chidambaram, see Balasubramanyan 1931.

During that time, Maṛaiñāna became an authoritative figure who initiated the construction of several religious buildings, and rendered the Sanskrit *śāstras* into Tamil.⁴² He also promoted the Āgamas in some specific temples listed in the passage; following Ganesan, I suspect that the causative verb *sthāpayati* might refer to Maṛaiñāna introducing āgamic worship in these temples. The passage ends by establishing the *guru-śiṣya* relationship between him and the author of the *Dikṣādarsa*, his nephew Vedajñāna II.⁴³

In sum, notwithstanding the many uncertainties that remain on his life and activities, the ample information collected thus far points to the fact that Maṛaiñāna brought forth new modes of scholarship connected to ideas and practices of translation, and promoted new institutions and ways of worship. Coherently, we know that Maṛaiñāna had students—but we have no clues regarding his teachers. In his texts, he pays homage to Meykaṇṭār, the thirteenth-century initiator of the Caiva Cittāntam tradition, but mentions no other *guru*. This incongruence was noted by Aruṇācalam too, who set off to gather information on this matter from Maṛaiñāna’s intellectual opponents.⁴⁴ Among Maṛaiñāna’s smaller works is the *Muttinilai* (‘The Condition of Emancipation’), a treatise in favour of the idea that bliss is inherent to the soul (*āṇmānanta vātam*). This booklet and the doctrine it supported were opposed by Maṛaiñāna’s contemporary, Tarumapuram Kuruñāna Campantar, a fellow Caiva Cittāntam teacher and founder of the Tarumapuram *atīnam* lineage, in a poetical rebuttal titled *Muttiniccayam* (‘The Ascertainment of Emancipation’; see Sanskrit *muktiniścaya*). In the eighteenth century, Kuruñāna’s successor Velliyampalavāṇa Tampiraṇ wrote two commentaries on the *Muttiniccayam*, a short commentary (*cirṟurai*) and a longer one (*pērurai*). In this second one, printed by the Tarumapuram *atīnam* in 1948 but currently unavailable to me, Aruṇācalam located the names of Maṛaiñāna Campantar’s two teachers.⁴⁵ One was Kaḷantai Nāṇap-

⁴² These two activities of Maṛaiñāna Campantar are indicated by the parallel verbs *akalpayat* and *parikalpayat*, both referring to the building—of sacred sites, and a literary corpus.

⁴³ This information is confirmed by the colophon of the *Ātmārthapūjāpaddhati*, as transcribed in Hultzsch 1896, 105–106 (on MS no. 1096 within Hultzsch’s list).

⁴⁴ Most of the information in the next two paragraphs is originally found in Aruṇācalam 1976/2005, 137 and 159–60.

⁴⁵ Aruṇācalam refers to an edition by the Tarumapuram *atīnam* of the *Muttiniccayam* along with the *pērurai* printed in 1948. I was only able to consult an earlier edition by the Purōkirasiv [bureaucracy] accukkūṭam in Chennai that includes the *cirṟurai*. It should be noted that Ganesan does not mention the *Muttinilai* in his list of works by Maṛaiñāna Campantar (2009, xiii–xvi), even though he includes in the bibliography this early edition of the *Muttiniccayam*. However, besides Aruṇācalam’s opinion, the

pirakācar, allegedly from the same town as Maṛaiñāṇa, who also authored important Śaiva poems.⁴⁶

Besides a direct reference in the *Muttiniccayam Pērurai*, other hints pointing to the connection between Nāṇappirakācar and Maṛaiñāṇa are the contiguity of some of their texts in the manuscript tradition, and the fact that Nāṇappirakācar wrote in *kuṛaḷ veṅpāmetre*.⁴⁷ Another teacher was Kaṇṇappa Paṇṭāram, whom Maṛaiñāṇa met after going to Kalahasti as a young boy, and who initiated him into Caiva Cittāntam. While living in Kalahasti, Maṛaiñāṇa proved to be a talented student, but with time he became arrogant—or so the story goes. He rejected the *liṅga* of his teacher and entered the Kukai *maṭam* without ever taking another teacher.⁴⁸ Unsurprisingly, this account is not very flattering. Without reading too much in these negative but still hagiographical stories that were collected a couple of centuries after Maṛaiñāṇa's time, his characterisation as a self-reliant thinker fits well with the bold intellectual operations we find in his masterly work of translation, the *Civatarumōttaram*, to which we now turn.

2. Old and new textual architectures

The *Civatarumōttaram* includes scant references to the context of its composition other than pointing to the centrality of Chidambaram, as we saw. However, it does offer clues as to its own nature as a translation, and to its positioning vis-à-vis the original Sanskrit text as well as to the larger world of Tamil literature. It also envisions a world of readers, and it is on these two types of context—the field of translation and readership—that we will focus our attention in the next two sections of this article. When reading the *Civatarumōttaram* side by side with its Sanskrit source, it is immediately obvious that the two texts are similarly organised in twelve chapters that cover roughly the same topics, from the tenets of the Śaiva religion to yoga and descriptions of hells.⁴⁹ The division into twelve chapters appears in all the printed editions

introduction to the edition of the *Muttiniccayam* I consulted (1934, ii) does mention Maṛaiñāṇa Paṇṭāram, that is Maṛaiñāṇa Campantar, as the author of the *mūlam* that prompted the writing of the *Muttiniccayam* and its commentary.

⁴⁶ *Uṇṇatu* (i.e., Maṛaiñāṇa's) *kuṛuvrāṇa Kaḷantai Nāṇappirakāca Paṇṭāram ceyta akaval*. I take this passage of the *Muttiniccayam Pērurai* from Aruṇācalam 1969/2005, 137.

⁴⁷ On Kaḷantai Nāṇappirakācar, his literary works, and his relationship with our Maṛaiñāṇa (including details on the manuscripts of their works), see Aruṇācalam 1969/2005, 136–144.

⁴⁸ *Ibidem*.

⁴⁹ The titles of the Tamil chapters are: 'Chapter on the supreme *dharma*' (*paramatarumā-tiyiyal*); 'Chapter on the gift of the knowledge of Śiva' (*śivañāṇatānaviyal*); 'Chapter on the

and the manuscripts I consulted, and is also confirmed by an index-stanza at the end of the twelfth chapter of the *Civatarumōttaram*.⁵⁰ In parallel to the Sanskrit, a crucial topic in the *Civatarumōttaram* seems to be that of the gift of knowledge (*ñānatānam*), namely the copying and transmission of Śaiva scriptures described in the second chapter.⁵¹ The topic is mentioned in the *pāyiram*, where it is the subject of an entire stanza:

Tell me in due order also the act of giving that bestows knowledge, which is [particularly] difficult to attain [among acts of giving], and [which is] the variety [of giving] that possesses greatness. Tell me all the rules, beginning with the manner of giving that is suitable, along with the fruits [that accrue] to those who give and to those who receive.

nāṭ' ariya ñānatara tāṇamu navirrāy
pītu peru pētamum eṇakku murai pēcāy
iṭu perav iyu muraiy ipavar irappār
kūṭu payanātiyav aṇaittu murai kūrāy. (0.14)

This is just one among many elements ensuring that the translation is recognisable as closely related to its source, at least on the surface, and that anyone with a knowledge of the *Śivadbharmottara* would see its general structure being reproduced in the *Civatarumōttaram*.⁵² But how does the Tamil version talk about, and position itself vis-à-vis a source so close in content and yet so far in time and cultural references?

In the introduction to his translation, Maṛaiñāṇa, following the account given in the first chapter of the *Śivadbharmottara*, acknowledges that his poem originated in two different yet equally mythical moments.⁵³ Its content was

five types of sacrifice' (*aivakaiyākaviyal*); 'Chapter on the many excellent instruments' (*pa-laviciṭṭakāraṇaviyal*); 'Chapter on the *dbarma* of Śiva' (*civatarumaviyal*); 'Chapter on sins' (*pāvaviyal*); 'Chapter on the heavens and hells' (*cuvarkkanarakaviyal*); 'Chapter on death and rebirth' (*ceṇaṇamaranaviyal*); 'Chapters on the remainders of the heavens and hells' (*cuvarkkanarakanēṭaviyal*); 'Chapter on the yoga of knowledge of Śiva' (*civañāṇayōkaviyal*); 'Chapter on expiation' (*parikāraviyal*); 'Chapter on the world of the cows' (*kōpuraviyal*).

⁵⁰ Cf. *Civatarumōttaram* 12.221.

⁵¹ The second chapter also caught François Gros's attention (see Gopal Iyer 1984–85, vii).

⁵² The importance of chapter two of the *Śivadbharmottara*, and of the ritual copying of the manuscript described there is the focus of Florinda De Simini's recent monograph (2016a). Such ritual seems to have been important for Maṛaiñāṇa Campantar too, and as I will discuss later in this article, this is a chapter where he strives to remain faithful to the Sanskrit original.

⁵³ Indeed, the *Śivadbharmottara* opens with a series of questions posed by Agastya to Skanda (*Śivadbharmottara* 1.2–14). As a result, the god then imparts to the sage a teaching that had previously been revealed by Śiva (*śāstram iśvarabhāṣitam*, *Śivadbharmottara* 1.16)

first revealed by Śiva to Umā and, only later, Skanda—who had attended their dialogue—retold it to Agastya. This second conversation was purportedly written down in the *Śivadharmottara*. Maṛaiñāna strives to make explicit the illustrious origins of his poem, all the while scattering in the verses of the *pāyiram* grammatical key-words that point to his understanding of the complex operation of bringing those conversations into the Tamil literary universe. Take for example the following verse:

Praising and worshipping the fragrant lotus-feet of Kukaṇ (Murugan) who fully knows the true [scriptures] beginning with the Vedas spoken by the Pure one without beginning, middle, or end, so as to destroy the impurities of living beings, Agastya asked [him]: ‘O teacher, tell [me] a way that might generate wisdom for all living beings!’ Skanda graciously taught [him] the *Śivadharmottara*. Analysing closely (*ōrntē*) that book, and making a summary of it (*tokai ceytum*), I will now expound [it].

