

THE UNIVERSITY OF CALGARY

An Interpretation of Māṇikkavācakar's "Tiruvempāvai"

BY

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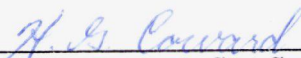
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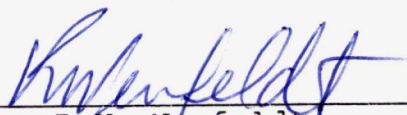
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FACULTY OF GRADUATE STUDIES


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ABSTRACT

This thesis represents an effort to interpret Māṇikkavācakar's "Tiruvempāvai" through an appeal to descriptive and figurative elements in the poem.

"Tiruvempāvai" is a poem which is about an encounter between a group of girls and their friend. The poem can be understood to present a dilemma regarding the condition of the girl when her group of friends arrive at her house. The study will attempt to demonstrate several things. Firstly it will suggest that the poem can be interpreted as presenting three mutually exclusive possibilities that, when considered, point to an unidentified state which the girl was in even prior to the group's coming through the street singing their praises. Secondly, it will suggest that a possible explanation for the girl's condition can be posited by an appeal to certain descriptive and figurative elements in the poem. The classical Tamil literary tradition and the myth of Śiva as the cōti liṅga will be drawn on in order to facilitate the interpretation of some of the descriptive and figurative elements of "Tiruvempāvai". Thirdly through the process of identifying the condition of the girl by drawing on the descriptive and figurative elements, a world-view emerges. That world-view

includes both the experiences of the girl and those of the members of the group in its conception of religious life.

Chapter one consists of introductory comments. Chapter two is a translation of the poem with notes. In chapter three the dilemma regarding the condition of the girl as well as two other related dilemmas are discussed. The central dilemma, the confusion regarding the girl's condition, is resolved into a single unidentified state in this chapter. Various descriptive and figurative elements are considered in chapter four which, it is suggested, indicate the direction for an identification of the condition of the girl. In chapter five the condition is identified and the world-view that emerges through the resolutions of the dilemmas is discussed.

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Preface

In this study, the Tamil script has been romanized according to the system found in A. H. Arden's A Progressive Grammar of the Tamil Language with the exception that the letter, ழ , has been transcribed as l. The few Sanskrit words in this study have been transliterated according to the system found in W. D. Whitney's Sanskrit Grammar with the exception that the palatal silibant has been transliterated as ś rather than as ç. In quotations which include non-English words, those words have been left as the author who is quoted has transliterated them.

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

Māṇikkavācakar is one of the Śaiva and Vaiṣṇava poet-saints who were essential contributors in the revival of Hinduism and the upsurge of bhakti in South India between the sixth and ninth centuries AD.¹ In the Śaiva Siddhānta tradition which emerged out of this movement² Māṇikkavācakar holds a significant position. He, along with three other saints, are regarded as the "founders of religion" for that tradition. Each one of them is believed to exemplify one of the four Śaiva paths. Māṇikkavācakar is the model for the highest path, jñāna mārga. He is believed to have attained the highest religious goal, release from rebirth and union with Śiva.³

Māṇikkavācakar's status as an important religious figure was established early. Evidence dating from the twelfth century indicates that land was set aside at that time for a pūjā for Māṇikkavācakar, and other saints.⁴ Even today his image is seen in Śaiva temples in Tamil Nadu.⁵ Māṇikkavācakar has been and continues to be a significant religious figure among the Tamil Śaivas.

There is some controversy regarding the date of Māṇikkavācakar. He has been dated variously from the third

century AD⁶ to the second half of the tenth century. Most modern scholars place him in the mid-ninth century.⁷

Māṇikkavācakar's two works are the Tiruvācakam and the Tirukkōvaiyār. Both of his works are included in the Śaiva Siddhānta Canon. The Tiruvācakam is a collection of fifty-one poems. The poems, in the main, consist of expressions of the love of devotees or a devotee for Śiva, indications of different states of devotion, praises to and descriptions of Śiva, and Śiva's response to devotees. The poems are filled with emotion. As the eminent Tamil scholar, K. Zvelebil, says: "Religious emotion achieves, in these poems, a strength and fullness hardly achieved anywhere else."⁸ He places the Tiruvācakam in the bhakti movement in South India in the following way: "The whole of the Tiruvācakam is the culmination of the Śaiva bhakti hymnic literature, and at the same time, the beginning of the specific system of Śaiva Siddhānta philosophy."⁹ The Tirukkōvaiyār is modelled after the classical Tamil genre of akam poetry. It is not explicitly religious in that the work is concerned with human love. However, traditionally, it is sometimes interpreted allegorically, as a description of a relationship between a devotee and Śiva.¹⁰ The Tiruvācakam has a more important role in the daily lives of Śaiva devotees than does the Tirukkōvaiyār. The hymns of the Tiruvācakam are sung daily in temple worship and in

homes throughout Tamil Nadu.¹¹ That is perhaps a result of its more explicit religious nature.

Commentaries have been written on both of Māṇikkavācakar's works.¹² The Tirukkōvaiyār was commented on in the thirteenth century.¹³ The Tiruvācakam was not commented on until modern times. The first commentary was apparently written in the second half of the nineteenth century.¹⁴ The Śaiva hymns in general were considered too sacred to be the subject of a commentary.¹⁵ Another Tamil scholar, Glenn Yocum, argues that the modern commentators tend to interpret the Tiruvācakam in terms of Śaiva Siddhānta principles. His objection to that practice is that the "crystalization" of Śaiva Siddhānta thought did not occur until after Māṇikkavācakar's time. Yocum notes that there is a tendency to try to find parallels between the text and Western literature or the Upanisads.¹⁶

Various translations and studies have been done on the Tiruvācakam. To this writer's knowledge there are three full translations of the Tiruvācakam available in English. They are those of G.U. Pope, G. Vanmikanathan, and K.M. Balasubramaniam.¹⁷ Pope's version is mainly a translation. He does not really give any commentary on the poems, although some of the poems have a short introduction and corresponding notes. Preceding Pope's translation are a series of appendices in which he provides a context for

the translation based on Śaiva Siddhānta texts. His intent in the translation appears to be to make available in English what he considers to be a worthwhile Tamil text. Vanmikanathan's translation is self-admittedly interpretive. He understands the Tiruvācakam to be a handbook of mystical theology. With the exception of the first four poems, he interprets the sequence of poems to reflect, chronologically, Māṇikkavācakar's spiritual development.¹⁸ As of the writing of this thesis K.M. Balasubramaniam's full translation of the Tiruvācakam is still unavailable to me. However, I have been fortunate to have obtained a copy of his "Tiruvempāvai".¹⁹ There is also a translation of the Tiruvācakam into German by Schomerus.²⁰

Two major studies on the Tiruvācakam have been done in English. These are by Glenn Yocum and Ratna Navaratnam.²¹ Yocum's approach is essentially thematic. Navaratnam, a scholar and a Śaiva, focuses on the Tiruvācakam as great poetry.

None of those translations and studies deal with "Tiruvempāvai" in an in-depth manner. As "Tiruvempāvai" is the seventh hymn of the Tiruvācakam and the subject of this thesis, only studies and translations of that text will be considered. Pope gives a short introduction to the poem and attempts to give some focus to ambiguous parts in his

notes. He does not give any in-depth consideration of the poem. Yocum's study does not specifically deal with "Tiruvempāvai". He does consider some of the verses as they contribute to an understanding of the themes that he is investigating. Both Vanmikanathan and Navaratnam offer interpretations of "Tiruvempāvai". However, they do not make explicit the connections between the interpretation and the poem. Their studies of the poem are perhaps restricted by the fact that each is attempting to understand the Tiruvācakam as a whole and therefore, they are not trying to give a detailed analysis of any one poem. Balasubramaniam's translation of "Tiruvempāvai" gives a few notes which reflect his interpretation of certain ambiguous points in the poem. To my knowledge there is no detailed study of "Tiruvempāvai" in English.

"Tiruvempāvai"

"Tiruvempāvai" is a poem in which a group of girls are on their way to engage in certain religious observances.²² They proceed through the street singing praises to Śiva. When they arrive at their friend's house they find her still in bed. In verses 2 to 8 they attempt to prod her into participating. In verses 9, the group addresses Śiva. There is some controversy regarding who is the speaker in

verse 10. Verses 11 to 20 (except 16 and 19), invoke the setting of a pond where the group bathes, or will bathe while they praise Śiva. It is not explicitly indicated whether the group is successful in encouraging the girl to participate or not.

The poem can be interpreted as presenting a dilemma regarding the condition of the girl when her friends arrive at her house, and for the rest of the first half of the poem. She is either asleep, indifferent to their praise and the events of the morning, or overwhelmed by intense emotion as a result hearing the group's praises of Śiva. Three different interpretations take, as their point of departure, one of these states.

The traditional understandings²³ seem to take as the point of departure for their interpretations the position that the girl is asleep. In general, the poem is traditionally interpreted on a level other than the level of the activities of the girls. That is, in one view, the awakening attempts in the first 8 verses symbolize the awakening of the human soul out of its spiritual darkness at the time of creation and engage it in the cleansing activities of life. It is through life that spiritual purification occurs.²⁴ A variation of that view is that the awakening that occurs in the first 8 verses refers to the

awakening of different śaktis that are instrumental in the evolution of the cosmos.²⁵

Navaratnam's interpretation is based on the notion that the girl is indifferent. In her view, the girl in the house represents Māṇikkavācakar and the poem relates Māṇikkavācakar's recovery from a state of spiritual despondency. Thus, Māṇikkavācakar's despondency is represented by the girl's non-response to the group's praise and events of the morning. Perhaps, she also interprets the emotional description as a manifestation of the depth of his despair. In this interpretation the group of girls represent devotees who are more spiritually advanced than Māṇikkavācakar.²⁶

A third interpretation is offered by Vanmikanathan. He interprets the girl in the house to be in a swoon state as a result of hearing the group's praise. He describes this state as one in which one becomes "beside oneself with joy."²⁷ The group represents devotees who are spiritually less developed than the girl.²⁸

All three of the interpretations take at least one of the possibilities which can be understood to be presented in the poem as the point of departure for their interpretation. If the girl can be inferred to be in three mutually exclusive states the question that emerges is:

Can the poem be interpreted as offering a resolution to the dilemma it presents regarding the girl's condition?

This study will attempt to suggest three things. Firstly it will suggest that the three mutually exclusive possibilities for the condition of the girl inferred from the poem, when considered, point to an unidentified state which the girl was in even prior to the group's coming through the street singing their praises. Secondly it will suggest that the girl's condition can be identified by appealing to certain descriptive and figurative elements in the poem. Thirdly through the process of identifying the condition of the girl by drawing on the descriptive and figurative elements, a world-view emerges. That world-view includes both the experiences of the girl and those of the members of the group in its conception of religious life.

These three points will be demonstrated in the following way. Chapter two is a free translation²⁹ of the poem with the romanized Tamil script for each verse and notes. "Tiruvempāvai" has been translated differently in some places by Vanmikanathan, Pope and Balasubramaniam. The notes accompanying the translation will point out some of the differences, especially in Vanmikanathan's and Pope's translation and to a lesser extent Balasubramaniam's. A translation has been included in order to show how "Tiruvempāvai" has been understood in

this study in the face of the different possibilities suggested by the other translators. In chapter three the dilemma regarding the condition of the girl as well as two other related dilemmas are discussed. The central dilemma is resolved into a single unidentified state in this chapter. In other words, it is suggested that the condition of the girl before the group came through the street singing praises of Śiva was not any of the three possibilities suggested by the group when they arrive at her house, but another condition altogether. Various descriptive and figurative elements are considered in chapter four which point the direction to an identification of the condition of the girl prior to hearing the praise of the group in the street. In chapter five the condition is identified and the world-view that emerges through the resolutions of the dilemmas are discussed. That identification requires a consideration of the symbolic motif of the feet, and a consideration of certain concepts related to the feet.

The central idea which will be suggested is that the mutually exclusive possibilities inferred for the condition of the girl point to her experience of another condition. That state is a spiritually significant state.

Notes to the Chapter One

- ¹K.A. Nilakanta Sastri, Development of Religion in South India (Bombay: Orient Longmans, 1963), pp. 35-48.
- ²Saiva Siddhānta receives its main inspiration from the Śaiva poet-saints. Śaiva Siddhānta as a religious group receives its specific identity with the articulation of its philosophy in the śāstras. This process began in the early thirteenth century and was completed in the fourteenth century. The principal commentaries were written between the fourteenth and eighteenth centuries. K. Sivaraman, Śaivism in Philosophical Perspective: A Study of the Formative Concepts, Problems and Methods of Śaiva Siddhānta (Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass, 1973), pp. 31-39.
- ³M. Arunachalam, Outlines of Saivism (Tiruchitrāmbalam - Mayuram: Gandhi Vidyalayam, 1978), pp. 32-33, 39; T.B. Siddalingaiah, "Origin and Development of Saiva Siddhanta Upto 14th Century" (Madurai: Madurai Kamaraj University, 1979), pp. 22-24. The four paths are caryā mārqa, kriyā mārqa, yoqa mārqa, and jñāna mārqa.
- ⁴K.V. Zvelebil, Tamil Literature (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1975), p. 143, n. 92.
- ⁵Glenn E. Yocum, Hymns to the Dancing Śiva: A Study of Maṇikkavācakar's Tiruvācakam (Columbia, Missouri: South Asia Books, 1982), p. 10; p. 47.
- ⁶G. Vanmikanathan, Pathway to God Through Tamil Literature: I - Though the Thiruvaachakam (New Delhi: The Delhi Tamil Sangam, 1971), p. 6. Vanmikanathan indicates that this is the date for Māṇikkavācakar suggested by Maraimalai Adigal.
- ⁷Yocum, p. 47; p. 63, n. 1. Yocum discusses some of the factors favouring the ninth century dating of Māṇikkavācakar and some that are difficult for that position. C.V. Narayana Ayyar in Origin and Early History of Saivism in South India (1939; rpt. Madras: University of Madras, 1974) pp. 398-430, discusses the issues for dating Māṇikkavācakar earlier than the ninth century.
- ⁸Kamil Zvelebil, The Smile of Murugan: On Tamil Literature of South India (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1973), p. 204.

⁹Zvelebil, Smile, p. 206.

¹⁰Yocum, p. 55; p. 63, n. 28.

¹¹M. Dhavamony, Love of God According to Śaiva Siddhānta (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1971) p. 158. See also Arunachalam, p. 28.

¹²I know of no commentary of the Tiruvācakam which has been translated into English.

¹³Zvelebil, Smile, p256; Yocum, p. 59.

¹⁴Yocum, p. 59; p. 64, n. 43.

¹⁵Zvelebil, Smile, p. 248, n. 1.

¹⁶Yocum, p. 59. This criticism may not be completely correct. The Śaiva Āgamic thought predates the Śaiva Siddhānta thought. There are prima facie, striking resemblances between basic concepts of Āgamic and Śaiva Siddhānta thought. See Dhavamony, pp. 118-121 and pp. 202ff for a brief statement of the main Āgamic principles and for a summary of the Śaiva Siddhānta śāstras. See also Sivaraman, pp. 31-39, for a statement about the Śaiva Āgamic traditions in relation to the formulation of Śaiva Siddhānta philosophy. Māṇikkavācakar actually mentions the Āgamas in the Tiruvācakam (poem 2 lines 10 and 18). Thus, it is possible that Āgamic ideas are reflected in Māṇikkavācakar's poetry and that, therefore, it may not be misguided to apply the Śaiva Siddhānta framework in interpreting it. The critical editing and printing of the Āgamas has only recently been undertaken. See Arunachalam, p. 26 and Dhavamony, p. 117 as well as n. 2 and n. 3 on that page. Studies comparing ideas in the Āgamas and in Śaiva Siddhānta, and comparing ideas in Māṇikkavācakar's poetry and the Āgamas based on critically edited Agamic texts can only be in their infancy.

¹⁷G.U. Pope, trans., introd., notes, prefix, The Tiruvācāgam or "Sacred Utterances" of the Tamil Poet, Saint, and Sage Māṇikka-Vācagar (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1900); For the full reference to Vanmikanathan's translation see n. 6. K.M. Balasubramaniam, Tiruvachakam of Saint Manikkavachakar (Madras: 1958).

¹⁸Vanmikanathan, pp. xxii, 26-29.

- ¹⁹K.M. Balasubramaniam, trans., Tiruvembavai in Tamil by Saint Manikkavachagar (Madras: The South India Saiva Siddhanta Works Publishing Society, Tinnevely Ltd., 1954).
- ²⁰H.W. Schomerus, Die Hymen des Manika-Vasaga (Tiruvасаga) (Jena, 1923).
- ²¹For Yocum's study see the reference above.
R. Navaratnam, Tiruvachakam: The Hindu Testament of Love (Bombay: Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan, 1963). This book seems to be a modified version of her book A New Approach to Tiruvасаgam, 2nd ed. (Annamalainagar: Annamalai University, 1971).
- ²²See chapter 3, pp. 111-13 for details.
- ²³I have not had direct access to a traditional interpretation of the poem in English. What is said about the traditional interpretations is based on the brief references in the summaries provided by Vanmikanathan, Balasubramaniam and Navaratnam. The essential point that I want to draw attention to is that these interpretations seem to understand the girl to be asleep.
- ²⁴Navaratnam, Hindu Testament, p. 138; Navaratnam, A New Approach, pp. 193-194. For a discussion of the Saiva Siddhanta view of the states of the soul see Sivaraman.
- ²⁵Balasubramaniam summarizes this version in the following way (p. 3): "There has also been in vogue a traditional and mystic interpretation of this Tiruvembavai. Including the first maid who goes to wake up others in turn, nine maids are spoken of herein. The first one wakes up another, that a third and so on it goes, till the ninth one wakes up from her slumber. These nine maids are identified with nine Saktis of Siva, who among themselves, setting in motion one another in turn, operate on the Mayic matter, which unfolds itself into the thirtysix tatwas from Prakriti upwards and generates the universe." See also Vanmikanathan, pp. 223-4.
- ²⁶For Navaratnam's interpretation of "Tiruvempāvai" see Hindu Testament, pp. 139-40; A New Approach, pp. 194-7.
- ²⁷Vanmikanathan, p. 49.
- ²⁸Vanmikanathan, pp. 48-50.

²⁹This translation was only possible with the help of Dr. Radhakrishnan. He patiently went through the entire poem with me line by line. In addition, he tried to show me some of the basics of Tamil grammar. Any errors found in the translation and the corresponding notes are mine alone. The Tamil verses of "Tiruvempāvai" used in this study are Irāmanāta Piḷḷai's edition in Tiruvācakam (Madras: The South India Saiva Siddhanta Publishing Works Society, Tinnevely, Ltd., 1976), Pope's version, and Balasubramaniam's version. Irāmanāta Piḷḷai's version of the Tiruvācakam is accompanied by a commentary in Tamil.

CHAPTER TWO

TRANSLATION AND NOTES.

TIRUVEMPAVAI

I

ātiyum antamum illā arum peruñ
cōtiyai yām pāṭak kēṭṭēyum vāṭṭaṭaṅkaṇ
mātē vaḷarutiyō vanceviyō nincevitān
mātēvaṇ vārkaḷalkaḷ vāḷttiya vāḷttolipōy
vītivāyk kēṭṭalumē vimmi vimmi meymmarantu
pōtār amaḷiyiṇ mēniṇrum puranṭiṇṇaṇ
ētēnum ākāḷ kiṭantāl enṇē enṇē
ītē entōḷi paricēl ōr em pāvāy

Without Beginning or End

the Precious Great Effulgence¹

we sang about;

Oh Bright Wide-Eyed Maiden,

you heard, and

yet you sleep?

Are your ears hard?²

Upon hearing the loud sounds,

the praise of Mātēvaṇ's anklets

with leather girts³

in the street:

on the bed filled with flowers⁴

exclaiming overwhelmedly⁵

forgetting herself⁶

directionless, in this way,⁷

tossing and turning⁸

she lay.

Ah! Ah!

Is this, indeed, the state of our friend?⁹

Oh our Lady!¹⁰

Notes

1. Effulgence is cōti. Cōti will be rendered as Effluence throughout the translation.

2. Vanceviyōnin̄cevitān̄ is literally, "are the ears hard, your ears themselves?". "Hard" refers to hard like stone.¹ The implication is that her ears are like stone. They do not hear. Vanmikanathan:² "...are your ears hard of hearing?" Pope:³ "...is thine ear dull...?"

3. vār has various meanings as a verb and a noun. The most appropriate meaning for this context is that it is a leather strap. As a leather strap, vār may be the band which connects the anklets to the feet.⁴

4. In the Sanskrit literary tradition the bed filled with flowers is conventionally understood to provide a cooling effect for intense feelings. Sighing heavily (note 5) and forgetting oneself are outward manifestations of intense love.⁵ In the Tamil culture as it is reflected in literature, flowers, also, are used for their cooling effect. They symbolically convey coolness.⁶ Flower symbolism in Sanskrit and Tamil literature is rich and varied. A full understanding of such symbolism would require a separate study. The possibility that the flowers are used to symbolized the need for a cooling device is perhaps one way of understanding what the significance of the flower-filled bed is in this verse. Also, in the Tamil akam genre of poetry, the heroine does not express her feelings of love explicitly. Such feelings are to be inferred.⁷

5. vimmi vimmi. Vimmi is a verbal participle of the verb, vimmu. It designates the utterance of a long noise with a hiatus. It is a releasing in an outburst a full emotion that has been contained. So it conveys that the individual is overwhelmed by some emotion.⁸ The repetition of a verbal particle twice indicates that the action recurs, is alternating or prolonged.⁹

Vanmikanathan: "Sob after sob tearing her frame".

Pope: "muttering".

6. meymmarantu. This phrase conveys the sense that one is overwhelmed by emotion. The individual is so completely immersed in that emotion that they become insensitive to their body.¹⁰ Vanmikanathan: "her body in a trance". Pope: "in forgetful sleep". Pope carries forward the notion of sleep into the description in the last half of the verse. Vanmikanathan understands this description of the girl as indicating that she is in a trance.

7. iñṇan ētēnum ākāl. Literally, ētēnum ākāl means: "She was not becoming for any thing or state". The expression is somewhat idiomatic. It indicates that the girl is restless and not able to do anything under her own volition.¹¹ iñṇan is an archaic form of iṅkam, which means "in this way", "in this manner".¹²

8. purantu. I have taken this to mean that she is rolling restlessly. Vanmikanathan: "has rolled off her flower-strewn bedstead". Pope: "turns".

9. ennē ennē ītē entōli paricu. Ennē could be either an interrogative, in which case the phrase is a question, or it can be an exclamation. If it is an exclamation it

is one of amazement, surprise, pity, doubt or contempt.¹³ Vanmikanathan: "What, what is this condition, Oh my chum?" Pope: "Why thus, why thus? doth this our friend beseem?"

10. ēl ōr empāvāy. The phrase recurs at the end of each verse throughout the poem. It has been referred to here as the refrain. Vanmikanathan omits the phrase from each verse. In his opinion the refrain may be an appeal to the pāvai worshipped by the girls, or it is a call to the girl in the house to pay attention. Otherwise, he suggests that the phrase has no special significance.¹⁴ Pope translates the refrain as: "Our Lady Fair, Arise". He gives an alternative meaning as: "Arise (or ponder), O Our Lady".¹⁵ ēl and ōr are sometimes traditionally taken as sound fillers.¹⁶ In the rendering here that tradition has been followed. However, ōr can also be taken as the imperative form of the root, ōr, which means to ponder or consider.¹⁷ ēl can be taken as the imperative form of the root, ēl. It can mean be fit, be able, be competent, receive, allow or approve.¹⁸ pāvāy is the vocative form of pāvai.

II¹

pācam parañ cōtik kenpāy irāp pakaṇām
 pēcum pōteppōtippōtār amaḷikkē
 nēcācum vaittanaiyō nēriḷaiyāy nēriḷaiyīr
 cīci ivaiyuñ cilavō viḷaiyāṭi
 ēcum iṭam ītō viṇṇōrkal ēttutarkuk
 kūcu malarppātan tantaruḷa vantarulun
 tēcā civalōkaṇ rillaic cirrampalattuḷ
 īcaṇārk kaṇpāryām ār ēl ōr em pāvāy

You would² express [your] love

for the Supreme Effulgence,

whether night or day

whenever we spoke.

Now, you have given your affection

to the bed filled with flowers,³ itself?

Oh Adorned One!

Oh Adorned Ones!⁴

Shame!⁵

Is it that:⁶

this is the place to playfully reproach?⁷

Are not we ones who have affection⁸

for the Lord in Tillai's sacred hall,⁹

the Lord of Sivalōka,¹⁰

the possessor of immanent light¹¹
 who graces
 coming to give
 bestowing
 the foot [adorned] with blossoms
 that withdraws from the
 praising of the Gods?¹²

Oh Our Lady!

Notes

1. There is some controversy regarding the number of segments in the dialogue preceeding the refrain.

Iramanata Pillai divides the verse into three parts.

Vanmikanathan divides the verse into two parts. It is unclear to me from Pope's translation how he divides the verse. All agree that the first division is the group's address to the girl which ends with "O Adorned One"

(nērilaiyāy). Vanmikanathan attributes the remainder of the verse, excluding the refrain, to the girl.¹⁹

Irāmanāta Pillai attributes from "O Adorned Ones"

(nērilaiyīr) to "reproach" (ito) to the girl, and the remaining portion of the verse he attributes to the

group.²⁰ I have followed Irāmanāta Pillai. My reason for doing so rests primarily on the presence of yām in

line 8. See Appendix A, verse 2 for a discussion of this point.

2. Enpāy is the second person of the future tense of the verb, en, which means to say. In Tamil the future tense can be used to convey a general statement or a habitual state of affairs. Those statements can refer to something that happened in the past.²¹

3. Ār amali means "filled bed". From verse 1 it is known that the bed is filled with flowers.

4. The same epithet, nērilai, is applied both to the girl by the group and to the group by the girl. In the first case it is in the singular and in the second it is in the plural.

5. Cīci is an expression of disapproval or contempt.²² It is used in informal situations.²³

6. Ivaiyuñ cilavō means literally "are these things a few?". The question has the sense of "could these be so?". The question marker, "o", is being understood to function suppositionally in this situation.²⁴

Colloquially, the plural is not used. The colloquial expression would be: "could this be such?". The expression is a way of introducing a topic and then

explaining it. The expression conveys a sense of wonder at what is to follow.²⁵ However, in this verse the topic (the inappropriateness of the group's chiding of the girl) does not seem to be explained. Vanmikanathan does not explicitly translate the phrase. Pope translates it as: "...are these things trifles too?".

7. The question is designated by the marker, "ō". Here it is understood to convey the speaker's negative attitude towards the contents of the question.²⁶ The phrase is being understood to convey that in this situation the girl does not think it is appropriate that they should reproach her.

8. īcanārkkānpāryāmār. See the discussion in note 12 and Appendix A, verse 2. Vanmikanathan: "...Who are we to say that we are filled with love?" Pope: "Who are His lovers all?"

9. The word translated here as "sacred hall" is cirrapalam. It means literally "small space" or "small public space".²⁷ Tillai is Citamparam where the Nataraja temple is. The Lord in Tillai's cirramapalam refers to Natarāja in that temple. Vanmikanathan: "dance hall". Pope: "porch".

10. Sivalōka is the residence of devotees. It is wherever true devotees are.²⁸

11. Tēcan is the Tamil masculine singular form of tejas.²⁹ Tejas is a Sanskrit word which means, among other things, heat, glow, lustre, brilliance or splendour.³⁰

12. vinṇōrkal ēttutarkukkūcu malarppātam.

Vanmikanathan: "the blossom feet which shies away from the praise of the heavenly ones." Pope: "foot-flower, shame-fast angels praise?". Literally this phrase (vinṇōrkal - pātam) means "the blossom foot that withdraws for the praising of the heavenly ones".

Ēttukarku is in the dative case which has been crudely translated as "for the praising". The main "meaning of the Dative case is that of an oblique object, to which the action is directed or for the sake of which it is performed".³¹ Here the "withdrawing" is directed towards the praising of the gods. In English, the word "from" is used. The word for foot (pātam) is in the singular. However, the neuter nouns can function semantically either as a plural or as a singular.³² Since

Māṇikkavācakar uses both singular and plural forms (kalalkal - 1, 20, atikal - 20, ponmalarkal - 20, and centalirkal - 20) in this translation the singular and

plural forms have been rendered respectively as the English singular and plural forms. Pope seems to have taken the "withdrawing (shame-fast - kūcu) to be an adjective of vinṇōrkaḷ. Normally, the adjective precedes what it modifies.³³ If kūcu was to modify vinṇōrkaḷ it should precede vinṇōrkaḷ not follow ēttutarku. In the structure given in the poem, kūcu positionally modifies malarppātam.

III

mūttanṇaveṇṇakaiyāy munvantetir elūnten
 attan ānantan amutan enraḷḷūrit
 tittikkappēcuvāy vantunkaṭaitiravāy
 pattuṭaiyīr īcaṇ paḷa aṭiyīr pāṅkuṭaiyīr
 puttaṭiyōm punmai tīrttāṭkoṇṭār pollātō
 ettō niṇ anpuṭaimai ellōm ariyōmō
 cittam aḷakiyār pāṭārō nañcivaṇai
 ittaṇaiyum vēṇṭum emakkēḷ ōr em pāvāy

Oh One with the white smile like a pearl!

Coming previously,
 appearing in [our] presence,
 sweetly, mouth wateringly,
 you would say:

"My Father, Blissful One, Ambrosial One".¹

Come and open your door!

Oh Bhaktas!

Ancient Devotees of the Lord!

Oh Beautiful Ones!²

Is it wrong to accept those
and forgive the faults
of us who are new devotees?³

Would you mislead [us]?⁴

Do not we all know your affection?

Should not those with beautiful hearts sing
to our Siva?

All of this is necessary for us.⁵

Oh Our Lady!

Notes

1. enru - pēcuvāy. Vanmikanathan: "...who used to come forward in the past and talk sweetly till your mouth drooled of Aththan, Aanandan, Amudhan...."

Vanmikanathan does not take the enru as a quotative. He also omits the en (my) in en attan (my Father). The inclusion of en makes the use of quotations for the epithets more appropriate. Pope: "...present thyself before the Sire, the blissful One, the Ambrosial, And with o'erflowing sweetness speak!" Pope takes pēcuvāy

as an imperative rather than the future form. The imperative form of pēcu (speak) should be pēcāy.³⁴ For the use of the future see verse 2 note 2. Pope also does not take the enru as a quotative and he omits the en in his translation.

2. puttuṭaiyīr - pāṅkuṭaiyīr. Vanmikanathan: "O devotion-filled Ones! O Eesan's ancient devotees! O decorous ones!". Pope: "Ye men devout, the Ruler's ancient saints, ye reverend men". The plural second person address (indicated by -īr) does not distinguish gender. Thus those addressed could be male or female. In order to interpret this as an address that is directed towards men rather than the group of girls, Pope has indicated that a change of setting has taken place. His note, which immediately precedes the translation of this line, is: "She joins them. They enter the temple-porch". Nothing in the verse itself nor anything in the preceding verses nor anything in the following few verses seems to support the change of setting that Pope offers. In verse 11, a change of location is suggested by the reference to bathing in a tank. Most of the remaining verses support this change of location by references to playing in a pond or playing in water.

Pāṅku suggests an outward manifestation of an inner quality. It has meanings such as beauty, propriety, agreeableness, suitableness, manners and carriage.³⁵ The word indicates appropriateness in attitude and action.

Aṭiyīr is a second person plural personal noun of the noun, aṭi (foot). It means "You who are at the feet". The personal nouns of aṭi are used to refer to devotees in the context of bhakti. Visvanatha Pillai gives the following definitions for aṭiyar, the third person plural personal noun of aṭi,: "slaves, servants, as applied to devotees in reference to their deity, and used by persons of themselves in addressing superiors, to show respect, obedience or submission".

