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The Other Way Round: From Print to Manuscript

Abstract: The *Tirumurukkāṛruppaṭai*, possibly dated to the 7th century, is one of the earliest Tamil texts to have been published in the first half of 19th c. in Tamil Nadu. It is a poem in 317 lines praising the god Murukaṅ and it has been popular in at least three different circles as one among the *Pattuppāṭṭu* of the so-called Caṅkam corpus, as part of the canon of devotional Tamil Śaiva texts (the *Tirumurai*), and as a devotional text of its own, independent of Śaivism. Among the more than fifty extant manuscripts from the *Tirumurukkāṛruppaṭai* that I have been so far able to examine, I had the surprise to find that four are in fact palm-leaf copies of earlier printed editions. This fact raises several questions that I will try to address in this paper. Why would one have ordered a manuscript copy of a printed book? Is it related to economical, religious or ritual preoccupations? Was *ōlai* (palm-leaf) cheaper than paper? Was the printed book no more available? What was the use of such a manuscript? Are there other such manuscripts in India?

1 Introduction

A systematic search, for a project of critical edition of the *Tirumurukkāṛruppaṭai* as well as for a study of the paratexts and commentaries of this possibly 7th-century devotional Tamil poem to Murukaṅ, has yielded so far more than 50 manuscript witnesses—all on palm leaves—of that text (*mūlam*) and/or its commentary (*urai*).¹ Among these, four stand in an interesting relationship with early printed editions. One has a title-page identical with that of a printed edition (mentioning the name of the editor-commentator, the date, and the year of publication). Another has a less explicit title-page, but nonetheless one of the print culture type, as opposed to briefer mentions of titles in the manuscript tradition. All have an introduction to the book that is similar in content. This introduction variously called *pirapantavaralāru* or *nūl varalāru*, ‘history of the work,’ is not found in other manuscripts, but appeared in several of the early printed editions. Even though some of these manuscript witnesses could theoretically be pre-print drafts sent to the press, there are

¹ I have accessed these manuscripts through digital photos and, for some among them, seen the physical objects in the libraries safekeeping them.

good reasons, expounded below, for assuming that they are indeed manuscript copies of printed editions.

The study of such manuscript copies of printed books is instructive in several respects. It puts the focus on the period of transition between manuscript and print culture, a slow process indeed, as print did not rapidly cause the disappearance of manuscripts. It also enables us to observe scribes' habits of writing and editing since we can compare the master printed version to the manuscript copy and see the transformations and additions made by the scribe when copying the printed edition (scribal blessings, colophons, headings). In the present case, the manuscripts of the *Tirumurukāṛruppaṭai* raise questions that pertain to the history of that text only, but other issues concern also the whole Indian and Indic manuscript culture in the age of print culture.²

As for the *Tirumurukāṛruppaṭai*, how to account for such a proportion of manuscript witnesses (approximately one in ten) copied from printed books? Is it an exceptional proportion? What do we know about other manuscript copies of printed books in the Indian and Indic world? Is it a widespread phenomenon? Why would one have commissioned a manuscript copy of a printed book? Is the reason for having such a copy made linked to economic, technological, sociological, religious or ritual reasons? In the case of the *Tirumurukāṛruppaṭai*, why was palm-leaf used and not paper? Was it cheaper? Was the printed book no longer available? What was the *raison d'être* of such a manuscript? The merit of the scribe and/or the commissioner? Its cultural value or symbolism? Was the handwritten palm-leaf book—that is a traditional book—considered different and more valuable than the modern book printed on paper?

These are just a few of the issues at stake and I am afraid I cannot even respond to most of the questions asked here, but I hope that the following discussion on the four examples of the *Tirumurukāṛruppaṭai* can throw a ray of light and suggest paths to explore.

I will describe these four examples, make codicological observations, compare their texts to those of the printed editions they were (or are suspected to be) copied from. I will check if some of the reasons that prompted, in these four particular cases, the creation of a manuscript copy of a printed edition, are assessable from an examination of the physical witnesses. I will then come back to the problem in the larger perspective of Indian and Indic manuscript culture. But to begin with, some more information about the *Tirumurukāṛruppaṭai* might be useful.

² Under Indic I include other regional manuscript cultures (insular and continental Southeast Asia, central Asia) that have much in common with Indian manuscript culture (writing support, related scripts, sometimes same language and similar literary and religious culture).

2 The *Tirumurukāṛruppaṭai*

The *Tirumurukāṛruppaṭai* is one of the long poems of the so-called Caṅkam corpus of classical Tamil texts, itself comprised of the *Pattuppāṭṭu* ('The Ten Long Poems,' of which the *Tirumurukāṛruppaṭai* is traditionally the first) and the *Eṭṭuttokai* ('The Eight Anthologies' of shorter poems). The root-text of the *Tirumurukāṛruppaṭai* dates maybe to the end of the 6th or the beginning of 7th century CE and has been the object of commentaries at least from the 14th century. The poem, in 317 metrical lines (*aṭis*), praises the god Murukaṅ, a name in fact attested only once in the work, while Muruku is used twice. This deity already combines in this text northern Sanskritic and southern features; in other words Murukaṅ is here already identified with Skanda.

The poem lauds Murukaṅ in six different abodes, most only vaguely described geographically. These abodes are identified with the major temples of the god in present-day Tamil Nadu (see Francis 2015). The division of the text into six sections is reflected in the inter-titles used in the manuscripts (most of which seem to date to the 19th century).

Besides being one of the Caṅkam poems, the *Tirumurukāṛruppaṭai* is also part of another textual canon, as it is found in the eleventh *Tirumuṛai*. The twelve *Tirumuṛais* or the twelve books of *The Tirumuṛai* constitute the devotional Śaiva corpus in Tamil, compiled in the 12th century. Murukaṅ was accommodated in the *Tirumuṛai* because of his identification with Skanda, the son of Śiva.

It thus appears that the *Tirumurukāṛruppaṭai* has been cherished in different circles. First, as one among the *Pattuppāṭṭu* of the so-called Caṅkam corpus, it was appreciated as a literary work. Second, as part of the eleventh *Tirumuṛai*, it was considered a devotional Tamil Śaiva text. The extant manuscripts however show that it is rarely transmitted in serial *Tirumuṛai* and *Pattuppāṭṭu* manuscripts. In fact, it is more often found either alone (whether *mūlam* only, *urai* only, or *mūlam* with *urai*) or in multiple-text manuscripts, some of which are compilations of Śaiva Tamil texts while, for some others, the rationale of the collection remains unclear. The manuscript history of the *Tirumurukāṛruppaṭai*, which is mainly a history of the 19th century situation (the period of most of the manuscripts), shows that the text has been transmitted as a devotional text, sometimes in a Śaiva context, sometimes with no apparent relation to an exclusive Śaiva devotion.