*āti natuṅ antam ilāṅ amalaṅ uyirkk’ alukk’ arukkav arainta vāymai
vētamutal unarnta kukaṅ viraimalarttāl akattiyaṅ rāṅ viyantu pōrrip
pōtakaṅēy anaituyirkkum pulam ākku neri pukalāy eṇṇak kantaṅ
ōtiy aruḷ civatarumōttara nūlait tokaiceyṅ uraippām ōrntē* (0.7)

Tightly packed in the last line of this stanza we find two distinct references to what I would call Tamil theories of textual derivation, that is of the relationship between an ‘original text’ (*mutal nūl*) and a ‘secondary text’ (*vaḷi nūl*). The close relationship and possible dependence of one book on another was first articulated in the ancient grammar *Tolkāppiyam*, where we find the definition of *mutal nūl* as the result of direct knowledge or ‘vision’ (*kaṇṇatu*).⁵⁴ This definition applies particularly well to the revealed nature of most scriptures, including the *Śivadharmottara*. As for secondary texts (*vaḷi nūl*), they can have according to *Tolkāppiyam* four types of relationships with the source from which they derive, the *mutal nūl*. These four modes of operation of *vaḷi nūl* are 1. *tokuttal*, a compendium or synopsis of the *mutal nūl*; 2. *virittal*, amplification, addition of details; 3. *tokaiviri*, namely a mix of abridgment and amplification; and finally, 4. *molipeyarp-pu*, translation.⁵⁵ In the stanza we just read, Maṛaiñāna claims to have condensed the content of the original *Śivadharmottara* by using the verb *tokai ceytu*, an exact synonym of *tokuttal*. In doing so, he is positioning his work

⁵⁴ *Tolkāppiyam*, *poruḷātikaram*, *marapiyal* 96: *viṇaiyiṅ nīnki viḷaṅkiya ariviṅ - mu-naivaṅ kaṇṇatu mutanū lākum*.

⁵⁵ After defining *vaḷi nūl* (*sūtra* 97) and mentioning that it has four subdivisions (*sūtra* 98), the text lists them as follows (*Tolkāppiyam*, *poruḷātikaram*, *marapiyal* 99): *tokuttal virittal tokaiviri molipeyart - tatarppaṭa yāttalō taṇaimara piṇave*.

within the category of *vali nūl*, and implying that he is selecting the material in the original, while at the same time keeping close to it. Yet he never says explicitly that his work is a translation from Sanskrit into Tamil—the word *vaṭamoli* does not appear anywhere in the verses of the introduction—even though this must have been obvious to his readers. This is probably connected with the desire to stress the didactic purpose of his work, if following the commentator Pēraciriyar we understand a compendium (*tokuttu kūral*) as being useful for ‘people with little knowledge and a short lifetime to know what is explained at length in the original book.’⁵⁶ Maṛaiñāṇa must have thought that this didactic aim was better achieved by stressing his work’s nature as a compendium rather than a translation.⁵⁷

Secondly, the intended faithfulness of the Tamil version is emphasised in the stanza by the adverbial participle *ōrntu*, which is connected with the numeral for ‘one’ (*ōr*) and implies looking closely at the original, i.e., ‘being one/in agreement’ with it. In this context, *ōrntu* echoes the verbal participle *oruṅku*—which also comes from a similar root—used in the thirteenth-century grammar *Nannūl*, exactly in the context of the discussion on the relationship between *mutal nūl* and *vali nūl*. In *sūtra* 7 of this grammar, *vali nūl* is defined as ‘adhering to (*oruṅku*) the conclusions of the text of the original author, but introducing options (*vikarṇam*) that appear necessary to the new author, the secondary text follows the way of unvarying tradition (*marapu*).’⁵⁸ Echoing this *sūtra*, the use of *ōrntu* in the *Civatarumōt-taram* points to the close relationship with the original Sanskrit text while also implying the possibility of introducing variations that the author of the secondary text deemed necessary to appeal to its different audience. And indeed, the stanza we just read already presupposes two ways in which Maṛaiñāṇa strayed from the original text. First, he summarised the content of the original book. Second, his text retells in Tamil the content of a conversation between Skanda and Agastya that was originally expressed and

⁵⁶ Pēraciriyam ad *Tolkāppiyam*, *poruḷātikaram*, *marapiyal* 99: *tokuttal eṇpatu mutanūlul virintatanaic cilvālnāṭ cirraṇiviṇ mākkatku ariyat tokuttukkūral*.

⁵⁷ This attitude might have also been inspired by the desire to remain faithful to the spirit of the original text, which presents itself as a compendium of the knowledge necessary to salvation, since life is too short for most people to master the whole body of religious knowledge. For instance, the *Śivadbarmottara* (1.69) admonishes the readers as follows: ‘You should know this, you should know this! One who wishes to know everything won’t get to the end of all the treatises, not even in a thousand years.’ (*idaṁ jñeyam idaṁ jñeyam yaḥ sarvaṁ jñātum icchati | api varṣasahasrāyuh śāstrāntaṁ nādbhigacchati ||*). I thank Florinda De Simini for sharing her draft edition of this chapter with me.

⁵⁸ *Muṇṇōr nūliṇ mutiporuṅ kottu - piṇṇōṅ vēṇṭum vikarṇaṅ kūri*. *Nannūl*, *sūtra* 7.

recorded in Sanskrit. Both types of deviation are already accounted for in the *Tolkāppiyam*, even though Maṛaiñāṇa does not refer to the second one explicitly. Considering the amount of unpacking this stanza required, his rhetoric attitude towards the complex textual operations at play in the *Civatarumōttaram* could be described as laconic, even (deceptively) humble. Perhaps the author was trying to keep the reader's focus on the elaborate narrative framework and the eulogistic stanzas but, more likely, he dropped subtle references to his textual strategies for the trained ear to catch.

Certainly, the commentator Maṛaiñāṇa Tēcikar was well aware of such references. In his explanation of this stanza, he made explicit the reference to the theory of *vali nūl*, while also introducing further layers of complexity.⁵⁹ First of all, Maṛaiñāṇa Tēcikar read the use of *-um* in *tokai ceytum* as *eccavummai*, that is, as pointing to something else beside what is mentioned in the text. In our case, this is the full list of strategies of *vali nūl* derivation besides the compendium (*tokuttal*)—including, I would stress, explanation or amplification (*virittal*). As we keep reading from the *Civatarumōttaram*, the reason why the commentator wanted to read this *-um* as a reference to the whole list will become clearer. Maṛaiñāṇa Campantar's *Civatarumōttaram* not only summarises its Sanskrit original, it also expands on it in different ways, including the incorporation of translations from other sources. Moreover, the commentator makes a direct reference to the crossing from one language into another (*molipeyarttal*), in this case from Sanskrit into Tamil, at work in the

⁵⁹ Commentary ad *Civatarumōttaram* 0.7: *e-tu. yām, mutanaṭu vīrillāta niṇmalaṇ ākiya civaṇ uyirkaḷukku ānava mutaliya pācaṅkaḷaiy arukkum poruṭtu aruḷicceya vētakama mutaliyav unmaiñāṇattaiy uṇarnta piḷḷaiyār maṇam poruntiya centāmarai pōṇra cīpātaṅkaḷai vaṇaṅki ṇāṇācāriyaṇē — caruvāṇ mākkalukku marivunṭā mārkattai aruḷicceya vēṇṭum eṇru — akattiyaṇ viṇṇappaṇ ceyyap piḷḷaiyār aruḷicceya civatarumōttaram eṇṇuñ civākamattaiy urruṇōkkitt tokuttut tamiḷār collā niṇṇōm. e-ru. tokaiceytum eṇṇav ummaiyaḷ, vakuttum eṇa varuvitt' uraikkaṇṇaṭṭatu. akamākiya cintiya paruppatattaik kiḷṇ paṭuttukaiyāl akattiyaṇ eṇap peyar āyirru. cū. 'viṇaiyiṇiṅki viḷaṅkiyavariviṇ, muṇaiyaṇ kaṇṭatu mutāṇūlākum' eṇa muṇṇūlāip pārttu molipeyartt' uraikkaiyāl itu valinūl eṇap peyar perum. cū. 'valiyēṇappaṭuva tatan valittāku, matuvē tāṇumiruvakaitṭē, tokuttal virittal tokaiviriṇmōli peyarpeṇat takunūl yāppi riraṇṇēṇpa' eṇpataṇūl iṭṭu tokai vakaiy eṇr' arika. ākkiiyōṇ peyarai mutarṇkaṭ kūṇṇātu nūr peyaraik kūṇṇāy' eṇ nūtalirrōv eṇiṇ; ellārum piraṇāṇamākaṇv aṅkikarikka vēṇṭukaiyāṇ eṇka. ākkiiyōṇ peyar mutaliyaṇa varumāru; ākkiiyōṇ peyar, maṛaiñāṇa campantanāyaṇār. valī, civākamattiṇ valī. ellai, tamiḷ valaṅkum nilam. nūrpeyar, mutāṇūlār perrāpeyar, yāppu, tokaivakai. nūtalīya poruḷ, civatarumam civaṇaṇatāna mutalāyiṇa. keṭpōr, avarmāṇakkar. payaṇ, viṭuperu eṇṇarika.*

Inverted commas are added by me to help identify the *Tolkāppiyam* verses we already discussed above.

Civatarumōttaram. Indeed, he seems to think that this is the main reason why the text is to be considered a *vali nūl*—at once close to and yet different from its source, due to the different language. Only after referring to *molipeyarttal*, Vedajñāṇa II mentions the text should be understood as falling within the category of *tokai/tokuttal*, namely compendium or abridgement, the category Maṛaiñāṇa decided to cite explicitly in his stanza.

Thinking of translation as one way among many to compose a *vali nūl* allowed the commentator, as it allows us, to embrace the dialectic between closeness and innovation with respect to its authoritative source that characterises the *Civatarumōttaram*. Observing its twelve chapters from a closer resolution, the many ways in which the translation departs from the Sanskrit text become evident, starting with the structure of the chapters themselves. First of all, unlike in the *Śivadharmottara*, each chapter begins in Tamil with some stanzas that bring the reader back to the narrative framework of the conversation between Skanda and Agastya. This is likely an attempt to make the Tamil version, whose contents are those of a theological and ritual manual for students of Caiva Cittāntam, closer to a Purāṇic narrative and its modes of appealing to and instructing the audience. We will return to the question of the genre of the text later. Firstly, we notice that the figures of Skanda/Murugan and especially Agastya are central to Tamil identity and imagination, and they tie together linguistic, cultural and religious belonging. A good example of the role of Agastya in all these aspects of Tamil imagination is the last stanza of chapter two:

He [Śiva] is difficult to know even for Viṣṇu and Brahmā; he is the ocean of compassion who drank the dark poison first, so as to give ambrosia to the gods; he is the supreme one; he has a waist [decorated] with snakes and bones; he is the one who loves us as [we, his devotees] join [him]—we praise the words/language of the sage of the Potikai mountain [i.e., Agastya] in order to merge with [his] clinking anklets.