3. puttatiyōm - pollātō. This line is somewhat ambiguous. This is reflected in the different renderings. Vanmikanathan: "Is it wrong if the Lord enslaves new devotees, ridding them of their baseness?" Pope: "...Will't be amiss if ye our weakness aid, us novices admit?" Vanmikanathan brings in "the Lord" to explain the removing of blemishes (punmai tīrttu). There is some support for this addition in the poem. The removing of blemishes is associated with Śiva. Although the phrase elsewhere is kōtāṭṭum or kōtāṭṭi (5, and 17 respectively). Also the two words, āl and kol

are associated elsewhere with Śiva (5, 6, 11, 15, 20). However in those cases the context makes it quite clear that Śiva or some feature of Śiva is the one being modified by the phrase. The phrase does not seem to apply to Śiva in its use here. It is part of a rhetorical question addressed to pattutaiyīr. As such it is inferred that it is those addressed as pattutaiyīr to whom the phrase, āṭkonṭāl applies. āl and kol have been translated differently in their use in this verse than in their occurrence in the other places in the poem. In this verse, āl has been taken as "people" and rendered as "those". Kol has been taken as "accept". See chapter 5 for a discussion of āl and kol as they apply to Śiva and for the justification of the renderings of the verbs in those occurrences of them. Tīrttu can mean leave, quit, finish, complete, perfect, destroy, kill, cure, and so on.³⁶ Pope takes tīrttu in the sense of "cure" or "perfect". The rendering suggested here takes tīrttu in the extended sense of "leaving" or "dismissing".

Puttu is from putu³⁷ and it is related to putumai. Putumai conveys as sense of newness, novelty, freshness, abundance, excess and intensity.³⁸

4. ettō. Vanmikanathan omits an explicit translation of the phrase. Pope: "No cheat is this".

5. nañcivanai - emakku. Vanmikanathan: "This is all we want of you." Pope: "Our Civan's form ev'n so we yearn to see." Vanmikanathan takes the nañcivanai with the previous sentence as has been done in this translation. Pope takes the phrase with the last sentence. Vanmikanathan also supplies "of you". Pope supplies "to see". Pope and Vanmikanathan take vēntum to mean "yearn" and "want", respectively. Those are meanings of the verb. The sentence, perhaps, suggests that she is troublesome to them.³⁹

IV

oṇṇittil nakaiyāy inṇam pularntinrē
 vaṇṇakkilimoliyār ellārum vantārō
 eṇṇikkoṭuḷlavācollukōm avvalavun
 kaṇṇaittuyinṇravamē kālattaipōkkātē
 viṇṇukkorumaruntai vētavilupporulaik
 kaṇṇukkiṇiyāṇaippāṭikkacintuḷḷam
 unṇekkuniṇruruka yāmāṭṭō nīyēvan
 tenṇikkuraiyirruyil ēl ōr em pāvāy

Oh One smiling like a luminous pearl!

Has it not dawned yet?

Not all those whose speech

is beautiful like a parrot's

have come, have they?¹

After counting² we will tell you the way that it is.

Don't waste your time sleeping!

Singing

to the one Medicine for Heaven,

to the Excellent Sense of the Vēdas,³

to the Person who is agreeable to the eyes,

heart melting,

mind dissolving,

while dissolving,

we won't do [it].

You come and count!

If it is deficient,

[go back] to sleep.⁴

Oh Our Lady!

Notes

1. The question is designated by the marker "ō". See verse 2, notes 6 and 7 for the meaning of the marker.

Vanmikanathan: 'Have all my companions of colourful parrot-like speech come?' Pope: "have not the

sweet-voiced come, like parrots many-hued?" Pope seems to attributes this statement to the group. He notes at the beginning of his translation of this verse that:

"They all henceforth sing their morning song to the goddess, imploring HER to arise in grace." The question suggests that the speaker does (speakers do) not think everyone has arrived yet. Pope interprets the question in the affirmative. That is he understands it to be saying that everyone has arrived.

2. Enni is a verbal participle for the root, ennu. The verb can mean "to count" or "to consider".⁴⁰

Vanmikanathan: "We shall count and tell you the true tally". Pope: "Thus thinking, as is meet, we speak".

3. vēta viluporulai. Porul can mean either a concrete object or meaning.⁴¹ Vilu means great or excellent.⁴² So the phrase can have two meanings: that 1) Śiva is the excellent sense of the Vedas; or that 2) Śiva is the object that the Vedas extol. Vanmikanathan: "the Subject par excellence of the Vedaas". Pope: "the Veda's precious Sense".

4. nī - ruyil. Vanmikanathan: "Come yourself and count, and if the number falls short, go back and

sleep!" Pope: "...nor deem thou should's't remain
forever thus asleep."

V

māl ariyā nānmukanūnkāṇā malaiyiṇai nām
pōl arivōm enruḷḷa pokkaṅkaḷēpēcum
pāl ūru tēṇ vāyppaṭiṇi kaṭaitiravāy
nālamē viṇṇē piravē arivariyān
kōlamunammai āṭkoṇṭarulikkōtātṭuṇ
cīlamum pāṭic civaṇē civaṇē en
rōlam iṭiṇum uṇarāy uṇarāy kāṇ
ēlakkulaliparicēl ōr em pāvāy

Deceitful One!

whose honied mouth flows with milk
that speaks, indeed, real falsehoods,¹

saying:

"That Mountain

unknown by Māl²

unseen by even the Four-Faced One³

we can know,

others like us can know."⁴

Open the door!

After singing about the beauty⁵ of him who

is unknown by the knowledge
 of the world, the heavens and others,
 about the characteristics⁵
 that remove blemishes
 gracing
 taking and ruling
 us:

even if [we]⁶ cry unrestrainedly "Siva" "Siva":

You do not know! You do not know!

See that nature!

Oh Fragrant-locked One!⁷

Oh Our Lady!

Notes

1. Pālūru means "flows with milk". It can also refer to a young child who is not yet weaned. This may bring in the notion of innocence. Also a sweet talking child is one who is unblemished.⁴³ In the Cilappatikāram, the hero uses "honey" as an epithet to describe the heroine, Kannaki. Honey, in that context, is said to refer to her speech. It is filled with honey and pleasing to the ear.⁴⁴ The Cilappatikāram, in its present form, was not composed before the fifth or sixth centuries AD. Zvelebil suggests the poem is based on an old legend.⁴⁵ Vāy has a variety of meanings such as mouth, lip, place,

word, doorway, etc.⁴⁶ Vanmikanathan: "tongue". Pope: "mouth".

2. Māl is Viṣṇu.⁴⁷

3. The Four-Faced-One is Brahmā.⁴⁸

4. nāmpōl arivōm. Arivōm is the future first person plural of ari, to know. For the use of the future see verse 2, note 2. Nāmpōl is idiomatic for "people like us".⁴⁹ Vanmikanathan: "people like us will come to know". Pope: "we can know".

5. The phrase can be understood to have two components indicated by the -um attached to each one.⁵⁰ The first phrase is ñālamē to kōlamum. The second phrase is nammai to cīlamum. The whole phrase is then: singing about the beauty of him (etc.) and about the characteristics (etc.). Ñālamē to arivariyān modify kōlamum. Nammai to āttum modify cīlamum.

Vanmikanathan: "...singing of the form of Him whom the earth, the heavens and all the rest do not know, and of His nobleness in ridding us of our faults and graciously enslaving us". Pope: "He Whom earth, heaven and other realms know not, In glory makes us His, cleanses our souls in grace. His goodness sing!" Pope associates kōlam (glory or beauty) with the acts of gracing, etc.,

and takes cīlam (goodness or qualities) separately, in contrast to Vanmikanathan and as it is in the translation here.

6. cīlamum pāti - itinum. The phrase civanē - itinum is part of the same sentence as cīlamum pāti. The finite verb which completes the sentence is unarāy. From the context of the poem established in verse 1, it is known that the group of girls have been singing. Thus it seems appropriate to supply the word, "we" in this phrase. Vanmikanathan: "Even if we yell...." Pope: "they cry". Pope also takes this phrase as separate from cīlamum pātic. Pope: "His goodness sing! 'O Civan, Civan'! hark! they cry."

7. kān - paricu. ēla can refer to a substance for perfuming the hair, or a cardomon plant, among other things.⁵¹ Kulal is one of the five modes of doing the hair.⁵² Vanmikanathan: "Oh you with cardomom scented tresses." Pope: "So's she with perfumed locks". Vanmikanathan omits paricu. Pope takes paricu with ēlakkulali. Vanmikanathan and Pope also omit kān. In the translation here kān ēlakkulali paricu is taken as a unit.

VI

Māṇē nīnennalai nāḷaivantuṅkalai
 nāṇē eluppuvaṇ enṛalunāṇāmē
 pōṇaticai pakarāy innam pularntinrō
 vāṇē nilanē piravē arivariyān
 tāṇēvantemmaittalai aḷittāṭkoṇṭarulum
 vāṇvārkalal pāṭi vantōrkkun vāytiravāy
 ūṇē urukāy unakkē urum emakkum
 ēṇōrkkuntaṅkōṇaippāṭēl ōr em pāvāy

Oh Doe!

Yesterday you said:

"Tomorrow¹ I will come and awaken you."

Unashamedly, that [promise] has gone.

Explain what has happened.²

Has it not dawned?

Open the door!³

for those who come singing about

the beautiful banded-anklet

that graces:

[of Him who]

comes,

kindly looks

[and]

takes and rules
 us;
 who is:
 unknown to the knowledge of those
 in heaven,
 on earth,
 and others.

Your body does not melt.

Only you can feel this way.⁴

Sing to our King

for us

for others like us.⁵

Oh Our Lady!

Notes

1. Nālai means tomorrow. Nāl means day, early, dawn, forenoon.⁵³ Vanmikanathan: "tomorrow". Pope: "at dawn".

2. nānāmē - pakarāy. nānāmē, "without shame", can be taken in two ways.⁵⁴ The first is as modifying tikai pakarāy. In that case, the sense is that she should explain, without feeling shameful, why she did not wake them up. In the second case, the phrase modifies pōṇa. It indicates that she acted immodestly by not carrying

out her promise. Vanmikanathan: "tell us where those words have gone shamelessly". Pope: "but now, all unabashed Tell us, what quarter didst thou seek?" Pope follows the first interpretation. Vanmikanathan follows the second.

3. vāytiravāy. See verse 5, note 4 for vāy. This phrase can be taken as an imperative or as a negative in the second person singular. Vanmikanathan: "You do not open your mouth". Vanmikanathan takes a similar structure, kaṭaitiravāy, in verses 3 and 5 as an imperative. Pope: "Speak thou". In both cases the implication is that she is not speaking to them.

4. ūnē - urum. Urukāy can be either a negative second person singular or an imperative second person singular. Vanmikanathan: "...you do not melt all over your body". Pope: "In rapture melt". Pope seems to omit unakkē urum in his translation.

5. emakkum - pātu. Vanmikanathan: "For us and the rest (of the world) it befits to sing of our King." Pope: "The King of thee, of us extol; of all the worlds!" Ēnōr means "such others".⁵⁵

VII

annē ivaiyuñcilavō pala amarar
 unnarkariyān oruvan iruñcīrān
 cinnāṅkaḷ kētpac civan enre vāytirappāy
 tennā ennāmunnan tīcēr melukoppāy
 ennānai eṇ araiyaṇ in amutenrellōmuñ
 connōnkēḷ vevvērāy innan tuyilutiyō
 vanneñcappētaiyarpōḷ vālākiṭattiyāl
 ennētuyilin paricēḷ ōr em pāvāy

Mother!¹

Could it be that:²

You would open your mouth

crying: "Siva",

upon hearing of the emblems of

Him of great beauty³

who is

without equal

unknowable to the

conceptualization

of the gods,

You would be like wax before a fire

[upon hearing] "O Southern One";⁴

Listen!

all of us
 without exception
 individually
 have cried:⁵

"My Lord, My King, Sweet Ambrosia!":

and still you sleep?

You lie down
 indifferent
 inactive
 like one who is naive
 with a hard heart.⁶

What blissful sleep this is!⁷

Oh Our Lady!

Notes

1. Annē is a vocative of annai which means "mother". It is quite common for girls to address their friends by annē.⁵⁶ In the classical context the address can refer to any kinswoman.⁵⁷

2. ivaiyuñ cilavō. See verse 2, note 6.

Vanmikanathan: "are these the acts of a handmaiden of the Lord?" Pope: "are these too trifles?"

3. cinnāṅkal -vāytirappāy. Kētpa is an archaic form of the root kēl. The form is equivalent to the

infinitive.⁵⁸ It means to hear or listen.⁵⁹ Tirappāy is the future second singular of the root tira. It means to open.⁶⁰ See verse 2, note 2 for the use of the future. Vanmikanathan: "...you would be the first to open your mouth saying: 'Lo, there is Civan coming'". Vanmikanathan supplies "the first", "Lo, there is", and "coming". However, his translation, with the additions, conveys the girl's immediate recognition of the emblems of Śiva. Pope: "Hearing His signals, ope thy mouth, and 'Çivan' cry...." Pope seems to take the phrase as: vāy + tirappu + āy. In this case, vāy means "mouth"; tirappu is a verbal noun meaning "open"; and āy is a verbal participle of āku meaning "becoming". Literally, this would mean: "becoming with an open mouth". Pope appears to take tennā ennā as the end of the sentence (see note 4). In light of how he interprets tennā ennā (as the end of the sentence) his rendering of the verbal participles enru and āy seems to be appropriate.⁶¹ The major difference between the interpretation of Pope and the interpretations of Vanmikanathan, Balasubramaniam and the rendering here is that Pope understands the group to be commanding the girl whereas the other three translations understand this section to be a description of the girl's past behaviour.

4. tennā - oppāy. Tennā is an abbreviated vocative form of either tennātu (southern country) or tennātutaiyān (He who possesses the Southern country).⁶² Ennā can be taken as either: 1) a verbal participle ennā;⁶³ or as 2) a single imperative with the particle ā (ennu + ā); or as 3) a negative third person plural indicative; or as 4) a negative participle (ennā); or as 5) a negative verbal participle (ennā).⁶⁴ Oppāy can be taken as the future second singular of the root o, or as the verbal noun of o (oppu + āy).⁶⁵ Vanmikanathan: "Before one could say: 'O Southerner', You would become like wax fallen into a fire." Pope: "Hearing His signals, open thy mouth, and 'Çivan' cry, Cry 'O Southern One.' Like wax before the fire Melting, -- 'My own, My King, Ambrosia', we all have sung." Vanmikanathan's translation takes ennā as a verbal participle and oppāy as the future second singular of the verb o. His rendering conveys the rapidity of response. Pope's translation takes ennā as ennu + ā (an imperative). If ā is not taken as part of the negative form of en, then it can be taken as a sound filler.⁶⁶ As can be seen, Pope associates the melting (being like wax before a fire) as being a description of the girls in the group. That interpretation is supported by the fact that in

verse 4 they are described as melting. He appears to omit munnam.

Śiva is considered by the Śaivas of Tamil Nadu to be the Lord of the Southern land (their land).⁶⁷

5. enru - tuyilutiyō. Vanmikanathan: "Listen! now all of us are severally saying: 'My Beloved! My King! My delicious Ambrosia!'. There is no "my" before "sweet Ambrosia" in the Tamil. Pope: "... 'My own, My King, Ambrosia', we all have sung! Hear thou! apart from us yet thou dost sleep?" In these words the placement of vevvērāy is difficult. In order to take it adverbially as Vanmikanathan has done and as done in the translation here, the position of it must be disregarded. Taken in this way it can either modify the group or what they say.⁶⁸ The use of en (my) supports this first interpretation. Pope's interpretation takes account of the position. He takes it as describing the girl. Perhaps it emphasizes her separateness from the group.

6. vanneñca - vālākitattiyāl. Vanmikanathan: "Since you lie inert like a hard-hearted scatter-brains, what kind of sleep is this?" Pope: "Dost thou yet speechless lie, like the hard-hearted silly ones?" Pētai is a girl of 5 to 7 years of age. It can also mean one who is naive.⁶⁹ The sense here seems to be that

she is ignorant out of naivete (not knowing - see verse 5), not that she is scatter-brained or silly. vālā can mean silently, quietly, indifferently, or vainly.⁷⁰

"Indifferent" and "inactive" have been used to try convey these two senses.⁷¹ The verse as a whole seems to be suggesting that she seems to be sleeping like those would who are too young to appreciate the events of the morning.

7. ennētuyilin paricu. Vanmikanathan: "what kind of sleep is this?" Pope: "What grace is in this sleep?" Paricu means: quality, nature, manner, way and method.⁷² It can also mean gift, donation and boon.⁷³ "Blissful" has been included to emphasize the sarcastic nature of the question.

VIII

kōlī cilampac cilampuñ kurukenkum
 ēlīl iyampa iyampum veṇcañkenkum
 kēlīl parañ cōti kēlīl parañ karuṇai
 kēlīl vilup poruḷkal pāṭinōñkēṭṭilaiyō
 vālī ītenṇa urakkamō vāy tiravāy
 āliyān anpuṭaimai yāmārum ivvārō

ūlimutalvaṇāy ninra oruvaṇai
ēlapaṅkāḷaṇaiyē pāṭēl ōr em pāvāy

Everywhere

the rooster crows
the birds chirp.

Everywhere

in seven notes music sounds¹
the white conch shells resound.

We have sung about:

the noble things² without compare,
the supreme Grace beyond compare,
the supreme Effulgence without compare.

Did you not hear?

Bless you!³

What is this? Is it sleep?

Open your door!⁴

Is this, indeed, the manner

in which you show your affection
to He who is the sea [of grace]?⁵

Sing to Him

who is without equal,
who stands
underlying the cosmic rest,⁶
who is part woman⁷

Oh Our Lady!

Note

1. Ēlil means "in seven". The expression, ēl tīcai (seven notes), is found often in literature. On the basis of that convention one can say that this word here refers to music.⁷⁴ Irāmanāta Piḷḷai takes it as referring to the music of an instrument which is somewhat similar to a clarinet.⁷⁵ Vanmikanathan: "sounding of the seven scale music pipes". Pope: "trumpet sounds"

2. See verse 4, note 3 for the meaning of vilu poruḷ. Vanmikanathan: "of peerless subjects par excellence,". Pope: "the Being great without compare". The grace, Effulgence and vilupporuḷkal can be considered as three separate items as Vanmikanathan and Pope have taken them. Alternatively, the grace and Effulgence can be understood to be what the vilupporuḷkal are.

3. vāli is a blessing. I have followed Vanmikanathan and Pope in the translation of the word.

4. vāy tiravāy. See verse 6, note 3. Vanmikanathan: "Open your lips". Pope: "Thou openest not thy mouth?" The Tamil does not seem to indicate a question here.

Pope appears to have taken tiravāy previously as in verse 3, 5, and 6 as an imperative.

5. āliyān - ivvārō. Vanmikanathan: "Is this the way to become love-filled towards the sea (of grace)?"

Pope: "is such the recompense for our King's love we bring?" āliyān means one who possesses the sea. āli can also mean circle, discus, or king's power as it is symbolized by a wheel.⁷⁶ āliyān as king would be more appropriate if the poem were about Viṣṇu as he is the one who carries the discus. "Of grace" is supplied in Vanmikanathan's translation and in the translation here.

6. ūlimutalvanāy - oruvanai. Vanmikanathan: "him Who stood as first in every aeon" Pope: "Th' Eternal, First of Beings; Him Who 'bides the Only-One;" ūlimutalvanāy modifies oruvanai. ūli is the periodic termination of the age.⁷⁷ mutalvan means "He who is head, the first one, principle".⁷⁸ ninra is the relative participle of nil which means to remain, stand, continue.⁷⁹ The case relationship between ūli and mutalvan is not specified explicitly. "Eternal" might be suitable for ūli - ninra but as not as the meaning for ūli, as ūli has a beginning and an end. Likewise, mutalvanāy in an extended sense could be understood as "First of Beings". Alternatively, "First of Beings" or "Eternal" could be

somewhat extended meaning of ūlimutalvanāy. However, Pope's rendering of ūlimutalvanāy as "Th' Eternal, First of Beings" does not seem appropriate.

7. Ēlaipaṅkālanai. Ēlai at the time of the poem meant "woman".⁸⁰ In current dictionary use it also means "poor" and "helpless".⁸¹ Vanmikanathan: "Partner of the frail One". Pope: "Lady's Partner".

IX

munnaip palamporuṭku munnaip palamporuḷē
 pinnaip putumaikkum pērttumapperriyanē
 unnaip pirānākap perra un cīr aṭiyōm
 un aṭiyār tāl paṇivōm āṅkavarkkēpāṅkāvōm
 annavarē eṅkaṇavar āvār avar ukantu
 conna paricē toḷumpāyp paṇicēyvōm
 inna vakaiyē emakkeṅkōṇalkutiyēl
 enna kuraiyum ilōm ēl ōr em pāvāy

Oh Ancient of ancient things!

Oh Newness of new things!¹

We who have attained you as Lord

are at your holy feet.

We bow to the feet of your devotees.

We, there, are companions to them alone.

They, only will be our husbands.

We will serve

obediently doing

what they desiringly say.²

If you grant³ to us thus,

Oh our King,

We will be without want.

Oh Our Lady!

Notes

1. I thank Dr. Radhakrishnan for the rendering of these lines.⁸² Vanmikanathan: "Oh earliest ancient Thing of all earliest ancient things! To all latest novelties, Oh You Who are in turn of same nature!" Pope: "Ancient of days, existing ere the ancient world! Whose nature shares the newness of created things!"

2. The verbs, paṇivōm, āvōm, and ceyvōm, are in the future tense. Considering the context of the poem, a festival for obtaining husbands, it seems best to render them in the future (as Pope and Vanmikanathan have done) rather than taking them as indicative of a general action.

3. inna - nalkutiyēl. Vanmikanathan: "In this manner, if You, our King would bestow grace on us...." Pope: "Thus, if Thou grant to us this boon, our King...." Vanmikanathan supplies "grace" and Pope supplies "this boon". These additions are implied in the context.

X

pātālam ēlinunkīl cor_kalivu pātamalar
 pōtār punai muṭiyum ellāp poruṇmuṭivē
 pētai orupār rirumēni onrallan
 vētamutal vinṇōrumaṇṇuntutittālum
 ōta ulavā orutōlan roṇṭar uḷan
 kōtil kulattaran ran kōyir piṇāpillāikāl
 ētavan ūr ētavanpēr ār urrār ār ayalār
 ētavanaip pāṭum paricēl ōr em pāvāy

His foot-blossom¹

surpassing words

lies below the seven netherworlds.

His crown

filled with flowers

alone is the end to all things.²

His form

is not only the holy form

which is part woman.³

He is to his devotees

the one friend

who cannot be contained by the praise
of the Vedas, gods, and humans.⁴

Siva is, indeed,

of the faultless lineage.

Oh Young Girls of the temple!⁵

What is his village?

What is his name?

Who are his relatives?

Who are not his relatives?

How can [one] sing about his nature?⁶

Oh Our Lady!

Notes

1. malar in pātamalar is in the singular.

Vanmikanathan: "feet". Pope: "foot-flower".

Vanmikanathan omits the malar (flower or blossom).

2. pōtār - mutivē. Vanmikanathan: "His flower-laden crown is all knowledge's end." Pope: "with flowers adorned His crown of all the universe is crown!" For the meanings of porul see verse 4, note 3.

Vanmikanathan's translation brings out the notion of

porul as "meaning". Pope's rendering and the translation here bring out the notion of things (objects). Both meanings should be considered. Thus Śiva is not only the end of all things (ūlimutalvanāy ninra in verse 8) but he is also the end of all knowledge.

3. pētai - onrallan. Vanmikanathan: "A lady by Him is His form, but not the only one". Pope: "The Lady's at His side! -- His sacred form dwells not alone!"

Onrallan means "he is not one". The verse speaks about ineffability. It seems reasonable to say he is not only the concretized form of half-man and half-woman.

4. vēta - ronṭarulan. Vanmikanathan: "Though the Vedaas, the heaven-dwellers and all the world sing His praise, praises fall far short of Him, our unique Companion--Dweller in His devotees. Pope: "The Vedam, heavenly ones, and earth, praise Him, and yet He's our one Friend, Whose praise ne'er dies; within His saints He dwells." Vētamutal can be understood in two ways: 1) as beginning with the Vedas; or 2) as the principal of the Vedas (that which is to be praised).⁸³ Ulavā is the negative participle of the root, ula. It means to become diminished, wasted, to be devoid of life or terminate.⁸⁴ Ulavā positionally modifies orutōlan (the

one friend), not the praise. It is an adjective and is in an adjectival position to orutōlan.⁸⁵ The infinitive, ōta, suggests that there is a causal relationship between the phrase that it governs and the following phrase.⁸⁶ The negative (in ulavā) negates the causal relationship. So, the whole phrase conveys the sense that praising Śiva cannot cause him to be diminished. This taken together with the notion of ineffability expressed in line 1 (corkalivu pātamar) suggests that praise cannot contain Śiva. In other words he cannot be fully grasped by praise.

The exact relationship between tontar and ulan in tontarulan is not specified. It could, therefore, be: "He who is in the servers" as Vanmikanathan and Pope understand the phrase. Alternatively, it could be: "He who is to the servers...."

5. kōtil - pillaikāl. Vanmikanathan: "Therefore, Oh you damsels of blameless lineage, handmaidens of Haran's shrine." Pope: "...pure He sustains the 'clan'; ye temple-ladies, say". Vanmikanathan takes kōtil kulattu (faultless lineage) as modifying the girls. Pope takes it as modifying Śiva. The relationship between kulattu and aran is not explicitly specified.

The reference to the temple may be taken figuratively rather than as referring to a concrete building. That is, the temple is considered to be wherever one sincerely worships. Thus the girls may be temple girls in the sense that they worship Śiva sincerely. The epithet need not necessarily mean that the girls are employed at the temple.⁸⁷

6. Ētavanai - paricu. Vanmikanathan: "how sing we His praise?" Pope: "And how sing we His praise?" Two ideas may be associated with this phrase. The first one may be that the speaker (speakers) would like to know how to praise Śiva. She (they) are lacking in knowledge and want to know more.⁸⁸ The second possibility is that if Śiva is ineffable how can one sing about him?⁸⁹

There is some disagreement regarding who says this verse and who is addressed in this verse. The plural vocative address suggests that the verse is addressed to the group by either the girl inside or by a member of the group. The girl has been enjoined to sing to the form of Śiva which is half-man and half-woman (8). In this verse it is said that that form is not Śiva's only form and that it is not possible to fully describe Śiva by praise. The verse seems to suggest that Śiva cannot be grasped by praise and that praising and singing about

Śiva is futile for that purpose. It would be inconsistent with the behaviour of the group to suddenly suggest that singing praises of Śiva is futile. The members of the group have been praising Śiva at the start of the poem in the street and during the poem up to this point. They continue to praise Śiva in the remainder of the poem.⁹⁰ Their action suggests that praising Śiva is not a futile activity. In addition, if the last two lines are interpreted as a request for more knowledge rather than as rhetorical questions about Śiva's ineffability it still would be inconsistent with the group's behaviour for them to say these lines. They seem to have a good conceptual grasp of Śiva and his role in human life. A lot of what emerges of the world-view is based on statements made by the group.⁹¹ In addition, the group has praised Śiva with great variety in the poem. They do not seem to be lacking in knowledge regarding how to praise Śiva. Thus it seems inappropriate that they should ask: "How can Śiva be praised?" and therefore it does not seem likely that the group says this verse. It therefore seems likely that the verse is said by the girl. Vanmikanathan also suggests that the verse is said by girl,⁹² however, Navaratnam and Balasubramaniam hold the view that the verse is said by the group.⁹³

XI

moyyār taṭam poykai pukku mukēr ennak
 kaiyār kuṭaintu kuṭaintuṇ kaḷal pāṭi
 aiya vaḷi aṭiyōm vāḷntōṇ kāṇ āṛ aḷalpōr
 ceyyā venṇīrāṭi celvā cirumaruṅkul
 mai ārtataṅkaṇ maṭantaimaṇavāḷā
 aiya nī āṭkoṇṭaruḷum viḷaiyāṭṭiṇ
 uyvārkaḷ uyyum vakai ellām uyntolintōm
 eyyāmar kāppāy emai ēl ōr em pāvāy

Entering the wide tank

swarming with bees,¹

scooping and scooping with [our] hands,

sounding "mukēr",²

singing about the anklet:

Oh Father, see!

That is how we

who have been your devotees

for generations

have lived.³

O Red One

like a full flame!

O Rich One⁴

smeared with sacred white ash!

O Husband of the woman
 with wide blackened eyes
 and a small waist!⁵

O Father!

 We have been saved
 by all of the redemptive ways
 of those who are saved
 by your⁶ sport
 that graces
 taking and ruling.

Without failing in strength,
 You will protect us.⁷

O Our Lady!

Notes

1. moyyār. Vanmikanathan: "hovered over by bumble bees". Pope: "frequented". Both moy and ār have a variety of meanings. Among other things, moy can mean a bee-like creature and a crowd or throng.⁹⁴ ār means: fullness, completeness, or combine with, among other things.⁹⁵ The meanings could then be: 1) "full of bees; or 2) "full (or combined) with a crowd". "Frequented" could be a derived meaning. Bees and beetles, in the classical poetry, are "almost always associated with flowers from which they collect nectar."⁹⁶ Given that

convention and that in the following verses the pond is said to have flowers (12, 13, 15, 17, 18) and bees around the hair of the members of the group (12, 14) it seems appropriate to interpret this as a reference to bees.

2. mukēr - kuṭaintu. Vanmikanathan: "Diving noisely into the wide tank...and churning the water with our hands (as we swim about)". Pope: "...with joyful cries, and hands outstretched, we plunge and plunge". Mukēr is an onomatopoeic word. Grammatically, it can refer to the cries or to the sound made when scooping the water.⁹⁷ Dr. Janaki suggests that it refers to the sound made when scooping the water.⁹⁸ Kuṭaintu is a verbal participle of the root, kuṭai. It can mean to hollow, to bore, and to scoop out water.⁹⁹ It can also mean to bathe in water.¹⁰⁰ Pope takes kuṭaintu as "plunge". This seems to make sense in the context. See verse 1 note 5 for the significance of the repetition of the verbal participle.

3. vali - kāṇ. Vanmikanathan: "...we, your servitors since generations past, have lived...." Pope: "Thy faithful worshippers are blest!" Vālntōm is the first person plural past form of the verb, vāl. It can mean

to "live" or "flourish".¹⁰¹ Vanmikanathan takes the verb as "live" and Pope takes it in the sense of "flourish".

4. celvā. Vanmikanathan: "Oh Treasure". Pope: "Blessed One". Celvan means a "wealthy man" or a "lord".¹⁰² Derivatively it could mean "blessed" or "treasure". Vanmikanathan and Pope also seem to take the word separately from venṇirāṭi. That is possible if ati is taken as a poetic contraction of āṭi (a vocative form).¹⁰³

5. Cirumarunkul means "small waist". In Tamil literature it is common to compare the waist of a woman to lightning. The comparison is used in order to convey the waist's narrowness¹⁰⁴ and nimbleness.¹⁰⁵ In the Tamil context "lithe" would be appropriate.