This devotional quality of the *Tirumurukāṛruppaṭai* explains why among the works of the Caṅkam corpus it is the one for which we have today the largest number of manuscripts.³ Additional stanzas to the root-text attest to the salvific or protective power of the *Tirumurukāṛruppaṭai*. Such is the case of the so-called *kāppu*—the most frequent of the ‘satellite stanzas,’ as Wilden (2014, 202, and see also Wilden in this volume) calls them, found in the manuscripts of the *Tirumurukāṛruppaṭai*. This stanza—which also appears in printed editions; see, for instance, *Tirumurukāṛruppaṭai* 1956, 82—may perhaps be read at the same time as an initial benediction, as it is mostly found in the beginning of the manuscripts, and as a *phalaśruti*, since it seems to imply that the recitation of the text will urge Murukaṅ’s help for his devotee:

*orumuru kāvenre*⁴ *ṇuḷḷaṅ kuḷira vuvantuṭaṅē*
varumuru kāvenru vāyveru vāṇiṇṇak kaiyiṇṇaṅē
tarumuru kāvenru tāṇṇipulam pāṇiṇṇat taiyaṇṇuṇṇē
tirumuru kāṛrup paṭaiyuṭa ṇēvaruṇ cēvakaṅē

While my heart/mind cools saying ‘O unique Murukaṅ!’
 While my mouth keeps being in awe saying ‘Come, O Murukaṅ, as soon as pleased!’⁵
 While it keeps speaking grievingly saying ‘Give, O Murukaṅ, presently (in my) hand!’
 The warrior comes with the *Tirumurukāṛruppaṭai*, in front of the lady.⁶

This stanza, as I understand it,⁷ means that if one worships Murukaṅ with the *Tirumurukāṛruppaṭai*, the god will shower his grace. The text also gained wide popularity as Murukaṅ became an identity-marker of Tamilness (see Clothey 1978, 2). Furthermore the *Tirumurukāṛruppaṭai* had—and still has—a marked devotional and ritual dimension, as a recited text. These particulars might explain the nature of its recent manuscript transmission (as a devotional text rather than a literary or strictly Śaiva text) and probably also account for the fact that it is one of the earliest Tamil texts to have been printed in the first half of the 19th century in Tamil Nadu (the first

3 For comparative figures of the extant manuscripts of Caṅkam works, see Wilden 2014, 42ff. (especially 43 and 139 concerning the *Tirumurukāṛruppaṭai*).

4 Printed editions have *kāvenra*, while most of the manuscripts have *kāvenre*, which I have thus adopted here.

5 Alternatively: While my mouth keeps being in awe and rejoicing at the same time saying ‘Come, O Murukaṅ!’

6 The warrior is Murukaṅ. The lady is Murukaṅ’s consort. One might equally understand that as soon as the *Tirumurukāṛruppaṭai* has been recited, the god, correctly praised by the poetry, appears before the devotee, who, as suggested to me by Dominic Goodall, imagines him- or herself as the god’s consort.

7 For another translation, see Wilden 2014, 206.

edition known to me, by Caravaṇapperumāl, appeared in 1834). At the same time, this also means that quite early in the history of print-culture in Tamil Nadu several printed editions of the *Tirumurukāṛruppaṭai* were available as master texts for manuscript copies. The four witnesses of the *Tirumurukāṛruppaṭai* that I will describe were, I believe, probably such copies.

3 *Tirumurukāṛruppaṭai* manuscript copies of printed books

Table 1 provides a general overview of the four manuscripts that can be considered, with a varying degree of certainty, as manuscript copies of printed editions of the *Tirumurukāṛruppaṭai*. It shows the correspondence between the manuscripts and the supposedly master printed editions (when identified or suspected). The four manuscript witnesses are designated here and in the following pages as the Annamalai MS (A1) (Figs 1–2), the Pondicherry MS (I2) (Figs 3, 5–8), the Chennai MS (G9) (Fig. 4) and the Trivandrum MS (T4).⁸

Tab. 1: Manuscript copies of the *Tirumurukāṛruppaṭai* and their master printed editions.

Manuscripts	Printed books
Annamalai MS (internally dated to 1853/1854 or 1913/1914).	Edition (<i>mūlam</i>) by Caṇmuka Aiyar, probably published in the 1850s.
Pondicherry MS (internally dated to March 1864).	Edition (<i>mūlam + urai</i>) by Āṇmukanāvalar, published several times (1853 ¹ , 1866 ² , 1873 ³ , 1881 ⁴ , 1886 ⁵ , 1906 ⁸ , 1911 ⁹ , 1913 ¹⁰ , 1917 ¹¹ , 1923 ¹² , 1935 ¹⁵).
Chennai MS (not internally dated).	
Trivandrum MS (not internally dated).	Undetermined edition.

⁸ The sigla are those used in Francis 2016, where the reader will find more information about the more than 50 manuscript witnesses of the *Tirumurukāṛruppaṭai* so far accessed. See ‘References: Manuscript Sources’ below for more details about these four manuscripts.

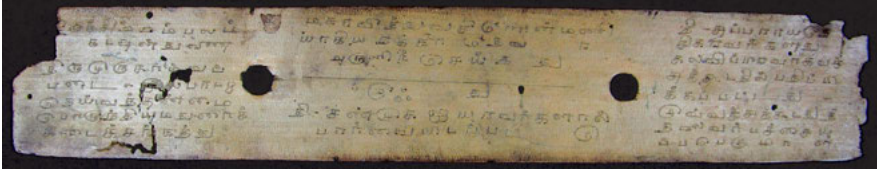


Fig. 1: Annamalai MS, fol. 1r: title-page. Photo: E. Francis.

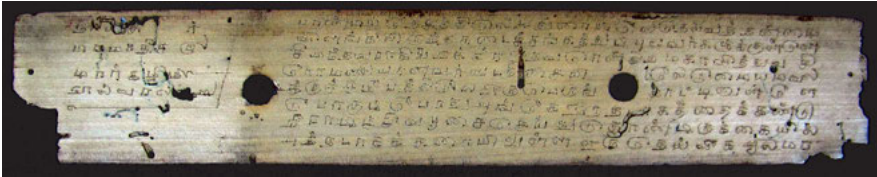


Fig. 2: Annamalai MS, fol. 1v: title-page and *nūl varalāru*. Photo E. Francis.

The Annamalai MS, with an internal date of 1853/4 (or, among other possibilities, 1913/4) is a copy of an edition of the root-text probably printed in the 1850s. The Pondicherry MS, internally dated to 1864, and the Chennai MS, undated, are copies of an edition of the root-text and commentary by Ārumukanāvalar, first published in 1853 and later republished several times. In the case of the Pondicherry MS, we know which edition was used since the title-page with the date of publication (Piramāṭica year of the Jovian cycle, Aippaci month, i.e. 1853) is reproduced. The Trivandrum MS has no internal date and I have not yet definitely identified the edition of which it may be a copy.

As for the two manuscripts with no internal date (the Chennai and the Trivandrum MSS), our knowledge of the palaeography of Tamil manuscripts is still too superficial to assess their age with confidence,⁹ but they might equally date to the second half of the 19th century.

Concerning these four manuscripts of the *Tirumurukāruppaṭai* of which the text closely follows that of printed editions, I see at first sight two possibilities. Either they are copies of these printed books or they are the final *ōlai* draft given to the press and as such an element of the chain that lead to the advent of the poem into the print culture. Several reasons make me believe that these four manuscripts belong to the first category.

⁹ I discuss below in detail the internal dates of the Annamalai MS and the Pondicherry MS.

Firstly, as far as we know, in the 19th century, when printing gradually became widespread in Tamil Nadu, drafts of printed books were written on paper, the usage of which spread at that period and the price of which became more affordable.¹⁰ The *Tirumurukāṟruppaṭai* might however be an exception to this pattern as none of its manuscript witnesses is paper.¹¹

Secondly, one would expect to find specific instructions for the press if our four manuscripts were pre-print drafts. I found none. Besides, the vertical format of paper being that of most printed book, the horizontal format of palm-leaf manuscript does not seem very suitable for a draft. Furthermore, the title-pages in our manuscripts, when there is one, are not particularly helpful in guiding the press towards the layout we find in the printed editions, as they are in *scriptio continua* with minimal punctuation. They look rather like typical title-pages of palm-leaf manuscripts.¹² But as they are longer than usual for manuscript titles, they look like the result of retro-conversion of printed title-pages into manuscript format. The Pondicherry MS looks friendlier to a printer, as it uses punctuation much more than the others, but its internal date indicates that it is later than the printed edition whose date is reproduced on the title-page. Finally, the Trivandrum MS, which does not use the *puḷḷi* to mark consonants that are not followed with a vowel, with the result that any consonant without *puḷḷi* could be read in two ways (either C [for consonant] or C + vowel *a*), would not be of great help to printers in an age when most printed books use the *puḷḷi* to dispel ambiguities.