*ariy ayaṇ aritar̥k' ariyaṇaiy amarar̥kk' amirt' iyak
karukiya kaṭu mur̥ parukiya karuṇaik̥ kaṭalāṇaip
paramaṇaiy arav' akk' araiyaṇai viravap̥ parivāṇaip
poru kaḷal̥ puṇarap̥ potimalai muni cor̥ pukalvāmē (2.83)*

Here Maṛaiñāṇa praises the language (*col*) of Agastya, that is Tamil, since the sage is traditionally known as the first grammarian of this language, which he learnt from Śiva himself. Maṛaiñāṇa does so in order to 'join the feet of Śiva,' i.e., to attain liberation. In doing so, he ties inextricably this god to the Tamil language, a connection whose cultural, social and political implications were already strong in the sixteenth century but played out at their fullest in

the Tamil identity politics of the nineteenth century.⁶⁰ This stanza introduces us to another element of innovation in the *Civatarumōttaram*, namely the presence of verses of praise (*tuti*, Skr. *stuti*) in honour of Śiva at the end of each chapter. These are usually more complex, metrically longer stanzas that include more recherché rhythm and figuration compared to the stanzas in the main body of the chapters. Both innovations—the emphasis on the Purāṇic narrative and the use of *stuti*—point to an attempt by Maṛaiṇāṇa to attract and persuade his listeners by using literary forms that were popular at this time. They appealed to the sphere of devotion and imagination, and were especially suited to the instruction of the devotees, in a way strongly reminiscent of the didactic role of Appayya Dikṣita's *stotras* discussed by Yigal Bronner.⁶¹

Besides these two structural innovations, each chapter makes wildly different choices with regard to how to adapt the original Sanskrit content, what to include, what to exclude, and especially what to add. Chapter two, for instance, remains close to the original. Most changes are omissions, in line with the logic of *tokuttal*, but overall the Tamil version strives to convey almost the same content as the Sanskrit text. Chapter three, on the other hand, is much shorter than the original, probably because most of the elements that made it important in the seventh century—such as the reuse of the *Bhagavadgītā* in a Śaiva context and the interaction with Buddhist ideas—were not as important to our sixteenth-century author.⁶² Other chapters are considerably longer and more elaborated, often because Maṛaiṇāṇa Campantar incorporated content he drew from different texts of the Tamil and Sanskrit tradition. For instance, the first 74 verses of chapter ten depart drastically from the Sanskrit, and the commentator points out how Maṛaiṇāṇa added new material from the seminal text of Caiva Cittāntam, Meykaṇṭa Tēvar's *Civaṇānapōtam*.⁶³ Similarly, chapter eleven translates and incorporates into the text large sections of the twelfth-century *Prāyaścittasamuccaya*, Trilocanaśiva's treatise on expiation rites.⁶⁴ This text and the

⁶⁰ The importance of Neo-Śaivism in the articulation of non-Brahmin Tamil nationalism has been put forward in the most comprehensive way in Vaithees 2015.

⁶¹ Bronner 2007 shows the public and didactic dimension of Appayya's *stotras*, which 'attempt to reach out to some community of listeners and instruct them on a variety of topics: from purāṇas to speech ornaments to piety and surrender' (2007, 127).

⁶² On chapter three of the *Śivadharmottara*, see De Simini forth.b

⁶³ This is clearly stated in the comment ad 10.74: *innūlil vārāta poruḷkaḷ ellām virittuk kūrīyatū maṛṛum virinta tamīl nūlkaḷilum ākamaṅkaḷilun kaṅṭu virittuk kūrīyat enak koḷka*. K. Nachimuthu was the first to notice this passage.

⁶⁴ Such extensive borrowings from Trilocanaśiva's *Prāyaścittasamuccaya* became evident during our group readings of chapter eleven of the *Civatarumōttaram*. Since

topics it covers must have been important to Maṛaiñāṇa, considering that one of his students embarked on a translation of the whole *Prāyaścittasamuccaya* into Tamil.⁶⁵ So, in chapter ten and eleven of the *Civatarumōttaram*, the main operation at play is *virittu*—the process of enlarging, explaining, expanding—rather than abridgment or *tokuttal*. These differences are likely the reason why the commentator found it important to read the *-um* in stanza seven of the *pāyiram* as implying all possible types of *vali nūl* formation. Maṛaiñāṇa Campantar abridged as well as expanded upon the Sanskrit, often turning to other works whose contents were important in sixteenth-century South India, so to offer to his readers an up-to-date compendium of the theological and ritual knowledge required of a Caiva Cittāntam follower.

Following such compendium logic, the text contains allusions to other Tamil texts besides the borrowings from Caiva Cittāntam scriptures such as the *Civañāṇapōtam*. Unsurprisingly, we find among these the poems of the *Tēvāram*. These hymns, beautiful songs set to music and still performed by professional *ōtūvars* in Tamil temples today, do not expound any systematic theology but rather express multi-layered devotion to Śiva, tying it to specific sites in the Tamil land. They had been integrated into the world of Caiva Cittāntam by the early teachers of the thirteenth and fourteenth century, chiefly Umāpati, but they also remain a powerful expression of devotion aimed at direct communication with god.⁶⁶ Maṛaiñāṇa Campantar worshipped the poet-saints who composed the hymns. He loved especially Karaikkāl Ammayār, perhaps because she is believed to have witnessed Śiva's dance, and the form of Śiva most venerated in Chidambaram is the Natarāja.⁶⁷ The influence of the *Tēvāram* is particularly strong in the stanzas where

R. Sathyanarayanan edited the *Prāyaścittasamuccaya* in 2015 along with Dominic Goodall, the two of them were particularly equipped to catch such references.

⁶⁵ On the *Pirāyaccittasamuccayam*, the independent Tamil translation of the *Prāyaścittasamuccaya*, see fn. 27 above.

⁶⁶ In the words of Pechilis Prentiss (1999, 118), especially Umāpati, 'in his effort to create an authentic Tamil lineage for Śaiva Siddhānta philosophy, undertook several organizational and interpretive works with respect to the *nāyaṇmār* [i.e., the saint-poets who composed the hymns of the *Tēvāram*].' Chiefly, he 'compiled the first anthology of the *mūvar*'s hymns, which he keyed to foundational philosophical categories explored in one of his own canonical works.'

⁶⁷ Karaikkāl Ammayār is the first in the list of the *nāyaṇmārs* cited in the *pāyiram* of the *Civatarumōttaram* (0.4): *ālavāṇatt' amala nāṭaṇ kaṇṭ' uvanta kāraikkāl ammai taṇṇaiṇ - pāl aruṇṭiy umai mulaiyir patikavitam pala pakarṇta pālaṇ raṇṇaiṇ - cūlaiyīṇaiṇ civaṇ aruḷār ruṭaittāṇaiṇ taṭutt' āṇṭāṇ rolaṇ raṇṇai - mālaiṇaṇivācakaṇai marṇaiy aṭiyaraiyūm aṭi vaṇaṇkuvāme*. She also appears in the other works by Maṛaiñāṇa, such as *Caivacamayaneri* 0.9: *nammatika nāṭakattai nāṇavīli yārrīḷaiṇku - mammaitrup pāṇaiṇaiṇ pām*.

Maṛaiñāṇa lingers on Śiva's attributes, and some of his peculiar expressions can only be understood by referring to these hymns. This is the case of *Civatarumōttaram* 1.29, for instance, where Śiva is described as wearing on his broad and beautiful chest a turtle along with the bones of dead men (*irantavar eṇṇōṭ' āmaiy iṇṭ' elin mārpīr pūṇṭu*). The turtle is an uncommon ornament for Śiva. While the commentator explained the mythology behind this choice, the image would have been immediately familiar to anyone who had previously heard the second song of *Tirumurai* 2.85 where bones, hog's tusks and a turtle are said to shine on Śiva's chest (*eṇṇōṭu komṇōṭ' āmaiy ivai mārp' ilaṅka*).⁶⁸ In layering this reference within the verse, Maṛaiñāṇa was tying his theological and ritual teachings to a world of Śaiva devotion in which his listeners likely participated.

Another important piece that composes the fabric of Maṛaiñāṇa's poem is the *Tirukkural*. This ethical poem was very popular, and had already been commented upon several times by the sixteenth century. Maṛaiñāṇa must have admired the *Tirukkural*, and perhaps thought it useful in the articulation of Śaiva ethical life in the Tamil country, since he wrote his entire *Caivacamayaneri* in the type of *veṇṇā* metre that has come to be identified as *kural veṇṇā*. Quotations of the *Tirukkural* are also scattered throughout the *Civatarumōttaram*, often in stanzas with a strong rhetorical flavour, written to address and appeal directly to the audience. This is the case of the following stanza, with no direct parallel in Sanskrit:

Those who are in harmony with the highest one, difficult to attain, will not consent to [performing] action (*karumam*). If they do, they will not be close to the essence greater than action. Who would choose to get unripe fruits and reject the rich fruits that have fallen in their hands? Who would be happy with faulty stones and bypass the shining gems of the world?

*eytark' ariya paramparaṇaiy icaintār karumatt' icaiyārkaḷ,
ceyyiṛ karumañ ciṇṇantaporuḷ ceṇṇintār allar, ceḷuṅkaṇi taṅ
kaiyiṛ pukaluṅ kalaintav alakkāyaik kavarak karutiṇar ār?
vaiyatt' oḷikoṅ maṇiy akarri vaḷuvāñ cilai yār makilvārē? (3.15)*

The rhetorical appeal of this verse is emphasised both by the use of direct questions, which are quite common in Tamil, and by the clear reference to verse 100 of the *Tirukkural*. The latter reads 'saying harsh words, when sweet ones are available, is like picking a raw fruit, while a ripe one is at hand' (*iṇṇiya ulavāka iṇṇāta kūṛal kaṇi - iruppak kāykavarn tarṛu*). Once again,

⁶⁸ T. Rajarethinam noticed this important reference during one of our Śivadharmā Project readings.

the image in this stanza would have been immediately familiar to anyone who had heard, and likely memorised, this *kural* before.