6. vilaiyāṭṭin uyvārkaḷ. Vanmikanathan: "In Your game...those who would be redeemed...." Pope: "In this our sport, What those who would be saved...." The issue is whether the sport is Śiva's or the group's. Vilaiyāṭṭu is sport or sporting. The particle, -in, is a marker for the ablative or genitive in classical Tamil grammar.¹⁰⁶ If it is a genitive it should refer to either uyvārkaḷ or what uyvārkaḷ modifies, which is the group (uyntolintōm). There are several problems with

taking -in as a genetive marker. Firstly, the phrase ātkontarulum is in an appropriate form and position to modify vilaiyāttu. Secondly, nī is in a position to modify vilaiyāttu also. It is in the nominative form. The nominative form can function in a number of ways, one of which is as a possessive.¹⁰⁷ Thus nī can be taken as "of your". The person referred to in "of your" is the person addressed as "O Father" (Śiva). Thirdly, the phrase, ātkontarulum is used elsewhere only in reference to Śiva. In verses 6 and 20 it is used in reference to his feet (see chapter 5 on the feet). In verse 5, the phrase ātkontaruli is used in reference to Śiva's characteristics. The combination of āl kol and arul is not used any where else in the poem in reference to anyone else, so it seems that in this verse also it refers to Śiva. Fourthly, the concept of Śiva's sport is important.¹⁰⁸ Finally, sport is mentioned in the following verse as being Śiva's and there it is defined. If the particle, -in, is taken as an ablative marker, then the sport can be associated with Siva and all the conditions just mentioned would then be satisfied. One of the uses of the ablative is that it can express the cause of an action.¹⁰⁹ Thus, the saving action is directed from Śiva's sport.

7. eyyāmar - emai. Vanmikanathan: "Do, therefore, save us that we may not get wearied". Pope: "Guard that we weary not!". Eyyāmar is a negative verbal particle of ey, which means "to fail in strength".¹¹⁰ Kāppāy does not seem to be in an imperative nor an optative form.¹¹¹ It appears to have been taken in that way by Vanmikanathan and Pope. Kāppāy is the future second person singular of the root, kā, which means to preserve, shelter and guard.¹¹² Thus the whole phrase could be understood as a general statement. Śiva is the one who guards them and his strength is not diminished by that action.

XII

ārtta piravittuyarkeṭanām ārttātun
 tīrttan narrillai cirrampalattē tī āṭum
 kūttan ivvāṇunkuvalayamum ellōmun
 kāttum paṭaittuṇ karantum vilaiyāṭi
 vārttaiyum pēci vaḷaicilampa vārkalai
 ārpparavañ ceyya aṇikuḷanmēl vaṇṭārppap
 pūttikalum poykai kuṭaintuṭaiyāṇ porpātam
 ētti iruñ cunai nīrāṭēl ōr em pāvāy

Speaking, indeed, words¹ about the sporting,

the preserving, creating and concealing²
 of us, the world, and the heavens
 by the Dancer who dances with fire
 there in good Tillai's sacred hall,³
 of He who is the holy water⁴
 about whom we sing
 while we bathe⁵
 to deteriorate
 the suffering of fated birth;
 scooping in the pond
 resplendent with flowers,
 while bees buzz
 around [our] pretty hair,⁶
 while waistlets⁷
 loudly jangle,
 while bangles
 tinkle;
 praising
 the golden foot
 of He who possesses;⁸
 play
 in the waters
 of the great hill tank!
 O Our Lady!

Notes

1. vārttaiyum pēci. Vanmikanathan: "Speaking words (of praise about Him)". Pope: "Thou say'st the word!"
2. karantu is a verbal participle of kara. It means to conceal, steal, hide and lie hidden.¹¹³ Vanmikanathan: "withdraws". Pope: "enshroud". Karantu, probably, conveys the sense of the third of the three functions, destruction. Concealing "us, the world, and the heavens" makes them non-distinguishable (non-differentiated), which is effectively what the cosmic dissolution does.
3. tī - kūttan. Vanmikanathan: "He is the Dancer Who dances with fire in his hand." Pope: "Dancer..."Midst waving fire!" The relationship between tī (fire) and āttum, (who dances), is not specified exactly. It could be "with" which gives Vanmikanathan's interpretation. Alternatively, it could be "in" which leads to Pope's interpretation. Both renderings are appropriate as they correspond to the iconography of Naṭarāja, the dancer at Tillai. Naṭarāja is pictured as dancing encircled by fire and as holding fire in one of his hands.¹¹⁴ This image of Naṭarāja is associated with Śiva's five cosmic functions (creation, preservation, destruction, concealment and the bestowal of grace).¹¹⁵

A. K. Coomaraswamy describes the Natarāja image at Citamparam and he explains its symbolism based primarily on Śaiva Siddhānta texts.¹¹⁶ "Concealment" in terms of the five cosmic functions is not the same as "concealment" referred to in note 3 above. In note 3, "concealment" is equivalent to "destruction" in the framework of the five cosmic functions. "Concealment", as one of the five cosmic functions in the Śaiva Siddhānta context refers to the spiritual development which occurs through the life process and which prepares one for the fifth cosmic function, the bestowal of grace. In other words, souls are subject to births (the life process) in order that their spiritual impurities may be prepared for removal. Concealment is the designation for this type of spiritual development. Creation, preservation and destruction of the universe are the framework in which the life process occurs. The fifth cosmic function, the bestowal of grace, is what effectively removes the soul's spiritual impurity and leads to liberation. The five cosmic functions of Śiva represent two kinds of grace. The grace of the first four of the five functions (creation, preservation, destruction and concealment) enables the souls to develop spiritually so that their spiritual impurities

become ready for removal. The second kind of grace, which is the bestowal of grace, removes the spiritual impurities.¹¹⁷ Thus, concealment and the bestowal of grace represent two different kinds of spiritual development that individuals undergo. Concealment occurs within the general flow of creation, preservation and destruction. The second type of development, occurs within the context of creation, preservation and destruction but not as part of the general flow of those processes. The bestowal of grace is what enables one to break out of the cycles of rebirth that occur in the framework of Śiva's creation, preservation and destruction of the universe. The five cosmic functions also appear to be in the Śaiva Āgamas as well.¹¹⁸

4. I have understood tīrttan to mean that Śiva is the holy water rather than that he possesses the holy water.¹¹⁹ The equation seems appropriate in light of the simile that follows in verse 13.

5. nām ārttātun. Vanmikanathan: "in which we bathe with ardour". Pope: "where we...acclaiming bathe" Vanmikanathan takes ārttu as "ardour" while Pope interprets it as "acclaiming". Both interpret ātum as "bathe". Ātum has a variety of meanings such as play, dance and bathe.¹²⁰ In the context "bathe" seems most

appropriate. Ārttu as a verbal participle of ār means to shout, roar, vilify, and so on.¹²¹ Pope's "acclaim" is appropriate. The meanings also suggest intensity from which "ardour" can be derived. In addition the root, ārttu means: to become full (etc.)¹²² for which "ardour" would be an appropriate expression. "Sing" has been used in the translation here. That would be a derived meaning of "shout" based on the context (they have been singing).

6. Ani can mean, as a verb, to be beautiful, to be an ornament, to adorn or to be a decoration;, or as a noun, a decoration, an ornament or beauty.¹²³ Vanmikanathan: "jewelled". Pope: "adorned". It would seem that, given the convention of bees and flowers (see verse 11 note 1) that the hair is adorned with flowers. Also in verse 14 it is said that their hair has flowers.

7. vārkalaikal. Vanmikanathan: "jewels". Pope: "jewels". Vār is a girdle, band or leatherband.¹²⁴ Kalai has been specifically defined as "a woman's exterior girdle consisting of 7 strings of jewels", among other things.¹²⁵ It has been translated here as "waistlets".

coming to wash off
 their blemishes²
 springing, springing to enter
 the swelling pond
 resembling our King and Lady
 together
 our bangles jangle and anklets tinkle
 filled with happiness
 our breasts rise
 fomenting the stirred waters³
 leaping into the waters³
 with lotus flowers,
 play!
 O Our Lady!

Notes

1. Line 2 of the text (rendered as "with flocks of birds, with woven sounds) could also be translated as follows: "With a collection of bracelets on her arms, with entwined snakes". The Lady is suggested by the bracelets. The King is evoked by entwined snakes. Various depictions of Śiva show snakes entwined on his body.¹²⁶ The words in this line have double meanings. For a further discussion of the comparison of the pond with Śiva and Śakti see chapter 4. Vanmikanathan: "by

the fresh blue lotus's dark flowers, by the blossoms of the fresh red lotus, by the families of beautiful (water) birds, by the snakes besides...." Pai can mean fresh as well as beautiful.¹²⁷ There is an issue whether kuvalai is a lotus or a waterlily.¹²⁸ Pope: "There burn the dark crimson flowers of kuvalai, here the red lotus blooms; there the bright race of small birds utters songs;" It is unclear to me how Pope arrives at "there burn", "crimson" and "here". In the context of dawn, pōtu (buds ready to bloom) could be rendered as "blooms".. Also, given the flock of birds, it is contextually possible to take pinnum aravam as "utters songs". That is, since the birds are present "woven sounds" can be understood to refer to the songs of the birds.

2. Malam can mean any kind of impurity, physical or spiritual.¹²⁹ Malam is a technical term in Śaiva Siddhānta. It refers to the impurities of the soul. They are ānava, karma and māyā.¹³⁰ It also appears to be used in the Śaiva Āgamas.¹³¹ Vanmikanathan: "malam (dirt)". Pope: "sin".

3. Punal can mean water, flood and river.¹³² The term recurs in verse 14 (line 3), 15, 17, and 18 (line 8). Pope translates it as "flood". (14, 15, 17) and "stream"

(18). Vanmikanathan translates it as water (13, 14, 15, 17, 18) and pool (13 line 7).

XIV

kātār kulai āṭap paim pūṇ kalan āṭak
 kōṭaikulal āṭa vaṇṭinkulām āṭac
 cītappunal āṭic cirrampalam pāṭi
 vētap porulpāṭi apporūl ām āpāṭic
 cōti tiram pāṭic cūlkonrait tārpāṭi
 āti tiram pāṭi antam ām āpāṭip
 pētittu nammai vaṭarttetutta peyvalaitan
 pātattiram pāṭi āṭēl ōr em pāvāy

While

pretty earrings wave,
 beautiful adorning ornaments sway,¹
 flower-adorned locks wave
 swarms of bees sway,
 moving² the cool waters
 singing of the sacred hall³
 singing of the substance of the Vedas,
 singing of the essence of
 that substance,⁴
 singing about the nature^{5a} of the Effulgence

singing about the wreath of konrai flowers
singing of the nature^{5b} of the beginning,⁶

singing the way which is the end,⁷
singing of the nature^{5c} of the foot⁸

of the bangle-wearer, herself,

who separates and

fosters

us,⁹

play!⁹

O Our Lady!

Notes

1. paimpūṅkalan. Vanmikanathan: "pure gold ornaments". Pope: "golden jewels". Gold does not seem to be a meaning for any of these three words.¹³³

2. cītapṇunālāṭi. Vanmikanathan: "bathing in the cool water". Pope: "Bathe in the cool flood". In describing the action up to this point in the verse the same verb (āṭu) is used. In the first two lines (the first four descriptions) the verb is in the infinitive, in this last description it is a verbal participle. Since the phrase follows the description of the motion of the earrings, ornaments, hair, and bees, and uses the

same verb, it has been rendered as "moving" rather than "bathe" or "play."

3. cirrampalam. See verse 2 note 9. Vanmikanathan: "the dance hall (in Thillai)". Pope: "sacred court". There is no explicit reference to Nataraja or Tillai in this verse. However, the reference to the dance in verse 12 (see verse 12, note 3) and the reference to Tillai's cirrampalam in verse 2, make Vanmikanathan's clarification appropriate.

4. vēta - pāti. Vanmikanathan: "singing of the Vedaa's Content, singing how the Content He becomes". Pope: "sing the mystic Vedas, sing their inner sense". See verse 4 note 3 for the meaning of porul. Ā is a poetic contraction of āru. It can mean road, way, path, manner and method.¹³⁴ Literally, the phrase, apporulāmāpātic is: "Sing the means which is that substance". The phrase "the means which is" is taken by Pope as "inner sense" and in the translation here as "essence".

5. Tiram appears in three places. It is a rich word. Its meanings when taken together give a depth of meaning to the word not conveyed by only one of the English terms. The following is a list of meanings which are

relevant in the context: quality, state, nature, means, method, strength, power, goodness, and excellence.¹³⁵

Vanmikanathan: 5a-"glory"; 5b-"manner", 5c-"qualities".

Pope: 5a-"glory"; 5b-"power"; 5c-"glory".

6. āti. Vanmikanathan: "the source of all things".

Pope: "the First".

7. antam - pāti. Vanmikanathan: "singing of how he becomes the end to:". Pope: "sing Him the Last".

8. pātattiram. Vanmikanathan: "qualities of the feet". Pope: "glory of Her Foot".

9. pētittu - valarttetutta. Vanmikanathan:

"separating us (from the common herd), cherished and brought us up". Pope: "Whose guardian care we own".

Pope appears to omit the notion of separation, unless he intends that it be implied in "guardian". However, the verse makes the notion explicit. From what the group is separated is not explicitly stated. It could be "from the common herd" as Vanmikanathan suggests. Perhaps it could also be from malam as verse 13 (in conjunction with verse 16 where Śakti is said to be not separated from Śiva) suggests.

10. Pope omits ātu in his rendering of the last line of the verse.

XV

ōrorukāl emperumān enrenrē namperumān
 cīr orukāl vāy ōvāl cittāṅkalikūra
 nīr orukāl ōvā neṭuntārai kaṇ paṇippap
 pār orukāl vantaṇaiyāl viṇṇōrait tān paṇiyāl
 pēr araiyarṅkiṇṇānē pittoruvar ām ārum
 ār oruvar ivvaṇṇam āṭkollum vittakartāl
 vāruruvappūṇmulaiyīr vāy āra nām pāṭi
 ēruruvappūṇpunal pāyntāṭēl ōr em pāvāy

She would speak unceasingly

sometimes

about the glories of our Lord

sometimes

repeatedly crying: "Our Lord".¹

She,

sometimes

would be on the ground

eyes wet with long streams [of tears];

sometimes

due to the happiness in [her] heart

the water would not stop;
 would not show respect to the gods, themselves.²
 [The] manner is of such a person
 who is maddened
 in this way
 for the great King.³

Who is such a person?

Let us,

singing with a full mouth

O Ones whose breasts are adorned
 with an embossed band!

of the foot of the Knowing One

who takes and rules
 in this way!⁴

leaping into the waters with beautiful flowers,
 play!

O Our Lady!

Notes

This is a difficult verse. The basis for the divisions here is the notion that the finite verb forms in this verse indicate the termination of a sentence and that non-finite forms indicate sub-phrases of the sentences.

1. ōrorukāl - ōvāl. ōvāl is a finite negative form of the root, ōvu. The sentence has two sub-phrases. They are signalled by ōrorukāl and orukāl, and by the use of em and nam. The two orukāls divide how she used to speak into two categories. The first category is that she used to call "our Lord", repeatedly. The repetitive action is indicated by the appearance of enru twice. The other category is that she would speak about the glories of Śiva. Em is the form of the possessive which excludes the person addressed. It forms part of the quotative. That is appropriate because if her cries are addressed to Śiva (perumān) then it would be inappropriate to include him in the address by using the inclusive form nam. The use of nam here suggests that the phrase nam perumān does not fall within the quote, but that it is spoken by someone (or some people) to another one (or others) where it is appropriate to include the person addressed.¹³⁶ (See Appendix A verse 15). Vanmikanathan: "Now and then crying: 'Our Lord! Our Lord!' she will never cease speaking about the glories of our Lord." Pope: "Once on a time 'our Peruman', full oft cried she." Pope seems to take enrenrē as an indication of repetition and at the same time one of them functions finitely in order that a full

sentence can terminate at this point. The reference to "glories" is taken with the next section by Pope.

2. cittan - paniyāl. This section can be divided into two parts: cittan - anaiyāl and vinñōrai - paniyāl. If the two sections are taken as part of one sentence, the finite verb is paniyāl. The two main sub-parts of the sentence are indicated by the infinite forms vantu and ōvā (if ōvā is taken as a negative verbal participle) and the two orukāls. The infinitive (panippa) governed by vantu indicates simultaneity of action.¹³⁷ That is while she is "being on the ground" her eyes are wet with long streams. The infinitive governed by ōvā indicates a causal relationship.¹³⁸ That is, due to the happiness (kūra) in her heart, the water (tears) does not stop (ōvā). The two orukāls in this sentence are each preceded by one of the verbal particles (orukālōvā, orukālvantu). This suggests a kind of symmetry in the sentence.

The sentence can either end with anaiyāl (if it is taken as the symbolic verb meaning resemble) or with paniyāl (if anai is taken as a substantive meaning "such a one").¹³⁹ Anaiyāl has been rendered as "She" in the translation here.

Lines 1 through 4 are taken as being in the past tense, even though the negative verbal forms do not indicate tense explicitly.¹⁴⁰ The "sometimes" indicates the recurrent action and at least all but the current action must be in the past.

Vanmikanathan: "With her mind brimming with joy, and her eyes wet with an unceasing long stream of tears, she resembles Her Who comes down to earth from time to time". It is possible to render pār - vantu as "coming to earth from time to time". The relationship between vantu and pār is not specified explicitly. He also takes anaiyāl as the finite form of the symbolic verb meaning "to resemble". The sense of the rest of Vanmikanathan's translation of this verse basically corresponds to the translation given here.

Pope: "His glory any time to speak she ceased not With gladsome mind, while tears in ceaseless stream flowed forth." Pope appears to take the infinite forms (kūra and panippa) that follow the finite form (ōvāl) as part of the sentence terminated by ōvāl. The result is that the modifying phrases (of which kūra and panippa are a part) follow what they modify. This goes against Tamil syntax in two ways. The first is that a finite verb terminates a sentence while any infinite forms included in the sentence precede that finite form.

Secondly, modifiers generally precede what they modify.¹⁴¹ However, as Arden indicates: "conditions of meter and emphasis in poetical Tamil often justify the neglect of these rules in verse."¹⁴²

3. pēr - ārum. Pope: "Once upon a time, this woman came to earth, nor bowed Before the heavenly ones,--by the great King with frenzy filled." Pope seems to have taken orukāl - paniyāl with pēr - ārum. The finite verb, paniyāl, appears in the midst of his sentence, unless he takes pēr - ārum as a separate sentence in Tamil but when rendering them into English combines them into one sentence in order to facilitate expressing the meaning in English.

4. ār - pāti. Pope: "Who like to her? Of this mysterious One, O lovely damsels, sing the Foot...." The issue here, is does ār oruvar refer to pittoruvar or to vittakar. All three of these are in the same plural form which is also the honorific singular. A clue to resolving this problem lies in the modifier of vittakar, ivvanṇam āṭkollum. In the other uses of āṭkol (with the exception of its use in verse 3) it describes Śiva in some way. (See the discussion in chapter 5). It would seem that vittakar is a reference to Śiva.¹⁴³ It is clear from the poem so far that King also refers to

Śiva.¹⁴⁴ Since King refers to Śiva, then pittoruvar and vittakar cannot refer to the same person. That is if the pittoruvar is filled with madness for the King (or by the King in Pope's rendering) it does not make sense to say that he is filled with madness by or for himself. Pope, however, equates pittoruvar and vittakar in his phrases: "Who like to her? Of this mysterious one...." He also seems to omit ivvaṇṇamātkollum and vāy āra.

"Lovely damsels" is an interpretive translation of vār - mulaivīr.

xvi¹

munnikkata₁alaic curukki eluntutaiyāl
 ennat tika₁ntemmai ālu₁taiyāl it₁t₁taiyin
 minnip polintempirā₁t₁ti tiru a₁timēr
 poṇ aṇcilampir cilampit tiruppuruvam
 ennac cilaikulavi nantammai ālu₁taiyāl
 tannir pirivilā eṇkōmān anparkku
 munni avanamakkumun curakkum in arulē
 ennap poliyāy malai ēl ōr em pāvāy

Advancing

compressing the sea²

arising

being visible
 like she who possesses³
 appearing
 flashing
 like the small waist of she
 who possesses and rules us;⁴
 sounding
 like the beautiful gold anklets
 on the holy feet of our Lady;⁵
 bending a bow
 like the holy brows;⁶
 like the sweet grace of her
 having advanced
 that flows first
 for the devotees of the King
 who is inseparable
 from Her who
 possesses us,
 for us also;
 Pour [your rain]
 O Cloud!⁷
 O Our Lady!

Notes

1. The verse is a comparison between a cloud and Śakti. This is known from the various points of comparison throughout the verse and the vocative "O Cloud" that occurs just before the final refrain. The whole verse is linked together by a series of verbal participles with the finite verb pōliyāy (pour) occurring in the last line. Vanmikanathan brings the subject of the comparison to the foreground by putting the vocative "O Cloud" at the beginning of his translation. He also incorporates the sense of the imperative in the linking verbal participles ("come forward and shrink", "rise up", "break out"). Pope attributes a past sense to the verbal participles leading up to the imperative ("didst glisten", "didst bend", "didst...diminish", "didst...sound"). He probably derives the past sense from munnikkatalai where munn means before, and the "i" is associated with katalai making it "this sea". The version cited here has munnikkatalai. Munni is a verbal participle of munnu rendered here as "advancing".

2. Curukki is a verbal participle of curukku.

Vanmikanathan: "shrink". Pope: "diminish". The verb has meanings like to curtail, reduce, lessen, compress,

furl, closed and epitomize. As a noun it means contraction, reduction, wrinkle, fold and crease.¹⁴⁵

3. utaiyāl - tikalntu. Vanmikanathan: "parading in the hue of Her Who owns us". Pope: "rising like the Queen". Utaiyāl is a feminine form which means one who possesses, a owner.¹⁴⁶ Enna is a particle of comparison. Tikalntu is a verbal participle of tikal. It can mean glimmer, appearance, visibility and brilliancy.¹⁴⁷ The "us" is supplied. There is no object of utaiyāl given in this phrase. It is given in subsequent lines as "us". "Hue" is not given either. It is, however, what is being compared in this section. "Parading" gives the sense of visibility. Pope takes tikalntu with the following point of comparison. Pope's division leads to the first point of comparison being "arising". Following the grammatical rules for comparisons outlined by Arden, it seems that the point of comparison should be "being visible".¹⁴⁸ Pope renders utaiyāl as Queen.

4. emmai - polintu. Vanmikanathan: "break out in lightning flashes like the slender waist of Her Who has sway over us." Pope: "didst glisten like Her slender waist Who rules my soul" (tikalntu - minni). Polintu is the verbal participle of poli. It can mean enlarge, extend, appear, grow full, bloom and shine.¹⁴⁹ It is

rendered "break out" by Vanmikanathan, and "appearing" here. In the divisions followed by Vanmikanathan and those followed in the translation here, there are two verbal participles minni and polintu. Both have been understood to apply to the cloud. Pope seems to take the two verbal participles to be tikalntu and minni, ascribing one to the cloud and one to Śakti. The point of comparison is the "flashing". Pope also takes emmai which is the exclusive first person plural pronoun as "my soul". The comparison of lightning to the small waist is a reversal of the usual comparison of a waist to lightning. See verse 11, note 5.

5. em - cilampi. Vanmikanathan: "Reverbrate like the golden cilambu on the holy feet of our Mistress". Pope: "Didst like the golden anklets sound that on Her sacred foot in beauty gleam". Pope applies polintu (see note 4) to the golden feet. From this point on, Pope's divisions correspond to those of Vanmikanathan and those here. Pope translates pirāṭṭi as "Her". Vanmikanathan translates it as "Mistress".

6. tiruppuruvam - kulavi. Vanmikanathan: "display a bow like her eyebrows". Pope: "didst bend like to Her sacred brow". Two of the meanings relevant for kulavu (kulavi is the verbal participle of kulavu) are: to be

conspicuous (shine, glitter) and to bend.¹⁵⁰ Pope and the rendering here use "bend" and Vanmikanathan uses "display".

7. nantammai - malai. Vanmikanathan: "and, like the very grace which She Who lords over us pours on the devotees of our King Who is never disjunct from Her pour as rain." Pope: "As she, mindful of those who love our King, who like herself, our Mistress, never quit His side; Mindful of us too, as our Queen, pours forth sweet grace, even so pour down, O cloud!" Vanmikanathan seems to omit in (sweet), munni (having advance or having considered) and namakku (for us). He supplies "as rain" but this is implied. Pope takes munni as "mindful". He translated nantammai ālutaivāḷ as Our Mistress. He omits em (our) in en̄kōmān̄. He supplies "as our Queen" for aval.

XVII

ceṅkaṇ avan pāṛ ricaimukanpār rēvarkaḷpāl
 eṅkum ilātatōrinpanampālatāk
 koṅkunkaruṅkulalinantammaikkōtāṭṭi
 iṅkunammillaṅkatōrum eluntaruliḷ
 ceṅkamalap porpātantantarulun cēvakaṇai

aṅkaṇ aracai aṭiyōṅkaṭkār amutai
 naṅkaḷ perumāṇaip pāṭi nalan̄tikalaḷap
 paṅkayap pūm puṇal pāyṇtāṭēl ōr em pāvāy

With the Red-Eyed One,¹
 with the Four-Faced-One,²
 with the gods,

that one delight

is not anywhere;

it is with us

O One with the Fragrant Black Locks!³

when [He]

removes our blemishes

and rises, graciously,

in each of our homes

bestows the red-lotus golden foot.⁴

About that guardian⁵ who thereby graces,

about the King with beautiful eyes,

about the best Ambrosia for we who are devotees,

about our Lord,

singing

so that well-being will flourish,⁶

springing into the waters

beautiful with lotus flowers;

play!

O Our Lady!

Notes

1. ceṇkanavan. Vanmikanathan: "Viṣṇu". Pope: "red-eye one". Pope indicates that the red-eyed one is Viṣṇu in his note.¹⁵¹
2. ticaimukan. Vanmikanathan: "Brahmaa". Pope: "He Whose face turns to each point". Pope indicates in his note that this is a reference to Brahmā.¹⁵² Literally the phrase means "direction-faced". Visvanatha Pillai gives the following meaning for the word: "He whose four faces are turned towards the four points."¹⁵³
3. koṅkunkaruṅkulali. Vanmikanathan: "O damsel of fragrance-impregnated dark tresses!". Pope: "Thou of the fragrant locks didst make our beings pure; and here in grace didst rise in every home of ours". Pope attributes nantammai - aruli to koṅkunkaruṅkulali. The phrase koṅkun - kulali is a second person address. He omits karum, black. In order to make the division that he does, Pope must be taking aruli as a second person singular form of the verb. Pope attributes the removal of blemishes, a divine act, to the one with black fragrant hair. He is then understanding her to be Śakti. However, those whose blemishes are removed

includes the person addressed, the Black Fragrant Haired One (see Appendix A, verse 17). It seems inappropriate that Śakti would have blemishes that need removing.

Aruli can be taken as a verbal participle of arul, to grace. The phrase nantammai - aruli can be understood to form part of the adjectival phrase modifying cēvakanai. The adjectival phrase, then, has three components: nantammai - ātti; iṅku - eluntaruli; and ceṅkamala - arulum.

4. ceṅkamalapporpātam. The red-lotus smells sweet and is tender.¹⁵⁴

5. cēvakanai. Vanmikanathan: "Knight". Pope: "Warrior".

6. nalantikala. Vanmikanathan: "that prosperity may flourish in us". Pope: "His gift".

XVIII

anṇāmalaiyāṇ atikkamalañcenṇiraiñcum
 vinṇōr muṭiyiṇ maṇit tokaivīrarrārpōl
 kaṇṇār iravikatir vantū kārkarappat
 taṇṇār oḷimaluṅkit tārakaikaṭām akalap
 penṇāki āṇāy aliyāyp pirāṅkolicēr

viṇṇāki maṇṇāki ittaṇaiyum vēṛākik
 kaṇṇār amutamumāy ninrān kalal pātip
 peṇṇē ippūmpuṇal pāyntātēl ōr em pāvāy

Like the foot-lotus of Him in Anṇāmalai¹

before which

gods go, bowing,

the diamonds on their crowns

lose their lustre;

the sun's rays²

having come

pervade the space

conceal the darkness and

dull the cool light

of the yielding stars.³

He remained

becoming female, male and neuter,⁴

becoming the sky flourishing with light,

becoming the earth,

becoming differentiated [into] so much;⁵

and [in addition]

becoming space-filling Ambrosia;⁶

singing of His anklet,⁷

O Girl!

leaping into the flower-filled waters

play!

O Our Lady!

Notes

1. annāmalaiyān atikkamalam. Vanmikanathan: "the lotus feet of Him abiding in Annaamalai". Pope: "Annāmalai His form, His lotus foot...."
2. kannār - katir. Vanmikanathan: "the eye-dazzling sun's rays coming up". Pope: "bright-eyed sun" Kan can mean eye, aperture, orifice, place and site.¹⁵⁵ Ar means fullness. Kannār can be rendered "filling the eye" or "filling the place". Iravi means sun. Katir means ray of light, beam, sun.¹⁵⁶
3. Kannār - akala. Vanmikanathan: "on the eye-dazzling sun's rays coming up and dispelling the darkness, the stars, their cool sharp brilliance becoming dulled, have faded away." Pope: "So when the bright-eyed sun the darkness drives away, the cool moon's rays are paled, the stars themselves depart." Pope takes oli as moon, and Vanmikanathan takes it as brilliance. Oli can mean moon or brilliance.¹⁵⁷
4. aliyāy. Vanmikanathan: "neuter". Pope: "Neither - one".

5. ittanaiyum vērākik. Vanmikanathan: "something apart from all these" Pope: "was all the rest." Vēru has meanings like other, that which is different, that which is separated, and so on.¹⁵⁸ Āki is a verbal particle of āku which means "to become". Pope and Vanmikanathan seem to take the phrase as one more of the things already listed. It has been understood here as encompassing those five things and anything omitted from the list. The notion of "becoming other" vērāki, can be understood in contrast to "not becoming other" (being undifferentiated).¹⁵⁹

6. kannār amutamumāy. Vanmikanathan: "and eye-satisfying ambrosia as well". Pope: "Ambrosia manifest". Pope omits kannār in kannār amutamumāy. See note 2 for a discussion of kannār.

7. kalal. Vanmikanathan: "anklet-girt feet"; Pope: "jewell'd foot". Kalal is a singular form which means anklet. "Feet" and "foot" are supplied although they are implied. See verse 2, note 12 regarding the singular and plural.

XIX

uñkaiyīr pillai unakkē aṭaikkalam enr
 aṅkap palañcorputukkum em maccattāl
 eñkaḷ perumān unakkonruraippōṇ kēḷ
 eñkonkai ninṇanpar allārtōḷ cērarka
 eñkai unakkallā teppaṇiyuñ ceyyarka
 kaṅkul pakaleṅkaṇ marronrunkāṇarka
 iṅkip paricē emakkeñkōṇalkutiyēḷ
 enkelil eññāyiremakkel ōr em pāvāy

"The youth is in your hands.

She is [given] in trust to you only."¹

Because of our fear

which is renewed by that old saying;

we will say one thing to you our Lord.²

Listen!

Let not our breasts join the shoulders of

those who are not your devotees.

Let not our hands do any service which is

not for you.

Let not our eyes see anything else

night and day.³

If you grant, our King, to us this status, here

what does it matter to us

where the sun rises?⁴

O Our Lady!

Notes

1. uñkaiyir - kalam. Vanmikanathan: "The child in your arms is Your own protege". Pope: "The children of Thy hand are we; our Refuge Thou". Pope supplies "are we" and "our". Vanmikanathan interprets ataikkalam as protege. Kalam means "vessel".¹⁶⁰ Atai means delivering, conveying, resort or refuge.¹⁶¹ The phrase is said at the time of marriage to the groom's parents by the bride's parents during the ceremony.¹⁶² "She" has been substituted for "vessel", in the translation here.