Thirdly, I would presume that, given the relative affordability of paper and the technical skills required to write—that is actually incise—on palm leaf, the editor of a text would preferably use paper (although a traditional scholar might in fact be more at ease with a stylus than with a pen). And I see at first sight no reason why, once his work finished, an editor would have commissioned a professional scribe to write down on palm leaf the final draft (unless motivated by a conservative predilection for the traditional palm-leaf support).

10 On paper manuscripts or transcripts of Caṅkam texts, at the transition between palm-leaf manuscript and print, see Wilden 2014, 367ff.

11 On the lack of paper manuscripts of the *Tirumurukāṟruppaṭai*, Wilden (2014, 368) comments: ‘The most likely explanation for this situation is that a) the text was still so familiar that it was not necessary to experiment with transcribing it on paper, and b) print remained for quite some time either too expensive or questionable as a medium for a religious work that was meant to be used in daily worship.’

12 Only the Annamalai MS has the minimal characteristics of a printed title-page in the sense that it has a horizontal strike to separate the mention of the title of the book and that of the editor (Fig. 1) and isolates the word *iḷtu*, alone at the centre of a line. Note also the use of columns. Still *scriptio continua* is used and punctuation is minimal.

Fourthly, when such a manuscript is internally dated and when the details of the date are enough to obtain a corresponding date in the Common Era, the manuscript appears as later than the printed edition. Admittedly this is the case for only one out of the four manuscripts (the Pondicherry MS).

Such arguments are not fully conclusive, I must admit. For the sake of exposition, however, I will provisionally assume that the four manuscripts of the *Tirumurukāṛṛuppaṭai* dealt with below are indeed copies of printed editions. Let us now examine them individually, looking especially at the differences (missing parts, additions, variants) as compared to the printed editions.

4 The Annamalai MS

The Annamalai MS is an almost exact copy of an edition by Caṅmuka Aiyar, which probably appeared in the 1850s. I say 1850s because this edition does not contain any year of publication. This date in the 1850s is a guess by the compilers of the catalogue of the RMRL, from which I obtained a digital copy (which seems complete) of the book. The date approximation is seemingly based on the fact that Caṅmuka Aiyar published other books during this decade.

The Annamalai MS gives, like Caṅmuka Aiyar's edition in the form in which it is available to me, a title-page (fols 1r–1v1–3, left margin), an introduction (fols 1v–2v) referred to in the left margin as *nūl varalāru* (fol. 1v4, lm) (Figs 1–2), the so-called *kāppu* (fol. 3r), and the root-text (*mūlam*) (fols 3v–22r). The *Tirumurukāṛṛuppaṭai* is followed in the same manuscript by another text, still to be identified, and possibly also copied from a printed book.

Differences between the Annamalai MS and Caṅmuka Aiyar's edition are found in the title-page as shown in Table 2.¹³

¹³ I have not fully checked the manuscript, in which further possible scribal variants might occur.

Tab. 2: Text of title-pages of the Annamalai MS (fols 1r–1v3, lm) and Caṅmuka Aiyar’s edition (undated, p. 1). The title-page of the Annamalai MS (in *scriptio continua*) has been arranged so as to parallel the printed version. I have also introduced space between words. Differences are marked in bold.

Annamalai MS	Caṅmuka Aiyar’s edition
(fol. 1r1, c1) [t]irucciṛrampalam	(1) ᳚
(fol. 1r2, c1) kaṭavu! tuṇai	(2) kaṇapati tuṇai.
(fol. 1r3, c1) tirumurukāṛrup (fol. 1r4, c1)paṭai ᳚ [mūla]pāṭam ¹⁴	(3) tirumurukāṛruppaṭai (4) mūlapāṭam . ¹⁵ (small horizontal separation)
(fol. 1r5, c1) teyvattaṇmai (fol. 1r6, c1) poruntiya maturaik (fol. 1r7, c1) kaṭaiccaṅkattu (fol. 1r1, c2) makāvittuva	(5) teyvattaṇmaiporuntiya (6) maturaikkaṭaiccaṅkattumakāvittuva
cirōṇmaṇi (fol. 1r2, c2) yākiya nakkīratēvar	(7) cirōṇmaṇiyākiya (8) nakkīratēvar
(fol. 1r3, c2) ° aruḷicceytatu (horizontal line)	(9) ° aruḷicceytatu . (long ornamented horizontal separation)
(fol. 1r4, c2) ° iḷtu	(10) ° iḷtu
(fol. 1r5, c2) ti – caṅmuka ° aiyaravarkaḷāl	(11) ti – caṅmuka ° aiyaravarkaḷāl
(fol. 1r6, c2) pārvaiyiṭappaṭṭu	(12) pārvaiyiṭappaṭṭu , (small horizontal separation)
(fol. 1r1, c3) ti – cupparāyatē (fol. 1r2, c3) cikara- varkaḷatu	(13) tiru – cupparāyatēcikaravarkaḷatu
(fol. 1r3, c3) kalvippiravākvac (fol. 1r4, c3) cuk- kūṭattil	(14) kalvippiravākvaccukkūṭattil
patippi (fol. 1r5, c3) kkappaṭṭatu –	(15) patippikkappaṭṭatu .
(fol. 1r6, c3) ° ivvaccukkūṭatut	
(fol. 1r7, c3) talaivar paccaiya (fol. 1r8, c3) ppa- perumā!	
(fol. 1v1, lm) n[āyak]ar	
(fol. 1v2, lm) piramāṭica (varuṣam)	
(fol. 1v3, lm) mārkali (mācam)	

Note first that the *piḷḷaiyār cuḷi* (᳚, an auspicious symbol also used as punctuation mark) and the *kaṇapati tuṇai* blessing (‘Gaṇapati is help’) of the printed edition have been substituted by the words *tirucciṛrampalam*—that is Cidambaram, the temple of which is the Śaiva epicentre, so to speak, of Tamil Nadu—and by a more

¹⁴ The final *m* is in Grantha.

¹⁵ The final *m* is in Tamil script.

general blessing, that is *kaṭavuḷ tuṇai* ('God is help'). There are also minor orthographic variants: *makāvittuva* against *makāvitva*; [*mūla*]pāṭam, with final Grantha *m*, against *mūlapāṭam*, with final Tamil *m*; *ti* against *tiru*. The printed edition uses full stops, which are only sometimes reproduced, as dashes, in the manuscript. The title-page in the manuscript is immediately followed in the left margin by the intertitle *nūl varalāru* ௨ (fol. 1v4, left margin) while, in the printed edition, this intertitle appears as ௨ *varalāru*. on top of page 2.

More significant is an apparent addition in the manuscript, after the legal mention of the press' owner (fol. 1r6–8, c3 to fol. 1v1–3, lm):

ivvaccukkūtatut [i.e. *ivvaccukkūṭattut*] *talaivar paccaiyappaperumāl n[āyak]ar pīramāṭica* (*varuṣam*) *mārkaḷi* (*mācam*)

'The head of this printing house (that is the *kalvippiravākavaccukkūtam* mentioned in the preceding sentence) Paccaiyappa Perumāl Nāyakar. Pīramāṭica year, Mārkaḷi month.'

This addition consists in the name of an individual who was the head (*talaivar*) of the press—namely Paccaiyappa Perumāl Nāyakar, who is different from the owner of the press mentioned in the previous sentence, namely Cupparāya Tēcikar—and a date (*pīramāṭica* year of the Jovian cycle, *mārkaḷi* month).

As for the date, by want of further information (such as the day of the week and the number of the day), I cannot determine with certainty the correspondence with the Gregorian calendar. It might be any day between mid-December 1853 and mid-January 1854, or between December 1913 and January 1914 (or even between mid-December 1973 and mid-January 1974). The years 1793-1794 are impossible, because the press mentioned on the title-page was then not yet established.