Summing up, Maṛaiñāna Campantar's translation oscillates between condensing and expanding upon the original Sanskrit text in multiple directions, and in so doing the *Civatarumōttaram* draws the contours of the theological, poetical and ethical road map of a Caiva Cittāntam follower of his time and place. What keeps together such a complex textual architecture are the language and metre of the poem. The twelve chapters of the *Civatarumōttaram*, although covering a great variety of topics, consistently adopt a register of Tamil characterized by an articulated yet relatively explicit syntax and morphology, and often cryptic choices of imagery and vocabulary. We will begin the next section on readership by exploring the implications of this choice of register. Here I wish to focus on poetic features, especially metre, as the unifying thread running through the text. The *Civatarumōttaram* is entirely in verse, and it consistently employs the subtype of verse (*pāviṇam*) called *viruttam*. This form consists of lines of different length organised in stanzas of four lines. It became popular in the medieval and early modern period, especially in connection with translation from Sanskrit. The Tamil versions of Sanskrit Kāvya and Purāṇa—*kāppiyam* or *ceyyul* and *purāṇam*—mostly employ this stanzaic metre, probably because it can render the narrative flavour of Pūraṇic *śloka* as well as the complex metres used in Kāvya, even though *viruttam* itself is more elaborate than *śloka* and requires a higher level of poetic mastery on the part of the author. The poet most often associated with this verse form is Kampan (twelfth to thirteenth century), whose *Kamparāmayanam* exploits the poetic potential of *viruttam* to the fullest. In his metrical analysis of this text, K.V. Dakshayani highlights Kampan's exceptional ability to move from one type of *viruttam* to the other following the plot and the mood of the story.⁶⁹

Maṛaiñāna's translation is far from the refinement and complexity of *Kamparāmayanam*, but the author nicely employs different types of *viruttam*, along with a few other stanzaic metres, to match the content he aims to convey. The mythological framework is mostly narrated through shorter, simpler stanzas such as *kali viruttam*, which are also used to express commonplace Caiva Cittāntam concepts scattered throughout the chapters.⁷⁰

⁶⁹ The different types of *viruttam* in *Kamparāmayanam* and the context in which they are used are specifically listed in Dakshayani 1979, 117–150.

⁷⁰ *Civatarumōttaram* 2.7, which is part of the narrative framework, and *Civatarumōttaram* 2.12, illustrating the Caiva Cittāntam *topos* of Śiva standing inside the teacher to cut the bondages of the souls, are good examples of the usages of simpler varieties of *viruttam*.

By contrast, the verses of praise at the end of each chapter (verses that have no equivalent in the Sanskrit) are written in the most complex types of *viruttam*, often made of seven- or eight-metre (cīr) lines, such as the two following verses:

You are (*āyavaṇ*) like the root of precious life! Your mouth (*vāyavaṇ*) recites the Vedas! You are the true meaning (*carporu!*) sought after by ascetics! You are the true essence (*carporu!*) beyond which there is nothing! You are perfect and have no comparison (*poru iliyē!*) Your bow (*viliyē*) fought when the [three] cities were destroyed! You inhabit a place (*iṭattinaṇēy*) that no one can fathom! You have eaten the poison (*viṭattinaṇē!*) (80) You have concealed (*karattan*) in your matted locks the Gaṅgā herself! You are the five-syllable [mantra] (*aṅcu-akkarattan*) that makes sin go away! Your sharp arrow (*vāli*) made the three cities perish! At that time, you took (*āli*) the three persons who cherished [you] [i.e., Nandi, Mahākāla and Bāṇāsura] as your relatives!⁷¹ O hero (*tīraṇ*) who slaughtered a lion!⁷² O shore (*tīraṇ*) on which to climb [to be liberated] from the ocean of rebirth! May you indeed cut off (*arukka*) the stain (*mācai*) of Impurity, in order to cut off (*arukka*) the attachments (*ācai*) that are in the body. (81)

⁷¹ During a Śivadharmā group reading some of us pointed out that the three figures who revered Śiva and became part of his family could be Nandi, Mahākāla and Caṇḍeśvara, since those three became incorporated into the entourage of *gaṇas* in Saiddhāntika worship, along with other members of Śiva's Purāṇic family (Umā, Skanda, Gaṇeśa, Vṛṣabha). The commentator, on the other hand, lists Vāṇāsuraṇ as the third, somewhat unrelated figure along with Nandi and Mākālar. I think we should take this second half of the second line as going closely with the preceding half and read *aṅke* to mean at the time of the destruction of Tripura; *matitta mūvaraiy aṅk' uṇav āliyē* then refers to the three *asuras* who did not succumb to the wily teachings of Māl (Viṣṇu) and were graced by Śiva on that occasion. Two among them, Nandi and Mākālar, were appointed as guards of Kayilai, while the name of the third one is unknown to me. The *Tēvāram* corpus contains many references to this myth, and makes explicit references to the fact that the *asuras* were three, even though Śiva only took two as his gatekeepers: *mūvār purāṅkaḷ eritta aṅru mūvarkku aruḷ ceytār* (Campantar, Tiruvaṇṇāmalai, *patikam* 1:69, 1)]; *mū veyil ceṇṇa ṇāṅru uynta mūvaril iruvar niṅtirukkōyiniḷ vāyilkāvalāḷar eṇṇu ēviyapiṇṇai* (Cuntarar, Tiruppuṅkūr, *patikam* 7: 55, 8)]; *aṅinilai mēl, nanti mākāḷar kaṭai kalinta pōltattu* (*Tirukkayilāya ṇāṇa ulā*, 21–22); *uyyavallār oru mūvaraiḷ kāvalkoṇṭu eyyavallāṅukkē untipara* (*Tiruvacacam, Tiruvuntiyār*, 4).

⁷² The reference to the lion is uncommon, but K. Nachimuthu suggested that that it may belong to a version of the Devadāruvana myth in which the sages of the Devadāruvana perform some *abhicāraka* rite that brings forth a lion to frighten Śiva. The commentary too alludes to this, when describing the lion as having appeared through the black magic of the sages (*iruṭikalāpicāratṭir rōṅṇiya ciṅkattai*).

*ār uyir vēṛ eṇav āyavaṇēy āraṇam ōtiya vāyavaṇē
cāraṇar nāṭiya carporuḷē taṇaiy oḷint' iṇmaiya carporuḷē
pūraṇaṇ ākip poruviliyē puram avai mālap poruviliyē
yārum eṇṇātav iṭattinaṇēy aruntiyav āla viṭattinaṇē. (2.80)*

*kaṅkai taṇṇaic caṭaiyir karattaṇē karicu pōkkitum aṅc'akkarattaṇē
maṅka muṇṇuraṇ ceyta vaivāḷiyē matitta mūvaraiy aṅk' urav āḷiyē
ciṅkan taṇṇaiy urittiṭuṇ tiraṇē ceṇṇa caḱkaratt' eṇṇiṭuṇ tiraṇēy
aṅkan taṇṇiṇum ācaiṇ arukkavēy ammaṇv āṇava mācaiṇ arukkavē. (2.81)*

This first verse is a six-metreme *viruttam* (*arucīrkkalīneṭilācīriya viruttam*), immediately followed by another complex verse, *kattalaikalippā*, both containing a list of invocations to Śiva. The emphatic *ē* marking the locatives also gives a very catchy rhythm to both stanzas, layering the metre with another musical pattern (*cantam*). Each line contains two attributes built upon a *maṭakku* or *yamaka*, a figure of speech implying two homophonous segments of texts that have nevertheless different meanings. This is sometimes achieved through the polysemy of the words chosen, and sometimes by alternative strategies of segmentation made possible by *sandhi*. In my translation, I have shown this by including the different words resulting from the *sandhi* split in italics between parentheses. The play on words is particularly intense in the last line of the second stanza, where we have to split the text so that the two identical metremes *mācai* and *mācai* give the two words *mācai* and *ācai*. We also need to understand the two identical metremes, and morphologically indistinguishable forms *arukka* and *arukka* as being two different verbal tenses, infinitive and optative. On top of these formal niceties, stanza 81 also contains the reference to the story of the three *asuras* escaping from the destruction of Tripura, well-known through the songs of the *Tēvāram*. Verses such as this one, display in a condensed, intensified mode the complex layering of Caiva Cittāntam theology, Tamil belles-lettres, Śaiva mythology and Tamil devotion typical of the poem, are placed at the end of chapters to appeal to listeners at multiple levels, from the intellectual to the emotional to the imaginative.

In conclusion, a careful use of the language of poetry characterises the entire *Civatarumōttaram*, whose complexity increases and decreases in accordance with the content its different parts are meant to convey. What does Maṇaiṇāṇa's poetic awareness reveal about the genre to which the *Civatarumōttaram* belong? The literary qualities of the poem are pronounced, as also noticed by the anonymous scribe of a manuscript, hosted nowadays in Paris, who labelled the text in a colophon 'the poem *Civatarumōttaram*,' *civatarumōttiramākāvyaṃ*. And yet, besides the metre our text does not fulfil the requirements of a Tamil 'great/epic poem' (*peruṅkāppiyam*) with

respect to content organisation and narrative development. The lack of a narrative plot poses that main difficulty for classifying the *Civatarumōttaram*, and perhaps the reason beyond Maṛaiñāṇa's choice to emphasise the narrative framework. In this way, his poem resembles a *purāṇam*, even though Purāṇas in Tamil usually tell the story of either a place or a caste. Indeed, this is how Raghavan thought of the *Civatarumōttaram* in the twentieth century, when he included the poem in a list of Purāṇas translated from Sanskrit into Tamil. The difficulty in classifying the *Civatarumōttaram*, though, points to an important development precisely at this time. Under the influence of Sanskrit ideas of Kāvya and the common practice of translating Sanskrit Kāvya and Purāṇas into Tamil, the narrative genres of *kāppiyam* and *purāṇam*—both characterised by the prevalent use of *virtutām*—developed in Tamil to acquire strong poetic and didactic connotations.⁷³ Maṛaiñāṇa attempted to mould the *Śivadbharmottara*, a śāstric text