2. añka - uraippōm. Vanmikanathan: "In our fear, we say afresh that (well known) adage...Our great Lord, we will tell You something". Pope: "thus that old word we say anew; in this our dread Our Lord, to thee one prayer we make". The word which is taken as "anew" or "afresh" by Pope and Vanmikanathan is putukkum. They appear to have understood putukkum to modify how the group says the old saying. Putukkum is a future relative participle of putukku which means to renew. Putukkum positionally modifies em maccattāl (because of our fear). Putukkum is in turn modified by appalañ col, (an

old saying). The sense conveyed by this interpretation of the phrase is that the group's fear (em maccam) is renewed (putukkum) by the old saying (appalañ col) which is the marriage vow (uñkaiyir - enru). Putukkum (renewed) does not seem to modify enru (the quote directly) or uraippōm (we will say). If putukkum did modify enru or uraippōm, then it would be modifying how the group says the vow. That is, they say the vow again. As the saying is a pledge that the bride's parents make it seems inappropriate that the group would make it rather than just quote it in order to indicate that it is the old saying which causes their fear to be renewed.

3. kañkul - arka. Vanmikanathan supplies "but You" and Pope supplies "but Thee". Those additions are implied by the context.

4. iñku - emakku. Vanmikanathan: "If, here and now, this boon You would grant us, what does it matter to us where the sun rises?" Pope: "Our King, if here this boon Thou grant, to us the sun in perfect beauty shines!" Vanmikanathan omits eñkōṇ which means our king. Ipparicu has been translated by Pope and Vanmikanathan as "this boon". I have followed Dr. Radhakrishnan's suggestion and translated it as

"this status".¹⁶³ The request is basically for a marriage in which the members of the group will be allowed to continue to worship Śiva to the degree that they do now. After marriage, the girl is generally expected to conform to the practices of the husband's family. That conformation may have the effect that their religious beliefs and practices must also conform.¹⁶⁴ The "old adage" is a recollection of the ceremonial process when this change occurs in the girl's life. The word "status" suggests an on-going state. It is hoped that it conveys the desire of the girl to obtain a life-long status that does not compromise their beliefs. The phrase eṅkelil - emakku has been translated by Vanmikanathan as "what does it matter to us where the sun rises?" and by Pope as "to us the sun in perfect beauty shines!". Elil can mean "beauty" or it can be the conditional form of elu which means to rise. Using "beauty" it is possible to derive Pope's meaning. Using the verb "to rise", Vanmikanathan's meaning emerges. Pope adds the nuance of "perfect". He also adds "shine", although this is to be expected. In Vanmikanathan's and the translation here, "does it matter" is supplied, as with Pope's "shine" it is implied in the context.

XX

pōrri aruluka ninnātiyām pātamar
 pōrri aruluka nin nantamāñcentalirkal
 pōrri ellā uyirkkuntōrram ām porpātam
 pōrri ellā uyirkkum pōkam ām pūñkalalkal
 pōrri ellā uyirkkum īrām inai atikal
 pōrri mānānmukanūñkāñātapuñtarikam
 pōrri yām uyya ātkoñtarulūm ponmalarkal
 pōrri yāmārkalinirātēl ōr em pāvāy

Praise be to you!

Let us be graced with your foot-flower
 which is the beginning.¹

Praise be to you!

Let us be graced with your red sprouts²
 which are the end.

Praise be to you!

[Your] golden foot is the basis to all life.³

Praise be to You!

[Your] flowery anklets⁴ are happiness⁵
 to all that lives.

Praise be to You!

[Your] two feet are the end to all life.⁶

Praise be to You!

[Whose] white lotus⁷ was not seen, indeed,
by Māl or the Four-Faced-One.⁸

Praise be to You!

[Whose] golden flowers that grace,
taking and ruling,⁹
redeem us.

Praise be to You!

Let us play in the water [during] Mārkaḷi.¹⁰
O Our Lady!

Notes

1. pōrri - pātamalar. Vanmikanathan: "Obeisance to You! graciously bestow on us Your feet-blossom--- the beginning (of all things):". Pope: "Be gracious Thou! to the foot's flower be praise!" Pope renders pōrri as "be praise". It is the foot's flower that is to be praise. Pōrri appears in each of the 8 lines in the verse. Most of those lines have references to the feet or foot in some manner. Each time Pope indicates that it is the reference to the feet that is to be praised. In the final line he associates the praise with the bathing activity, and thereby takes it as a verbal participle. Aruluka is rendered by Pope as "be gracious". He isolates this phrase from the others on the line. Aruluka appears only in the first two lines

of the verse. Vanmikanathan renders pōrri as "Obeisance to You". In the first two lines and the eighth he isolates it from the rest of the words and attributes it to the references to the feet or foot. Aruluka is translated as "graciously bestow on us" by Vanmikanathan. The feet or foot is what is to be bestowed. In each case in the translation here pōrri has been rendered as "Praise be to You!".¹⁶⁵

2. centalirkal. Vanmikanathan: "pink leaf shoots". Pope: "Thy rosy beauteous feet". The meaning for talir as a noun are sprout, tender shoot, or bud.¹⁶⁶ "Beauteous feet", then, is an interpretation for talirkal.

3. uyirkkum-porpātam. Vanmikanathan: "Obeisance to the golden feet--(source of) manifestation to all beings!" Pope: "The golden feet, the source of all that live". Torram can mean appearance, splendour, origin, birth creation, among other things.¹⁶⁷ pātam means foot. It is in the singular form. See also verse 2, note 12.

4. pūṅkalalkal. Vanmikanathan: "flowery feet". Pope: "flow'ry feet". Kalal means "anklet". It is in the plural.

5. pōkam. Vanmikanathan: "savour". Pope: "bliss".
6. ellā uyirkkum īru. Vanmikanathan: "the end to all beings". Pope: "Goal and End of every life". "Goal and" is added by Pope, although it may be implied in the context of the whole poem. See chapter 5 for a discussion of the two feet as the end.
7. puntarikam. Vanmikanathan: "lotus (feet)". Pope: "lotus-flower". Puntarikam is equivalent to puntarīkam.¹⁶⁸ Puntarīkam among other things, is a "white lotus" or just "lotus".¹⁶⁹ It is also in the singular.
8. Māl is Viṣṇu. See verse 5, note 1. The Four-Faced-One is Brahmā. See verse 5, note 2.
9. yām - arulum. Vanmikanathan: "which enslave us that we may be redeemed". Pope: "that saving made us His".
10. yām - ātu. Vanmikanathan: "We will now have our Maarghazhi bath, O Paavaai!". Pope: "In Mārgaṛi-month we bathing praise!" ātu is the single imperative that has appeared just before the refrain in verses 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 17, 18, and 20. The yām seems to make the ātu plural in this use. yām is also the exclusive

pronomial form. See Appendix A, verse 20.

Vanmikanathan brings in pāvai here. He omitted them previously (with explanation).

Notes to Chapter Two

- ¹Discussion with Dr. R. Radhakrishnan, Professor of Linguistics, University of Calgary, 17 October, 1986.
- ²G. Vanmikanathan, Pathway to God Through Tamil Literature: I - Through the Thiruvaachakam (New Delhi: The Delhi Tamil Sangam, 1971). Vanmikanathan's translation of "Tiruvempāvai" is found on pages 229-239. The references to his translation in the discussion will be made by referring to his name. References to other parts of his book will include page numbers.
- ³G.U. Pope, trans., introd., notes, prefix, The Tiruvācaṇam or "Sacred Utterances" of the Tamil Poet, Saint, and Sage Mānikka-Vācaṇar (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1900). Pope's translation of "Tiruvempāvai" is found on pages 104-116. All references to his translation will be by reference to his name. Any other references to his book will include page numbers.
- ⁴Discussions with Dr. S.S. Janaki, Director of The Kuppaswami Sastri Research Institute, Madras, India (at the University of Calgary), 13 March, 1987.
- ⁵Discussions with Dr. Janaki, 11 March, 1987.
- ⁶D. Nadarajah, "The Tamil Ideals of Female Beauty," Proc. of The Second International Conference Seminar of Tamil Studies, Jan. 1968, (Madras: The International Association of Tamil Research, 1971, Vol. II), p. 35.
- ⁷See chapter 4 for a discussion of akam poetry.
- ⁸Discussions with Dr. Radhakrishnan, 29 October 1986.
- ⁹M. Andronov, A Standard Grammar of Modern and Classical Tamil Foreward S.K. Chatterji and T.P. Meenakshisundaran, USSR Academy of Sciences Institute of Oriental Studies (Madras: New Century Book House Pvt. Ltd., 1969), p. 183.
- ¹⁰Discussions with Dr. Radhakrishnan, 29 October, 1986.
- ¹¹Discussions with Dr. Radhakrishnan, 29 October, 1986.
- ¹²Discussions with Dr. Radhakrishnan, 29 October, 1986.

- ¹³Lifco Tamil-Tamil-English Dictionary, (1966; rpt. Madras: The Little Flower Co., 1968).
- ¹⁴Vanmikanathan, pp. 225-6.
- ¹⁵Pope. See the end of each verse, and n. 4, p. 104.
- ¹⁶Discussions with Dr. Radhakrishnan, 7 January, 1987.
- ¹⁷V. Visvanatha Pillai, A Tamil-English Dictionary, 9th ed. (Madras: The Madras School Book and Literature Society, 1984).
- ¹⁸Visvanatha Pillai.
- ¹⁹See verse 1, note 10 regarding Vanmikanathan's view on who says the refrain.
- ²⁰Discussions with Dr. Janaki, 13 March, 1987. She translated from Irāmanāta Pillai's commentary. See also chapter 1, n. 29.
- ²¹Discussions with Dr. Radhakrishnan, fall, 1986. A.H. Arden, A Progressive Grammar of the Tamil Language, Revised by A.C. Clayton, 5th ed. (1942; rpt. Madras: The Christian Literature Society, 1969), p. 266.
- ²²Discussions with Dr. Radhakrishnan, fall, 1986.
- ²³Discussions with Dr. Janaki, 24 March, 1987.
- ²⁴For the various uses of the marker "ō", see Andronov, p. 255.
- ²⁵Discussions with Dr. Radhakrishnan, 9 January, 1987.
- ²⁶Andronov, p. 255.
- ²⁷See T. Burrow and M.B. Emeneau, A Dravidian Etymological Dictionary, 2nd ed. (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1984), no. 1594 for cirru and no. 173 for ampalam.
- ²⁸Discussions with Dr. Janaki, 11 March, 1987.
- ²⁹Discussions with Dr. Radhakrishnan, fall, 1986.
- ³⁰Prin. Vaman Shivaram Apte, The Practical Sanskrit-English Dictionary, (Poona, 1957; rpt. Kyoto: Rinsen Book Co., 1978).

- 31 Andronov, p. 81.
- 32 Discussions with Dr. Radhakrishnan, 19 June, 1987.
- 33 Andronov, p. 126; Arden, p. 108, no. 189.
- 34 Discussions with Dr. Radhakrishnan, 3 June, 1987.
- 35 Visvanatha Pillai; Burrow, n. 4053.
- 36 Burrow, no. 3278.
- 37 Discussions with Dr. Radhakrishnan, fall, 1986.
- 38 Visvanatha Pillai.
- 39 Discussions with Dr. Janaki, 13 March, 1987.
- 40 Janert, Klaus Ludwig, ed., Miron Winslow Tamil-English Dictionary, (Madras, 1862; rpt. Wiesbaden: Steiner, 1977).
- 41 Janert; Lifco.
- 42 Janert; Lifco.
- 43 Discussions with Dr. Radhakrishnan, 22 December, 1986.
- 44 Nadarajah, p. 34.
- 45 Kamil Zvelebil, The Smile of Murugan: On Tamil Literature of South India (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1973), p. 173.
- 46 Burrow, no. 5352. Visvanatha Pillai.
- 47 Visvanatha Pillai; Vanmikanathan uses Viṣṇu in his translation rather than Māl.
- 48 Visvanatha Pillai; Vanmikanathan uses Brahmā in his translation.
- 49 Discussions with Dr. Radhakrishnan, 6 January, 1987.
- 50 For the use of -um see Andronov, p. 249-51.
- 51 Burrow, no. 907.
- 52 Janert.

- 53 Burrow, no. 3656.
- 54 Discussions with Dr. Radhakrishnan, 7 January, 1987.
- 55 Discussions with Dr. Radhakrishnan, 7 January, 1987.
- 56 Discussions with Dr. Radhakrishnan, 8 January, 1987.
- 57 A.K. Ramanujan, selected and trans., Poems of Love and War from the Eight Anthologies and the Ten Long Poems of Classical Tamil (New York: Columbia University Press, 1985), p. 232.
- 58 Discussions with Dr. Radhakrishnan, 8 January, 1987. Andronov, p. 239.
- 59 Burrow, no. 2017.
- 60 Burrow, no. 3259.
- 61 For the use of verbal participles see Andronov, pp. 182-85.
- 62 Discussions with Dr. Radhakrishnan, 8 January, 1987.
- 63 Andronov, pp. 180, no. 161; p. 182, no. 163; p. 227.
- 64 Andronov, pp. 226-8.
- 65 Burrow, no. 924.
- 66 The particle, \bar{a} , is sometimes taken by traditional commentators as a sound filler. Discussions with Dr. Radhakrishnan, 8 January, 1987.
- 67 Discussions with Dr. Radhakrishnan, 8 January, 1987.
- 68 Discussions with Dr. Radhakrishnan, 9 January, 1987.
- 69 Visvanatha Pillai. Burrow, no. 4437.
- 70 Burrow, no. 5310; Visvanatha Pillai.
- 71 Dr. Radhakrishnan suggested that the term conveys a sense of inactivity. Discussions, 9 January, 1987.
- 72 Burrow, no. 3968.
- 73 Burrow, no. 3970.

- ⁷⁴Discussions with Dr. Radhakrishnan, 12 January, 1987.
- ⁷⁵This was told to me by Dr. Janaki based on her reading of Irāmanāta Pillai's commentary. Discussions, 17 March, 1987.
- ⁷⁶Janert; Lifco; Burrow, no. 396 and no. 398.
- ⁷⁷Visvanatha Pillai.
- ⁷⁸Visvanatha Pillai.
- ⁷⁹Burrow, no. 3675.
- ⁸⁰Discussions with Dr. Radhakrishnan, 12 January, 1987.
- ⁸¹Visvanatha Pillai.
- ⁸²Discussions with Dr. Radhakrishnan, 13 January, 1987.
- ⁸³Discussions with Dr. Radhakrishnan, 15 January, 1987.
- ⁸⁴Burrow, no. 671.
- ⁸⁵For the use of negative participles see Andronov, p. 179, no. 160; p. 209, no. 202.
- ⁸⁶Infinitives can be used to indicate causally related or simultaneously related actions. George L.Hart, III, The Poems of Ancient Tamil: Their Milieu and Their Sanskrit Counterparts (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1975), p. 182.
- ⁸⁷Discussions with Dr. Janaki, 24 March 1987.
- ⁸⁸This interpretation is suggested by K.M. Balasubramaniam, trans., Tiruvembavai in Tamil by Saint Manikkavachagar, (Madras: The South India Saiva Siddhanta Works Publishing Society, Tinnevely Ltd., 1954), p. 18, n. 10; and Ratna Navaratnam, Tiruvachakam: The Hindu Testament of Love, (Bombay: Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan, 1963), p. 136.
- ⁸⁹This interpretation is suggested by Vanmikanathan (p. 55).
- ⁹⁰For a description of the group's behaviour see chapter 3.
- ⁹¹See chapters 4 and 5 for a discussion of the nature of

the group's religious experience and of the world-view. Much of the conceptual understanding of Śiva, the description the feet and the content of the world-view that emerges is based on the group's utterances. See chapter 5 and note the verses which support the discussion. Those verses are mainly said by the group. What little of these is known from the girl's statements come from her past utterance in verse 5 and from her utterance in verse 10.

⁹²Vanmikanathan, p. 227.

⁹³Navaratnam, Hindu Testament, p. 136; Balasubramaniam, p. 18, n. 10.

⁹⁴Burrow, no. 5030; Visvanatha Pillai; Lifco.

⁹⁵Burrow, no. 368.

⁹⁶M. Varadarajan, The Treatment of Nature in Sangam Literature (Ancient Tamil Literature) 2nd ed. (Madras: The South India Saiva Siddhantha Works Publishing Society, Tinnevely, Ltd., 1969), p. 313.

⁹⁷Discussions with Dr. Radhakrishnan, 15 January, 1987.

⁹⁸Discussions with Dr. Janaki, 18 March, 1987.

⁹⁹Burrow, no. 1660.

¹⁰⁰Visvanatha Pillai.

¹⁰¹Visvanatha Pillai.

¹⁰²Burrow, no. 2786.

¹⁰³Discussions with Dr. Radhakrishnan, 15 January, 1987.

¹⁰⁴Nadarajah, pp. 37-38.

¹⁰⁵Discussions with Dr. Radhakrishnan, 24 February, 1987.

¹⁰⁶Andronov, p. 82.

¹⁰⁷Andronov, p. 77.

¹⁰⁸There is a Tamil text called the Tiruvālavāyutaiyār Tirvilaiyātal Purānam. The work relates the 64 sports of Śiva. It is dated not earlier than 850 AD and not later than 1227-8 AD. Zvelebil suggests that some of

the contents which have been incorporated into the text are very old and some includes pre-Aryan matter. The 64 sports are associated with Siva at the Maturai temple, Minatci-Cuntarecuvarar temple. K.V. Zvelebil, Tamil Literature (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1975), pp. 220-1; p. 220, n. 6.

109 Andronov, p. 82.

110 Burrow, no. 807.

111 See Andronov's notes on the optative and imperative (pp. 171-7).

112 Burrow, no. 1416.

113 Burrow, no. 1258.

114 Anne-Maire Gaston, Siva in Dance, Myth and Iconography, (Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1982), p. 47.

115 Heinrich Zimmer, Myth and Symbol in Indian Art and Civilization, Bollingen Series VI, ed. Joseph Campbell, (1946; rpt. New York: Bollingen Foundation, 1963), pp. 152-155. In the specifically Saiva Siddhanta context see M. Arunachalam, Peeps into Tamil Culture - 2: Outlines of Saivism (Tiruchitrambalam - Mayuram: Gandhi Vidyalayam, 1978), pp. 46-7, 83-5.

116 Ananda K. Coomaraswamy, "The Dance of Shiva" in The Dance of Shiva: Fourteen Indian Essays (Revised Ed. New Delhi: Sagar Publications, 1976), pp. 68-79.

117 K. Sivaraman, Saivism in Philosophical Perspective: A Study of the Formative Concepts, Problems and Methods of Saiva Siddhanta (Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass, 1973), pp. 132-37.

118 Mariasusai Dhavamony, Love of God According to Saiva Siddhanta: A Study in the Mysticism and Theology of Saivism (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1971), pp. 118-20.

119 Based on discussions with Dr. Janaki, 18 March, 1987.

120 Burrow, no. 347.

121 Burrow, no. 367.

122 Burrow, no. 368.

- 123 Burrow, no. 116.
- 124 Visvanatha Pillai.
- 125 Visvanatha Pillai.
- 126 Discussions with Dr. Janaki, 19 March, 1987.
- 127 Burrow, no. 3821.
- 128 In Burrow (no. 1894) the kuvalai is said to be a blue nelumbo which closes by day. According to The Random House College Dictionary, revised ed., (1975; rpt. New York: Random House Inc., 1974), a nelumbo is a lotus. Visvanatha Pillai says that a nelumbo is a waterlily (ponterderia).
- 129 Visvanatha Pillai.
- 130 Arunachalam, pp. 81.
- 131 Dhavamony, pp. 118-120.
- 132 Burrow, no. 4338.
- 133 See verse 13, note 4 for pai and Visvanatha Pillai for pūn and kalan.
- 134 Burrow, no. 405.
- 135 Burrow, no. 3260. Dr. Radhakrishnan emphasized the richness of the word. Discussions, 12 February, 1987.
- 136 Dr. Janaki suggested that this verse could be said by a member of the group to the other members of the group. Discussions, 25 March, 1987.
- 137 The grammatical basis for this statement is made by Hart (p. 182).
- 138 The grammatical basis for this statement is made by Hart (p. 182).
- 139 Burrow no. 1 gives for the masculine form, anaiyan, the meaning "such a one". In the translation the feminine form, anaiyāl, has been understood as meaning "such a one" but has been rendered as "She".
- 140 Andronov, p. 202, no. 188.

- 141 Arden, pp. 179-82, nos. 343-5; p. 269 I and II.
- 142 Arden, p. 179.
- 143 vittakan is given by Visvanatha Pillai as a reference to Siva as Bhairava. He also indicates that the word means a knowing one. Vittakar is an honourific form of vittakan.
- 144 See the references given for the use of "King" in "Tiruvempavai" listed in n. 2 of chapter 5.
- 145 Burrow, no. 2687.
- 146 Burrow, no. 593.
- 147 Visvanatha Pillai; Burrow, no. 3200; Dr. Radhakrishnan indicated that "shine" is a derived meaning of the word. Its primary meaning is "to be seen explicitly" or "to be obvious". Discussions, 24 February, 1987.
- 148 Arden, p. 179, no. 345 i; p. 381, no. 345 vii and viii.
- 149 Janert; Visvanatha Pillai; Burrow, nos. 4550 and 4551.
- 150 Janert; Burrow, no. 2136.
- 151 Pope, p. 114, no. 2.
- 152 Pope, p. 114, n. 3.
- 153 Visvanatha Pillai.
- 154 Letter received from Dr. S.S. Janaki, 10 June, 1987.
- 155 Burrow, no. 1159 and no. 1160.
- 156 Visvanatha Pillai.
- 157 Burrow, no. 1016.
- 158 Burrow, no. 5548.
- 159 This interpretation in general was suggested by Dr. Radhakrishnan. Discussions, 26 February, 1987.
- 160 Burrow, no. 1305.
- 161 Burrow, no. 79.

- ¹⁶²Discussions with Dr. Radhakrishnan, 2 March, 1987. See also Balasubramaniam, p. 19, n. 19.
- ¹⁶³Discussions with Dr. Radhakrishnan, 2 March, 1987.
- ¹⁶⁴Discussions with Dr. Radhakrishnan, 2 March, 1987.
- ¹⁶⁵This rendering was suggested by Dr. Radhakrishnan. Discussions, 2 March, 1987.
- ¹⁶⁶Burrow, no. 3131.
- ¹⁶⁷Burrow, p. 3566.
- ¹⁶⁸Discussions with Dr. Radhakrishnan, 2 March, 1987.
- ¹⁶⁹Visvanatha Pillai.

CHAPTER THREE

THE DILEMMAS

"Tiruvempāvai" can be understood to present three dilemmas. The first two concern the girl. There appears to be some uncertainty among the group regarding what her condition is and why she is behaving as she is. These two dilemmas can be deduced from two contrasts found in the poem: that of the girl's and the group's behaviour, and that of the girl's past and present behaviour. Those contrasts are presented within the framework of a dialogue.¹ The third dilemma concerns the identity of pāvai. That difficulty is suggested by the refrain.

The general description of the group is of devotees acting and responding appropriately in a festival situation. Their appropriate activities and responses are not merely compliance with given expectations. Theirs is a joyful and voluntary participation which is apparently fulfilling for them. They are devotees doing happily and enthusiastically what devotees are supposed to do (11).

In general the group is well adorned, possesses beauty and propriety (2, 3). They are described by the

girl inside as possessing devotion (3) and as being ancient devotees of the Lord (3). They refer to themselves as devotees (9,17), as those who have been devotees for generations (11), and as those who possess affection towards the Lord (2).

A variety of jubilant activity is associated with the group. They sing about and praise Śiva, Śakti and Śiva-Śakti in various ways (1,2,4,5,6,7,8,9, 11,12,13,14,15,17,18,20). They arose at dawn, have come through the street praising and have arrived at the girl's house (1). They chide and prod her to participate and to join them in their play in the pond. They may be describing activity that is transpiring when they enjoin the girl to join them in the pond. If they are, then they are jubilantly playing in the pond (12,13,14,15,17, 18, 20). If not, then they are describing action in which they will be engaged shortly. Their playing involves entering the pond, leaping into and scooping the water, praising and singing. In their praise they refer to Śiva intimately.² They describe themselves as melting and dissolving while they sing (4). They make requests to Śiva and the cloud. They ask Śiva for suitable husbands to whom they vow to respond appropriately (9). They ask Śiva for suitable husbands who will allow them to continue in their

devotion as they are doing now (19). They ask the cloud to pour rain as Śakti bestows her grace, generously (16).

The group's activity evokes a specific festival context. All the actions of the group are appropriate for the festival. The cultural event which serves as the backdrop for the poem is sometimes referred to as pāvai nōṇpu.³ In the month of Mārkaḷi (roughly mid-December to mid-January) unmarried girls partake in certain observances. Those observances occur at the beginning of the marriage season. The hope is to obtain suitable husbands.⁴ The girls arise at dawn. They go from house to house waking their friends and singing the praises of their Lord. The observances involve the taking of baths, making an image out of sand and worshipping it, and taking a vow.⁵ Pāvai, in the context of the festival, is a technical term referring to the image that is made.⁶ V. Raghavan suggests that the festival goes back to the Sangam days. In those days it was "in honour of Devi" and the concern of the festival was for "rains, fertility and plenty".⁷ In any event the festival is a tradition in the Tamil culture.

The girl is presented in the poem in two ways; as she was in the past and as she is in the present. Both descriptions are conveyed mainly by the group as they

perceived her previously and as they perceive her to be at the time of the poem. Their perception of her present condition is uncertain. That confusion is manifested through the suggestion of conflicting possibilities.

The first dilemma concerns the girl's present condition. It can be inferred initially from the references in verse 1 and then from the references in the next 7 verses. In verse 1, it is suggested that she either is asleep, or that she hears the praise but does not respond, or that she is in some way out of her senses as a result of hearing the group's praise, as the last half of the verse suggests. References to the possibility that she is asleep also recur (4, 7, 8). Her non-response to their praise is reiterated in verse 5 ("You do not know! You do not know!"), and 6 (You do not melt), and 8 ("did you not hear?"). The clearest statement made regarding the possibility that she is indifferent is in verse 7: "you lie down indifferent inactive, like one who is naive, with a hard heart." The last option, that she may be emotionally overwhelmed, may also be presented in verse 6 through the comparison of her to pētai.⁸

The girl, herself, in her responses in verses 2, 3, 4, and 10, offers no explicit explanation for her

condition. She tells the group that they should not chide her (2). She tells them that they should forgive the shortcomings of one who is a new devotee like herself (3). She simply asks if all of them have arrived yet (4). Her response in verse 10 reflects her view that Śiva is ineffable. The only clear statement about herself is that she is a new devotee. The girl's own words, then, give no clear indication about what her condition is.

There is a sharp contrast between the girl's past behaviour and her present behaviour as it is perceived by the group. She used to express her affection for the Supreme Effulgence, but now it appears that she prefers her bed (2). Whenever she and the members of the group would speak to each other (whether night or day), she would praise Śiva (2); now when she and the group speak, she does not praise at all. She would call out Śiva's names sweetly (3). In her responses she does not call out Śiva's names (2, 3, 4, 10). She does not refer to Śiva at all in verses 2 and 4. She refers to Śiva as īcan, not in an attitude of praise but only as a way of describing the group (as devotees of īcan-3). She mentions Śiva, again not in an attitude of praise, but in order to say that praise cannot describe Śiva (10). She used to respond to hearing praise about Śiva (7) but

now she does not (1, 7, and implied in 2, 5, 6). She said that she and the group and people like them could know the mountain that Māl and the Four-Faced-One could not, but now there is no indication that she knows (5). She would melt previously (7) but now she does not (6). In general then she does not praise Śiva as she used to nor does she respond to the praises sung about Śiva as she had in the past.

There is a remarkable similarity between the group's current behaviour and the girl's past behaviour. She would express her affection for the Supreme Effulgence. They praise the Great and Rare Effulgence Without Beginning and End (1). That praising indicates that they also hold such affection towards the Effulgence. She would respond to praise of Śiva by uttering "Śiva" and by melting in ecstasy (7). They also respond to such praise by melting and dissolving (4). She had planned to wake them up, and they have come to awaken her (6).

The difference between the girl's present and past behaviour, and the similarity between the group's present behaviour and the girl's past behaviour suggests that there is a second dilemma. If the group's present behaviour is appropriate for the festival, and if this behaviour is similar to the girl's past behaviour but is

different from her present behaviour, then the girl at the time of the poem is not acting appropriately in the festival context. The dilemma is: Why is she behaving inappropriately? The group has the expectation that she would act suitably because she had expressed her intention to participate by telling them that she would awaken them (6). Also, it would be consistent for her to continue to behave during the festival as she had in the past since that past behaviour is suitable for the festival.

A question which is related to both the first and second dilemma is: What is the girl's status as a devotee? She designates the group as "old" devotees and herself as a "new" devotee (3). Since the behaviour of the group is so similar to the girl's past behaviour, the designation of them as "old" devotees applies to her also as she conducted herself in the past. How can she be a "new" devotee when she is already an old devotee? The resolution of this difficulty involves determining what her condition is and why she therefore behaves as she does.

The third dilemma that can be understood to be presented in the poem concerns the identity of pāvai. The title of the poem, "Tiruvempāvai",⁹ and the refrain ēl ōr em pāvāy, focus attention on pāvai. The title

means "Our Sacred Lady" or "Our Honorable Lady". The refrain keeps the notion of pāvai in the forefront. The refrain is repeated in the last half of each line of each stanza in the poem. It has been translated here as "Oh Our Lady".¹⁰ Vanmikanathan suggests that it can be either the girl inside or Parvathi. That is, he says that pāvai is Parvathi, but in "Tiruvempāvai", the girl inside plays Parvathi.¹¹ It is possible that Parvathi can be identified with pāvai given the context of the festival, the associated goddess worship, and given that Śiva is the god extolled in the poem. Considering the basic meaning of pāvai as "doll" or "image" it is also possible that pāvai could be the girl inside.¹² The girl is described as unresponsive (1, 7), and being without volition and self-awareness.¹³ These descriptions also apply to a doll. Therefore, by virtue of sharing those characteristics, the girl could be said to be doll-like.

In summary, the dilemmas that can be inferred from the poem are: 1) the uncertainty regarding the exact condition of the girl when the group arrives at her house; 2) the reason for the girl's behaviour when the group arrives at her house; and 3) the identity of pāvai.

The first dilemma can be resolved into a single unidentified condition by considering the different possibilities in light of other evidence presented in the poem. The girl is either asleep, indifferent or overwhelmed by emotion when the group arrives at her house. She can be in only one of these three states at one time.

Certain evidence in the poem suggests that the girl is not asleep when the group arrives at her house. The expression, "O Bright Wide-Eyed Maiden!",¹⁴ suggests that she is wide awake. That is, if she is asleep or even half asleep how can her eyes be bright and wide open?¹⁵ On the other hand they suggest that she has heard¹⁶ and yet she still sleeps. How can she have heard and continue to sleep? In addition, if the girl is sleeping, or even dozing when the group arrived at her house, it suggests that she was not as enthusiastic about the festival's activities as her speech the day before indicated. She had intended to be up and at her friends' houses awakening them (6). For her to over-sleep is incompatible with that behaviour. Alternatively, if she is awake and had not yet gone to awaken her friends she also would appear to be indifferent or at least unenthusiastic. Therefore, for the girl to be asleep or half asleep when the group

arrives at her house suggests that she is indifferent to the events of the festival.

In addition, if the girl is asleep when the group arrives at her house, she could not still be asleep when she responds (2, 3, 4, 10). The references to sleep suggest that she gives the appearance of preferring to sleep rather than participating in the festival (4, 7, 8), and thus she seems to be indifferent.

The possibility that the girl is indifferent is also suggested by her apparent non-response to the group's singing about Śiva. The response to the praise of Śiva that the group expects is the response that she had manifested in the past (uttering "Śiva" and melting -7). That behaviour is not one of the possibilities presented for her current condition. In fact it is explicitly stated that she does not react that way (2, 5, 6, 7).