This date in the manuscript seems at first sight that of the publication of the printed book copied. No date however appears on the title-page or elsewhere in the copy held in the RMRL (provided this is, as it indeed seems to be, a complete copy). One thus wonders if this date is that of the copy of the manuscript and if the manuscript was commissioned by Paccaiyappa Perumāl Nāyakar. A further issue is whether Paccaiyappa Perumāl Nāyakar, head of the press, was a contemporary of Cupparāya Tēcikar, owner of the press? Could the manuscript be a preprint draft with a mention of this second man of the press, a mention that somehow was left out in the print version? Or is Paccaiyappa Perumāl Nāyakar the successor of Cupparāya Tēcikar at the head of the press? Did he fail to find a print copy of this earlier publication of his press and did he commission a copy from a printed copy he had access to but did not own?

Some of these conjectures can be dismissed as, according to Ayyappaṅ (2009, 96–97), there is another edition of the *Tirumurukārruppaṭai* by the Kalvippiravākam Press dated to 1850, with the following title-page:

tirumurukārruppaṭai, mūlapāṭam, teyvataṅmai poruntiya, maturaik kaṭaic caṅkattu makāvit-tuva cirōmaṇiyākiya nakkīratēvar aruḷic ceytatu. iḷtu tamilppulavar, vētakiri mutaliyārāl pār-vaīyitappaṭtu, pā. maturaīmutaliyārāl, tiru. cupparāyatēcīkaravarkaḷatu, kalvippiravākavac-cukkūṭattil patippikkappaṭtatu. ivvaccukkūṭattalaivar, paccaiyappa perumāl nāyakar, cātāraṇa varuṭam, aiṅpaci. (text as in Ayyappaṅ; this edition not available to me)

In this publication, the editor of the text is not Caṅmuka Aiyar but Vētakiri Mutaliyār. We furthermore learn that Paccaiyappa Perumāl Nāyakar and Cupparāya Tēcīkar were most probably contemporary people.

It thus appears that the Kalvippiravākam Press published at least two editions of the *Tirumurukārruppaṭai*, each with a different editor for the text. The title-page of the Annamalai MS is a kind of mix of the title-pages of these two printed editions: the editor is Caṅmuka Aiyar, as in the copy held by the RMRL; there is a date and the mention of Paccaiyappa Perumāl Nāyakar, as in the edition mentioned by Ayyappaṅ.

In the present state of knowledge, we face different possibilities. The Annamalai MS could have been copied from the two editions and the date (1853/4?) given on its title-page would not be that of the master printed edition, but that of the copy of the manuscript. Or there was a third edition of the *Tirumurukārruppaṭai* by the Kalvippiravākam Press in 1853/4 and our manuscript is a copy of that. I have however not been able to trace the 1850 edition mentioned by Ayyappaṅ nor the putative 1853/4 edition in any of the resources available to me (RMRL, WorldCat). I cannot therefore reach definite conclusions concerning the Annamalai MS. Is it a copy mixing the respective editions of Vētakiri Mutaliyār and Caṅmuka Aiyar? Is it a copy of an untraced 1853/4 printed edition? And in that case it cannot be ruled out that this is the draft manuscript of this untraced third edition of the *Tirumurukārruppaṭai* by the Kalvippiravākam Press (whether it eventually was printed or not).

5 The Pondicherry MS and the Chennai MS

Two manuscript witnesses, the Pondicherry MS and the Chennai MS, are copies of Ārumukanāvalar's printed edition of the root-text of the *Tirumurukārruppaṭai* with commentary.

The Pondicherry MS is an explicit copy as it reproduces the text of the title-page of the printed edition with the date of the original publication (Fig. 3). This date



Fig. 3: Pondicherry MS, unfoliated fol. 1r: title-page. © IFP

being Piramātica year of the Jovian cycle, Aippaci month, we thus apparently know which among the several successive editions of the printed book was copied, namely the first edition of 1853.

Besides this date reproduced from the printed book, we also find, inside the manuscript, at the end of five of the six sections of the *Tirumurukāruppaṭai*, intermediary dated scribal colophons seemingly providing intermediary completion dates for the copying. Here are their transcriptions and correspondences in the Gregorian calendar, which I could establish only with the invaluable help of Marco Franceschini:

mutalāvatu | tirupparaṅkuṅṅamurum | (fol. 34v8) rudrotkāri varṣaṃ māsi ((mācam)) 22 ((nā!)) ௨¹⁶

‘First (section). Tirupparaṅkuṅṅam complete (literally: “wholly, entirely”) (i.e. end of section 1 of the *Tirumurukāruppaṭai*, which deals with the abode of Murukāṅ at Tirupparaṅkuṅṅam). Rudrotkāri year, Māsi month, 22nd day.’ The date corresponds to March 3, 1864 (a correspondence with 1924 can be ruled out as this date stands in a sequence with the last three dates, two of which can correspond only to 1864).

°iraṅṅāvatu • tiruccīralai(fol. 51b4)vāy muṅṅam ௨ rudronkāri [i.e. rudrotkāri] (fol. 51b5) varṣaṃ māsi ((mācam)) na na ga ((nā!)) virodhi varṣaṃ siṅha (fol. 51b6) māsaṃ na na ṅa ((nā!)) śa[n]ivāraṃ dīnaṃ °eḷutiya yadu śrī ௨

‘Second (section). Tiruccīralaivāy complete. Rudrotkāri year, Māsi month, 3rd/30th day, Virodhi year, Siṅha month 1st/10th day, Saturday, day when Yadu Śrī wrote (?).¹⁷’ The first date corresponds to February 13, 1864/February 15, 1924 or March 11, 1864/March 13, 1924. The

¹⁶ There are two *piḷḷaiyār cuḷis* here one after the other: the first one is an abbreviation for ‘day’, the second a punctuation mark.

¹⁷ As explained to me by Marco Franceschini, the *kaṭapayādi* expressions *na-na-ga* and *na-na-na-ṅa* can be interpreted either as 3 (0-0-3) and 1 (0-0-0-1), or as 30 (3-0[0]) and 10 (1-0[0-0]) respectively.

second date corresponds to Saturday August 15, 1829 or August 24, 1889 (as the weekday, Saturday, is stated, the corresponding year could not be 1949).

mūṅṛāvatu tiruvāṇaṅkuṭi muṅṛum • (fol. 66v3) **rudrotkāri** ((*varuṣam*)) *māci* ((*mācam*)) 26 ((*nā!*)) °*amāvāsai*¹⁸ – *śrī* |

‘Third (section). Tiruvāṇaṅkuṭi complete. Rudrotkāri year, Māci month, 26^(th) day, new moon, Śrī (wrote ?).’ The date corresponds to March 7, 1864 (this correspondence is certain because *amāvāsya*, ‘new moon night,’ is the special name for ‘1st *tithi*’).