⁷³ This statement reflects my current understanding of a complex issue. In a pioneering essay, Anne Monius has discussed the relationship between narrative poetry and ethics in the Sanskrit tradition, claiming that ‘far from merely entertaining, in other words, poetic narrative is quite ubiquitously assumed to “instruct” in what are known as the “four aims of human life” (*puruṣārtha*): ethics, material well-being, love, and eventual liberation from bodily rebirth and redeath’ (Monius 2015, here 152). In a recent paper (2020) E. Annamalai explored how the Sanskrit-derived idea of the *puruṣārthas* as the subject matter of literature (instead of traditional *akam* and *purāṇam*) played a crucial role in creating a relationship between the esthetic and the didactic aim in Tamil literature. I would argue that the twelfth-century translation of Daṇḍin's *Kāvyaadarśa*, the *Taṇṭiyalanikāram*, which popularised the theory of the subject-matter of *kāppiyam* as coinciding with the four *puruṣārthas*, represents an important step in strengthening this link and tightening it to specific genres. I discuss this in my dissertation, in relationship with the Christian use of *kāppiyam* and minor narrative genres such as *ammānai* for literary as well as didactic purpose (Trento 2020, 189–193). As for *purāṇam*—a genre closely connected with *kāppiyam* in Tamil—Jay Ramesh has argued in his dissertation (2020) for the unique blending of the poetic and didactic dimensions in Tamil *tālappurāṇam* (= *sthalapurāṇa*). Indeed, only by keeping both these two aspects in mind one can appreciate the beautifully crafted verse of the *Tanikaippurāṇam* where Valli, portrayed by poet Kacciappa Muṇivar as the heroine of an *akam* sequence, compares her love for Murukaṇ to union with Śiva adopting Caiva Cittāntam terminology (Shulman 1980, 281–82). As for the modes of fruition of such texts in a Śaiva context, Fisher's use of the concept of the ‘public sphere’ to explain the role of the *Tiruvilaiyārtarpurāṇam* in sixteenth-century Madurai seems an attempt at answering this question (Fisher 2017, especially 137–182). Yet much remains to be done in this area, and understanding the type of education and social life connected with *maṭams* seems to me a key direction for understanding how the entanglement of literature and religious instruction played out in the social life of this time.

with little to no poetic relevance which had acquired quasi-scriptural status within the Śaivasiddhānta, into one such didactic poem that would instruct people on Caiva Cittāntam ethics and rituals.⁷⁴ His translation seems to be a conscious, bold experimentation in bridging and tying together *śāstra* and poetry, didacticism and devotion.

3. Readers of the *Civatarumōttaram*

In the previous pages, we have encountered Maṛaiñāṇa Campantar and lingered on the ideas and strategies of translation emerging from his poem, the *Civatarumōttaram*. It is now time to ask: for whom did he write? And who read his poem in the sixteenth century? The short answer is that the poem had a didactic purpose, and likely was read as a sort of theological and ritual textbook in the context of Caiva Cittāntam monastic culture in the Kaveri region from the sixteenth century onwards. Moreover, it was written in a style that Tamil students could enjoy, and the poetic and devotional layers within the *Civatarumōttaram* are integral to Maṛaiñāṇa's project. This picture already emerges from the schematic analysis at the very end of Maṛaiñāṇa Tēcikar's comment ad *Civatarumōttaram* 0.7 discussed above. There, the commentator claims that the *Civatarumōttaram* is meant to circulate in the land where Tamil is in use (*ellai, tamil valaṅkum nilam*), that its audience are Maṛaiñāṇa's students (*keṭṭōr, avar māṅakkar*), and its purpose is the attainment of liberation (*paṇaṅ, viṭuperu*).⁷⁵

For the long answer, let us return to the issue of language and register upon which we touched in the previous section. As we established, a good knowledge of literary Tamil, Caiva Cittāntam theology, Śaiva mythology, and Sanskrit were all prerequisites to understanding the *Civatarumōttaram*. The original *Śivadbharmottara* was written in 'undemanding Sanskrit that could be expected to be readily understood by a larger public.'⁷⁶ On the contrary, the Tamil translation employs the language of poetry, even though the text is admittedly not as extreme as Tamil poems of the same period can be.⁷⁷ Readers did not need to be full-fledged *pulavars*, but at least average students

⁷⁴ Indeed, the *Śivadbharmottara* contains references to itself as a *śāstra* and an *āgama*, but never a Purāṇa (let alone a Kāvya). See De Simini 2016a, 47–49. However, later tradition had considered the *Śivadharma* to be an Upapurāṇa (De Simini 2016a, 61), just as we find references to the *Śivadbharmottara* as an *upabbedā* in later Śaivasiddhānta scriptures.

⁷⁵ See fn. 59 for the full text of the commentary.

⁷⁶ Sanderson 2012-13, 4.

⁷⁷ Examples of the extremely complex poetry from this period are analysed in Shulman 2016, 195–248 and Ebeling 2010, 56–62.

of Tamil literature familiar with the literary register, and able to catch the occasional *Tirukkuraḷ* or *Tēvāram* reference. This likely excluded many Tamil speakers of that time, and shows how the *Civatarumōttaram* was not meant to directly reach the common devotees. It had to be mediated and explained to them by teachers, very much like its Sanskrit counterpart. The change of language is then perhaps indicative of a new group claiming the role of mediators for themselves, namely Caiva Cittāntam teachers aiming to replace Smārta Śaiva Brahmins who could better lay claim to the Sanskrit text. Yet the question of caste is thorny, and acquired many layers over the centuries.⁷⁸ From the nineteenth century onwards, Caiva Cittāntam and Tamil Śaivism more in general were strongly associated with Tamil castes such as *veḷāḷas*, and acquired an anti-Brahmanical flavour, yet there is no clear evidence to suggest that Maṛaiñāṇa Campantar and his students were not Brahmins.⁷⁹

⁷⁸ The only study in English of the development, from the sixteenth century onwards, of several Caiva monastic establishments, especially in the Kaveri delta region, staffed by elite non-Brahmanical castes (*veḷāḷārs*), remains Koppedrayar 1990. On the use of the category of *veḷāḷār* in the work of Maṛaimalai Aṭikal, see Raman 2009.

⁷⁹ Auṇācalam (1976/2005, 280) identifies Maṛaiñāṇa Campantar as a *veḷāḷa*. Indeed, both the intellectual milieu to which he belonged (see Aruṇācalam 1976/2005, 187–189) and the titles given to him seem to point in that direction, but his own *paramparā* remains mostly obscure. Among his titles, *paṇṭāram* is particularly relevant. With time, this title has come to indicate the member of an *atīṇam* (a non-Brahmanical monastic institution, as mentioned in the footnote above), and in that context we even see the development of a literature by such members called *paṇṭāra cāttiraṅkal* (see Klöber 2017, 217 fn. 10). Probably connected to this use is the adoption of the title *paṇṭāram* by Jesuit missionaries who, at least from 1646 onward, fashioned themselves as *paṇṭāra cāmikaḷ* in an attempt to go beyond the Brahmanical model of mission inaugurated in 1606 by Roberto de Nobili (Chakravarti 2018, especially 256–257). Yet, Maṛaiñāṇa was not part of a non-Brahmanical *atīṇam*, but of a generic *maṭam*, and his life spanned a period immediately preceding such developments. Looking at the earlier history of the term, then, G. Vijayvenugopal writes the following: ‘This inscription of Pāṇṭya Jaṭāvallabha issued in his third regnal year (PI 484; corresponding to 1311 A.D.) states that the Nāṭuṭai Nāyakappēriḷamaiyār (the cultivators of this temple’s lands) have made an agreement with the *Camayapaṇṭārattār* (Treasury Officials/ Officials of the religious sect?) stating that they will also take out the image of Campanta-p-perumāḷ Nāyaṅār (Tiruñāṇacampantar, one of the *Tēvāram* trio) [...] When such a procession is carried out, the inscription says, eight persons will carry the presiding deity and two persons will sing hymns, which means altogether ten, and one person will carry the holy lamp. What is interesting here is that a new group of people, viz. *Camayapaṇṭārattār*, are mentioned as being in charge of the temple. They probably belong to a Śaiva sect which is non-brahminical. Does this mean that the hold of the brahmins of Tirunallāru over this temple is slowly transferred to a non-brāhmin sect?’ (Vijayvenugopal 2010, cxxx; the emphasis is mine, and I thank Emmanuel Francis for this reference). Taken together, all these uses of *paṇṭāram* seem to indicate a non-Brahmanical

Still, the *Civatarumōttaram* added a certain familiarity to Tamil poetry as a new requirement for those who wanted to access Śaiva knowledge, and this was not among the fields of expertise to which Brahmins in South India laid exclusive claim. Perhaps more crucially, rather than removing an obstacle to the fruition of the content of the text—that is Sanskrit—Maṛaiñāṇa’s translation into literary Tamil refocused the expertise required of its readers. He transformed the interpretative barriers of the text without lowering them, so that in the sixteenth century the cultivation of a learned yet vernacular literate pleasure became part of the experience of reading the *Civatarumōttaram*, in a way that is coherent with its classification as *kāppiyaṁ* that we encountered above.⁸⁰

Indeed, the text explicitly argues for literary or poetical Tamil, that is *centamiḷ*, as a proper language of Śaiva religious instruction:⁸¹

He, [the author of the *Tirukkuraḷ*], did not compose in Tamil poetry anything beyond [the three chapters] ending with the one on love. They, [the Śaiva poet-saints *nāyaṁmars*], investigated the words of the one without end and without beginning, and they made verse in fine Tamil with deep meaning, to cut off this age of fatal Kāli, so that good [people] may obtain salvation.

centamiḷiṅ inṇam iruvāy alatu ceppār
antam iliy ātiyūm ilāṅ uraiyaiy āyntār
centamiḷiṅṇuṅ kevuṭamākav urai ceytār
inta yuka kālakaliy iṭ’ ara nal viṭum. (10.123)

We find in this stanza the mainstays of Maṛaiñāṇa’s Tamil literary universe, the *Tirukkuraḷ* and the devotional corpus of the *Tēvāram*. The three books of the *Tirukkuraḷ* told of *dharmā* (*aram*), *artha* (*poruḷ*) and *kāma* (*inṇam*), while the saint-poets who composed the songs of the *Tēvāram* and the authors of the *Meykaṇṭacāttiraṅkaḷ* expressed the words of god in Tamil. Considering how both the aims of men, the *puruṣārthas*, and the scriptures, the Vedas and the Śaiva Āgamas, are integral parts of the Sanskrit cultural world, this stanza is almost a manifesto of the so-called ‘vernacular millen-

sphere, but still, the best way to solve the puzzle concerning Maṛaiñāṇa Campantar’s caste is probably to study more in detail the lineage emerging from the works of his nephew Maṛaiñāṇa Tēcikar/Vedajñāna II.

⁸⁰ This is coherent with the development of Tamil at this time into a ‘cosmopolitan vernacular,’ according to Pollock’s in-depth analysis in the second part of his work (2006), in which he theorises the notion of a ‘vernacular millennium.’