The girl's own responses in verses 3 and 4 could be understood as expressions of her indifference. She appears to offer an excuse for her behaviour by suggesting that she, who is one of the new devotees, should be excused by the mature devotees, like themselves (3). The group's doubtful attitude towards her classification of herself as a new devotee in contrast to them as old devotees is indicated by "should

not those with beautiful hearts sing to our Śiva?" (3). Here the inclusive pronoun is used, which indicates that they regard Śiva to belong to her as well as to them. The group does not really accept her excuse. The excuse could be offered for a variety of reasons, at least one of which is indifference.¹⁷ The girl appears to try to delay participation by posing the mundane question of whether all have come (4). The group's disdain for the question is indicated by their response in which they say that they will not count how many have come because they are too busy singing and melting.

There is some evidence to suggest that the girl is not simply indifferent to their praise and to the events of the festival. The implication is that if she is indifferent to the praise of Śiva and the events of the festival, then she is also indifferent to Śiva. If that is so, then she must have undergone a radical change in the intensity of her belief or she must have lost her belief overnight. She praised regularly (2, 3) and melted when she heard praise (7). She also intended to rouse her friends at dawn (6). That suggests that she not only intended to participate but that she was so enthusiastic about the festival that she expected to be up before the others and at their houses to awaken them. For her not to respond to their praise and not to wake

them up; only out of indifference to praise and the events of the festival suggests that she seemingly has undergone a radical change to make her so indifferent.

Her responses in verses 2 and 10 however, suggest that she did not undergo such a radical change. She reproaches the group for chiding her about her apparent misplaced affection for her bed. She suggests that it is not the time for such scolding. The implication is that their chiding of her is inappropriate if not irreverent. Some of the depth of her disapproval is conveyed in the expression cīci (Shame!).¹⁸ The girl also says that Śiva cannot be circumscribed by praise which further suggests that she is not indifferent (10). The statement suggests that she does not praise Śiva because he cannot be grasped by praise. Although she does not explicitly say so, this may be an explanation for why she is not praising Śiva. The girl, then, is not indifferent to Śiva, instead she is regarding him from a perspective of ineffability rather than from one of effability. This evidence suggests that the girl is not indifferent. This further supports the suggestion that the girl is neither asleep nor half asleep when the group arrives at her house, as to be asleep or half asleep would be a manifestation of indifference.

If the girl is neither asleep nor indifferent, then she must be in the condition described in the last half of the first verse. The group attributes the cause of that state to be the hearing of their praises of Śiva (line 5 of verse 1). However, the possibility that she did not hear the praise of Śiva is raised by the question: "Are your ears hard?".¹⁹ The girl then, either heard the praise or she did not. If she heard the praise then it may or may not have prompted a response from her. It will be suggested that the best solution to this difficulty is that she heard the praise and that it did in fact prompt a response from her. That response is the state described in the last half of the first verse. It will be argued that the condition from which she emerged upon hearing the praise was not an ordinary state of consciousness such as sleep, dozing or the state in which one conducts their daily affairs.

It seems unlikely that the girl did not hear the group's praise. There are two possible reasons why she would not hear it: 1) because she was asleep; or 2) because she was in such a state that the group's praise could not penetrate her consciousness. It has already been suggested that the girl was not asleep when the group found her, but wide awake. On the other hand, if

she was so engrossed that she could not hear the group's praise, then it also seems that she would not be able to hear them when they addressed her; she could not have responded to them. She does respond to them however, and that response involves a change in her condition. The group finds her, as indicated in verse 1, with bright-wide eyes, lying on a bed filled with flowers, uttering sighs which are outbursts of emotion, "forgetting herself", "directionless", and "tossing and turning". The phrases "forgetting herself" and being "directionless" indicate that she is unaware of herself and without volition.²⁰ Subsequently, the girl responds to the group by speaking to them (2, 3, 4, 10). In order to speak to them she must have recovered an awareness of herself and regained her volition. Intentional speech requires both self awareness and volition. The group's addresses to her cause her to change from the state described in verse 1 to one where she is able to speak intentionally to the group.

Alternatively, it is possible that she heard the group's praise but it did not evoke a response in her. This possibility also seems unlikely. In the past she would respond almost anticipating the praise of Śiva, by uttering "Śiva" and by melting in ecstasy (7). In verse 1, however, neither one of those responses are

mentioned. There are two possible reasons why she would not respond to the praise of Śiva. One is that she has become indifferent. That seems unlikely for the reasons that have already been mentioned. Secondly her state could be such that although she may hear the praise she still is unable to respond. The second possibility poses the same problem referred to earlier: If she cannot respond to the group's praise why would she be able to respond subsequently to the group's addresses to her?

The final alternative is that the girl heard the group's praise and did in fact respond to it. This in turn raises two questions: 1) What was her response to the praise of Śiva; and 2) what was her condition prior to hearing it and responding?

The girl's response in the situation immediately preceding verse 1 cannot have been her usual response of uttering "Śiva" and melting. Firstly, it is not one of the possibilities indicated in verse 1. Secondly if she had responded in her usual way the group would have recognized her condition. Clearly, they are puzzled by her condition as the conflicting possibilities they present indicate. As was suggested above, the group finds her in the condition described in the first verse.²¹ If the praises of Śiva by the group coming

through the street evoked a response in her, then that response began with her hearing the praise which preceded the group's arrival. The change of state initiated by the group's praise of Śiva cannot have been the change from the state in verse 1 to the state in verse 2 where she is capable of intentional speech because that change occurs only after the group has spoken to her (which is after the praise has stopped). Thus the girl appears to undergo two changes in her condition. The first is stimulated by the praise of Śiva and results in her condition as described in the first verse. The second is prompted by the group's speech and results in the change from the state described in verse 1 to the state where she is capable of intentional speech.²² The remaining concern is the nature of the girl's condition even prior to her hearing the praises sung of Śiva.

There are two possibilities regarding the girl's state prior to hearing the praise of Śiva. She was either in an ordinary state of consciousness or in a non-ordinary state of consciousness. An ordinary state, in this context, means a condition in which one is either asleep, half asleep, or awake and in the state of mind in which one goes about daily affairs. A non-ordinary state of consciousness refers to a state

that is not one of the states referred to as ordinary. It has already been suggested that it does not seem likely that the girl was asleep or half-asleep.²³ In addition, if the girl was awake and in the state in which one goes about daily affairs (religious or otherwise) but had not gone to awaken her friends, she would be unenthusiastic or indifferent. As suggested earlier, the girl does not seem to be indifferent.²⁴ It seems possible, then, that the girl arose as she had intended but before she could leave to awaken her friends something happened so that she entered a non-ordinary state of consciousness (yet to be identified) and therefore was unable to do as she had intended the day before.

The dilemma regarding the girl's state can be partially resolved by suggesting that when the group arrived at her home she had just emerged from a non-ordinary state of consciousness into the state described in the last half of the first verse. However, it is still not clear what the nature of the non-ordinary condition is. The second dilemma dissolves once the first one is understood. In other words once the girl's condition is understood, then her behaviour, which is an outward manifestation of that condition, is also understandable, and in turn, her behaviour can

convey something about the nature of her condition. The resolution of the third dilemma also requires an understanding of the girl's non-ordinary condition and it requires some insight into the nature of Śakti. A consideration of certain descriptive and figurative elements suggests what the nature of that condition is and in addition reveals certain characteristics of Śakti. Those are the subjects of the following chapter.

Notes to Chapter Three

¹Primarily the dialogue is between a girl and a group of her friends. There is some controversy about this view. Yocum says that there is "no clear indication, however as to who is speaking at what time." Glenn E. Yocum, Hymns to the Dancing Śiva (Columbia, Missouri: South Asia Books, 1982), p. 63, n. 35. There is no doubt that there is a dialogue. The second person vocatives and verb formations make that clear. Even in verses 11-20 where the dialogue appears to be a chorus, (except 15), the recurrent final imperatives indicate that someone is being addressed. There is a problem in some of the verses deciding who says what (for example verse 2) and exactly who is speaking in verse 10 and 15. However, there are clues in the poem which shed light on who speaks where and says what. These are the context, the use of pronouns, the use of intimacy and the imagery. The issue of who speaks where and says what has been considered in some detail in the notes on the translation and in Appendix A. For other interpretations regarding the dialogue see Pope's translation and Navaratnam's discussion of the poem.

²See verses 3-nam; 7-en; 13-em, eṅkal; 15-em; and 19-eṅkal. The references to Śiva as "ours" or "mine" suggests that the speakers (speaker) feel a sense of intimacy towards the object considered to be possessed.

³V. Raghavan, Festivals, Sports and Pastimes of India (Ahmedabad: B.J. Institute of Learning and Research, 1979), pp. 190-1.

⁴Yocum, p. 63, n. 35. For the correlation of the festival to the English calendar see G.U. Pope, trans., introd., notes, prefix, The Tiruvācaṇam or "Sacred Utterances" of the Tamil Poet, Saiñt, and Sage Mānikka-Vācaṇar (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1900), p. 103.

⁵G. Vanmikanathan, Pathway to God Through Tamil Literature: I - Through the Tiruvaachakam (New Delhi: The Delhi Tamil Sangam, 1971), pp. 47-8, 223. Raghavan, pp. 190-191.

⁶Discussion with Dr. S.S. Jannaki, Director of The Kuppuswami Sastri Research Institute, Madras, India (at the University of Calgary), 23 March, 1987.

⁷Raghavan, p. 191.

⁸See the discussion of pētai in chapter 4.

⁹The title is derived from the refrain. It is a way of identifying the poem. Discussions with Dr. R. Radhakrishnan, Professor of Linguistics, University of Calgary, 9 June, 1987. See also K.M. Balasubramaniam, trans., Tiruvembavai in Tamil by Saint Manikkavachagar (Madras: The South India Saiva Siddhanta Works Publishing Society, Tinnevely Ltd., 1954), p. 2.

¹⁰As indicated in the notes on verse 1 the exact meaning of the refrain is somewhat open. There is no doubt however that the refrain is addressed to pāvai.

¹¹Vanmikanathan, pp. 225-226.

¹²Raghavan, p. 190; T. Burrow and M.B. Emeneau, A Dravidian Etymological Dictionary, 2nd ed., (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1984), no. 4107.

¹³See verse 1, notes 6 and 7.

¹⁴This address is traditionally used to refer to a beautiful woman. Discussions with Dr. Radhakrishnan, 9 June, 1987. Interpreting the address as suggesting wakefulness involves drawing an inference beyond its traditional use.

¹⁵Dr. Janaki brought this possibility to my attention. Discussions, 11 March, 1987.

¹⁶The question regarding whether or not the girl heard the praises of Śiva is raised further on in the chapter (pp. 123-26).

¹⁷See chapter 5 for another explanation for her response.

¹⁸See verse 2, note 5.

¹⁹Dr. Janaki brought this problem to my attention. Discussions, 13 March, 1987.

²⁰See verse 1, notes 6 and 7.

²¹See pp. 123-24 of this chapter.

²²This two-fold account of the change was in part

stimulated by Dr. Janáki's indication that the state of union appears to be incompatible with the state described in the last half of verse 1. Discussions, 13 March, 1987.

²³See p. 119-22.

²⁴See p. 121-3.

CHAPTER FOUR

DESCRIPTION AND IMAGERY

In Chapter 3, it was suggested that the girl was in some unidentified non-ordinary state when the group came through the street singing praises of Śiva. In addition it was suggested that there was no explicit indication in "Tiruvempāvai", neither by the girl nor by the group, as to what her condition actually was.¹ The dilemmas, if they are to be resolved, must be resolved at a level other than the expressed level. The abundance of descriptive and figurative elements in the poem suggests that these aspects contribute to an understanding of the girl's condition. The difficulties lie in determining how these aspects can reveal meaning, and in determining what that meaning is. The purpose of this chapter is to show how the figurative and descriptive aspects in "Tiruvempāvai" can be understood to suggest both the nature of girl's experience and that of the group. In chapter 5, those insights will be utilized in order to resolve the dilemmas.

There are two ways in which the descriptive and figurative elements in "Tiruvempāvai" can be understood to suggest the nature of girl's experience and that of

the group. Firstly, the descriptive and figurative elements taken as a whole reveal a pattern of associations. An analysis of those associations suggests that there is a difference between the nature of the girl's experience of Śiva and that of the group. On the basis of this analysis it will be suggested that the group's relationship with Śiva can be considered to be more concrete than that of the girl's, and that the girl and Śiva are characterized by luminosity whereas the members of the group are not. Secondly, the use of figurative elements by the group and the girl further contributes to an understanding of the nature of their respective religious experiences. The group's use of three major similes, their use of the verbs ātu and pātu, and their reference to "bees" provides specific information about their experience of Śiva. The group's use of these figurative elements show how their religious experience can be understood to be more concrete than the girl's. The girl's use of the words, "parrots" and pētai, reveals important features of her experience of Śiva and how it is more subtle than that of the group. This chapter will deal firstly with the pattern of associations which emerges, and secondly with the group's and the girl's use of certain figurative elements.

In order to understand the significance of the pattern of associations and the particular figurative elements used by the group and the girl, it is necessary to appeal to the well developed literary tradition that preceded the bhakti movement in Tamil Nadu.² There are several reasons for invoking this tradition in order to interpret the descriptive and figurative elements of this poem which will be considered here. The first reason is an appeal to continuity. That is that Māṇikkavācakar and other bhakti poets did not create their poetry in a vacuum, but did so in the context of their culture. Part of that culture was the literary tradition that existed prior to the bhakti movement. Several modern scholars have noted that the literary traditions of that time continued to influence literature after the rise of bhakti.³ If Māṇikkavācakar's traditional biography is correct, he was well versed in sacred and secular knowledge.⁴ He would be acquainted with the classical literature and he would be in a position to employ those conventions in his poetry. As will be shown, the use of description in general and of certain figurative elements ("parrots", pētai, and "bees") have a particular significance in the classical literary tradition. Also, the descriptions of

the clouds, the sun and dawn are similar to descriptions found in the classical Tamil poetic tradition.⁵

In addition to the general appropriateness of appealing to the earlier literary traditions for the illumination of certain figurative elements, specific features of the poem also suggest that the appeal is suitable. Firstly, "Tiruvempāvai" is a poem and the earlier literary genres of akam and puram are poetic genres.⁶ Secondly, of the two genres in that tradition (akam and puram), the akam genre conventionally requires that all characters be anonymous.⁷ In "Tiruvempāvai" the girl and the group never receive a particular identity. These characters could be any girl or any group of girls. Thirdly, in the akam genre, the heroine never explicitly conveys her feelings. She indicates her mood indirectly through suggestion. Her state of mind also manifests itself physically, through her appearance and through her behaviour. It is through those manifestations of her feelings, in part, that her state may be recognized.⁸ In "Tiruvempāvai" the girl makes no explicit statement about her state. The group perceives certain physical and behavioural characteristics about her, but they cannot identify her condition.

Since the girl makes no explicit comment about her state, it seems that if the girl's state is to be conveyed in the poem, it must be done suggestively by the girl herself. The precedent for an appeal to the suggestive elements in the poem in order to identify the girl's condition is set in the akam genre of poetry. The clues to her state must lie in her responses at the suggestive level and in the group's description of her physically.

The notion that the outward characteristics of the heroine reflect her inner state can be generalized so that the outward characteristics of the group can be understood to contribute to an understanding of their inner state as well.⁹ Thus, the descriptions of the members of the group should convey something about their inner condition. In addition, it can be expected that what the group says suggestively also can reveal something about their own state. The difficulty is in determining how the figurative elements which the group and the girl use are to be interpreted. In the early poetic tradition, the meaning of a comparison, whether both of the objects of the comparison are stated or not, is arrived at through its use in tradition.¹⁰ Thus, by using the classical tradition where necessary in order to illuminate ambiguous imagery, and by utilizing that

which is unambiguous, the description and certain of the figurative elements (similes, "parrots", pētai and "bees") should reveal something about the inner states of the group and the girl.

The descriptive and figurative elements form a pattern of associations. These patterns of associations are connections evoked between elements sharing a common feature or common features at the time of the poem. The patterns can be traced for the elements in the poem. They have been summarized in four charts in Appendix B. However, only the patterns that emerged concerning Śiva, the group and the girl will be considered here as they are the most important figures for resolving the dilemmas. The patterns can be classified into three levels of relative subtlety. The first and most concrete level is that based on ornamentation. The second, and a little more subtle level, is that suggested through the colour of different elements. The third and most subtle level of associations is that based on certain intangible attributes such as those suggested through the notions of beauty and light.

The descriptions of Śiva, the girl and the group evoke suggestively certain connections between Śiva and the girl, and between Śiva and the group that exist at the time of the poem. In addition, since the

descriptions of the girl and the group can be understood to reflect their inner state, these descriptions also convey something about the nature of their experience.

At the least subtle level, that of ornamentation, Śiva is said to wear white ash (11), be associated with an anklet or anklets (1, 6, 11, 18, 20) and to wear a crown filled with flowers (10), a wreath of konrai flowers (14), and to have flowers associated with his feet (2, 10, 17, 18, 20) and to be adorned with snakes (13). The girl is described as being fragrant (5, 17) and being ornamented (nērilaiyāy - 2). It is implied in the vocatives that if she plays in the pond her ornaments would also be jingling and swaying like the group's (12, 13, 14).¹¹ That suggests that she may be ornamented like the members of the group, although the indirect nature of the reference indicates that the poem does not draw attention to the fact that the girl also is adorned. The members of the group wear anklets (13), bracelets (12, 13), earrings (14) and waistlets (14). They have flowers in their hair and bees buzzing around the flowers (12, 14). Their breasts are adorned (15) and they are associated with ornamentation in general (nērilaiyīr - 2, pūṅkalan -14).

The stress in the descriptions at this least subtle level, the level of ornamentation, is on the group and

Śiva. In other words, Śiva and the group are described more frequently and with more variety than the girl. This suggests that the group's relationship with Śiva is stronger at this level and more concrete than the girl's. The way in which the relationship can be considered to be more concrete will become apparent when the three similes are discussed later in the chapter.

The classifying feature of the level of intermediate subtlety is colour. The descriptions of colour are more subtle than those of ornaments because while colour is in some way physical it is not, generally, removable as is the case with ornaments (unless it is a colour of an ornament). Five different colours are mentioned in the poem. They are red, gold, white, black and dark blue or blue-black. Red (11, 17, 20), gold (12, 17, 20) and white (11, 20)¹² are associated with Śiva. The girl is associated with white (3) and with black (17). The girl, at this level, is linked to Śiva through white. The group has no colour associated with it. The significance of the girl's experience at this level is that it has some component, which in terms of subtlety, lies in between the least and most subtle levels. An understanding of this component of her experience of Śiva will be suggested following the discussion of the use of figurative

elements by the girl and the group, and after the girl's condition prior to responding to the group's praise is identified.

The descriptive elements at the third and most subtle level of associations are the qualities of beauty and light. Śiva, the girl and the group are associated with beauty. However, only Śiva and the girl are associated with light. Beauty is used in reference to Śiva (5, 7, 9, 15, 18). The words which are used to refer to Śiva in terms of beauty are kōlam (5), cīr or cīrān (7, 9, 15) and am (18). Śiva's beauty (5, 7) is said to be unknown by the knowledge or the conceptualization of the gods. His feet (9)¹³ and eyes (18) are referred to as beautiful. There also is a reference to the beauty of Śiva in general (15).¹⁴ Kōlam and cīr convey the notion of positive qualities in general. It would seem that Śiva's beauty is associated with positive qualities.¹⁵

The beauty of the girl at the time of the poem and of the group, as a subtle quality, is implied through their respective ornamentation. Ornamentation suggests a physical beauty. Physical beauty in turn suggests a more abstract internal beauty, if one invokes the notion, mentioned above, that one's outer appearance reflects one's inner state. This inner beauty is a

positive inner state.¹⁶ The inner beauty of the group is further suggested by the girl's reference to the as pāṅkutaīyīr.¹⁷

Both Śiva and the girl are associated with light whereas the members of the group are not. He is said to be the Effulgence (cōti - 1, 2, 8, 14). He is also referred to as Effulgence indirectly (5, 10, 18, 20).¹⁸ He is associated with light in the epithet, tēcan (2) and by being "red like a flame" (12). In those two references, light is one of his attributes. Three references connect the girl with light. She is described as having bright, wide eyes (1), and a luminous smile (3, 4). The word for bright in verse 1 is vāl. It means "lustre, light, splendour".¹⁹ The luminosity of her smile is conveyed by comparing it to a pearl (3, 4). Her smile is said to be white like a pearl (3). The adjective is ven. Ven means "white, pure and bright".²⁰ Her smile is then said to be like a luminous pearl in the fourth verse. The adjective in this comparison is ol. Ol means luminosity.²¹ The shift of the adjective from ven (3) to ol (4) makes the notion of luminosity more explicit and the repetition emphasizes that quality in the girl.

At this most subtle level, beauty is a quality which is associated with Śiva, the girl and the group.

However, only Śiva and the girl are luminous. It can be suggested that at this most subtle level of association the girl's connection to Śiva is stronger than that of the group by virtue of the fact that she shares two qualities with Śiva while the group shares only one quality. The stronger association between the girl and Śiva rather than between the group and Śiva at this most subtle level, suggests that the girl's experience of Śiva is more subtle than the group's. The way in which her experience could be understood to be more subtle will become apparent when her use of the words "parrots" and pētai are discussed.

In general, then, a consideration of the pattern of description of Śiva, the group and the girl suggests certain differences and similarities between the girl and the group, and their respective relationships with Śiva. Those similarities and differences reiterate that there is a contrast between the girl as she is now and the group, as discussed in chapter 3. At the descriptive and figurative level, the contrast between the group and the girl as she is now is revealed both through the type of level stressed in describing them, and through the level at which there is, relatively speaking, the strongest connection with Śiva. The description of the group occurs mostly at the least

subtle level, not at all at the intermediate level and to a lesser degree at the most subtle level. In contrast the girl is described primarily at the most subtle level and somewhat at the other two levels. This suggests that the group's connection to Śiva at the least subtle level is stronger and their experience is more concrete than the girl's. In contrast, the girl's connection to Śiva at the most subtle level is stronger and her experience more subtle than the group's.

The group's and the girl's use of certain figurative elements provides specific information about their respective experiences and substantiates the understanding of the nature of their experience as suggested through the pattern of associations. The group's experience will be shown to be of a less subtle nature than the girl's in two ways. Firstly the group's experience involves understanding Śiva in terms of concepts. Secondly their experience is primarily of a sacred universe where the emphasis is on Śiva as he relates to the cosmos and hence to devotees. The girl's experience of Śiva will be shown to be more subtle than the group's in the sense that it cannot be conceptualized, that it involves union with Śiva and that it lacks the orientation towards the cosmos that the group's experience includes.

The group's experience will be considered by a discussion of the three major similes that they use, the repetitive use of the verbs, ātu and pātu, and their use of "bees". The girl's experience will be considered through her use of the figurative elements, "parrots" and pētai. The discussion will begin with the three similes and then move to a discussion of the terms, "parrots" and pētai. It will be concluded with consideration of the significance of the use of "bees" by the group.

In "Tiruvempāvai", a significant amount of information is conveyed about the group's religious experience through their use of three major similes. These similes convey something about nature, Śiva, and the beauty of life to devotees like themselves. The structure of the similes is that the group compares some aspect of nature to some aspect of Śiva (Śiva-Śakti, Śakti or his foot). For example the group compares the action of the rain cloud to the action of Śakti. The group easily finds parallels between aspects of nature and their conceptions of Śiva. In a sense, the religious outlook of the devotees affects how they view nature.

However, the similes can be understood to convey information about Śiva by reversing the comparison. For

someone who is familiar with the aspects of nature that are being compared, their understanding of nature enriches their understanding of Śiva. That enriched understanding occurs by the applying of attitudes and notions associated with the aspect of nature to the aspect of Śiva (Śiva-Śakti, Śakti or his foot) being compared. In the example given above, a rain cloud is compared to Śakti. In the original comparison the cloud is asked to pour rain generously like Śakti generously gives grace. Knowing that Śakti brings grace generously, then, indicates how the cloud is to pour its rain. In the environment in which Māṇikkavācakar lived rain is essential for life and thus the cloud which brings the rain is regarded as beneficent. In reverse then, Śakti, like the cloud, is beneficent.²² Knowing that the cloud is beneficent because it generously pours its rain indicates that Śakti is beneficent because she generously gives grace. The significance of such an effect is that a communication of religious ideas can occur through the common medium of nature between members of the same environment.

In the first simile, the group compares a pond to Śiva-Śakti.²³ The descriptions in the first three lines of verse 13 are the points that are compared. Each of those lines can be interpreted as referring to the pond

or to Śiva-Śakti. In the first line a dark blue and a red flower are mentioned. If the line is understood as referring to the pond, then the flowers are understood to be in the pond. The colours of the flowers can also be understood to refer to Śiva-Śakti. From verse 11, it is known that Śiva is red, so it follows that the dark blue colour is a reference to Śakti. The colour of Śakti is confirmed in verse 16, where the colour of the rain cloud and the colour of Śakti are compared. The second line can be understood to refer to either the pond or to Śiva-Śakti. That is possible because some of the words have double meanings. The double meanings yield both the adornments of the pond (the flock of birds and woven sounds) and the respective adornments of Śiva-Śakti (entwined snakes and a collection of bracelets).²⁴ The third point of comparison which occurs in the third line refers to bathing. In the case of the pond what is washed off is physical uncleanness and in the case of Śiva-Śakti it is spiritual impurities. All those who come and enter into the pond are cleansed like those who come and enter into Śiva-Śakti. The significance of the comparison is that it reveals the cleansing power of Śiva-Śakti and it suggests the intensity of the devotion of the group who

readily identify the pond with Śiva-Śakti, both visually and functionally.²⁵

In the second major simile, the group compares a cloud to Śakti. That the cloud is being compared to Śakti is not explicitly stated. Certain features of the cloud, however, are clearly compared to certain features of Śakti. The features of the cloud are suggested by references to its advancing, collecting water from the sea, arising and appearing (implying it is dark blue), its flashing (implying lightning), its sounding (implying thunder), its bending (implying a rainbow), and its pouring (implying rain). The cloud's features are compared respectively to Śakti's colour, her small waist,²⁶ the sound of her anklets, her eyebrow and her giving of grace. From the simile it is evident that Śakti pours grace generously (curakkum) on devotees of the King (Śiva), and on the group and the cloud.²⁷ Śakti is also inseparably united with the King.

By invoking the notion of the reverse analogy, further insight is gained into the nature of Śakti. In the classical poetic tradition rain clouds are also described.²⁸ In that tradition the cloud is thought to be beneficent, generous, and to give indiscriminately and unselfishly. The cloud brings rain which is necessary for life and for prosperity. The cloud, then,

is thought to be beneficent.²⁹ In the original comparison the cloud is asked to be like Śakti in various ways, and to pour rain as Śakti generously pours grace. In terms of the reverse comparison, as the rain which the cloud brings is necessary for life and prosperity, so the grace which Śakti brings is necessary for spiritual life and prosperity. Thus, as the cloud is beneficent so is Śakti. The reverse comparison brings out the importance of Śakti's grace.

A further element which is brought out in this comparison is the notion that grace fosters physical well-being as well as spiritual well-being. This is indicated in the request for rain, in which the group addressing the cloud asks it to pour rain like grace is poured on "us". The form of "us" used is namakku. This is the form of the pronoun which includes the individual addressed. That means that the cloud is a recipient of grace as well as the group.³⁰ That suggests that the function of the physical aspects of the world involves grace. Verse 12 already indicates that Śiva, the dancer, creates, maintains and conceals the universe. Thus, the notion that the world's components and inhabitants have a sacred dimension has already been introduced by this point. Verse 16 suggests that the natural world is subordinated to the spiritual. In the

comparison of the cloud to Śakti the activities of nature parallel those of the spiritual realm and yet are subordinate, subsumed and governed by those of the spiritual realm. Nature has clear sacred dimensions in this simile.

The last of the three major similes is the comparison between the sun and the foot of Śiva at Aṇṇāmalai (cōti liṅga).³¹ This comparison is made explicit by the marker, pōl. It is a comparison of the effect of each of them. The brightness or illuminative power of the foot of the cōti liṅga is significantly brighter than the diamonds on the crowns of the gods that come to bow at that foot. The lustre of the diamonds on the crowns of the gods is overshadowed by the brilliance of the foot of the cōti liṅga. In that way, the sun causes darkness to be hidden, and when it encounters the stars causes them to grow pale and yield to the light of the sun.³² In this simile the brightness or illuminating power of the sun is compared to that of the foot by comparing the effect of their brightness. Following this comparison, in the same verse, Śiva is said to remain yet become differentiated. One of the things into which he becomes differentiated is the "sky with flourishing light"(line 5 and 6).³³ Śiva is then the sun and its bearer, the sky. The verse

establishes that Śiva is greater than the sun by virtue of becoming the sun and much more, and yet remaining apart. These last lines of the verse, when taken together with the comparison, indicate explicitly the sacred aspect of nature. Śiva becomes all of nature.

From the comparison it is seen that as Śiva's lustre or illuminatory power is greater than that of the gods at the spiritual level, so is the sun's brightness greater than that of other lights at the physical level. Since Śiva encompasses both the physical and spiritual realm his illumination is of the highest kind.

The description of the sun's activities is familiar. It is a description of dawn. By employing the notion of the reverse comparison certain aspects of the description of the rising sun can be applied to the foot of the cōti liṅga. As the appearance of the sun causes darkness to be hidden, and other light to pale in comparison, so does the appearance of the foot of the cōti liṅga cause spiritual darkness to be hidden and other forms of knowledge to pale in comparison.

In each of these three similes the group compares some aspect of nature to some aspect of Śiva (Śiva-Śakti, Śakti or his foot). The effect of that comparison is that concepts of Śiva (Śiva-Śakti, Śakti or his foot) inform the reader about nature. The

presentation of the three similes in the poem moves chronologically from viewing nature in terms of the sacred (13) to a suggestion that nature as well as humans are affected by the sacred (16) to a statement that if nature is not sacred in its totality, it definitely has a sacred dimension.

However, since the aspects of nature being compared to Śiva are presumably known to an inhabitant of the milieu in which Māṇikkavācakar lived, the effect of the similies on a hearer of the poem is also a reverse comparison. The result of that reverse comparison is that aspects of nature contribute to the hearer's understanding of Śiva (Śiva-Śakti, and the foot). In the comparison of the cloud to Śakti, the cloud was asked to pour rain generously like Śakti. In terms of the reverse comparison, as the cloud's rain is necessary for life and brings spiritual prosperity, so Śakti's grace is necessary for life and brings spiritual prosperity. In the third simile, the illuminative power of the sun at the physical level is compared to the illuminative power of the foot of the cōti liṅga at the spiritual level. In terms of the reverse comparison, as the sun removes darkness and causes other light to pale, so the foot of the cōti liṅga removes darkness and

causes other forms of spiritual light to pale in comparison.

The group's use of the verbs, ātu and pātu, also contribute to an understanding of the nature of their experience. The verbs indicate the intense and positive nature of their activity. For the most part the verbs ātu and pātu describe the nature of the group's activity. Pātu, to sing, is used repeatedly in some form to indicate the manner in which Śiva is praised (1, 4, 5, 6, 11, 14, 15, 17, 18). In the last half of the poem, ātu, to play, is used to describe what the group does in the pond. It includes such activities as leaping into or entering the pond (pāy-13, 15, 17, 18; pukku-11, 13), scooping the water (kutai-11, 12) and singing (pātu-14, 15, 17, 18). The action indicated by ātu and pātu is energetic and joyful. In addition to "play", ātu also means to move, wave, swing, shake, dance, sport and enjoy.³⁴ The repeated use of the verbs suggest the ongoing nature of the activity. The group does not just sing and dip into the pond once or twice. They sing and play over a period of time. The energetic, joyful and ongoing nature of the activity suggests that the group, as devotees, willingly participate in these activities.