Kuṅṛutō(fol.78r5)*rāṭal muṅṛum* 62 **rudrotkāri** ((*varuṣam*)) *māsi* ((*mācam*)) 27 ((*nā!*)) *maṅkaḷavāram* 62

‘Kuṅṛutōrāṭal complete. Rudrotkāri year, Māsi month, 27^(th) day, Tuesday.’ The date corresponds to March 8, 1864 (this correspondence is certain because of the mention of the day of the week: *maṅkaḷavāram*, i.e. the Tamilised form of Sanskrit *maṅgalavāra*).

paḷamutircōlai muṅṛum - (fol. 106v1) **rudrotkāri varuṣam** [i.e. **varuṣam**] *māsi* ((*mācam*)) 28 ((*nā!*)) *muṅṛintatu* 62

‘Paḷamutircōlaimalai complete. Rudrotkāri year, Māsi month, 28^(th) day. Completed.’ The date corresponds to March 9, 1864 (a correspondence with 1924 can be ruled out as this date stands in the sequence of four dates, two of which can correspond only to 1864)

No date was given at the end of section 4, most probably because it is the shortest one (only 13 *aṭis*) and was thus written the same day as section 5 (on Kuṅṛutōrāṭal). After the fifth date, at the end of section 6, 20 more folios follow. We thus have five dates in Rudrotkāri (Tamil Rutirōrkāri, Rutrōtkāri) year of the Jovian cycle, in the Māsi month (Tamil Māci), four of which in ascending order (22, 26, 27, and 28). There is one date in Virodhi (Tamil Virōti) year of the Jovian cycle coupled with the only Rudrotkāri year that breaks the ascending order. These latter two dates attached to the section 2 are enigmatic and might refer to another event than simply the completion of copy of the section. Note that for these two dates only the number of the day is stated in ambiguous *kaṭapayādi* expressions, as opposed to Tamil figures. This double date in any case somehow pertains to the act of writing, as the word *eḷutiya* appears at its end. The details of some of the Rudrotkāri years in ascending order can correspond only, as pointed out to me by Marco Franceschini, to 1864 CE, which thus is most probably the year of copying of this manuscript (March 3, 7, 8 and 9 for the concerned sections). The intermediary dated colophons for completion of the sections 5 and 6 show that the copyist did write 10 to 20 folios per day.

18 Cf. Tamil *amāvācai*, from Sanskrit *amāvāsya*, ‘new moon.’



Fig. 4: Chennai MS, fol. 1r: introduction. © EFEO

The Chennai MS (Fig. 4) is a ‘silent’ copy since the title-page is not reproduced (unless it was lost, even if the manuscript seems complete). It is not internally dated. This witness of the *Tirumurukāṛruppaṭai* is actually found in a multiple-text manuscript, that is one codicological unit, uniform in the size of its leaves and seemingly entirely written by the same hand, but containing three different texts. The bundle has an unfoliated title-folio that mentions the content of the manuscript:

(fol. 1a1–2, c1) *ta[t]tuvakkattalai mūlapāṭam*
 ‘Root-text of *Tattuvakkattalai*.’

(fol. 1a3, c1) *makāvākkiamūlapāṭam*
 ‘Root-text of *Makāvākkiam*.’

(fol. 1a1–2, c2) *tirumurukāṛruppatai* °*uraipāṭam* (fol. 1a1–2, c3) *mūla[m a]llāmil*
 [i.e. *illāmal*]
 ‘Commentary to the *Tirumurukāṛruppaṭai*, without root-text.’

We thus have here the root-text of *Tattuvakkattalai* (GOML catalogue No. R2686) and *Makāvākkiam* (GOML catalogue No. R2687), two Śaivasiddhānta works, followed by Ārumukanāvalar’s edition of the *Tirumurukāṛruppaṭai* with commentary (GOML catalogue No. R2688). The three texts are independently foliated. It is possible that the whole manuscript was copied from printed editions, but I have not been able to assess that concerning the two Śaivasiddhānta works. I found no internal date in the whole manuscript.

The Pondicherry MS and the Chennai MS are not exact copies of Ārumukanāvalar’s printed book. There are minor differences, such as the use of specific blessings in the manuscripts (see for instance the left-marginal blessings and *mantras śrī hrī[m*] °om hrīṃ śrī* on the unfoliated fol. 1r of the Pondicherry MS, which are probably specific to the scribe (Fig. 3)). Table 3 shows the most substantial differences.

Tab. 3: Content of Ārumukanāvalar's 1st edition of the *Tirumurukāṛruppaṭai* with commentary (1853), Pondicherry MS and Chennai MS compared.

Ārumukanāvalar's ed. (<i>mūlam</i> + <i>urai</i>) 1853	Pondicherry MS 1864	Chennai MS (undated)
Title-page	Title-page (unfoliated fols 1r–1v) <i>pirapantavaralāru</i> (unfoliated fols 2r–4v)	
[Preface] (pp. 1–5) <i>mūlam</i> and <i>urai</i> (6 sections) (pp. 5–80) °itaṇatu tāṛpariyam (pp. 80–83)	<i>urai</i> (6 sections) (fols 1r–106v) <i>urai</i> (4 th section, repeated) (fols 107r–110r) [Preface] (fols 111–118r) °itaṇatu tāṛpariyam (fols 119r–124v)	[Preface] (fols 1r–4v) <i>mūlam</i> (incomplete) and <i>urai</i> (6 sections) (fols 5r–68v4) °itaṇatu tāṛpariyam (fols 68v4–71v)
Additional stanzas (pp. 83–84)	Additional stanzas (fols 125r–126v)	Additional stanzas (fols 72r–73r)

From the likely hypothesis that it was copied from the 1853 edition, the Pondicherry MS of 1864 contains two additions.

First, after the title-page, four unfoliated folios provide a 'history of the poem' as the left-margin heading *pirapantavaralāru* indicates (Fig. 5). This introduction consists in a text almost similar to the *nūl varalāru* ('history of the book') found in other printed editions and manuscripts. But this introduction is not found in Ārumukanāvalar's edition of 1853, which however starts with a preface (pp. 1–5, not named as such however, that is without title) by Ārumukanāvalar. This preface is also found in the Pondicherry MS, but not at the place expected (in the beginning, as in the printed edition), for it comes after the commentary (fols 111r–118r). The *pirapantavaralāru* is however found from the second edition of Ārumukanāvalar (1866) onwards.

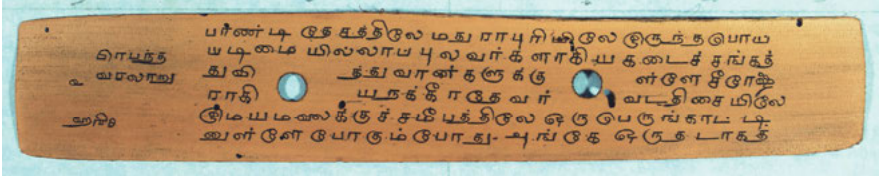


Fig. 5: Pondicherry MS, unfoliated fol. 2r: *pirapantavaralāru*. © IFP.

The second addition is found right before this original preface by Ārumukanāvalar that appears as a kind of post-face in the manuscript. We find there repeated in seven pages (fols 107r–110r) (Fig. 6) the commentary about the fourth section of the *Tirumurukāruppaṭai* (which concerns the abode of Murukaṇ at Ērakam). In fact this commentary is already found in the manuscript in the preceding folios at its expected place (fols 67r–70r) (Fig. 7). The difference is that in the repeated version there is no introductory sentence specifying the chain of words (*toṭar*) commented upon, that the text is now arranged in columns (two columns, sometimes three) and that the bits of the root-text are not systematically reproduced (if not reproduced, they are ‘indicated’ by an horizontal line, except when passing from one page to another, where no indication is made). Maybe this second version was an attempt at a different layout (the hand is the same as in the rest of the manuscript). The fourth section of the work would have been selected for this experiment because it is the smallest (13 *aṭis* only). And in any case it is a minimalist version, as the root-text is not fully quoted as in the original.

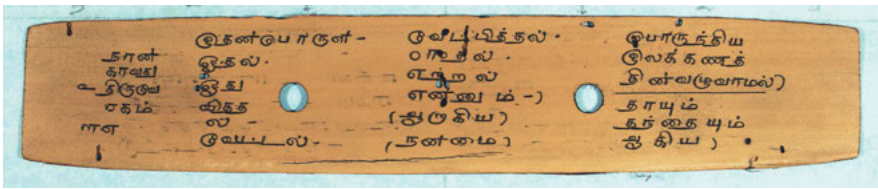


Fig. 6: Pondicherry MS, fol. 107r: beginning of the second version of the commentary on Ērakam section of *Tirumurukāruppaṭai*. © IFP.