⁸¹ I thank K. Nachimuthu for bringing this verse (*Civatarumōttaram* 10.123) to my attention.

nium.⁸² From the perspective of sixteenth-century Chidambaram, all aspects of life could be discussed in Sanskrit as well as in Tamil. But what type of Tamil? For our purposes, what is most remarkable in the verse is the combination of *centamiḷ* and *vītu*, Tamil poetry and salvation.

Besides a passable knowledge of literary Tamil, reading the *Civatarumōttaram* also demanded familiarity with the theological, ritual, iconographical and cultural world of sixteenth-century Caiva Cittāntam. This was a composite universe where *Tēvāram* songs, Tamil *cāttiraṅkaḷ* and Sanskrit Āgamas, along with elaborate stories often connected to religious sites in the Tamil country and retold in local *purāṇams* and *māhātmyas*, coexisted.⁸² Maṛaiṇāṇa's text is brimming with references to this universe that could make the text rather obscure to someone not initiated in that tradition. And indeed, the text was not aimed at the general public, but rather to students who had been initiated into the Caiva Cittāntam and had reached the right stage of intellectual and spiritual development to be able to grasp its message. Granted, this was an easily accessible and fast-growing community in the sixteenth century, but its boundaries were nevertheless clearly drawn.

Even when the text did travel outside this community, we find it cited by Vīraśaiva authors, a Śaiva group that closely coexisted with Caiva Cittāntam, sharing many of its spaces and premises. The initiatory logic of the poem emerges especially from the recurrent use of terms such as *paruvam*, 'stage, season, ripeness' and *pakkuvar*, 'people whose [condition or *mala*] has ripened.' In the second chapter of the *Civatarumōttaram*, Maṛaiṇāṇa openly states that teachers should only transmit their knowledge to students who have reached the right stage, and can therefore receive it:

After having ascertained that [their (i.e., the students')] condition (*pāvakam* > *bhāva*) has ripened to the right stage (*paruva murriya*), [he] should compassionately teach [them] the truth which is difficult to be taught. [He] should speak either in the language that comes and mingles in [their] mouth (*vāy*) or also in Sanskrit, which is difficult [and is] for capable men. (4) [...] The teacher of those who have reached the right stage (*paruvamurravar*) will gain the eight qualities that belong to the Higher one. The teacher of those who have not reached the right stage will settle into hell for a long time indeed. (6)

paruva murriya pāvakam ōrntupin,
urukiy ōtukav ōtarum unmaiyaī

⁸² Precisely in the *pāyiram* of his *purāṇam* on Tiruvārūr, the *Kamalālayaccirappu*, Maṛaiṇāṇa extols scholars of Tamil and of Sanskrit at the same time (see the verse in Aruṇācalam 1975/2005, 206).

maruvi vāy varu pātaiyiṅ vallavarkk'
ariyav āriyattāṇum araikavē. (2.4)

[...]

paruvam urravar pāl upatēcikan
paramanukk' uḷav eṅ kuṇam parruvan,
paruvam arravar pāl upatēcikan
narakitaiṅ paṭivā netu nāl arō. (2.6)

These stanzas follow the Sanskrit original in giving a definition of the good teacher, and in ascribing to him the eight *guṇas* that are usually the fruits of yogic practice but appear in the Sanskrit as well as in the Tamil to be properties of Śiva.⁸³ Note that stanza five includes both Tamil and Sanskrit as mediums of instruction, closely reflecting the bilingual reality of Caiva Cittāntam. Sanskrit is characterised as difficult and meant for capable men (*vallavarkku*), or perhaps more simply for those who knew it, thus implicitly allowing the option for students of Caiva Cittāntam to only know Tamil. The commentator at this point further explains the necessity for the teacher to ascertain the appropriate stage of the student by defining the Śaiva teachings as ‘the scriptures [containing] the knowledge [about Śiva] that should not be told to those [whose *mala*] has not ripened’ (*apakkuvarkkuc collappatāta ṅānacāttirattai*). In doing so he mobilises the term *a-pakkuvar*, the antonym of *pakkuvar*, which also explicitly appears in the poem elsewhere (see 2.3). This term, coming from the Sanskrit *pakva* and indicating ripening and full development, is connected with the idea of *malaparipāka* in Śaivasiddhānta. The latter indicates the ripening of a soul’s innate impurity (*mala*), a condition which according to some Śaivasiddhāntins was necessary for the descent of Śiva’s salvific power.⁸⁴ Both *paruvam* and *pakkuvar* are therefore keywords implying that the right student as envisioned in the *Civatarumōttaram* had embarked upon the journey of liberation that begins with Caiva Cittāntam initiation.

The setting for the transmission of knowledge from the teacher to such initiated students is that of a classroom. This emerges from another passage in chapter two on the duty of the teacher, where the Tamil version differs quite drastically from the Sanskrit one. This chapter is usually very close to its source, but this particular adaptation must have felt necessary to update the discussion to match the historical context in which Maraiṅṅa Cam-

⁸³ Cf. *Śivadbharmottara* 2.5–6. These eight qualities are ascribed to Śiva also in several *Tēvāram* hymns, quoted at length by the commentator.

⁸⁴ For a discussion of *malaparipāka* in Śaivasiddhānta, see Goodall 1998, xxxiii–xxxv, especially fn. 80.

pantar was teaching and writing. In order to understand this choice, and get a better sense of the translation strategies we discussed above, it is worth reading both the Sanskrit and the Tamil version of this passage. Let us begin with the description of the teacher in the *Śivadharmottara*:⁸⁵

The teacher who completely restores, as before, the correctness (*saṃskāra*, see 2.11) of the Śaiva knowledge, which has been damaged due to carelessness over the course of time and which has been wrongly written, with too little or too many syllables, by people who were confused; Whose readings have been erroneously learned; which has been spoiled by stupid people, and has been corrected by masters who are blinded by being proud in their knowledge; Which, with respect to the sense, is endowed with meaningless statements and contains repetitions, which contains internal contradictions [or is] in contradiction with its own theses; Which has been severely damaged with respect to the metrics, and which lacks words and meanings; [the teacher who properly restores the former correctness of this knowledge of Śiva], endowed here and there with these and other defects, is the knower of the meaning of the Śaiva scriptures, a sage, the supreme lord of knowledge.

*śivajñānasya kālena vinaṣṭasya pramādataḥ | ūnātiriktavarnasya mūdhair
durlikhitasya ca || 7 || pramādādhitapāṭhasya nāśitasyālpabuddhibhiḥ |
jñānāvālepamānāndhair ācāryaiḥ sodhitasya ca || 8 || vyarthaiḥ padair up-
etasya punaruktasya cārthataḥ | pūrvottaraviruddhasya svasiddhāntaviro-
dhiṇaḥ || 9 || chandasātīvanaṣṭasya śabdārtharabitasya ca | ityevamādhibir
doṣair upetasya kva cit kva cit || 10 || yaḥ karoti punaḥ samyak saṃskāram
pūrvavad guruḥ | śivatāntrārthavid dhīmān sa vidyāparameśvaraḥ || 11 ||*

This passage, focusing on issues of manuscript transmission and scribal errors, is transformed by Maṛaiñña into the lively description of a classroom setting, where students unfit to receive the teaching—the unripe ones (*apakkuvar*)—are to be rejected by the teacher, in lieu of the errors of textual transmission mentioned in the Sanskrit.⁸⁶ These are the corresponding stanzas of the *Civatarumōttaram*:

Those who speak to hinder [other] students, those who argue for the sake of argument, those who forget the wordings [of the scriptures], those who abandon the learning of the Vedas and so on, and those who are considered to be lowly by caste; (7) those who were born in a better caste compared to him (i.e., the teacher in v. 6), those who are not known to have such and

⁸⁵ I take both the Sanskrit text and the translation from De Simini 2016a, 393 and 374–375 respectively.

⁸⁶ For a discussion of this passage in the *Śivadharmottara* and several parallel texts, see De Simini 2016a, 128–140.

such nature (i.e., whose caste is unknown), those who do not grasp correctly the meaning of the books taught [to them by the teacher], and those who repeat in the wrong way [with respect to pronunciation] whatever is told [to them by the teacher]; (8) all those who declaim in these and those [wrong] ways because they do not recognise when the metre is broken, and those who puff themselves up [with pride]—[all these] are to be treated with contempt as well as kept away, considering them to be fools. (9) One who teaches [such people] the scriptures of the matchless one, considering worldly riches as something valuable, will fall into hell and suffer torments—alas, who will be close kin to such a fool there? (10)

*ōtuvārkk' itaiyūr' uraiṭṭāṭ avar,
vāṭapāṭaṇar, vākkai marappavar,
vētam āṭiyav ōti viṭṭappavar,
cāṭiyār raṇiyār eṇac cārṛuvār (2.7)*

*tannin mikka nar cāṭiyir rōṇriṇar,
inna tanmaiṇar eṇr' aṭiyap paṭār,
paṇṇu nūlin payaṇ murai parrilār,
conna cor piṇuṇ cōrvuṇac colluvār, (2.8)*

*cantapētamuntāṇ aṭiyār eṇav
intavār' icaittār, eḷuvāyinar,
nintai ceṭuṭa nīkkap paṭum avar
mantarām avar tammai matittumē (2.9)*

*ōtūviṭṭappavaṇ oppili karṇ' urai
pūṭalaṭ poruḷaip poruḷ eṇr' eṇi
yāṭanaip paṭuvaṇ narakatt' ilint'
ātanukk' avaṇ mikk' urav' ar annō. (2.10)*

Maṛaiṇāṇa was certainly reading the Sanskrit version closely, and the above stanzas echo many of the original expressions referring to manuscript transmission while adapting them to the new context. Just to mention one example, the *Śivadharmottara* talks about texts that are severely damaged with respect to their metrical arrangement (*chandasātivanaṣṭasya*). The *Civatarumōttaram* transforms this into students who do not understand (*aṭiyār*) when the metre is broken (*cantapētamum*), using the same Sanskrit word *cantam*.⁸⁷ Notwithstanding the analogies, the Tamil text repositions

⁸⁷ I translate *cantapētamuntāṇ aṭiyār* as ‘those who do not recognise when the metre is broken,’ taking *pētam* to mean incongruity, disagreement of the text with metrical rules. This is closer to the Sanskrit expression *chandasātiva naṣṭasya*, and makes more sense to me, even though the commentary reads *pētam* as ‘variety’ and sees this as a reference to the variety of Sanskrit and Tamil metres. The current translation leaves open the possibility of *cantam* to refer to both Sanskrit and Tamil metrical rules—in fact, I

the passage to describe a classroom, a context familiar to Maṛaiñāṇa as the most important setting of the transmission of Śaiva *and* Tamil knowledge at his time. The good teacher is no longer one who can restore a text whose transmission has been damaged, but one who can recognise and turn away bad students who do not comply with their duty and debase the teaching imparted to them in different ways.⁸⁸ The stanzas thus stress the importance of attention, correct repetition, and staying humble.