In addition, the activity of the group generally seems to have a positive effect physically and spiritually. This notion is suggested by the injunction: "singing about our Lord...springing into the waters beautiful with lotus flowers so that well-being will flourish, play!" (17). Exactly what is meant by well-being is not specified. However, it can be inferred from the poem that the activity in which the group participates contributes to both worldly and spiritual well-being. The notion that worldly well-being will flourish is inferred from the context of the festival and the activities appropriate to the festival.³⁵ The concerns of the group in the festival context are worldly concerns: suitable husbands and rain. It can be inferred that the group engages in the festival willingly, as devotees, but also so that their concerns will be addressed by Śiva. Their activities are to be engaged in so that well-being will flourish. The well-being that is to come about, at least in part, is the worldly concerns that they raise.

- However, the activities of the group are done for spiritual benefit as well. The group indicates that they play and sing, entering the pond to deteriorate their births (12). The overcoming of births is a spiritual goal.³⁶ In addition, their concern for

suitable husbands is also a spiritual concern. They request husbands who will not cause their devotion to Śiva to be compromised. The activity of singing and playing in the pond is engaged in both to deteriorate births and to retain the level of devotion they have attained.

The activities of entering the tank (poykai pukku), scooping the water (kutai) and singing (pātu) are activities which are part of the playing referred to by ātu.³⁷ These activities are done so that well-being, worldly and spiritual, will flourish. This suggests that the activities of devotees contribute to the well-being of the world in general.

The three similes combined with the notion of the positive effect of devotees' actions suggests a vision of a sacred universe. All of the universe is mutually interdependent and is ultimately dependent on God. Nature, the pond, the cloud with its rain, and the sun all affect the lives of the devotees (and others) and in turn the activity of the devotees has its positive effect on nature, and on themselves. There is in the three similes, the presentation of a harmonious relation between God, nature and devotees, where each does its part.

The group's experience as it is conveyed through the three similes is of devotees in harmony with God and the sacred universe. They have a clear, conceptual understanding of Śiva, Śakti, the universe and themselves, and how all of these components are interrelated. These similes indicate that the group's religious experience is primarily of devotees in a sacred universe. The similes suggest how the group's experience of Śiva occurs at the least subtle level, as it was suggested to be in the discussion of the pattern of associations developed earlier. They experience Śiva in terms of the concepts of the sacred universe and how he is conceptually understood to "be" and to participate in the lives of devotees. They, also, know conceptually that Śiva "becomes" all of the universe (18). Thus they know conceptually that Śiva in some way inheres in them or is part of them. This latter understanding suggests how they also have a connection to Śiva at the most subtle level.

The nature of the girl's experience, it will be shown, can be understood as it is suggestively conveyed through the use of the two terms "parrots" and pētai. Both are symbols in the akam genre. The significance of these terms can be understood by interpreting their use in terms of their significance in the classical Tamil

poetic tradition and more specifically in terms of the akam genre of that tradition. In order to do that it is necessary to briefly outline the framework of the akam genre.

In the akam convention, the background for the experience to be described is divided into five physiographic regions each corresponding to a particular phase of love.³⁸ The five regions are: 1) kuriñci which is associated with lover's union; 2) mullai which is associated with domesticity and patient waiting; 3) marutam which corresponds to lover's infidelity and sulking scenes; 4) neytal which is related to separation and anxious waiting; and 5) pālai which is associated with elopement, hardships, separation from parents or lovers.³⁹ Each region has associated with it particular flora, fauna, other objects, people, and usually a time of day and/or a season.⁴⁰ The elements associated with each region serve as clues which help identify the phase of love being described in classical poems.

The girl compares the group's words to those of a parrot. In terms of the classical conventions, there seem to be two possible interpretations of that comparison. Firstly, the comparison may be an attempt to indicate the pleasant nature of the girls' speech. There is a reference in the classical poetry in which

the cries of the parrot are said to be melodious like a particular musical instrument called the vayir.⁴¹ In addition, in the akam convention the parrot is a symbol for the kuriñci region, the corresponding phase of love is lovers' union. In the kuriñci region, the heroine is assigned the duty of keeping the parrots away so that they do not eat the ears on the plants in the fields of that region. That duty allows the heroine the opportunity to engage in a clandestine meeting with her lover.⁴² In the akam context, the presence of the parrots suggests that a clandestine meeting is occurring between the heroine and her lover. That is, if the parrots are present then the heroine is not in the field keeping them away. If she is not keeping them away, then she must be elsewhere, that elsewhere being with her lover. The meeting provides the opportunity for the union of the two lovers. With that literary background, it is possible that that context is invoked by the use of the word in the poem. In the context of "Tiruvempāvai", the presence of the parrots (the group) symbolically suggests the possibility of union with Śiva, or that union occurs. The presence of the group invokes the comparison with parrots who have the opportunity of coming while the clandestine meeting is taking place. According to tradition, the parrots

indicate their arrival by their cries.⁴³ In "Tiruvempāvai", the group announces their arrival by their singing. The girl may be suggesting the possibility or the actual occurrence of union by comparing the group to parrots.

Another term which contributes to an understanding of the girl's condition through what she says is pētai. The term is first used by the group. They compare the girl to those who are indifferent, inactive like pētaiyar with hard hearts (7). In this case the meaning of pētai is one who is ignorant as a result of being naive.⁴⁴ Pētai can also be understood in the context of the akam conventions as a woman of the pālai region,⁴⁵ in which the corresponding phase of love is that of elopement, hardships, or separation from parents or lovers. The context of application in "Tiruvempāvai" by the group must be that the girl is separated from her lover (in this case Śiva). Elopement, hardship or separation from parents is inappropriate. Firstly, the festival context of the poem suggests that she is at home. Secondly, hardships do not seem suitable for the festival context. If the girl is suffering as a result of being separated from her lover (Śiva), then the state in verse 1 could be a manifestation of that suffering. The state of the woman in the pālai region has been

described as "the separation from the man who[m] she loves and reveres leaves the thalavi emotionally empty and physically incapable of any action, except pining for her thalavan".⁴⁶

The interpretation of pētai according to the akam conventions contradicts its use in verse 7, but at the same time it is compatible with the emotional state described in first verse. The woman of the pālai region suffers precisely because she is not naive and does not have a hard heart. She suffers because she is filled with love and longing. On the other hand, the notion of one who is naive and therefore is unresponsive and indifferent, is incompatible with the state described in the first verse. If the group is invoking the akam convention in addition to using pētai to mean naive, it suggests that they do not know whether or not the girl has a hard heart. The use of pētai in this phrase of verse 7, then, reiterates the group's uncertainty regarding the girl's condition.

The girl uses pētai in the tenth verse, and by doing so redefines the meaning of the word. Her redefinition of the term suggestively indicates the nature of her condition. The occurrence of pētai in verse 10 follows the group's injunction for her to sing about Śiva in his form as half-man (Śiva) and half-woman

(Śakti-8), and the group's plea to Śiva for suitable husbands (9). In the girl's response, pētai is used to designate the female aspect of Śiva in his form as half-man and half-woman. Since pētai was first used by the group to describe the girl (through comparison) its re-use by the girl suggests that if she is like a pētai, it is not a pētai as described by the group. Firstly, the notion of separation (as suggested by the akam convention) is negated. The pētai is united with Śiva. This suggests that the girl's condition is one of union with Śiva. Secondly, Śakti is also the spouse of Śiva (11). Thus the term seems to suggest that her relationship of union parallels that of Śakti's relationship of union with Śiva. The girl is then like a wife to Śiva.

The second way in which the term may be redefined is in the notion that the pētai is a naive one. If pētai does indeed convey the status of the girl's relationship with Śiva, her comments about Śiva reveal what she knows. She knows that Śiva is ineffable. He is not only a concrete form (half-man and half-woman) who can be conceptually grasped, he is much more. In fact he transcends conceptualization. The pētai is not a naive one rather she is one who knows Śiva's ineffability.

The girl can be understood to convey something about her own state by utilizing two terms, parrots and pētai, in a suggestive manner. Her comparison of the group to parrots suggests the possibility if not the actuality of union with Śiva. In her use of pētai she effectively redefines its two meanings from one who is separated from her lover and one who is naive, to one who is united with her lover and one who knows. Her use of these two terms sheds light on the nature of her relationship to Śiva. Her experience of Śiva is one of union and one in which Śiva is understood as ineffable.

The fact that the members of the group have not experienced union with Śiva is suggested by them through their references to bees. In verse 12, the bees are said to buzz around the group's hair. In verse 14, the swarm of bees sways. The bee represents, in the classical poetry, the lover's role in courtship or sexual union.⁴⁷ The bees taking pollen from the flowers is a symbol of sexual union.⁴⁸ The buzzing suggests that the bees are looking for the right flower. Also the swaying suggests that the bees hover over the moving flowers in the girls' hair. That symbolism suggests Śiva, the lover, is hovering waiting for the right moment to unite with the members of the group. That action indicates that this union has not occurred.

The contrast between the experience of Śiva by the group and that of the girl, as it is conveyed by them through the descriptive and figurative elements in the poem, can now be summarized. The group's experience of Śiva is primarily external and effable. The girl's experience of Śiva is internal and ineffable. The group's experience is primarily directed outwards from themselves towards the cosmos and is conceived in concrete terms. In contrast, the girl's experience is notably not directed outwards towards the cosmos and it is non-concrete (ineffable). That suggests her experience is more internal and more subtle than the group's. In addition, the girl's connection to Śiva at the second level of intermediate subtlety can be understood to be a stage in her experience between the subtle experience of ineffability and the group's experience of conceptualizing Śiva in relation to the cosmos. This could correspond to the state described in the last half of the first verse. She is no longer at the ineffable stage, as she is overwhelmed by emotion and acts erratically, nor is she at the stage of intentional conceptualization of Śiva in relation to the cosmos.⁴⁹ Also the girl's most subtle experience is one of union and one which makes her luminous. The group indicates that they have not experienced union and in

addition, they have no association with light. This suggests that they have not had the experience that the girl had. It also explains why they did not recognize her state when they first encountered her.

In general, the analysis of certain descriptive and figurative elements in the poem revealed a sharp distinction between the experience of the group and that of the girl. The members of the group have not experienced union with Śiva while the girl has. The members of the group are not associated with light whereas the girl is. The question which must be answered, in order to identify the girl's condition is: What is the significance of the girl's association with light? Chapter 5 will address this question.

Notes to Chapter Four

¹See chapter 3, p. 126-7 for the non-ordinary state, and pp. 113-5 regarding the lack of any explicit indication of the girl's condition.

²Zvelebil suggests the following dating for the anthologies from the classical poetic tradition: 1) the earliest anthologies - 1st cent. BC to 2nd cent. AD; 2) the middle anthologies - 2nd cent. AD to 4th cent.; 3) the later anthologies - 3rd cent. to 5th cent.; 4) the latest anthologies - 4th cent. to 6th century. Kamil Zvelebil, The Smile of Murugan: On Tamil Literature of South India (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1973), pp. 42-3. The classical poetry is divided into two genres, akam and puram. Akam in the context of literature refers to "'inner life', 'private life' and, more specifically, 'all aspects of love', ie. premarital, marital and extramarital love". Puram in reference to literature refers to "'outward life, public life, political life' and more specifically 'heroism, war'." Zvelebil, p. 91. "The interpretation of 'akam' as 'soul' 'inner feelings' is secondary and develops later especially in devotional lyrics." Alexander M. Dubianski, "An Analysis of the Mullai-Pālai Fragment of Ancient Tamil Poetry," Journal of Tamil Studies, 15 (June 1979), p. 101, n. 13.

³According to A.K. Ramanujan: "The classical conceptions of akam and puram do not die. They find vigorous new lives in every major Tamil text until the twelfth century, and even beyond...in the moving and popular hymns of the Śaiva and Vaiṣṇava saint-poets, and in Kampan himself. All these texts, all except the Buddhist epic, are widely read, recited and used in temples, festivals, and political platforms." A.K. Ramanujan, selected and trans., Poems of Love and War from the Eight Anthologies and the Ten Long Poems of Classical Tamil (New York: Columbia University Press, 1985), p. 296. He also says in Hymns for the Drowning: Poems for Viṣṇu by Nammālvār (Princeton: University Press, 1981), pp. 157-8, that: "Not only the personae, but the landscapes and the situations of classical Tamil love poetry (and heroic poetry) are enlisted as 'signifiers' for a new 'signification'." As George Hart, III, says in The Poems of Ancient Tamil: Their Milieu and Their Sanskrit Counterparts (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1975), p. 195: "...all Tamil poetry, including that of the medieval period, is

very different from Sanskrit. Tamil writers always followed Tamil conventions and took most of their ideas from earlier Tamil Literature...." See also Zvelebil, Smile, p. 198.

⁴Glenn E. Yocum, Hymns to the Dancing Śiva: A Study of Maṇikkavācakar's Tiruvācakam (Columbia, Missouri: South Asia Books, 1982), p. 51.

⁵For more details see the discussion of the simile involving the cloud (pp. 147-8) and the simile involving the rising sun (pp. 149-50) as well as the corresponding notes (28, 32, 33).

⁶See n. 2.

⁷P.S. Subrahmanya Sastri, Tolkāppiyam: The Earliest Extant Tamil Grammar Text in Tamil and Roman Scripts with a Critical Commentary in English, Poruḷ-Atikāram-Tamil Poetics. Part I - Akattiṇai and Purattiṇai (Mylapore: The Kuppaswami Sastri Research Institute, 1949), s. 56 and s. 57; Zvelebil, Smile, p. 91; Ramanujan, Poems of Love, p. 235.

⁸"Since shyness and credulity are in the nature of women, the amorous desire in women under kaḷavu is not clearly expressed, but is to be understood from suggestion and position." Tolkāppiyam, s. 106; Kaḷavu is one of the stages in the akam genre. The topics of the akam genre are "love", and more generally, "inner life" (see n. 2). "Since it is not expressed except at the critical situation, the lady's love towards the lover is inferred by others through her features, etc.", s. 205. See also G. Sundaramoorthy, Early Literary Theories in Tamil (In Comparison with Sanskrit Theories), Foreward M. Varadarajan (Madurai: Sarvodaya Ilakkiya Pannai, 1974), pp. 61, 147.

⁹In the Sanskrit literary tradition, dress and appearance also reveal the inner feelings. Discussions with Dr. S.S. Janaki, 11 March, 1987. Perhaps this is a general characteristic of Indian literature, which therefore may support interpreting the group's inner state on the basis of their outer state.

¹⁰Tolkāppiyam, s. 292 and s. 294.

¹¹See Appendix A, verse 12.

¹²The colour white in verse 11 is the colour of the ashes.

Thus the association for Śiva with the colour is less subtle than if it were the colour of a non-removable feature. The other reference is to the cōti liṅga which is described as puntarikam. Puntarikam can mean a white lotus.

- ¹³Atiyōm is a reference to devotees. See verse three, note 2. The adjective, cīr, can be understood to describe the feet. Discussions with Dr. Radhakrishnan, 13 January, 1987.
- ¹⁴Cīr has been translated as beauty in the discussions in order to emphasize that the word has been used. It was rendered as "glories" in the translation.
- ¹⁵Cīr can also mean a good state or condition, or celebrity. Kōlam can also convey gracefulness, handsomeness, or distinguishing marks. Visvanatha Pillai, A Tamil English Dictionary, 9th ed. (Madras: The Madras School Book and Literature Society, 1984).
- ¹⁶Wearing ornaments seems to indicate a positive inner state and not wearing ornaments seems to indicate a negative inner state. See Hart, p. 166; and M.Varadarajan, The Treatment of Nature in Sangam Literature (Ancient Tamil Literature), 2nd ed. (Madras: The South India Saiva Siddhantha Works Publishing Society, Tinnevely, Ltd., 1969), p. 322-3. See also note 8. For example, Dubianski, in his discussion of the separation theme (mullai and pālai- see the discussion on p. 156 of this chapter) indicates that the woman is angry and displeased at being separated from her husband but suppresses those feelings. However, she "does not beautify herself". The receipt of a message that her husband is returning "marks the revival of her beauty. She cleans her hair, untwists knots (in [the] plait), beautif[ies] it with flowers, and when the hero comes, the happy family life resumes...." Dubianski, pp. 88-9. In the discussion of this theme, the heroine's negative inner state is reflected in a physical appearance that is uncared for and therefore is not beautiful. When the heroine's inner state becomes more positive and happy her physical beauty becomes manifest once more. Physical beauty reflects a positive inner state.
- ¹⁷See verse 3, note 2.
- ¹⁸See chapter 5 for an explanation of cōti and a justification for the citations being implied references

to the cōti liṇqa, pp. 171-4.

¹⁹Visvanatha Pillai.

²⁰Visvanatha Pillai.

²¹Klaus Ludwig Janert, ed., Miron Winslow Tamil-English Dictionary, (Madras, 1862; rpt. Wiesbaden: Steiner, 1977).

²²For an elaboration of this comparison and a justification of the interpretation see the discussion of the simile further on in the chapter, pp. 147-9.

²³The comparison is made explicit by the phrase: eṅkal pirāṭṭiyum eṅkōnum pōnricainta poṅku maṭu. Pōnricainta expresses the notion of "resemblance, being like". Poṅku maṭu refers to the pond. Eṅkal pirāṭṭi eṅkōnum refers to "Our King and Lady". The grammatical structure makes it clear that the pond is compared to Siva-Śakti. See A.H. Arden, Progressive Grammar of the Tamil Language, Revised by A.C. Clayton, 5th ed. (1942; rpt. Madras: The Christian Literature Society, 1969), p. 181, no. VII and no. VIII.

²⁴Discussion with Dr. Janaki, 19 March, 1987.

²⁵My attention was drawn to the intensity of the devotion of the group in this particular context by Dr. Janaki. Discussions, 19 March, 1987.

²⁶In this verse the usual comparison has been reversed. See verse 11, note 5.

²⁷Curakkum is the future relative participle of the verb cura. It means "to spring, stream, flow," or "give abundantly" among other things. Janert. Nammakku includes the person addressed. Here the cloud is addressed and therefore is included in namakku. The cloud also is a recipient of grace. See Appendix A verse 16.

²⁸There are descriptions of rain clouds in the classical poetic tradition that are similar to the description in "Tiruvempāvai". The cloud draws water from the sea. It becomes darker and darker, goes around the sky emitting lightning and thunder. Then it pours down in torrents. Varadarajan, p. 254.

²⁹Xavier S. Thani Nayagam, Landscape and Poetry: A Study

of Nature in Classical Tamil Poetry (Bombay: Asia Publishing House, 1966), pp. 19-20; Hart, p. 249.

³⁰See Appendix A, verse 16.

³¹See chapter 5, p. 171.

³²The description of dawn is similar to that found in the classical literature. Both the stars and the moon are said to grow pale at dawn. Varadarajan, p. 251.

³³This description is similar to a description of the sun in classical literature. Varadarajan, p. 42.

³⁴Burrow, no. 347.

³⁵See chapter 3 for the activities appropriate for the festival, p. 113.

³⁶See chapter 5, pp. 185 and the corresponding note.

³⁷Ātu governs the following verbs: kutai (11, 12), pūkupāyntu (13), pāyntu (13, 15, 17, 18), and pātu (14, 15, 17, and 18).

³⁸Zvelebil, Smile, pp. 91-2.

³⁹Zvelebil, Smile, p. 96.

⁴⁰Zvelebil, Smile, pp. 94-101.

⁴¹Varadarajan, p. 150.

⁴²Varadarajan, pp. 46, 62, 105, 294-5, 298, 356.
Varadarajan gives the references to the specific poems in his notes on each of these pages.

⁴³Varadarajan, p. 150.

⁴⁴See verse 7, note 6.

⁴⁵Zvelebil, p. 99.

⁴⁶Lalitha Sambamoorthy, "The Psychological Symbolism of Paalai in Kutunthokai", Proc. of The Second International Conference Seminar of Tamil Studies, Jan. 1968 (Madras: The International Association of Tamil Research, 1971), Vol. II, p. 28.

⁴⁷Hart, p. 262.

⁴⁸Hart, p. 166.

⁴⁹See chapter 3 for a discussion of the state described in the last half of the first verse (p. 123-4).

CHAPTER FIVE

ŚIVA AS THE CŌTI, AND THE RESOLUTION

In chapter 4, a consideration of certain descriptive and figurative elements of the poem resulted in the conclusion that the girl's and the group's experiences differed significantly. That difference was in part characterized by the girl's association with Śiva through light. The group was not connected with light.¹ In the first part of this chapter, the focus will shift from the girl and the group to Śiva in order to show the significance of Śiva as light (the cōti). In the second part of this chapter the focus will shift back to the girl and the group whereupon the consideration of the significance of Śiva as light (the cōti), in relation to devotees, will contribute to the resolutions of the dilemmas.

An important conception of Śiva in the poem is Śiva as the cōti, Effulgence (Great Light).² It will be suggested that the girl's condition is a result of an encounter with the cōti. That encounter is symbolically represented by the conferment of the foot of the cōti liṅga. The encounter accounts for her luminosity and the subtle nature of her experience. It will be

suggested that this experience is a spiritually significant state, as it is a prerequisite for the attainment of mokṣa. Once the condition of the girl has been identified, her behaviour, instead of being inappropriate, becomes understandable and in turn contributes to an understanding of the nature of her condition. Once the girl's state and behaviour are accounted for, the difficulty concerning the identity of pāvai can be considered. It will be suggested that pāvai is a designation for the girl which concisely represents the girl's state. A world-view will emerge as a result of the investigation into and resolution of the dilemmas.

The discussion will begin with a consideration of Śiva as the cōti. That discussion leads to a consideration of how the cōti and devotees may be related, and of how such a relationship is established. A discussion of that relationship leads to a consideration of the foot symbolism and related concepts in "Tiruvempāvai".

The cōti is a recurrent image in "Tiruvempāvai". The setting of the poem initially invokes the image. The cōti liṅga is the liṅga form of Śiva worshipped at Anṇāmalai.³ There are several myths associated with the cōti liṅga. A summary of the myth that seems to be

compatible with the understanding of the myth presented in the Tiruvācakam is found in the Śiva Purāṇa. The following is a brief summary which will provide a background regarding how the myth can be understood to be used in the poem. Viṣṇu and Brahmā had an altercation. Śiva, out of compassion, appeared as a pillar of fire. At the sight of the column both gods stopped their fighting. Viṣṇu transformed himself into a boar and attempted to dig down to find the bottom of the pillar. Brahmā changed himself into a gander and tried to fly to the top of the column. Both travelled at great speed for many years but they were not able to reach either end of the pillar. They realized that the column was infinite and returned to the place where they had been fighting. There they praised the god of that fire.⁴

Glenn Yocum notes that this myth is the "most frequently cited myth" in the Tiruvācakam.⁵ Some of the references to the myth found in the Tiruvācakam illustrate the compatibility of the conception of the cōti in the poems with that of the myth cited above. It also indicates how the myth seems to have been understood by Māṇikkavācakar. In the Tiruvācakam, poem 15 stanza 2, it says that the altercation began when Viṣṇu and Brahmā each claimed to be transcendent. The

pillar is described as passing through the three worlds.⁶ It is infinite and immeasurable (15:12). Viṣṇu, as a boar, dug down through the seven underworlds but could not find the bottom of the pillar.⁷ The bottom that Viṣṇu looked for is referred to as the foot.⁸ The top is referred to as the crown. Brahmā, likewise, was unable to find the crown.⁹

In "Tiruvempāvai" there are several explicit and implicit references to the cōti. The group praised the cōti Without Beginning or End (1). The girl used to praise the param cōti (2). The group praised the param cōti (5) and the nature of the cōti (14). Implied references to the cōti liṅga also occur in the poem (5, 10, 18, 20).¹⁰ The connection to the cōti liṅga is made through a reference to the mythic account of the origin of the cōti liṅga (5, 10, 20). In verse 5, the group reports that the girl had said that they, and those like them, could know the mountain that Māl (Viṣṇu) and the Four-Faced-One (Brahmā) could not. Here the mountain is the cōti liṅga of which Māl and the Four-Faced-One could not see the bottom or top. The connection to the cōti liṅga in verse 10 is made by reference to the foot, pātamalar, which is ineffable and is below the seven nether regions, and to the crown which is the crown to all things. Another reference to the cōti liṅga can be

deciphered from the reference to pātamalar which is referred to as the "beginning" in verse 20. Pātamalar is only used twice in "Tiruvempāvai", once in verse 10 and once in verse 20. This suggests that pātamalar refers to the same thing, the foot of the cōti liṅga, in both cases. The white lotus, puntarikam, that was not seen by Māl or the Four-Faced-One is referred to in verse 20. In verse 18, there is the reference to the foot of Śiva at Anṇāmalai. It was already indicated above that Śiva at Anṇāmalai is the cōti liṅga.¹¹

There is a connection stated in the poem between the cōti and certain people. In verse 5, the girl in the past indicated that they and people like them could know the "Mountain" that Māl and the Four-Faced-One could not. As indicated above that "Mountain" is the cōti liṅga.¹² Therefore, devotees like the girl and the group can come to know the cōti liṅga. The question is: How can they come to know Śiva as the cōti liṅga?

There are two references in "Tiruvempāvai" to feet that are bestowed. Those two feet are malarppātam, the blossom-foot (2), and ceṅkamalapporpātam, the red-lotus-golden foot (17). If the bestowed feet are the same as the foot of the cōti liṅga, then it is possible that humans come to know Śiva as the cōti liṅga through the bestowal of the foot of the cōti liṅga. In

order to determine if the foot of the cōti liṅga can be equated with the graciously bestowed feet, malarppātam and ceṅkamalapporpātam, it is necessary to consider the symbolism of the feet in the poem.

References to the foot or the feet occur frequently in "Tiruvempāvai" (1, 2, 3, 6, 9, 10, 11, 12, 3, 15, 16, 17, 18, 20). The words used for the foot or feet are pātam (2, 10, 12, 17, 20), aṭi (3, 9, 17, 18, 20), and tāl (15). Adjectives associated with references to the feet are: malar (blossom-2, 10, 20), pon (golden-12, 17, 20), ceṅkamalam (red lotus-17), kamalam (lotus-18), cīr (holy-9), and inaṭi (two-20). The feet are also referred to indirectly by kalalkal (anklets-1, 20), kalal (anklet-6, 11, 18), cilampu (anklet-16), centalirkal (red sprouts-20), puntarikam (white lotus-20), and ponmalarkal (golden flowers-20). Adjectives associated with these indirect references to the feet are vār (leather-girt-1, 6), pon (golden-16), pū (flower-20), cem (20) and vān (beautiful-6). Some of these references (pon, malar, ceṅkamalam, kamalam and pātam) will be suggested to represent a symbolic motif which will indicate that the foot of the cōti liṅga is the same foot as the graciously bestowed feet, malarppātam and ceṅkamalapporpātam.

The final verse of the poem is comprised almost entirely of references to the feet. This suggests that the concepts related to the feet are summarized in this verse (see pp. 251-2 for that translation). The references to the feet in verse 20 are varied and rich in description. Two of the seven references to the foot or feet occur in exactly the same form elsewhere in the poem. They are pātamalar (10) and porpātam (12). Pūṅkalalkal appears without the adjective, pū, (1) and pū is not used elsewhere in references to anklets. Inai atikal is not used anywhere else in the poem, although ati is. Centalirkal and puntarikam do not appear elsewhere in the poem. The last reference to the feet in verse 20 is ponmalarkal. This reference, also, is not used in this form anywhere else in the poem. However both pon and malar are used almost exclusively in association with pātam. The exceptions are where malar is used in reference to Śakti in the pond analogy (13) and pon is used in reference to Śakti's anklets in the cloud analogy (16).¹³ pātam, when used in reference to Śiva, is always modified by at least pon or malar.¹⁴ The recurrence of pātam in "Tiruvempāvai", that pātam is always modified by pon or malar or both, and the occurrence of ponmalarkal suggest that a series of interrelationships may exist which are identified or

connected through the symbolic sub-motif in the foot symbolism circumscribed by references to pātam, malar and pon. This possibility is also supported by the apparent lack of such a motif described by kalal or ati, and the single occurrences of references to centalirkal and puntarikam.¹⁵ An investigation into the references to pātam does suggest that such a motif may be understood to be in the poem, and it also suggests what the significance of the foot symbolism in "Tiruvempāvai" might be.

There are four distinct references to pātam in the poem. They are: malarppātam, blossom-foot (2); pātamalar, foot-blossom (10, 20); porpātam, golden foot (12, 20); and ceṅkamalapporppātam, red-lotus-golden foot (17). Each of these occurrences of pātam are described explicitly in certain ways. Pātamalar is said to be ineffable and transcendent (10), and to be a "beginning" (20). Malarppātam is described as shying away from the praising of the gods, and as the foot that is graciously bestowed (2). Ceṅkamalapporppātam also is said to be the foot that is graciously conferred (17). There are two references to porpātam. Porpātam is said to be the foot of he who possesses (12). The notion of possession, then, is related to porpātam by virtue of the fact that

it belongs to one who possesses. Porpātām is then said to be the basis of the appearance of life (20).

However, each of these expressions referring to pātām cannot be considered to be different descriptions of the same pātām because they all cannot be equated to each other. Malarppātām and ceṅkamalapporppātām, as the feet that are graciously bestowed, cannot be equated with porpātām which is the basis of life. From the contexts of the use of malarppātām (2) and ceṅkamalapporppātām (17) it is clear that these feet are graciously bestowed by Śiva on the living. In addition, not all of the living receive the bestowed foot, malarppātām. Malarppātām is inaccessible to the gods (2). The bestowed foot, then, cannot be the foot which gives life (porpātām) because all who are living, which includes the gods, have received the benefit of porpātām, while only some of the living receive malarppātām. Thus the bestowal of the foot presupposes the action of porpātām.

Since pātām suggests that all designations in which pātām appear are related, but as they cannot be equated, there must be some way in which the designation is meaningful. That way is suggested by the phrase, ponmalarkal. As pon and malar for the most part describe pātām, ponmalarkal may summarize the

interrelationships of the references to pātam. Only in line 7 of verse 20 do the words pon and malar appear together. Ponmalarkal suggests that the two feet are somehow a combination of two of the single feet designated by pātam, one modified by pon and one by malar. The combination of two pātams yields two feet which provide the plural in the equation. If the plural, kal, is taken as an abbreviation for the plural of pātam then the phrase ponmalarkal can be obtained.¹⁶ There are only two combinations of the pātams which can be related in this way. The first combination is pātamalar and porpātam, and the second is malarppātam and porpātam. Pātamalar and malarppātam taken together do not provide a pon, and their combination yields two malars. Ceṅkamalapporppātam cannot combine with any of the others because it will always retain its ceṅkamala. The plural marker, kal, suggests that the resolution of the pātams by the equation ponmalarkal into combinations of two feet, indicates that those two feet are not identical symbolically. It was mentioned above that mālarppātam cannot be identified with porpātam, as malarppātam presupposes the action of porpātam.

Various descriptive and conceptual evidence suggests that three of the four feet (pātamalar, malarppātam and ceṅkamalapporppātam) are different

descriptions of the same graciously bestowed foot, and that porpātam is a description of a different life-giving foot. It was mentioned above that pātamalar, through the mythic association, refers to the foot of the cōti liṅga (10).¹⁷ Malarppātam shies away from the gods, even though the gods praise the foot (2). Therefore, for gods, it is inaccessible and thus unknowable. It is known that the foot that the gods honour¹⁸ is the foot of the cōti liṅga (18). From the mythic context and the references to the myth in the Tiruvācakam¹⁹ and those in "Tiruvempāvai" (5, 20)²⁰ it is also known that Viṣṇu and Brahmā cannot know the cōti liṅga and thus by extension neither can the other gods. Thus, although the gods can honour the foot of the cōti liṅga, they cannot know that foot. Therefore, malarppātam, as the foot which the gods praise but cannot know, is the same foot as the foot of the cōti liṅga. Ceṅkamalapporppātam is connected to the foot of the cōti liṅga by the reference to atikkamala (18). The link is made through the use of the word kamala, and that pātam and ati are feet. Atikkamala is the foot of the cōti liṅga. The first three feet all can be related to a reference outside the pātam framework, the foot of the cōti liṅga. Porpātam, however, is not related to

that outside reference, neither through description nor through concepts.²¹

In addition, certain connections within the pātam framework suggest that malarppātam, pātamalar and ceṅkamalapporppātam refer to the same pātam. Pātamalar and malarppātam are linked descriptively by the word, malar. Malarppātam and ceṅkamalapporppātam are connected conceptually in that both are graciously bestowed. There is, within the pātam framework, only an indirect link between ceṅkamalapporppātam and pātamalar. That connection is through their common relation with malarppātam.