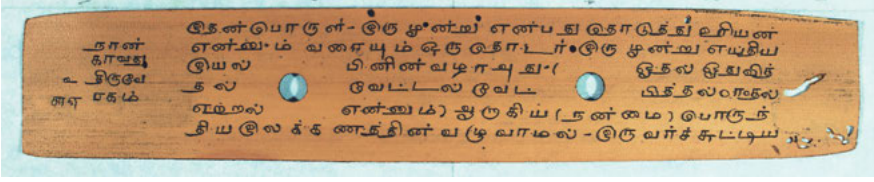


Fig. 7: Pondicherry MS, fol. 67r: beginning of the first version of the commentary on Ērakam section of *Tirumurukāruppaṭai*. © IFP.

The Pondicherry MS also differs from Ārumukanāvalar’s first edition by the fact that one portion of the commentary—namely the final concluding portion called *itaṇatu tāṟpariyam*, ‘explanation of this,’ where Ārumukanāvalar explains the meaning of the book—is found not directly after the commentary on the sixth and final section of the root-text, but after the repeated commentary on the fourth section on Ērakam and the original preface by Ārumukanāvalar now turned into a post-face.

There is one major difference between Ārumukanāvalar’s first printed edition and both our manuscripts. In the printed edition, Ārumukanāvalar provides first the continuous root-text (*mūlam*) of the first section of the work (describing an abode of Murukaṇ, which is a mountain west of Maturai), then the commentary (*urai*) on that section, then the root-text of the second section of the work, followed by its commentary, and so on, up to the sixth section. In the Pondicherry MS there is no continuous root-text given before the commentary (in which the root-text is at any rate quoted by bits), which, for the bits I checked, follows exactly Ārumukanāvalar’s edition. As for the Chennai MS, it reproduces the continuous root-text section by section only partially and for the first two sections only (in other words, we have approximately 15% only of the root-text). However, for the following sections, spaces and even entire folios have been left blank at the place of the missing root-text, allowing for the possibility of adding it later on. This is illustrated in Table 4.

Tab. 4: Content (*mūlam* and *urai*) of Āṛumukanāvalar's 1st edition of *Tirumurukāṛruppaṭai* with commentary (1853), Pondicherry MS and Chennai MS compared.

Āṛumukanāvalar's ed. (<i>mūlam</i> + <i>urai</i>) 1853	Pondicherry MS 1864	Chennai MS (undated)
1 st section, <i>mūlam</i> (pp. 5–9)		1 st section, <i>mūlam</i> (fols 5r–6v), but up to first <i>cīr</i> of line 48 only.
1 st section, <i>urai</i> (pp. 9–26)	1 st section, <i>urai</i> (fols 1r–34v)	1 st section, <i>urai</i> (fols 7r–22v)
2 nd section, <i>mūlam</i> (pp. 27–29)		2 nd section, <i>mūlam</i> (fol. 23r), but first 3 <i>cīrs</i> of line 78 only. fols 23v–24v left blank.
2 nd section, (pp. 29–38)	2 nd section, <i>urai</i> (fols 35r–51v)	2 nd section, <i>urai</i> (fols 25r–33r)
3 rd section, <i>mūlam</i> (pp. 38–40)		fols 33v–34v left blank.
3 rd section, <i>urai</i> (pp. 41–49)	3 rd section, <i>urai</i> (fols 52r–66v)	3 rd section, <i>urai</i> (fols 35r–43r)
4 th section, <i>mūlam</i> (pp. 49–50)		fol. 43v left blank.
4 th section, <i>urai</i> (pp. 50–52)	4 th section, <i>urai</i> (fols 67r–70r; fol. 70v blank)	4 th section, <i>urai</i> (fols 44r–45v)
5 th section, <i>mūlam</i> (pp. 52–53)		fols 46r–46v left blank
5 th section, <i>urai</i> (pp. 54–58)	5 th section, <i>urai</i> (fols 71r–78v)	5 th section, <i>urai</i> (fols 47r–51r)
6 th section, <i>mūlam</i> (pp. 58–62)		fols 51v–53v left blank
6 th section, <i>urai</i> (pp. 63–83)	6 th section, <i>urai</i> (fols 79r–106v)	6 th section, <i>urai</i> (fols 54r–71v)

From this observation one could conclude that the commissioner or copyist of the Pondicherry MS was not interested in the root-text so much as in the commentary (which however also contains the root-text, but not as a continuous text, since it is quoted piecemeal interspersed with the commentary), while having a continuous root-text, section by section, was also not a priority for the commissioner or copyist of the Chennai MS.

In both cases, it is quite plausible that the root-text was already available to the intended user of the manuscripts. As already mentioned the *Tirumurukāṛruppaṭai* is among the earliest printed Tamil classical texts. In the 1850s, there were already several different printed editions of it. And Āṛumukanāvalar, before publishing the root-text with commentary in 1853, had already published the root-

text in 1851.¹⁹ Alternatively the root-text could have been available in manuscript form too.

If the Pondicherry MS is indeed dated to 1864, it makes sense that that very year someone ordered a manuscript copy of Ārumukanāvalar’s commentary. The first edition of this was published in 1853 and could then be out of stock. Its second edition appeared in 1866.

Furthermore, as we have seen, the Pondicherry MS contains material not found in Ārumukanāvalar’s first edition, namely the *pirapantavaralāru* (unfoliated fols 2r–4v), which is a slight variation upon the *nūl varalāru* known otherwise in several printed editions and only in manuscripts that are (surely or plausibly) copies of printed editions. The Pondicherry MS thus appears more clearly than the Chennai MS as the work of a copyist commissioner interested in any information or explanation about the root-text.

Another interesting feature of the Pondicherry MS is that at the end of the title-page, right after the Jovian cycle date equivalent to 1853 a price is mentioned (unfoliated fol. 1v2) (Fig. 8). One reads:



Fig. 8: Pondicherry MS, unfoliated fol. 1v: end of title-page, date and price. © IFP

°itan vilai • ((currency symbol)) 1 • |

‘Price of this: 1 Rupee/Ringgit (?)’

The currency is expressed by a symbol that might stand for Rupee (î in modern typed script). The symbol seems however to be based on the consonant ṅ. But, as pointed out to me by T. Ganesan, ṅ and ṇ̇ are often confused in script. Alternatively, as suggested to me by Jean-Luc Chevillard, the symbol could stand for

¹⁹ See Zvelebil (1992, 156) and Rajesh (2014, 101), who however do not provide details about this 1851 edition of the *Tirumurukāṟruppaṭai* by Ārumukanāvalar. I surmise this is in fact his first edition of the 11th *Tirumuṟai* (not available to me), of which the *Tirumurukāṟruppaṭai* is a part. This edition of the 11th *Tirumuṟai* was quickly reprinted (in 1851/2).

Ringgit, the name of the actual currency of Malaysia.²⁰ The history of the term Ringgit needs further investigation in order to assess when it started to be used as a currency name. Information in the records of the IFP concerning this manuscript is inconclusive as to its provenance, as indicated to me by Dominic Goodall.²¹

Whatever the currency indicated, it is noteworthy that there is no mention of price in the printed book of 1853 (unless the copy available to me is incomplete). But I have found at least one edition of *Tirumurukārruppaṭai* by Ārumukanāvalar with a price printed in the book itself, i.e. the 5th edition of 1886, sold for four Annas (*aṅā* – 4), i.e. a quarter of a Rupee.²²

So what is this price in the Pondicherry MS standing for? Is it the price of the manuscript? It seems not very common to have such mention by the scribe himself. This would be the only case in the more than 50 manuscripts of the *Tirumurukārruppaṭai* available to me. About prices of manuscripts, it seems they were quite high before the print culture became widespread.²³ Further investigations about the cost of manuscripts and books in Tamil Nadu is yet to be done, but if the Pondicherry MS is indeed dated to 1864 and if the price in it is its cost of one Rupee, it was indeed a high price.²⁴

20 Jean-Luc Chevillard directed me to a post in Jaybee's Notebook (<http://jaybeesnotebook.blogspot.fr/2012/02/tamil-accountancy-symbols-1.html>, accessed June 15, 2015) which shows Tamil accountancy symbols used in Malaysia until 1972. One of them, based on the consonant *ṛ*, for *rūpāy* (i.e. Rupee), is similar to the symbol of modern typed script. Another, based on the consonant *ṅ*, for *riṅkiṭ* (i.e. Ringgit), is strikingly similar to the one used in the Pondicherry MS.