Maṛaiñāṇa also introduces here one new aspect crucial to the sixteenth-century social world envisioned by the *Civatarumōttaram*. This is the issue of caste, which was completely absent in the *Śivadbharmottara* passage.⁸⁹ In a largely cryptic way, stanzas 7 and 8 disallow students whose caste is unknown, and students whose caste does not match the caste of their teacher. The latter issue is also taken up in a later stanza, which explains how a student should learn the scriptures from a teacher of his own caste. If such a teacher is not available, the student should go to a teacher of the caste immediately inferior to his.⁹⁰ Details aside, the Tamil text is clearly steeped in a world of caste divisions and privileges, which it does not aim to subvert, as it appears clearly in chapter eleven when the text discusses rules of pollution and expiation. In this respect, the *Civatarumōttaram* is far more conservative than the original *Śivadbharmottara*, whose aim was precisely the instruction of lay devotees irrespective of their caste, gender, and social

agree with the commentator that this is the subtext of the verse—but doesn't make it as explicit. Still, both readings are possible.

⁸⁸ This discussion is not a direct quotation, but evokes the list of bad students in *Nannūl* 39; the new sectarian and didactic context of Maṛaiñāṇa's work emerge strongly when comparing the two.

⁸⁹ It is possible that this reference to caste in the *Civatarumōttaram*, besides being coherent with Maṛaiñāṇa's historical context, was prompted by a play—or perhaps even a misunderstanding—hanging on the polysemic word *varṇa*, meaning both 'letter' and 'caste,' in the expression *ūnātiriktavarṇasya mūdbhair durlikhitasya ca* (*Śivadbharmottara* 2.7c-d). The Sanskrit is referring here to a manuscript that has been badly written, and therefore has too few or too many letters. Parallel to this, v. 7 line 6 and v. 8 lines 1-2 describe the different ways in which a student might be 'wrongly inscribed in the caste system' either because of a deficiency—his caste being too low—or because of his belonging to a caste superior to that of his teacher. On the difference in attitude towards caste in the *Śivadbharmottara* vis-à-vis the *Civatarumōttaram*, see also De Simini's contribution in this volume.

⁹⁰ These additional details regarding caste are found in *Civatarumōttaram* 2.12. The comment to this stanza adds the interesting detail that a *śūdra*, in case he cannot avail himself of a teacher from within his own caste, may listen to a teacher of a caste above his (*cūttirantarcātiyiyūn taṇakkuṅyartacātiyiyūn keṭkalām*). This is of some interest considering the most elite Tamil castes, including *vēlālars*, are reckoned to be *śūdras*.

status. A second element pointing to Maṛaiñāna's context—indeed, an early modern trope—is the mention of wealth as something that might tempt a teacher.⁹¹ The *Śivadharmottara* (2.6) cursed a teacher who would transmit corrupted knowledge. In the Tamil version, Maṛaiñāna warns his readers against greedy teachers who might feel tempted to share their knowledge with unworthy students in exchange for cash.

The old commentary offers the best available example of how the *Civatarumōttaram* must have been read and understood in a sixteenth-century classroom of this type. The author of the commentary, Maṛaiñāna Tēcikar, was after all a student of Maṛaiñāna Campantar in the Kukai *maṭam*, and the very existence of the commentary is proof that the *Civatarumōttaram* was read, taught and discussed in that context.⁹² As already mentioned, very often the text is transmitted along with the commentary, which must have been an important tool for teachers seeking to explain the texts to the students through the centuries.⁹³ Indeed, the fact that the commentary was used by teachers to explain the poem to their students over time, and was therefore read and discussed in a classroom environment, might partially account for the large number of variations that characterise its textual transmission. This commentary first of all testifies that Maṛaiñāna Tēcikar, and perhaps Caiva Cittāntam teachers after him, read the *Civatarumōttaram* side by side with its Sanskrit source, since the commentary often explains the Tamil stanzas with specific reference to the Sanskrit.⁹⁴ The fact that the

⁹¹ The classic treatment of the role and representation of money in the early modern period is Narayana Rao, Shulman and Subrahmanyam 1992. Nilakaṇṭha Dikṣita *Kaliviḍambana*, for instance, includes among the figures it mocks *dhārmikas* who pretend to care about religion, but are really after money (see Filliozat 1967, 21).

⁹² On the identity of Maṛaiñāna Tēcikar, see K. Nachimuthu's contribution in this volume.

⁹³ Consider that already the two editions of the text, one from 1869 and the other one from 1888, include two versions of Vedajñāna's commentary which are at times rather different from each other.

⁹⁴ For instance, *Civatarumōttaram* 3.2 describes penance (*tapas*) as consisting of performing austerities to weaken the body, and so on (*naiyav uṭalam viratattai navirṭal āti tavañ*). The comment on this stanza, though, mentions explicitly among such austerities the *cāndrāyana*, a type of fasting regulated by the phases of the moon (*tavayākamāvatu uṭal vāṭaccāntirāyāṇa mutaliya virataṅkaḷai yaṇuṭṭittal*). This is also cited as an example of *tapas* in the Sanskrit: *atha pūjāgnikāryādyair bhedair bahuvīdhaiḥ sthītaḥ | karmayajñāḥ samākhyātas tapas' cāndrāyāṇādīkam* (*Śivadharmottara* 3.12). The verse is taken from De Simini's work-in-progress edition of the third chapter of the *Śivadharmottara*; I thank her for sharing it with me, and for a fruitful discussion on this specific verse.

two texts were read together is also proven by the existence of a single multiple-text manuscript that transmits both the Sanskrit text in Grantha script, and its Tamil translation.⁹⁵ The commentary further explicates many facets of the intellectual and cultural references the *Civatarumōttaram* triggered in its readers. As it is to be expected, it often points to echoes of *Tēvāram* songs in the stanzas, and to other texts of Śaiva theology in Tamil.⁹⁶ Yet it also mobilises other, perhaps less obvious forms of knowledge that it deems relevant to understand the text. So, Maṛaiñāṇa Tēcikar discusses complex grammatical concepts that he sees at play in the poem of his teacher, such as the concept of *vali nūl* or the type of Tamil and Sanskrit metres listed in the early grammar *Vīracolīyam*.⁹⁷ He also makes occasional references to specific bodies of ritual and practical knowledge. For instance, he has much to say about the right measurements for a book-repository (ad 2.60), or the different types of support to copy manuscripts that were available at his time (ad 2.58). When the *Civatarumōttaram* mentions night dances and theatre performances, the commentator specifies that they are dramas both in Prakrit and in Tamil, and he even composes an original verse citing four types of dance that were common at his time.⁹⁸ In short, the commentator Maṛaiñāṇa Tēcikar sketches for us the contours of a world where theology and poetry, ritual practicalities and the arts were all integral parts of a Caiva Cittāntam student's life and education.

Heading towards my conclusions, we saw how the *Civatarumōttaram* along with its commentary offers insights into the intellectual and cultural

⁹⁵ This is the IFP MS RE25374, nicely titled 'Shivadharmottara and Tamil urai.'

⁹⁶ For instance, the comment ad *Civatarumōttaram* 2.6 explains the reference to eight qualities belonging to Śiva by three different quotations from the *Tēvāram*, including *Tirumuṟai* 6.98.10, and *Tirumuṟai* 7.40.3.

⁹⁷ This is the comment ad *Civatarumōttaram* 2.9 that we also mentioned above, and the grammatical excursus is justified as explaining *cantapētam* as a variety of Tamil and Sanskrit metres.

⁹⁸ *Civatarumōttaram* 2.34 mentions that at the end of the ritual copying of a manuscript (the *nānatānam* ritual) one should stay awake at night, thanks to the hum of chanting of the Vedas and so forth, other types of songs, as well as through the charm of dramas (*vētāiy aravattān marṟum uḷa pāṭalinā nāṭakattiṇ vaciyāluñ*). The comment adds relevant details, and is worth quoting in full: *arraiṟ iraviḷ appūṅkōyiliṇ muṇṇē vēṭakamapurāṇav olikaḷiṇālum, pīrākiruṭam tirāvīṭa mutaliya pāṭalkaḷiṇālu māṇmākkalāi vacīkarikkūñ kūttukalālum uṟakkattiṇaiṟ pōkki viḷittirukkakkāvaṇ! marṟai nāṭ kālamē cirpanūḷ vittiyāy āṟāyntu paṇṇappaṭṭa tēriṇaiṟ alaṅkarikka! Vedajñāna concludes the comment with a verse of his own on the four types of dance: caṅkaraṇ āṭiya tāṇṭavamum āṅk'umaiyāḷ - iṅkitattāl āṭum ilācciyamum - poṅku tirai - yāḷip puviyil akamum, puravariyuñ - cūḷu nāṭa nāl eṇṟu col.*

life of a *maṭam* in sixteenth-century Chidambaram. The role of these monastic institutions in the early modern period is yet to be fully explored, even though recent works have begun to underline their social and political importance in specific regions of South India.⁹⁹ As for the *maṭams* of Chidambaram and the Kaveri basin, where the *Civatarumōttaram* was composed and circulated, we know little about their role in the period from the sixteenth to the eighteenth century. These places are much more comprehensively studied for the nineteenth century, especially the Tiruvāṇṭuṭṭurai *atiṇam*, where celebrated *pulavar* Mīṇāṭcicuntaram Piḷḷai (1815–1876) and his student U. Ve. Cāminātaiyar (1855–1942) studied and worked. Retracing the life and education of Mīṇāṭcicuntaram Piḷḷai, Ebeling shows how he began learning Tamil in a village school (*tinṇaiṇṇipalli*) ‘by memorising literary works (mostly of devotional nature), grammars (such as *Nāṇṇūl*), and *nikanṭus* (‘dictionaries’ of synonyms in verse form).¹⁰⁰ He went on to learn with several important Tamil teachers, including Marutanāyakam Piḷḷai, a Caiva Cittāntam scholar and the first editor of the *Meykaṇṭacātti-rāṅkal*. In his early twenties, he visited the Tiruvāṇṭuṭṭurai *atiṇam* for the first time, and filled with wonder, he thought that ‘there was no other place in the world where the spirit of both Lord Śiva and Tamil learning could be imbibed so thoroughly.’¹⁰¹ In one form or another, Mīṇāṭcicuntaram Piḷḷai remained attached to Tiruvāṇṭuṭṭurai for the rest of his life, as he went on to become a celebrated poet especially famous for his skills at composing Tamil Purāṇas, often by translating and rearranging contents previously narrated in Sanskrit Māhātmyas.¹⁰² In brief, the most famous Tamil poet of the nineteenth century spent his whole life learning devotional texts, studying and living in a *maṭam*, and writing *talappurāṇams* on Tamil Nadu’s most sacred sites.