The interrelationship between the three pātams can be taken one step further, in order to suggest another characteristic of the three pātams taken as one. Malar relates malarppātam, pātamalar and kuvalaikkārmalar (13). Kuvalaikkārmalar is the dark blue waterlily which refers to Śakti in the pond analogy (13). Ceṅkamala connects ceṅkamalapporppātam and ceṅkamalappaimpōtu (13). Ceṅkamalappaimpōtu refers to Śiva in the pond analogy. Since all three pātams are really the same foot, they can be combined to yield the notion of Śiva-Śakti in the pond analogy. Through that association the foot of the cōti liṅga also can be understood to cleanse.

Porpātām is connected to ceṅkamalapporpātām through the common adjective, pon. Although these two feet cannot be equated, as the action of ceṅkamalapporpātām presupposes the action of porpātām,²² it seems that they must share a common characteristic. Since porpātām is attributed with only two descriptions the shared feature must be one of those two characteristics. The common characteristic cannot be that both are the basis of the appearance of life, because that feature of porpātām is the characteristic which precludes the equating of the two porpātāms. The shared feature must be porpātām's capacity to possess. Both feet, then, possess.²³

There is also a possible conceptual connection between porpātām and pātāmalar. Porpātām is said to be the basis of the appearance (torram) of life. Pātāmalar is said to be a "beginning" (āti). What pātāmalar is the beginning of is not specified. Both feet represent a beginning. However, as pātāmalar is clearly linked with malarppātām and ceṅkamalapporpātām, it seems that pātāmalar and porpātām represent different types of beginnings.

A consideration of the motif suggested by ponmalarkal and pātām indicates that there are two different feet, one is porpātām which is the basis of life and the other is the foot of the cōti liṅga.

Ponmalarkal is said to grace by "taking and ruling", and thereby saving (uyya ātkoṇṭarulum). Thus both feet are part of the saving action of Śiva.

In summary, it has been suggested that the process of saving (which occurs by "taking and ruling") is divided into two components through the equation ponmalarkal. The first is symbolized by porpātam. Porpātam, as the foot which represents the basis of life, suggests that life itself is part of the spiritual process. Life is also a form of possession by Śiva. The second part of the saving process is represented by the foot of the cōti liṅga. All the attributes and qualities associated with the three references to pātam connected to the foot of the cōti liṅga and with aṭikkamala (from the comparison in verse 18) can be summarized in order to describe the second component of the saving process. This foot is graciously bestowed and it is unattainable by the gods. It also represents a form of possession. On the basis of the reverse comparison discussed in chapter 4, the effect of the gracious bestowal of the foot of the cōti liṅga can be compared to the dawning of the sun. As the sun, when it rises, causes darkness to be removed and other forms of light to pale in comparison and yield, so the gracious bestowal of the foot of the cōti liṅga removes spiritual

darkness and causes other forms of spiritual illumination to pale in comparison. It is also the highest form of illumination.²⁴ Such illumination is an experience of Śiva as ineffable (10). The experience of the bestowal of the foot of the cōti liṅga represents a beginning (20), a new stage in spiritual life. The encounter with it involves cleansing, the removal of spiritual blemishes.²⁵

In "Tiruvempāvai" there are other references to the feet in the plural form. Those contribute to an understanding of the significance of the two feet. The first plural reference is in the first verse. There the group indicates that they have been singing praises about the anklets of Mātēvaṇ (Śiva). The notion of the two feet is introduced but not elaborated here. In retrospect, it indicates that they have been praising the source of life as well as the bestowal of the foot, and that conceptually at least they know about the two feet. The rest of the plural references are found in the last verse. Verse 20 can be divided into four parts, three have to do with the feet. The first two lines are a request by the group to have the pātamalar (the foot of the cōti liṅga) and the centalirkal (the red sprouts) graciously bestowed on them. The red sprouts are defined as "the end". "The end" of what is

not specified. Since the reference here is also to pātamalar which is the "beginning", presumably it is the end of what pātamalar is the beginning. This indicates that both feet are required to bring about this end. The request for the two feet, then, is really a request for the second foot (they already have the first foot because they are alive), and for the end which both feet help bring about.

The next section of verse 20 is lines 3 to 5 which relate the foot (or feet) to all of life. Porpātam is said to be the beginning of life. Next the anklets (kalalkal) are said to be the enjoyment for all of life. The feet are a source of enjoyment in two ways. Firstly porpātam can be thought of as the source of wordly pleasure. Secondly the gracious bestowal of the second foot brings delight.²⁶ All of life, in theory, potentially can receive the second foot by virtue of the workings of rebirth.²⁷ The following line in the verse indicates that both feet (atikal) are the termination of all life. Since Māṇikkavācakar indicates in the Tīruvācakam, but not explicitly in "Tiruvempāvai", that he believes in the cycles of rebirth, this line indicates that both feet enable one to break out of the cycle of rebirth.²⁸ It is not exactly clear from

"Tiruvempāvai" what the state of release from the cycles of rebirth is like.

The third section refers to the ponmalarkal (golden flowers) which save, by "taking and ruling", and the puntarikam, the white lotus which was not seen by Māl and the Four-Faced-One. The references to feet in the plural indicate that both feet bring pleasure in life and that both bring about the spiritual goal, the end of life, however that is conceived to be by Māṇikkavācakar.

There are several other references in the poem to a foot in the singular. It is not always clear exactly which foot is intended although sometimes the context suggests a meaning.²⁹ For example, in verse 18 there are two references to feet. The first is atikkamala which was discussed above as the foot of the cōti līṅga and which is the foot that is bestowed. The second reference is to kalal (anklet). This anklet is said to belong to him who remains while becoming the whole of the universe. This concept suggests that the reference is to the foot which is the basis of life.

The golden flowers (ponmalarkal) are said to grace by "taking and ruling" (ātkontu) and simultaneously saving (uyya). The phrase, in various forms, is used several times in "Tiruvemāpāvai". Its use in these other places contributes to an understanding of the

nature of the feet. Ātkol is a combination of ā and kol. Ā can be understood as a noun, meaning person or slave, or as a verb, meaning to rule, possess or govern.³⁰ Kol in the phrase is a verb or a verbal form which can mean a variety of things, but basically it means to take or accept.³¹ The term has been translated in each case as to "take and rule" when it is used in reference to Śiva. This represents a certain interpretive position. The justification for it will be made after the use of the term has been elaborated.

The combination of ā and kol appears in two forms five times in the poem in reference to Śiva.³² The first occurrence of the phrase is in verse five. In this context, the group indicates that they are singing about the characteristics of Śiva that remove blemishes by taking and ruling, and gracing (ātkoṇṭaruli). Those whose blemishes are removed are "us" (nammai). This refers to the group and the person addressed, the girl. Thus, "taking and ruling" removes blemishes and is a form of grace.

The phrase, ātkoṇṭu, occurs again in the sixth verse. There the anklet (or the wearer of the anklet) is referred to as that which graces, and it belongs to him who is unknown to the gods, those on earth and others. The owner of the anklet comes, gives a kindly

look, and takes and rules. The notions of "coming" and "unknowability" associated with the anklet and Śiva in this context suggests that this is a reference to the foot that is bestowed. Here, the "us" is the exclusive form, emmai. Arulum is the future relative participle of the verb, arul (to grace). Arulum modifies the anklet. The future relative participle indicates either that the anklet will grace in the future or that in general the anklet graces. The emmai excludes the girl from those who receive the foot. Perhaps the group is suggesting that because she is not behaving appropriately she is not eligible or will not receive the foot.

The next occurrence of āl and kol is in the eleventh verse. There Śiva's sport is described as that which graces by "taking and ruling" (nī ātkontarulum vilaiyāttu). That sport saves others who did certain things and saves the group who do the same things (11). In verse 12, Śiva's sport is described as the "preserving, creating and concealing of us (ellom), the world, and the heavens". The equation of Śiva's sport to creation, preservation and destruction of the worlds, and that it takes and rules relates Śiva's sport to the foot which is the basis of life. If porpātam is the basis of life, the manifestation, maintenance and

destruction of all must be, figuratively, the activity of that foot. In verse 11, devotees' rituals include bathing themselves and praising the anklet. The anklet here is only qualified by "your" (un) which refers to Śiva. The context of sport and that it saves suggests perhaps that they are praising the anklet that is the basis of life and Śiva's creation. Alternatively, they could be referring to the foot that is bestowed in Śiva's creation.

In verse 15, āl and kol are used again. In this context they describe the Knowing One, (vittakar). The Knowing One "takes and rules" (ātkollum) in such a way that the one who is "taken and ruled" becomes filled with "madness" for Śiva. In this context, "madness" (pittu) is used to describe one so filled with devotion that their behaviour exceeds the bounds of normal everyday behaviour.

The final occurrence of the phrase is the last verse. As indicated above, it is used to describe ponmalarkal, the golden flowers.

Ātkol is something that both feet do. It effects the removal of blemishes and causes one to become "mad" with devotion for Śiva. The process of ātkol itself redeems. "Take" rather than "accept" was used in the rendering of kol because "take" implies a more

intentional action than does "accept". The function of porpātam (creating, etc.) suggests that the initiative in the spiritual development of the individual is wholly Śiva's. He provides life so that the individual may mature spiritually. Also "rule" was selected over "people" or "slave" as a rendering for āl because "ruling" stresses the on-going process of Śiva's action.

A discussion of the feet has suggested how the connection between Śiva as light and the luminosity of the girl may be understood. Śiva, as light, illuminates individuals. That action is symbolically represented by the gracious bestowal of the foot of the cōti liṅga. The motif of the feet divides spiritual development, generally, into two stages: that stage which is prior to the bestowal of the foot and the stage which follows that bestowal. Prior to having received the foot of the cōti liṅga one has not been "illuminated" and after the bestowal one has been "illuminated". Thus the association of light suggests that such an individual has been graced with the foot. On the basis of the girl's association with light, it can be said that she has been graced with the foot of the cōti liṅga.

The nature of the experience of the bestowal of the foot is indicated by the girl and through description. Through the use of the terms, pētai and "parrots", the

girl suggestively conveys that it is a state of union with Śiva.³³ She also indicates that she is in an experience which is ineffable, since in verse 10 she describes the pātamalar as being beyond words. This suggests that the state is one of mystical union with Śiva. In addition, the stress on the description of the girl at the most subtle level suggests that the experience of the foot is internal. It occurs within her rather than in relation to the world.³⁴

In terms of the contrast between the group and the girl, it is clear that the group is not experiencing the foot at the time of the poem. Their experience is diametrically opposed to that of the girl. The symbolism of the bees indicates that they are not experiencing union.³⁵ Secondly, their experience of Śiva is effable. They praise Śiva continually in a rich and varied fashion throughout the poem. Thirdly the group's experience was found to be primarily external and directed towards Śiva in the universe.³⁶

In addition, the members of the group do not seem to have had the experience of the bestowed foot yet. They are not associated with light.³⁷ This suggests that they have not been "illuminated". That illumination occurs through the bestowal of the foot. Also, in the final verse of the poem, they request that they be

granted the pātamalar (the foot of the cōti liṅga) and the centalirkal (red sprouts).³⁸

The contrast in the behaviour of the group and the girl as she is at the time of the poem, and between the girl as she was in the past and at the time of the poem are explainable from the perspective that the girl has received the foot of the cōti liṅga and while the group has not. The explanation is summarized in the girl's designation of herself as a "new" devotee in contrast to them as "old" devotees (3). It has already been indicated in chapter 3 that there is a similarity between how the girl was in the past and how the group is currently, and a contrast between the girl in the past and present.³⁹ It was also suggested in chapter 3 that there was a difficulty in that if the members of the group are "old" devotees and she was like them, then how could she now be a "new" devotee?⁴⁰ The foot of the cōti liṅga is said to represent a "beginning". Its bestowal suggests that the receiving devotee enters a new phase of spiritual development. The foot, on the basis of the reverse analogy, removes darkness and causes other illumination to pale in comparison, and to yield. These are results which the other foot, the one which is the basis of life, does not effect. In this way, the bestowal of the foot brings about a new

condition. The girl, then, is a new devotee in the sense that she has entered a new phase of spiritual development initiated by the conferment of the foot of the cōti liṅga. The difference between how the girl was (an "old" devotee) and how she is at the time of the poem (a "new" devotee) is a result of having experienced the foot.

The contrast between how the girl behaved in the past and how she behaves at the time of the poem also helps to determine when her experience of the foot occurred. The experience must have occurred between the time she promised to go and awaken her friends (the day before-6) and when the group arrived at her house the following day (1). At the time that the girl made the promise, she was an "old" devotee. She was planning to act in accordance with what is expected in the festival context.⁴¹ By the time the group arrived at her house she was a "new" devotee. She was not acting appropriately in their minds. She was not participating in the activities of the festival. Since in chapter 3 it was argued that the girl was in a non-ordinary state when she heard the group's praise of Śiva in the street,⁴² it seems that the state that she was in was a state in which she was experiencing the foot of the cōti liṅga.

The experience of the foot represents a non-ordinary experience or state of mind for two reasons. Firstly the structure of the foot symbolism suggests that such an experience must be non-ordinary as it is outside the normal experiences of life. That is, since Māṇikkavācakar believes in the cycles of rebirth⁴³ and since the bestowal of the foot is a prerequisite for bringing about the end of that cycle,⁴⁴ it is conceivable that one could live many lives before one experienced the foot of the cōti liṅga. The bestowal of the foot, then, occurs within life but not as part of the ordinary flow of life.

Secondly in chapter 3, non-ordinary was used more precisely than above to describe a state in which one was neither asleep, nor half asleep, nor awake and in a frame of mind in which one goes about their daily affairs.⁴⁵ It was argued in that chapter that the girl was neither asleep nor half asleep but awake.⁴⁶ It was also suggested that she could not be in a state in which one goes about their daily affairs. The experience of the foot of the cōti liṅga appears to be a state in which one must be awake because there is an awareness. The state involves an experience of Śiva as ineffable. In order to experience Śiva as ineffable one must be in a state which is ineffable. An experience of

ineffability cannot be a state in which one goes about their daily affairs. In order to conduct one's daily business one must deal with describable particulars. Consequently, the state in which one experiences the bestowed foot cannot be ordinary in the sense in which the term has been defined here. Thus, the girl's state just prior to hearing the praising of the group in the street, is possibly the state in which she was experiencing the foot of the cōti liṅga.

In terms of the levels of subtlety discussed in chapter 4, the experience of the foot of the cōti liṅga can be considered to occur at the most subtle level of experience. This is because it is at this level that one experiences luminosity and ineffability. The girl's experience, upon emerging from that state after hearing the praise, occurs at the intermediary level of subtlety. It is the state described in the last half of verse one. In that state she is overwhelmed by emotion and behaving erratically without volition. At this stage she still lacks the concrete experience of the group in which they intentionally act, by joyfully praising Śiva in a variety of ways.⁴⁷

Now that the girl's state prior to hearing the praise has been identified her behaviour becomes understandable and at the same time serves to convey

something about her experience of the foot of the cōti
liṅga. The girl was not religiously negligent, rather
she was in an important spiritual state which determined
her behaviour. Several things can be observed from her
behaviour during the state and upon emerging from it.
Since she was in that state, she did not go and awaken
her friends.⁴⁸ It is clear that the experience of the
foot takes precedence over the spiritual activities
followed in the normal course of a devotee's life. This
effect continues for the period immediately following
the experience. That is evident from the fact that once
the group initiated a response from the girl, she did
not immediately begin to participate in the activities
of the festival. It is not clear, however, from the
poem, if the normal activities of devotees will continue
to be inappropriate for one who has experienced the
foot. It also appears that the state in which the foot
is experienced is engrossing, overwhelming and one which
effectively suppresses one's self-awareness, so that one
does not act under one's own volition, if the individual
can act at all. This is suggested from the time that it
took the girl to recover her self-awareness. She hears
the praise and enters the state described in the first
verse. In that state she still appears to lack
self-awareness. It is only in the second change, when

she speaks to the group that she has regained her self-awareness.⁴⁹ The girl's behaviour at the time of the poem suggests the immediate importance of the experience and its completely involving nature.

The identification of the girl's condition and an understanding of the girl's behaviour that resulted from that condition contributes to a resolution of the dilemma regarding the identity of pāvai. The issue is whether pāvai refers to the girl or to Śakti. Pāvai can mean either: 1) a woman, or 2) a doll-like creature, or 3) an image which represents a female goddess worshipped in the festival context.⁵⁰ Pāvai as woman is appropriate for both Śakti and the girl. However, several aspects of the poem suggest that the last two meanings of the term cannot apply to Śakti. In contrast, an understanding of the girl's behaviour and condition suggests that those two meanings can apply to her.

The notion of a doll-like creature suggests inactivity, and a lack of volition and self-awareness. In the poem Śakti is described as active. Śakti is said to "separate and foster" (14), and to come and grace (16). In addition, both she and Śiva cleanse (13). The nature of her activity implies that she has volition and self-awareness. The girl, on the other hand, after having received the foot, is relatively inactive. When

the group finds her at her house, she is in a state in which she is incapable of undertaking any intentional action.⁵¹ pāvai, then, would seem to more appropriately suggest the girl if the "doll-like" meaning was used.

The third understanding, that pāvai refers to the image worshipped in the festival, also does not readily apply to Śakti as she is presented in "Tiruvempāvai". This use of the word is evoked by the cultural associations of the term with the festival and by the other aspects of the festival evident in the poem.⁵² In the poem, however, the main object of worship is Śiva, not Śakti. Śiva is extolled or mentioned in every verse of the poem. Śakti is only featured in verse 16 and somewhat less so in verse 13. She is praised along with other objects of praise in verse 14, and in verses 8, 10 and 11 she is only indirectly mentioned. Further, the group makes three requests of Śiva (9, 19 and from the context 20). No requests are made to Śakti and she is never addressed. Thus, pāvai as referring to the object worshipped, does not really apply to Śakti in "Tiruvempāvai". This third definition of pāvai indirectly applies to the girl. The notion of pāvai as an image who is worshipped or honoured in the festival context evokes the idea of a female goddess. In the context of the worship of Śiva, Śakti is the goddess.

evoked. Since Śakti is not the one worshipped in the poem, the term does not apply to her specifically in the context of the poem. However, as the term evokes in general the notion of Śakti, it can be thought of as a metaphor for the girl in which she is compared in some way to Śakti, as Śakti is presented in the poem. What is not clear from the use of the term itself is what is being compared. The poem, however, can be understood to give an indication of the point of comparison.

Basically two aspects of Śakti are described in the poem: her activity and her relationship with Śiva. Śakti's activity, referred to above, is divine activity. It is activity done to humans not done by humans. Also, Śakti's activity is intentional and therefore involves self-awareness. The girl, however, is more or less inactive and when the group found her she was incapable of intentional action.⁵³ It seems, then, that the point of comparison cannot be Śakti's activity. Therefore, it must be, within the context of the poem, a comparison to Śakti's relationship with Śiva. That relationship is described in several ways in the poem. Śakti is the woman portion of Śiva in his form as half-man and half-woman (8, 10). In verse 11, she is referred to as the spouse of Śiva and in verse 16 Śakti is said to be inseparable from Śiva. The two features of this

relationship which emerge are that Śiva and Śakti are united and they are married. Pāvai, used in the context of the festival to refer to a female goddess, then, suggests that the girl, like Śakti, is in union with Śiva and figuratively is married to him. That understanding of the term, is reinforced by understanding the girl's condition to be one in which she has experienced the gracious bestowal of the foot. That condition is a state in which she is in union with Śiva.⁵⁴ In addition, as one who has received the foot of the cōti liṇqa she is a devotee who is worthy of respect and honour.

Pāvai, as a term describing the girl, succinctly summarizes her state as one who has experienced the foot of the cōti liṇqa. The girl's state is one in which her relationship with Śiva parallels that of Śakti's and that such a state has the effect that one overcomes one's sense of self, at least temporarily.

"Tiruvempāvai" can be understood to present two types of religious experiences. The first is that of devotees in the activities of everyday life. This type of experience is depicted through the group's experience. The festival serves as the occasion for the group to show the nature of their religious experience. Although the festival may not be an everyday event, the

concerns of the festival are the concerns of life in this world, husbands (9, 19) and rain (16). The members of the group delight in their activities. They participate willingly. They praise joyfully.⁵⁵ The second type of religious experience that can be understood to be presented in the poem is the experience of the girl. Her experience is of the foot of the cōti liṅga. This experience is pivotal in a devotee's life as it is necessary for the attainment of the cessation of the cycles of rebirth, mokṣa.⁵⁶ This second type of experience transcends the first type when it occurs. As the poem has indicated, for the girl the activities which the group were engaged in had lost their significance for at least a period of time. It would seem then, that while everyday concerns are really spiritual concerns, in the overall purpose of life (spiritual progress) they become subordinated to another experience which furthers one along the spiritual path towards the spiritual goal. The spiritual goal seems to be the state which is brought about through the action of the two feet. What that state is, however, is not elaborated in "Tiruvempāvai". Even though the type of religious experience of the group is superceded by the type of religious experience of the girl, it does not mean that the group's type of religious experience is

not a valid and important experience. The girl was like the group.⁵⁷ In other words, the type of religious experience which is exemplified by the group leads to the second type of experience, that of the foot of the cōti liṇṇa. Thus, both types of experience are legitimate and essential for spiritual growth.

This conception of life and God's role in it is succinctly symbolized by Śiva's two feet.⁵⁸ The first foot, porpātam, is the foot which is the basis of life. It represents by extension the existence of the universe, the purpose of life in the universe and the type of religious experience exemplified by the group. The second foot, the foot of the cōti liṇṇa, represents an essential spiritual experience which is necessary for full spiritual growth to occur. It represents the type of experience that the girl in the poem had. Both feet, then, are essential for human fulfillment. Śiva provides the opportunity and the means for spiritual growth, and he brings about its completion.

The three dilemmas that can be inferred from "Tiruvempāvai" provoke the reader to search the poem for their resolution. Such a search stimulates an investigation into the rich descriptive and figurative elements used in the poem. An analysis of some of those elements contributed to a resolution of the dilemmas.

The resolution of the dilemmas and the insights derived from the descriptive and figurative elements in conjunction with the expressed meaning of the poem conveys a positive view of life in which all activities of life are spiritual activities. To devotees allowed to live as devotees, life is a joyous experience which leads to ultimate fulfillment.

Notes to Chapter Five

¹See chapter 4, p. 141.

²There are 8 explicit and implied references to the cōti in "Tiruvempāvai". See pp. 173-4 of this chapter. The only other motif mentioned as many times is that of Śiva as King. Śiva is referred to as kōṇ (in various forms - 6, 9, 13, 16, 19), as araiyan (7, 15) and as aracai (17).

³Alain Daniélou, Hindu Polytheism, (Bollingen Series LXXIII (New York: Bollingen Foundation, 1964), p. 221.

⁴Rabindra Kumar Siddhantashastree, Saivism Through the Ages (New Delhi: Munshiram Manoharlal Publishers Pvt. Ltd., 1975), pp. 104-4.

⁵Glenn E. Yocum, Hymns to the Dancing Śiva (Columbia, Missouri: South Asia Books, 1982), p. 142.

⁶Tiruvācakam, 28:9, 29:4.

⁷Tiruvācakam, 4:1-10, 8:1, 11:1.

⁸Tiruvācakam, 4:1-10, 8:1, 11:1, 27:5. The following references to the foot of the cōti liṅga in these verses are all in the singular form: 4:10 - malarati, 8:1 - paṅkumalarppātam, 11:1 - tiruvatiyai and 27:5 - atiyum). The notion of a cōti liṅga with human qualities (having a foot) is suggested by the myth. In the myth the pillar of light opens, revealing an anthropomorphic image of Śiva. For a full description of the myth see chapter 7 in the "Vidyēśvara Samhitā", Śiva-Purāṇa, trans. Board of Scholars (Delhi, 1970; rpt. Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass, 1977), I, pp. 54-7.

⁹Tiruvācakam, 27:5 (mutiyum).

¹⁰It is not exactly clear whether the param cōti (2, and 5) and the cōti Without Beginning or End (1) are the same as the cōti liṅga. It could be that the cōti liṅga with a foot and crown (even though the foot and crown transcend the sphere of the physical and conceptual universe - 10) are a more concrete representation of the param cōti.

¹¹See chapter 5, p. 171.

- ¹²See chapter 5, p. 173.
- ¹³See Appendix B, Chart 2 for the use of malar and Chart 3 for the occurrence of pon as adjectives.
- ¹⁴See verses 2, 10, 12, 14, 17 and 20, and the following paragraph. In verse 14, pātam is used in reference to Śakti not Śiva.
- ¹⁵Kalalkal is modified by vār and Mātēvan (1), and by pū (20). Kalal is modified by vānvār (6), un (11) and ninran (18). In reference to kalal or kalalkal, vār is the only recurring adjective and it only connects two references. There is no other linking adjective in the references to kalal or kalalkal. Ati is used four times as a reference to devotees, aṭiyīr (3) and aṭiyōm (3, 9, 17). Ati is used two other times as a reference just to feet, as aṭikkamalam (18) and ipai aṭikal (20). As with kalal and kalalkal, the references to aṭi do not seem to suggest that the references to aṭi form a sub-motif in the foot symbolism, since there are no linking adjectives.
- ¹⁶pātam is the singular form of a neuter noun. The singular, however, often has been taken semantically as a plural. Discussions with Dr. Radhakrishnan, 19 June, 1987. This study has not investigated the occurrence of the plural and the singular in "Tiruvempāvai", nor has it investigated the possibility that metrical constraints might require that the singular rather than the plural be used sometimes. As, both singular and the plural references to the feet occur in the poem, it is being assumed in this study that the use of the singular and plural, where they occur with respect to the feet of Śiva, are significant.
- ¹⁷See pp. 173-4 of this chapter.
- ¹⁸The word rendered as "honours" is the future relative participle of the verb, iraiñcu. It means to bow before, or worship (Burrow, no. 516). In the translation it has been rendered as "bowing". In the reference to it here "honours" was used in order to emphasize the aspect of worship which can be associated with the term.
- ¹⁹See n. 6 and n. 7 of this chapter.
- ²⁰See the discussion of the implied references to cōti

earlier in the chapter.

²¹The references to porpātam are the foot of he who possesses (12) and the foot which is the basis of life (20). Porpātam does not seem to be connected to the foot of the cōti liṅga either mythically or through the use of a particular adjective. For a discussion of these two concepts in relation to the other references to pātam and possibly indirectly to the other pātams see further on in the chapter. The possibility of an indirect connection of porpātam to the foot of the cōti liṅga is negated in that discussion.

²²See p. 178-9 of this chapter.

²³See verse 12, note 8. What is possessed is not specified. From the discussion of āl and kol (see pp.187 ff.) it would seem that what is possessed is all of life. See also the reference to possession on p. 183.

²⁴See pp. 149-50 of chapter 4.

²⁵For a discussion of the link of three of the references to pātam to the pond analogy (13) see p. 181 of this chapter.

²⁶This statement is made on the basis that ceṅkamalapporpātam is said to bring delight that is not experienced by Viṣṇu, Brahmā or the gods (17) and that ceṅkamalapporpātam is a reference to the foot of the cōti liṅga (see p. 180).

²⁷Although it is not indicated in "Tiruvempāvai" it is indicated in the Tiruvācakam that Mānikkavācakar believes in the cycles of rebirth. See 4:11-13. The following is quoted from Vanmikanathan's rendering of the first poem in the Tiruvācakam, lines 26-31:

As grass, shrub, worm, tree,
as full many a kind of beast, bird, snake,
as stone, man, goblin, demons,
as mighty giants, ascetics, devaas,
in the prevalent world of mobiles and immobiles,
Oh noble Lord, I have been born
in every kind of birth, and am wearied!

²⁸See n. 27.

²⁹The following are other references that have not been discussed in the chapter. In verse 3 there is a

reference to atīyīr and atīyōm. (See note 2 of that verse). In verses 9 and 17 there are the references to atīyōm, "We who are at your feet". Tāl occurs in verse 15. It is the foot of the Knowing One. This reference is considered in the discussion of āl and kol. It is unclear from the context which of the two feet is meant. In verse 16, there is a reference to Śakti's anklets.

³⁰V. Visvanatha Pillai, A Tamil English Dictionary, 9th ed. (Madras: The Madras School Book and Literature Society, 1984).

³¹Klaus Ludwig Janert, ed., Miron Winslow Tamil-English Dictionary, (Madras, 1862; rpt. Wiesbaden: Steiner, 1977).

³²The exception to this occurs in verse 3. See note 3 of that verse in chapter 2.

³³See chapter 4, pp. 155-61.

³⁴See chapter 4, pp. 140-2; 162.

³⁵See chapter 4, p. 161.

³⁶See chapter 4, pp. 138-9; 155; 162.

³⁷See chapter 4, p. 141.

³⁸As mentioned earlier in the chapter, the request for both feet, really is a request for the second foot. The group already has the first foot, figuratively speaking, because they are alive. Also, the request is, effectively, a request for the end which both feet bring about (20).

³⁹See chapter 3, pp. 111-6, especially pp. 115-6 for the discussion of the contrasts in behaviour between the group and the girl as she was in the present, and the behaviour of the girl as she was in the past and is in the present.

⁴⁰See chapter 3, p. 117.

⁴¹See chapter 3 for a discussion of the appropriate behaviour for the festival, p. 113.

⁴²See chapter 3, pp. 126-7.

⁴³See n. 27 of this chapter.

- ⁴⁴See this chapter, p. 185.
- ⁴⁵See chapter 3, p. 126.
- ⁴⁶See chapter 3, pp. 119-20
- ⁴⁷See chapter 3 for a discussion of the state described in the last half of verse one (pp. 122-3) and for the group's activity (pp. 111-3).
- ⁴⁸See chapter 3, pp. 126-7.
- ⁴⁹See chapter 3 for a justification of these statements, pp. 125-6.
- ⁵⁰See chapter 3, p. 113; Burrow, no. 4107.
- ⁵¹See chapter 3, pp. 123-4.
- ⁵²See chapter 3, p. 113.
- ⁵³See chapter 3, pp. 123-4.
- ⁵⁴See chapter 4, pp. 156 ff; and this chapter, pp. 109-1.
- ⁵⁵See chapter 3, pp. 111-3; chapter 4, pp. 152-4.
- ⁵⁶See this chapter p. 185.
- ⁵⁷See chapter 3, p. 116.
- ⁵⁸There appears to be prima facie, a compatibility between the symbolism of the feet in "Tiruvempāvai", as interpreted in this study and the symbolism of the feet in the image of Naṭarāja, the dancer in Citamparam. The right foot of Naṭarāja symbolizes concealment, and the raised left foot the bestowal of grace. Concealment represents the spiritual development that occurs in the general process of life and the left foot represents the spiritual development which ensures the termination of the cycle of life. (See verse 12 note 3). Thus the right foot of Naṭarāja seems to be equivalent to porpātam and his left foot seems to correspond to the foot of the cōti liṅga. However, in order to ascertain whether these equivalences are appropriate it would be necessary to investigate the symbolism of Naṭarāja and the concepts of the five cosmic functions in more detail than has been done in this study.

CHAPTER SIX

CONCLUSION

"Tiruvempāvai" has been interpreted variously. The poem lends itself to different interpretations. The poem can be interpreted as presenting a dilemma regarding the condition of the girl. She could either be asleep, indifferent or out of her senses as a result of hearing the group's praise. Three interpretations were mentioned, each of which took as a point of departure one of these states. The poem itself does not resolve the dilemma at the expressed level and therefore it is open to interpretations based on each of the possibilities presented regarding the state of the girl. Two other dilemmas also appear in the poem. They are the confusion regarding why the girl behaves as she does and the identity of pāvai.