21 The Pondicherry MS accession No. at the IFP is RE 25365. In the accessions' register, which Dominic Goodall kindly checked for me, from RE 25296 up to and including RE 25331 (at the top of p. 147) or possibly up to and including RE 25344 (at the bottom of p. 147) the manuscripts are all plainly marked as being those of a gift: 'don de Toṇḍamaṅḍalādhinam Jñānaprakāśa (svami-gal) Maṭham Coṅjeevaram.' They were all accessioned on 5th May 1970. All the following accessions are also manuscripts registered from 5th May 1970, up to and including RE 25410 on p. 151 of the register. They are also entered by the same hand and with the same blue ink, but there is no continuation of the ditto-marks in the columns devoted to provenance ('Source: Achat, don etc.', and 'Observations'), and so it is not made absolutely explicit (though it seems quite possible) that they, including RE 25365, were part of the same gift.

22 I have not been able to check all the editions of *Tirumurukārruppaṭai* by Ārumukanāvalar.

23 See for instance Naregal (2000, 277–279), for 18th-century Western India, and, as pointed out to me by Jonas Buchholz, Mayilai Ciṅi. Vēṅkaṭācāmi (*Pattonpaṭām nūṛṅṅiṭil tamil ilakkiyam*, Madras 1962, p. 114; also cited by Zvelebil 1975, 15) stating that before 1835, Reverend P. Percival had to pay 10 pounds, i.e. 150 Rupees for a manuscript copy of the *Caturakarāṭi*, while after the text had been printed, a printed copy would cost 2½ shillings (1 Rupee, 14 Annas).

24 A search in Murdoch (1865) about prices of books published in 1864 yielded no such a high price for a single book. See, for instance, p. 12 (Christian lyrics, 475 pages, 10 Annas), p. 26 (an

Unfortunately I cannot clear all the doubts concerning these two manuscript copies of printed *Tirumurukārruppaṭai*, nor those concerning the last one to be examined.

6 The Trivandrum MS

The Trivandrum MS is less obviously a copy of printed edition, but some of its peculiarities make it a probable fourth instance of this. The manuscript starts with three pages that contain an introduction to the work (fols 1r–2r), that is the *nūl varalāru* ('history of the book') already mentioned, which is referred to as such in the left-marginal heading. Then on the fourth page (that is fol. 2v), which is divided into two columns, we find on the left column a title-page, the structure of which is reminiscent of print rather than of manuscript culture. It looks indeed in part like a copy of a printed title-page (with small variants, see Table 5) followed by blessings and other paratextual elements. In the second column, we find the traditional invocation (*kāppu*). Then we have the *mūlam* (fols 3r–6r).

The text of the title-page on fol. 2v appears very similar to that of two editions I am aware of, namely the first edition of the *Tirumurukārruppaṭai*, published in 1834, and an edition published in 1845. Their respective title-pages are compared in Table 5.

Old Testament history, 278 pages, 6 Annas), p. 240 (*Tirukkuraḷ*, 94 pages, 8 Annas). NB: 1 Rupee = 16 Annas. Although some of these books were tools for proselytising and thus relatively cheap, the figures are nonetheless telling.

Tab. 5: Title-pages of the *Tirumurukāṛruppaṭai* edition by Caravaṇapperumāḷ (1834), of the *Tirumurukāṛruppaṭai* edition by Maḷavai Makāliṅkaiyar (1845) (not available to me) and of the Trivandrum manuscript. The segments of texts have been aligned for the sake of comparison. I have introduced spaces between words. Differences are marked in bold.

Caravaṇapperumāḷ ed. 1834	Maḷavai Makāliṅkaiyar ed. 1845	Trivandrum MS (undated)
(1) <i>tirumurukāṛruppaṭai</i> (2) <i>mūlapāṭam</i> . (small horizontal line)	<i>tirumurukāṛruppaṭai</i> <i>mūlapāṭam</i> .	(fol. 2v1) <i>tirumurukāṛruppaṭai</i> <i>mūlapāṭam</i>
(3) <i>teyvattaṅmai poruntiya</i>	<i>teyvattaṅmai poruntiya</i>	[t]eyvī(fol. 2v2) cattaṅmai poruntiya
(4) <i>maturaiikkaṭaic caṅkattu</i>	<i>maturaiikkaṭaic caṅkattu</i>	<i>maturaiikkaṭaic caṅka</i> (fol. 2v3)ttu
(5) <i>makāvittuvāṅākiya</i>	<i>makāvittuvāṅākiya</i>	<i>makāvittu[v]āṅākiya</i>
(6) <i>nakkīraṅṅār</i> (7) <i>°aruḷiccey-tatu</i> . (ornamented horizontal separation)	<i>nakkīraṅṅār aruḷicceytatu</i> .	<i>narkkīrar tēvar</i> °aru(fol. 2v4) <i>ḷicceytatu</i> –
(8) <i>nacciṅārkkīṇiyār uraippaṭiyē ...</i>	<i>nacciṅārkkīṇiyār uraippaṭiyē ...</i>	<i>nacciṅārkkīṇiyār</i> urai(fol. 2v5) <i>ppaṭiyē</i> - ...

Given that only the 1834 edition is available to me and that I know of the 1845 edition only thanks to WorldCat, I am not yet able to determine with confidence if one of these two printed books is the master copy of the Trivandrum MS.

There are slight differences between the Trivandrum MS version and the 1834 printed edition: the headings for the sections of the work consist in the name of the abode only in the manuscript as opposed to the number and name of the abode in the edition; furthermore the *nūl varalāru* is found at the end in the 1834 edition (pp. 13–14) and not at the beginning as in the manuscript (fols 1a–2r), where, strangely enough, it precedes the title-page and *kāppu* (fol. 2v) and the root-text (fols 3r–16v). These differences might be due to the scribe not copying exactly the 1834 printed book, but could also indicate that the 1845 printed edition is a better candidate for the model of the Trivandrum MS.

But the printed model might equally be another edition not yet available to me (as there are two printed editions with a very similar title-page, one may suspect that there are more), which would explain the small variants compared to the two printed title-pages known to me.

From the specificities of the Trivandrum MS arises another question. Why does the title-page come after the *nūl varalāru*, which is an introduction? The reason might be that it was not in the printed book taken as model for the root-text but imported from yet another printed book (or manuscript). If so, the Trivandrum MS

would be another instance—like the Pondicherry MS—of a manuscript made, like a patchwork, from different versions of the *Tirumurukārruppaṭai*, in order to get a (more) complete version.

7 Conclusions

The four manuscript witnesses of the *Tirumurukārruppaṭai* described above are apparently copies of printed books, even though it cannot be ruled out that one or the other might in fact be the manuscript prepublication draft of a printed book. If we place ourselves in the wider context of Indian and Indic manuscript culture, there are other instances known of such manuscripts. I have given in an appendix a list of Indian and Indic manuscript copies of printed books compiled on the basis of feedback from colleagues.

Let us come back, in this broader context, to the reasons for which one might have a manuscript copy of a printed book made. When I asked this question to the Indology list (<http://listinfo.indology.info>), several colleagues kindly shared their insights with me (search the thread ‘Manuscript copies of printed books’). I can summarize the reasons put forward—which are not mutually exclusive—as follows.