⁹⁹ Valerie Stoker (2014, 2016) has focused on Mādhva intellectual Vyāsātīrtha (1460–1539)—a quasi-contemporary of Maṇaiṇṇā Campantar—to explore the relationship between the Vijayanagara court and monastic institutions. In a recent article, Fisher explored the lineage of the Hooli Bṛhanmaṭha and the role of this institution in the systematisation of the Pañcācārya Viraśaiva community (Fisher 2018). She notices the interplay of Sanskrit and Kannada in this process, which is also relevant to our discussion of Sanskrit and Tamil in the context of Maṇaiṇṇā’s Kukai *maṭam*.

¹⁰⁰ Ebeling 2010, 38.

¹⁰¹ Ebeling 2010, 61.

¹⁰² This is a very condensed account of Ebeling 2010, 57–62. Famously, Mīṇāṭcicuntaram Piḷḷai did not know Sanskrit particularly well, so he had other people read Sanskrit *māhātmyas* and report their contents to him in Tamil. An earlier contribution to the history of Caiva Cittāntam *maṭams* in the nineteenth century is Oddie 1984.

And yet Mīṇāṭcicuntaram Piḷḷai is hardly remembered or studied as a religious figure, even though his *purāṇams* are exquisite literary pieces as much as they are didactic poems aiming to instruct Śaiva devotees on the history of their holy places. His long-standing interest in religious matters also underlies the humorous story, recalled by Cāmināṭayar in his biography, of how the *pulavar* wished for and finally entered into possession of a jealously guarded manuscript of the *Civatarumōttaram* thanks to the stratagem of a student of his.¹⁰³ One wonders whether this copy is still among the manuscripts in the library of the Tiruvāvaṭuturai *atiṇam*, which holds Mīṇāṭcicuntaram Piḷḷai's own collection. Granted, most students of the *Civatarumōttaram* would never achieve the same level of literary learning as Mīṇāṭcicuntaram Piḷḷai. They probably joined a *maṭam* to improve their general education, perhaps in view of becoming *pujaris* in a more peripheral shrine. And indeed, they did not need to be *pulavars* to study the *Civatarumōttaram*, which was meant to be understood and enjoyed by 'middle-class' Śaiva devotee, well-educated in Tamil literature and Caiva Cittāntam theology without particularly excelling in either of the two. Still, considering the achievements of Mīṇāṭcicuntaram Piḷḷai and his peers in the nineteenth-century from the point of view of the *Civatarumōttaram* is helpful in recognising the long-standing entanglement of religion and literature, of Sanskrit and Tamil learning in the life of these intellectuals and their institutions. In turn, keeping such later developments in mind helps to recognise the different threads woven into the *Civatarumōttaram*. This poem shows how the interplay of religion and literature, Sanskrit and Tamil, *śāstra* and devotion was an integral part of the life of a *maṭam* in sixteenth-century Chidambaram. Such interplay exceeded the rarefied world of *pulavars* and Caiva Cittāntam teachers, and enthralled the lives of their more average students—we can imagine them as a sixteenth-century small-town, middle-class intelligentsia, but still educated men, initiated into Caiva Cittāntam, and inhabiting a deeply multilingual world. The goal of this overview has been to offer a perspective for reading this text as a bridge between various domains, and the product of a regime of translation between languages not so far removed from each other. The image of a bridge nicely fits Maṛaiñāṇa's operation of making the ancient content of the Sanskrit *Śivadbharmottara* cross into the worlds of sixteenth-century Tamil Śaivism and Tamil poetry, firmly rooting his *Civatarumōttaram* in both.

¹⁰³ Cāmināṭayar 2001, 108–116.

4. *Appendix: Printed editions and manuscripts of the Civatarumōttaram*

The list that follows was compiled on the basis of visits to the Bibliothèque Nationale de France (Paris), the Institut Français de Pondichéry, the Government Oriental Manuscript Library (Chennai) and the Tiruvāṇṭūrai mutt. This first-hand research has been combined with the manuscripts identified in the following catalogues:

A Descriptive catalogue of palm-leaf manuscripts in Tamil, vol. 3 part 1, edited by A. Thasarathan et alii. General editors G. John Samuel and Shu Hikosaka. Madras: Institute of Asian Studies, 1993.

Computerised International Catalogue of Tamil Palmleaf Manuscripts, 3 vols., edited by K. C. Chellamuthu et alii. Thanjavur: Tamil University, 1989-1991

The list is intended as an aid to researchers, and also as proof of the wide diffusion of this text; however, many of the references to manuscripts presented here still need to be checked and confirmed.

4.1 *Printed editions*

1867. *Maṛaiñānacampantanāyaṇār aruḷicceya Civatarumōttaram mūlamum uraiyum*. Ivai Tirunelvēli Cālivāṭicuvara Ōtuvāmūrttikaḷal palaputakaṅkaḷaik koṅṭu paricōtittu Tirunelvēli Ampalavāṇaṅ kavirājaravarkaḷ Ku. Civarāmamutaliyāravarkaḷ Putūr Vaḷḷināyakampiḷḷaiyavarkaḷ ivarkaḷatu Muttamiḷākara accukkūṭattir patippikkapaṭṭaṇa. Pirapava v[aruṣam] mārkaḷi m[ācam= 1867 v[aruṣam] ṭicampar m[ācam]. Rigistret kāppiraiṭṭu

1888. *Caivākamam irupattēṭṭiṇuḷ 24-vatu Cantāna carvōttamattiṅ upapētam patiṇṇiṇuḷ 8-vatu Civatarumōttaram*. Vaṭamoliyiṇi ṇiṇṇum Maṛaiñānacampantanāyaṇār molipeyarttatu. Itarkuraiyuṭaṅ tiricirapuram puttaka viyāpāram m[āha]-r[āja]-r[āja]-śrī Cu. Cupparāyapiḷḷaiyavarkaḷ Tirumaiyilai vitvāṅ caṅmukampiḷḷai avarkaḷaik koṅṭu pārvaivyṭṭu, Pu. Appācāmimutaliyāratu Ceṇṇai Mīṇāṭciyammaikalāniti accukkūṭattirpatippittaṇar. 1888

1938. *Maṛaiñānacampantanāyaṇār vaṭamoliyi ṇiṇṇum molipeyarttaruḷiya Civatarumōttaram mūlamum uraiyum*: iccastiram Caivākamam irupattēṭṭiṇuḷ irupattu naṅkāvatākiya Cāntana Carvōttamattiṅ upapētam patiṇṇiṇuḷ eṭṭāvatāy uḷḷatu. Mataras: Mataras Rippan Piras

1998. *Civatarumōttaram (mūlamum uraiyim)*. Āciriyaṅ: Tavattiru Maṛaiñānacampantar. Parippāciriyaṅkaḷ: Paṅṭitar Mu. Kantaiyā Pi. E., Makāvittuvāṅ Vē. Civacuppiramaṇiyaṅ. Urai āciriyaṅ: Tiru. A. Irāmanāṅ. Caiva cittānta nilayam: Kuvālālumpūr, Malēciyā

4.2 Manuscripts

1. Bibliothèque Nationale de France, Paris

BnF Indien 12. Civatarumōttira kāviyam (12 chapters, text and commentary). Palm-leaf, ca. 1770

BnF Indien 13. Civatarumōttaram (12 chapters, text and commentary). Palm-leaf, ca. 1750

BnF Indien 14. Civatarumōttaram (12 chapters, text and commentary). Palm-leaf, ca. 1720

2. Institut Français de Pondichéry

RE 25374. Civatarumōttara urai (text with commentary). Palm-leaf, undated

3. Thanjavur Saraswathi Mahal Library, Thanjavur

Tamil ms. 1939c. Civatarumōttiram (12 chapters, only mūlam). Palm-leaf, copied in “868 v[aruṣam] cukkali m[ātam]” (fol. 113r) likely 1868, a śukla year.

Tamil ms. 234b. Civatarumōttaram (12 chapters, only mūlam)

Tamil ms. 327b. Civatarumōttaram (12 chapters, only mūlam)

Tamil ms. 363. Civatarumōttaram (only mūlam, likely incomplete)

Tamil ms. 364. Civatarumōttaram mūlamum uraiyum (text and commentary, likely incomplete)

4. Government Oriental Manuscript Library, Chennai

D. 1287 (missing)

D. 1288. TD 50. Civatarumōttaram (text without the commentary); Palm-leaf

R. 8851. TR 3163. Civatarumōttaram (text with commentary, seemingly a full copy). Palmleaf

R. 1258 (missing)

R. 1422. Fragment, palm-leaf

R. 1795. TR 1034. Civatarumōttaram (12 chapters, only mūlam). Palm-leaf

R. 1919. TR 450. Civatarumōttaram (text without commentary, only 101 verses). Paper, copied on 11/8/1949

R. 9248. TR 3411. Civatarumōttaram (text of chapter 8 only, without commentary). Palmleaf

5. Tiruvāṇṭur mutt

Tamil ms. 279. mūlam, complete

Tamil ms. 280. mūlam, complete

Tamil ms. 278. mūlam, complete
Tamil ms. 273. mūlam, incomplete
Tamil ms. 290. mūlam with an unspecified commentary, incomplete
Tamil ms. 182-zh. mūlam, incomplete
Tamil ms. 236-zz. mūlam, incomplete
Tamil ms. 248. mūlam, incomplete
Tamil ms. 277. mūlam with an unpublished (?) commentary, incomplete

6. U. Vē. Cāminātaiyair Library, Chennai

Ms. 1263. Civatarumōttaram (only mūlam). Palm-leaf
Ms. 1264. Civatarumōttaram (fragment, only mūlam). Palm-leaf

7. National Library, Kolkata

Ms. 3040. Civatarumōttaram. Palm-leaf, 1815

8. Tamil University, Thanjavur

ms. 117. Civatarumōttaram
ms. 245. Civatarumōttaram
ms. 249. Civatarumōttaram

9. Oriental Research Institute and Manuscripts Library, Trivandrum

ms. 7302. Civatarumōttaram