The purpose of this study was to investigate the possibility that the poem was open to an interpretation in which the dilemmas could be resolved. The study revealed that if the descriptive and figurative elements were utilized the dilemmas could be resolved. In order to understand how those elements could reveal meaning the classical Tamil poetic tradition was invoked as well

as the Tiruvācākam and the mythic context of the cōti liṇqa.

In the analysis of the descriptive and figurative elements, it was found that a contrast existed between the girl at the time of the poem and the group at this level, as well as at the expressed level. Just as the girl's behaviour at the time of the poem and that of the group's were found to be markedly different, so were their respective experiences found to contrast sharply. The experiences of the girl and the group were distinguished by the girl's association with light and the group's non-association with light. The girl was found to be connected with Śiva through that association, but as the group was not associated with light no such connection existed between them and Śiva.

An investigation into the significance of Śiva as light resulted in a consideration of Śiva as the cōti. It was found that Śiva as the cōti liṇqa was knowable to human beings through the gracious bestowal of the foot of the cōti liṇqa. The experience of the foot is what makes one luminous.

The girl, then, by virtue of being luminous was suggested to have experienced the foot. It was further suggested that this experience occurred just prior to the group's praising in the street and was the

explanation for the non-ordinary state that she was suggested to be in at that time. Once the girl's condition was identified her behaviour became understandable. Further, an understanding of the girl's condition and behaviour, as well as an understanding of Śakti in "Tiruvempāvai" led to the conclusion that pāvai referred to the girl. The designation of the girl as pāvai summarizes her condition and its effect on her behaviour.

In order to determine that devotees become luminous through the bestowal of the foot of the cōti liṅga, it was necessary to consider the foot symbolism in "Tiruvempāvai". It was found that the two feet circumscribe a certain world-view. One foot is the basis of life. As such the foot symbolizes the process of life and the spiritual growth that occurs through life in this world. The second foot, the foot of the cōti liṅga, when bestowed, initiates a new stage of spiritual growth. The experience of that foot is non-ordinary and profound. It is necessary in order for the cycle of rebirth to be broken and the goal of life to be obtained. Both feet symbolize Śiva's beneficent action with respect to individuals.

Both stages in spiritual growth can be understood to be represented in the poem. The group represents

devotees in the first stage and the girl represents a devotee who has just begun the second stage. The positive depiction of the group and the girl indicates that life for Śiva's devotees is a joyful occasion.

The analysis of "Tiruvempāvai" in this study is not exhaustive. This study has not examined the possibility that constraints could be placed on the interpretation of pātam as a result of the requirements of metre or as a result of a non-specific use of the plural and singular markers in the poem. There are, also, many other descriptive and figurative elements which could be considered and which could possibly contribute to a further elaboration of the interpretation suggested in this study. Perhaps a fuller understanding of the nature of the experience of the foot of the cōti liṅga could be arrived at through an analysis of the epithets of the girl and descriptions of her not considered here. Further, Śiva is richly portrayed in the poem. Only the motif of Śiva as the cōti has been considered in this study. An investigation of the various ways in which Śiva is portrayed in the poem would provide more detail for the world-view suggested in this interpretation of the poem.

In addition, the study of the motif of the feet and the cōti liṅga offered here could be extended to the

rest of the poems in the Tiruvācakam. Such a study could determine if the motif of the feet and the understanding of the cōti liṇqa suggested here was compatible with the uses of those symbols elsewhere in the Tiruvācakam.

If the motif of the feet and the experience of the foot of the cōti liṇqa are compatible with the occurrence of the feet and with the experience of the foot of the cōti liṇqa in other poems in the Tiruvācakam, it is possible that further insight could be gained into the nature of the experience of the foot. Several questions seem to be left unanswered in "Tiruvempāvai". Firstly, it is not clear whether or not the experience of the foot is a one time event or whether it is an event which recurs periodically while the devotee matures. Further, it is not clear exactly what the nature of the goal or end is that the two feet bring about.

"Tiruvempāvai" is a rich and multi-faceted poem. As was once said in the context of the classical poetic tradition: "a good Tamil poem is like a bottomless river".¹ "Tiruvempāvai" is a good Tamil poem. In spite of the studies done on "Tiruvempāvai", there is still room for more investigation into the poem itself and into its significance in the Tiruvācakam as a whole.

Notes to Chapter Six

- ¹This was said to G. Hart by his Tamil teacher, Ramasubramaniam. George Hart L., III., The Poems of Ancient Tamil: Their Milieu and Their Sanskrit Counterparts (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1975), p. 185.

APPENDIX A

A Discussion of the Use of First Person Pronouns in "Tiruvempāvai"

Andronov classifies nām, its base (nam) and its declined forms as a pronoun that includes whoever is addressed. He then classifies yām and nāṅkal, their respective bases (em, and eṅkal which is naṅkal in later Classical Tamil) and their declined forms, as pronouns that exclude the person addressed.¹ Arden considers yām and its declined forms to be poetic forms of nām and the corresponding declined forms.² He, like Andronov, regards nāṅkal and its declined forms to exclude the person or persons addressed.³ The issue is: Are yām and nāṅkal and their respective bases and declined forms used as inclusive or exclusive pronouns in "Tiruvempāvai"?

The chart at the end of this discussion lists the plural first person pronominal forms that appear in each verse in "Tiruvempāvai". In certain verses it is clear how the pronominal forms are functioning. From these verses it can be interpreted that Māṇikkavācakar uses

nām (and its forms) and yām (and its forms) as described by Andronov.

The exclusive use of yām and its declined forms is made clear in verses 1, 4, 9, 11, 19 and in the refrain in each verse. In verse 1, the group states that they (yām) have been singing. The girl has heard yet why is she sleeping? It is clear that only the group has been singing and not the girl. yām, in its use here, excludes the speaker. In verse 4, the group uses the exclusive form yām, in "we won't do it". The use is clearly exclusive because they, as a group excluding her, are otherwise engaged and will not count. She, who is not part of their activity, can count. The group refer to themselves in the plural using the form emakku (9, 19), and they also use the exclusive genitive forms, em (19) and eṅkal (19) in their requests to Śiva. It would be inappropriate for them to ask for a request from Śiva and at the same time ask him to bestow it on himself by addressing him using an inclusive form of "us". Likewise it would be inappropriate to address Śiva as "our King" using an inclusive form and thereby imply that he is a King to himself. Again in verse 11 they comment that Śiva protects them. They use emai to refer to themselves. If they used nammai it would mean that they would be asking Śiva to protect himself as

well as them. That would be inappropriate. Finally, in the refrain, the address is to em pāvāy. If the inclusive form was used (nām) it would imply that she belonged to herself. That does not make sense.

Verse 2 gives an example of the inclusive use of nām. The group allude to a time when they and the girl inside would speak to each other. They say: "When we (nām) spoke night and day...." It is clear that the group means that the girl inside was speaking with them. Thus when they address her in the verse they use nām indicating that she was one of them speaking.

If it is assumed that Māṇikkavācakar uses nām and yām and their declined forms respectively as inclusive and exclusive pronouns consistently throughout the "Tiruvempāvai", then these forms can be used to help determine who says what in the poem. The remaining portion of this appendix will give a verse by verse account for the occurrences of those first person plural pronouns not already considered.

Verse 2: yām. If the girl were to say the sentence which includes yām, it would mean that she would be excluding the group. It would be inappropriate for her to exclude them from those who have love for Śiva. In verse 1, their love has already been introduced and in

verse 3 she indicates that they have been devotees for a long time. If the group says the statement including the yām it means that they exclude her in their reference. It is clear who the "we" are. They are the members of the group. Furthermore, the statement would be a suitable response to her chastisement of them for their apparently inappropriate joking with her. They remind her that they also are devotees and perhaps indicate that they are not being disrespectful in trying to prod her into joining them in the activities of the festival. After all she is seemingly being religiously negligent by not participating in the festival (see chapter 3). It is appropriate that they exclude her as she did not seem to include herself in her chastisement. They as a group have been isolated by the chastisement, so they, as a group excluding her, respond that they are not disrespectful.

Verse 3: nañciyanai. This is said by the group. It indicates that they regard Śiva as hers as well as theirs. In line 6, the exclusive emakku is used. The ellōm ariyōm indicates that the group is speaking. Therefore, the group uses emakku to refer themselves and to exclude the girl from that reference. "All that is necessary" means it is necessary for them not the girl.

Verse 5: nām pōl arivōm. This is a statement made by the girl in the past. This indicates that the girl used to (and maybe still does) think that she and whoever she spoke to and anyone like them could know the cōti liṅga. Nammai is said by the group to the girl. It shows that they think Śiva removes their blemishes and hers through his acts of grace, by "taking and ruling" them (nammai ātkoṇṭarulik kōtāttum).

Verse 6: Emmai is said by the group to the girl. They exclude her from the description. They are implying or suggesting that she does not receive the "taking and ruling" that includes the "kindly glance". Emakku is also said by the group to the girl. They enjoin her to sing for them if not for herself and for others like them about their King. The intimacy the group mentions between Śiva and the girl in verse 3 and the action that she receives along with them seems to be somewhat reversed by the two references here in verse 6. They are perhaps suggesting that she is not worthy of receiving the "kindly glance". Also, they may be suggesting that if she will not sing for herself that at least she should sing of Śiva for them and others like them.

Verse 12: The verse ends with an injunction to play (ātu). The bathing is to include other action: speaking, scooping and praising. The nām occurs in the context of other action that goes along with the playing. The injunction does not mean that the action has necessarily occurred. The nām includes the individual addressed but it does not necessarily mean that the person addressed is partaking in the activity. The nām may just describe what the group and the girl would be doing if they did play and do all the concurrent action. The context suggests that the group is speaking to her. They have been praising and they indicate that this is how devotees have lived for generations (11). In verse 12, they continue their activity. In light of the situation in verse 13 (see below) it is possible that this verse is addressed to the girl.

Verse 13: This verse helps determine who is addressed in verses 11, 12 and the following verses. The exclusive references are eṅkal pirāṭṭi and eṅkōṇ. The inclusive reference is nañ caṅkam. There seems to be three possibilities regarding who addresses who in this verse. Either the members of the group address each other or they address the girl; or the girl addresses

the group. There is no difficulty with the inclusive reference if the group is addressing each other. However, if that is the case there is a problem with the exclusive references. Who is being excluded and who is being included? They cannot both all be included, as is indicated by using nam, and yet at the same time be excluded, as is indicated by eṅkaḷ and em. The verse cannot be said by the girl to the group because the em and eṅkaḷ would imply that they do not regard Śiva and Śakti intimately as the notion of possession ("our") suggests they do. Clearly they regard Śiva intimately and by extension Śakti also.⁴ If the group is addressing the girl the difficulty is resolved. If this is the case, they enjoin her to play. The action that is described as occurring concurrently (by the use of cilampa, ārppa and poṅka) with playing among other things is "our (nam) bangles jangle". If she were to play (along with them) her bangles would jangle also. She would be one of them and therefore nam is appropriate. The idea is: "come and play with us, our (nam) bangles will jangle...." The eṅkaḷ and em indicate that they consider the King and the Lady as theirs but not hers or that for her the notions are inappropriate at this time. They have noted her apparent indifference and in verse 6, they seem to

suggest that perhaps she is not so intimate with Śiva.⁵ The distinction here may be a comment on that. This distinction emphasizes that the vision of the pond resembling Śiva-Śakti is their vision, not hers. It also emphasizes that there is a difference between the group and the girl. If the group is addressing the girl in this verse, it seems likely that they are doing so in verses 12, 14, 17, and 18 also.

Verse 14: Nammai is included under the injunction to play: "singing to the bangle wearer who...us (nammai)".⁶ This may mean those who play and sing receive the action of the Bangle Wearer (Śakti). The girl, as the person addressed, may be a recipient of the action of the Bangle-Wearer whether or not she joins in the playful activity in the pond, or only if she partakes in that action.

Verse 15: The exclusive reference in this verse is em, and the inclusive references are nam perumān and nām pāti. The em forms a part of a quote of a past or past statements. It, therefore, does not help determine who is speaking in this verse.⁷ The verse can be addressed either: 1) to the girl by the group; or 2) to the girl by a member of the group; or 3) to the group by the girl; or 4) to the group by a member of the group. Nam

perumān is not part of the injunction to play.

Therefore it cannot be inclusive through subsequent participation. Nam perumān, then, must be considered to include both the speaker (or speakers) and the person (or persons) addressed. In verse 13, the girl was excluded from the notion of intimacy or concrete association with Śiva by the group. This suggests that the verse is not addressed to the girl. The second nām falls under the injunction to play. It can be inclusive through the play. The only other possibility is that the verse is addressed to the group. The plural vocative supports this notion. The question is then who is addressing them, the girl or another member of the group. The enjoinder to sing, praise and play is what has been said by the group previously.⁸ It seems more likely that a member of the group would continue to speak in this way, than that the girl would begin to speak this way. Also if a member of the group says the verse to the group then she includes the group among those who regard Śiva intimately in reference to Śiva as nām perumān. If the girl were to say the verse, then she would be referring to Śiva as "hers". It has been suggested that the notion of Śiva as "hers" does not seem to be appropriate for her at the time of the poem.⁹ Also, the member of the group, in the injunction, could

be encouraging her friends to play. The group could say the refrain.

Verse 16: The cloud is addressed in this verse. In the feature by feature concrete descriptions the exclusive pronoun is used. In the context of asking the cloud to pour (rain) like Śakti pours her grace, inclusive pronouns appear (namakku and nantammai). That conveys that the cloud is considered to be "possessed and ruled" by Śakti and that it receives grace. That more abstract inclusion of the cloud as being "possessed and ruled" and the recipient of grace makes sense in the context of Śiva creating and preserving the world (12). It is stated that Śakti who "possesses and rules" us (nantammai ālutaivāḷ) is not separate from the King (16). King is qualified by em, the exclusive form. That suggests that although Śakti "rules and possesses" the cloud and pours grace for it, the notion of the King, and for that matter lady, (em pirātti) is not applicable to the cloud.

Verse 17: The inclusive references are: nam, and nantammai. The exclusive reference is naṅkaḷ. An individual is addressed in this poem. That person is described as having blemishes through the inclusive reference nantammai kōtātti (removes our blemishes).

The person, therefore, should be human. She cannot be Śakti as was suggested by Pope.¹⁰ Since the girl has already been referred to as having fragrant hair in verse 8, and she is the only one indicated as having fragrant hair in the poem, it suggests that she is the one addressed. She is re-included in the action of Śiva in this verse as the use of nam and nantammai indicate.¹¹ The exclusive reference suggests that somehow the intimacy and (or) the concrete notion (indicated by naṅkal perumāṇai) may still be inappropriate for the girl.

Verse 20: From the context of the lines in verse 20 it is clear that the first 7 lines of the verse are addressed to Śiva. Line 8 can be addressed to either Śiva or to the girl. The use of yām indicates that the person addressed is excluded. If it is Śiva, that is appropriate because he does not participate in the bath. If it is addressed to the girl it means that she does not participate in the bath either. If the verse is addressed to the girl, the pōrri may still be directed towards Śiva, or it may be a verbal participle indicating that they will take the bath praising.

The Occurrence of First Person Pronouns

in "Tiruvempāvai"

verse & line	<u>nām</u>	<u>yām</u>	<u>nāṅkal</u> or <u>yāṅkal</u>	phrase
1-L2		<u>yām</u>		we sang
1-L8		<u>em</u>		our friend
2-L1	<u>nām</u>			when we spoke
2-L8		<u>yām</u>		we...affection
3-L7	<u>nam</u>			our Siva
3-L8		<u>emakku</u>		...is necessary for us
4-L7		<u>yām</u>		we won't
5-L1	<u>nām</u>			we can know
5-L5	<u>nammai</u>			ruling us
6-L5		<u>emmai</u>		rules us
6-L7		<u>emakku</u>		sing for us
9-L7		<u>emakku</u>		grant us
11-L8		<u>emai</u>		protect us
12-L1	<u>nām</u>			we bathe
13-L4			<u>eṅkal</u>	our Lady
13-L4		<u>em</u>		our King
13-L5	<u>nam</u>			our bangles
14-L7	<u>nammai</u>			fosters us
15-L1		<u>em</u>		our Lord
15-L1	<u>nam</u>			our Lord

15-L7	<u>nām</u>		let us sing
16-L2		<u>emmai</u>	possesses and rules us
16-L3		<u>em</u>	our Lady
16-L5	<u>nantammai</u>		possesses and rules us
16-L6		<u>em</u>	our King
16-L7	<u>namakku</u>		for us
17-L2	<u>nam</u>		if is with us
17-L3	<u>nantammai</u>		our blemishes
17-L4	<u>nam</u>		our homes
17-L7		<u>naṅkal</u>	our Lord
19-L2		<u>em</u>	our fear
19-L3		<u>eṅkal</u>	our Lord
19-L4		<u>em</u>	our breasts
19-L5		<u>em</u>	our hands
19-L6		<u>em</u>	our eyes
19-L7		<u>emakku</u>	grant...to us
19-L8		<u>emakku</u>	what...to us
20-L7		<u>yām</u>	redeem us
20-L8		<u>yām</u>	let us play

Notes to Appendix A

- ¹M. Andronov, A Standard Grammar of Modern and Classical Tamil, Foreward S.K. Chatterji and T.P. Meenakshidundaran, USSR Academy of Sciences Institute of Oriental Studies (Madras: New Century Book House Pvt. Ltd., 1969), pp. 100, 103-4.
- ²A.H. Arden, A Progressive Grammar of the Tamil Language, revised by A.C. Clayton, 5th ed., (1942; rpt. Madras: The Christian Literature Society, 1969), p. 100.
- ³Arden, p. 96.
- ⁴See Chapter 3, n. 2.
- ⁵See the discussion of verse 6 in this Appendix. See chapter 3 for a discussion of the group's view of the girl as indifferent.
- ⁶See the discussion in note 13 of the Appendix regarding the inclusion of nam under the injunction to play.
- ⁷See note 1 of the notes corresponding with the translation of verse 15.
- ⁸See the discussion for verses 12 and 13 in this Appendix.
- ⁹See chapter 3, n. 2 and discussion in notes 3, 6 and 13 of this Appendix.
- ¹⁰See the textual note 3 for verse 17.
- ¹¹See the discussion in notes 3, 6 and 13 of this Appendix.

APPENDIX B

I. Ornamentation

<u>Item</u>	<u>Girl</u>	<u>Śiva</u>	<u>Śakti</u>	<u>Group</u>	<u>Misc.</u>
anklets	-	<u>kalalkal</u> 1, 20 <u>kalal</u> 6, 11, 18	<u>cilampu</u> 16	<u>cilampu</u> 13	-
flowers see next chart	on bed 1, 2	2, 10, 14 17, 18, 20	-	<u>kōtai</u> -14	pond-13 12, 15, 17, 18
bangles	-	-	<u>kuruku</u> 13 <u>valai</u> -14	<u>caṅkan</u> 13 <u>valai</u> -12	
crown	-	10	-	-	gods-18
ornament in general	<u>nērilai</u> 2	-	-	<u>nērilai</u> 2 <u>kalan</u> -14	-
ash	-	11	-	-	-
colly- rium	-	-	11	-	-
scent	5, 17	-	-	-	-
ear- rings	-	-	-	14	-
adorned breasts	-	-	-	15	-
waist- lets	-	-	-	12	-

II. Flowers

<u>Name</u>	<u>Girl</u>	<u>Siva</u>	<u>Sakti</u>	<u>Group</u>	<u>Pond - Water</u>
<u>malar</u>	-	<u>pātam</u> 2,10,20 <u>pon</u> <u>maṭarkal</u> 20	-	-	<u>paim</u> <u>kuvalai</u> <u>kār</u> 13
<u>potu</u>	on bed 1,2	crown-10	-	-	<u>ceṇ</u> <u>kamala</u> 13
<u>kamalam</u>	-	<u>ceṇ</u> <u>kamala</u> <u>por</u> <u>pātam</u> 17 <u>ati</u> <u>kāmalam</u> 18	-	-	<u>ceṇ</u> <u>kamala</u> <u>paim</u> <u>pōtu</u> 13
<u>paṅkayam</u>	-	-	-	-	13,17
<u>pun</u> <u>tarikam</u>	-	20	-	-	-
<u>pū</u>	-	<u>kalalkal</u> 20	-	-	12,13,15, 17,18
<u>kōtai</u>	-	-	-	14	-

III. Colours

<u>Colour</u>	<u>Girl</u>	<u>Śiva</u>	<u>Śakti</u>	<u>Group</u>	<u>Misc.</u>
Red					
<u>ceyya</u>	-	11	-	-	-
<u>ceñ</u>	-	<u>ceñkamala</u>	-	-	<u>ceñkan</u>
		<u>porpātām</u> 17			(Viṣṇu)
		<u>ceñtalirkal</u>			17
		20			pond
					13
Gold					
<u>pon</u>	-	<u>porpātām</u>	<u>ponañ</u>	-	-
		12, 20	<u>cilampu</u>		
		<u>ceñkamala-</u>	16		
		<u>porpātām-17</u>			
		<u>poñmalarkal</u>			
		20			
White					
-	-	<u>puntarikam</u>	-	-	-
		20			
<u>ven</u>	smile	ashes	-	-	conch
	3	11			shells
					8
Blackness					
-	hair	-	<u>mai</u>	-	-
	17		<u>colly</u>		
			rium-11		
Blue-black					
-	-	-	analogy	-	cloud
			with		16
			cloud 16		
<u>kār</u>					pond
					13

IV Qualities

<u>Item</u>	<u>Girl</u>	<u>Śiva</u>	<u>Śakti</u>	<u>Group</u>	<u>Misc.</u>
beauty	adorned ch. 3	<u>kōlam</u> -5 <u>cīrān</u> -7 <u>cīr</u> <u>atīyōm</u> 9 <u>cīr</u> -15	-	<u>pāṅku</u> - <u>utaiyīr</u> 3 adorned chpt. 3	-
-	-	<u>aṅkaṇ</u> 18	-	-	-
light	<u>vāl</u> -eyes 1 <u>ven</u> smile-3 <u>ol</u> -smile 4	<u>cōti</u> 1,2,8,14 5,10,18 20 <u>tēcan</u> 2 like a flame-11	-	-	sun, stars 18 gems of gods-18

APPENDIX C

TRANSLATION

TIRUVEMPĀVAI

I

Without Beginning or End
the Precious Great Effulgence

we sang about;

Oh Bright Wide-Eyed Maiden,

you heard, and

yet you sleep?

Are your ears hard?

Upon hearing the loud sounds,

the praise of Mātēvaṇ's anklets

with leather girts

in the street:

- on the bed filled with flowers

exclaiming overwhelmedly

forgetting herself

directionless, in this way.

tossing and turning

she lay.

Ah! Ah!

Is this, indeed, the state of our friend?

Oh our Lady!

II

You would express [your] love

for the Supreme Effulgence,

whether night or day

whenever we spoke.

Now, you have given your affection

to the bed filled with flowers, itself?

Oh Adorned One!

Oh Adorned Ones!

Shame!

Is it that:

this is the place to playfully reproach?

Are not we ones who have affection

for the Lord in Tillai's sacred hall,

the Lord of Sivalōka,

the possessor of immanent light

who graces

coming to give

bestowing

the foot [adorned] with blossoms

that withdraws from the

praising of the Gods?

Oh Our Lady!

III

Oh One with the white smile like a pearl!

Coming previously,
appearing in [our] presence,
sweetly, mouth wateringly,
you would say:

"My Father, Blissful One, Ambrosial One".

Come and open your door!

Oh Bhaktas!

Ancient Devotees of the Lord!

Oh Beautiful Ones!

Is it wrong to accept those
and forgive the faults
of us who are new devotees?

Would you mislead [us]?

Do not we all know your affection?

Should not those with beautiful hearts sing
to our Siva?

All of this is necessary for us.

Oh Our Lady!

IV

Oh One smiling like a luminous pearl!

Has it not dawned yet?

Not all those whose speech

is beautiful like a parrot's

have come, have they?

After counting we will tell you the way that it is.

Don't waste your time sleeping!

Singing

to the one Medicine for Heaven,

to the Excellent Sense of the Vēdas,

to the Person who is agreeable to the eyes,

heart melting,

mind dissolving,

while dissolving,

we won't do [it].

You come and count,

If it is deficient,

[go back] to sleep.

Oh Our Lady!

V

Deceitful One!

whose honied mouth flows with milk

that speaks, indeed, real falsehoods,

saying:

"That Mountain

unknown by Māl

unseen by even the Four-Faced-One

we can know,

Others like us can know."

Open the door!

After singing about the beauty of him who

is unknown by the knowledge

of the world, the heavens and others,

about the characteristics

that remove blemishes

gracing

taking and ruling

us:

even if [we] cry unrestrainedly "Siva" "Siva":

You do not know! You do not know!

See that nature!

Oh Fragrant-locked One!

Oh Our Lady!

VI

Oh Doe!

Yesterday you said:

"Tomorrow I will come and awaken you."

Unashamedly, that [promise] has gone.

Explain what has happened.

Has it not dawned?

Open the door!

for those who come singing about

the beautiful banded-anklet

that graces:

[of Him who]

comes,

kindly looks

[and]

takes and rules

us;

who is:

unknown to the knowledge of those

in heaven,

on earth,

and others.

Your body does not melt.

Only you can feel this way.

Sing to our King

for us

for others like us.

Oh Our Lady!

VII

Mother!

Could it be that:

You would open your mouth

crying: "Siva",

upon hearing of the emblems of

Him of great beauty

who is

without equal

unknowable to the

conceptualization

of the gods,

You would be like wax before a fire

[upon hearing] "O Southern One";

Listen!

all of us

without exception

individually

have cried:

"My Lord, My King, Sweet Ambrosia!":

and still you sleep?

You lie down

indifferent

inactive

like one who is naive

with a hard heart.

What blissful sleep this is!

Oh Our Lady!

VIII

Everywhere

the rooster crows

the birds chirp.

Everywhere

in seven notes music sounds

the white conch shells resound.

We have sung about:

the noble things without compare,

the supreme Grace beyond compare,

the supreme Effulgence without compare.

Did you not hear?

Bless you!

What is this? Is it sleep?

Open your door!

Is this, indeed, the manner

in which you show your affection

to He who is the sea [of grace]?

Sing to Him

who is without equal,

who stands

underlying the cosmic rest,
who is part woman
Oh Our Lady!

IX

Oh Ancient of ancient things!

Oh Newness of new things!

We who have attained you as Lord
are at your holy feet.

We bow to the feet of your devotees.

We, there, are companions to them alone.

They, only, will be our husbands.

We will serve

obediently doing

what they desiringly say.

If you grant to us thus,

Oh our King,

We will be without want.

Oh Our Lady!

X

His foot-blossom

surpassing words

lies below the seven netherworlds.

His crown

filled with flowers

alone is the end to all things.

His form

is not only the holy form

which is part woman.

He is to his devotees

the one friend

who cannot be contained by the praise

of the Vēdas, gods, and humans.

Siva is, indeed,

of the faultless lineage.

Oh Young Girls of the temple!

What is his village?

What is his name?

Who are his relatives?

Who are not his relatives?

How can [one] sing about his nature?

Oh Our Lady!

XI

Entering the wide tank

swarming with bees,

scooping and scooping with [our] hands,

sounding "mukēṛ",

singing about the anklet:

Oh Father, see!

That is how we
who have been your devotees
for generations
have lived.

O Red One

like a full flame!

O Rich One

smeared with sacred white ash!

O Husband of the woman

with wide blackened eyes
and a small waist!

O Father!

We have been saved
by all of the redemptive ways
of those who are saved
by your sport
that graces
taking and ruling.

Without failing in strength,

You will protect us.

O Our Lady!

XII

Speaking, indeed, words about the sporting,
the preserving, creating and concealing
of us, the world, and the heavens
by the Dancer who dances with fire
there in good Tillai's sacred hall,
of He who is the holy water
about whom we sing
while we bathe
to deteriorate
the suffering of fated birth;
scooping in the pond
resplendent with flowers,
while bees buzz
around [our] pretty hair,
while waistlets
loudly jangle,
while bangles
tinkle;
praising
the golden foot
of He who possesses;
play
in the waters
of the great hill tank!

O Our Lady!

XIV

While

pretty earrings wave,

beautiful adorning ornaments sway,

flower-adorned locks wave

swarms of bees sway,

moving the cool waters

singing of the sacred hall

singing of the substance of the Vedas,

singing of the essence of

that substance,

singing about the nature of the Effulgence

singing about the wreath of konrai flowers

singing of the nature of the beginning,

singing the way which is the end,

singing of the nature of the foot

of the bangle-wearer, herself,

who separates and

fosters

us,

play!

O Our Lady!

XV

She would speak unceasingly

sometimes

about the glories of our Lord

sometimes

repeatedly crying: "Our Lord".

She,

sometimes

would be on the ground

eyes wet with long streams [of tears];

sometimes

due to the happiness in [her] heart

the water would not stop;

would not show respect to the gods, themselves.

[The] manner is of such a person

who is maddened

in this way

for the great King.

Who is such a person?

Let us,

singing with a full mouth

O Ones whose breasts are adorned

with an embossed band!

of the foot of the Knowing One

who takes and rules

in this way!

leaping into the waters with beautiful flowers,
play!

O Our Lady!

XVI

Advancing
compressing the sea
arising
being visible
like she who possesses
appearing
flashing
like the small waist of she
who possesses and rules us;
sounding
like the beautiful gold anklets
on the holy feet of our Lady;
bending a bow
like the holy brows;
like the sweet grace of her
having advanced
that flows first
for the devotees of the King
who is inseparable

from Her who

possesses us,

for us also;

Pour [your rain]

O Cloud!

O Our Lady!

XVII

With the Red-Eyed One,

with the Four-Faced One,

with the gods,

that one delight

is not anywhere;

it is with us

O One with the Fragrant Black Locks!

when [He]

removes our blemishes

and rises, graciously,

in each of our homes

bestows the red-lotus golden foot

about that guardian who thereby graces,

about the King with beautiful eyes,

about the best Ambrosia for we who are devotees,

about our Lord,

singing

so that well-being will flourish,
springing into the waters
beautiful with lotus flowers;
play!

O Our Lady!

XVIII

Like the foot-lotus of Him in Anṇāmalai
before which
 gods go, bowing,
 the diamonds on their crowns
 lose their lustre;
the sun's rays
 having come
 pervade the space
 conceal the darkness and
 dull the cool light
 of the yielding stars.

He remained

becoming female, male and neuter,
becoming the sky flourishing with light,
becoming the earth,
becoming differentiated [into] so much;
and [in addition]
becoming space-filling Ambrosia;

singing of His anklet,
 O Girl!
 leaping into the flower-filled waters
 play!

O Our Lady!

XIX

"The youth is in your hands.

She is [given] in trust to you only."

Because of our fear

which is renewed by that old saying;

we will say one thing to you our Lord.

Listen!

Let not our breasts join the shoulders of

those who are not your devotees.

Let not our hands do any service which is

not for you.

Let not our eyes see anything else

night and day.

If you grant, our King, to us this status, here

what does it matter to us

where the sun rises?

O Our Lady!

XX

Praise be to you!

Let us be graced with your foot-flower
which is the beginning.

Praise be to you!

Let us be graced with your red sprouts
which are the end.

Praise be to you!

[Your] golden foot is the basis to all life.

Praise be to You!

[Your] flowery anklets are happiness
to all that lives.

Praise be to You!

[Your] two feet are the end to all life.

Praise be to You!

[Whose] white lotus was not seen, indeed,
by Māl or the Four-faced One.

Praise be to You!

[Whose] golden flowers that grace,
taking and ruling,
redeem us.

Praise be to You!

Let us play in the water [during] Mārkali.
O Our Lady!

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