A manuscript copy remained for a long time the *only way* of having a copy of a book, be it handwritten or printed. ‘In those days there was no coffee’ wrote Va. Ramaswamy Iyengar in 1943, reflecting on the 19th-century context (Venkatachala-
pathy 2006, 12). There were no Xerox-machines either. In case a physical copy of a printed book was needed, there were not many possibilities other than having a handwritten copy made.

A manuscript copy was also the *cheap way*. For instance, as pointed out by Matthew T. Kapstein, in the case of Tibetan books hiring a copyist was cheaper and easier than commissioning xylographic printing. It seems also that with the development of print culture, the cost of hiring a copyist decreased (very high prices, as mentioned above, belonged to a time when there were no printed books). Depending on place and time, printed books could simply be more expensive than manuscripts.

A manuscript copy could also serve the purpose of making a printed edition, considered as valuable, accessible to a reader not familiar with the specific script in which it had been printed. Dominic Goodall pointed out to me the case of a Devanāgarī manuscript copy (of the 20th century) of a Sanskrit text printed in Grantha characters, a script read mostly in South India (see appendix No. 8). A similar case might be that of the manuscripts of Ratnakīrti’s *Apoḥasiddhi* and/or *Kṣaṇabhaṅgasiddhi* in the Nepal National Archives, which are, as pointed out to me

by Elliot M. Stern, copies in Nepālākṣara script of the Devanāgarī edition of Hara-prasād Shāstri (see appendix No. 2).

These last examples show that printed editions could simply be considered, like manuscripts, valuable exemplars. Furthermore, as Chris Clark and Whitney Cox pointed out to me, there are examples of manuscripts emended or collated by a later hand on the basis of printed editions.²⁵ As Judit Törzsök further suggested, it is also plausible that, depending on place and time, such valued printed editions were rare and thus worthy of being copied.

Finally, a manuscript copy was the traditional form of a book and as such could be preferred to modern printed books. In our own century, in Bali, written, type-written and published texts are transcribed on palm leaf (*lontar*), as Andrea Acri informed me, in the belief that these texts should be part of the Balinese manuscript heritage (Acri 2013, 72, n. 4, 75, n. 12; see appendix, Nos 3 and 11). This practice has to be understood in the context of a ‘revival of traditional forms’: books as manuscripts are considered ‘as sacred heirlooms inherited from ancestors’ and prized items of Balinese culture. But such practice is also part of the ‘anti-reactionary agenda of westernised Balinese urban intellectuals’ in an effort to ‘desacralize’ and ‘democratise’ the ‘production and sharing of knowledge,’ which are ‘activities involving *lontar* that were traditionally carried out by high-status people’ (Acri, forthcoming). The prestige of palm leaf is also attested in present-day Tamil Nadu, as Dominic Goodall pointed out to me: in functions such as marriages, guests are often given palm leaves printed (i.e. not incised, as traditionally) with verses from the *Kuṛaḷ* (Fig. 9). Richard Weiss (2009, 185ff.) demonstrated that the authority of manuscripts is central to contemporary Siddha medical discourse and practice. But it is noteworthy that this concerns unpublished medical texts, which the Siddha Medical Literature Research Centre proposes to collect, research and publish (p. 189). Bhoi (2005, 73–74) observes in contemporary Orissa a preference for palm leaf, instead of paper, for handwritten documents (most notably for noting down the horoscopes of new-born babies or as material support of the ‘ceremonial invitation sent to the bridegroom from the bride’s family’) and texts (otherwise available in printed form).²⁶

²⁵ Chris Clark pointed out a manuscript of *Aṣṭasāhasrikāprajñāpāramitā*, possibly dated to the 13th century, emended, in the process of its restoration, on the basis of a twentieth-century printed edition (see Emmrich 2009, especially pp. 146ff.). Whitney Cox indicated that one of the Śāradā manuscripts of Maheśvarānanda’s *Mahārthamañjarī* which he collated contained a considerable number of marginal annotations in a second Śāradā hand correcting the text according to the readings of Ganapati Sastri’s 1918 edition of the text in the Trivandrum Sanskrit Series.

²⁶ See also Bhoi 2005, 77, for the example of a manuscript of *Nirvedasādhanāgītā* sold for a rupee and four Annas in 1916 ‘when the printed book would have been much cheaper.’



Fig. 9: *Kuralis* printed on palm leaves. Photo E. Francis, from an item kindly supplied by Dominic Goodall.

But one should be cautious not to read back into the 19th century (provided that the manuscript witnesses of the *Tirumurukāṟruppaṭai* discussed here date to that period) contemporary practices, inspired by a revivalist or traditionalist approach. In another study, Richard Weiss (2015) argues that in the 1860s, as far as religious texts are concerned, the materiality of the printed object in which such texts appeared sustained assertions for authority. His example is that of the poems of a living author (the *Tiruvartupā*, a collection of devotional poems by Irāmaliṅka Aṭikal, who lived 1823–1874), not of one transmitted for centuries in manuscript form. Weiss convincingly contends that ‘the material form organization, and content of the 1867 publication’ of this work were adopted from the expensive and handsome printed volumes—that were produced at that time in an effort to re-establish the Śaiva canon—so as ‘to garner religious and textual authority’ for the poems of an author at the margins of influential and institutional Śaiva circles (p. 651). As for the *Tirumurukāṟruppaṭai* it was among the first classical texts that appeared in print in the early decades of the 19th century. In a sense, its printing at an early date derives from its popularity and authority, not the reverse, although it doubtless enhanced its canonicity by a mass diffusion. Furthermore, as Rick Weiss pointed out to me, it remains possible that someone just saw the act of transcribing on palm leaf a text such as the *Tirumurukāṟruppaṭai* to be a devotional achievement, yielding religious merit.

To sum up, the absence of mechanical reproduction such as Xerox-machines, the availability at a relatively cheap cost of the skills of copyists, the need of a script conversion, the valued status of printed editions, the attachment to the traditional book form and the merit that derives from making a copy of a devotional work are all reasons that might explain why manuscript copies of printed books were made (whether the printed version was out of stock or not).

The four *Tirumurukāṛruppaṭai* witnesses might attest to other or complementary reasons, not exclusive of those just mentioned. The commissioner's intention could have been to compile or to supplement the printed editions. The Pondicherry MS of the *Tirumurukāṛruppaṭai* is based on an edition by Ārumukanāvalar, seemingly the first edition of 1853, but it reproduces only the commentary part, not the continuous root-text of each section, and it supplements this master edition with an introduction about the work (*pirapantavaralāru*) not found in Ārumukanāvalar's first edition. If this manuscript was really written before the second edition appeared, its commissioner wanted, it seems, to have in the same volume all relevant information and commentary about a text, the root-text of which was otherwise available to him. This is a valid reason also for ordering the copy of a manuscript. The difference here is that the work considered valuable, of which a copy was needed, was printed and not handwritten. In the case of the Pondicherry MS, the cheapest and only way to have such an enriched copy of the *Tirumurukāṛruppaṭai* edition by Ārumukanāvalar was to produce a manuscript copy. The Trivandrum MS might be a similar case.

A manuscript copy of a printed book could also be the work of a copyist in want of business, due to the success of printing and paper writing. Imagine that a popular edition, like that of Ārumukanāvalar, was out of stock or very expensive; a copyist could decide to make a copy of it, without being commissioned, as a commodity to be sold. Could the Pondicherry MS, which is an enriched version in some aspects of Ārumukanāvalar's first edition and thus a value-added edition, be such a case, as, quite exceptionally, its price is specified on its title-page?

Another issue concerns the choice of palm leaf, instead of paper, for the manuscript copy of a printed book. Was not paper easier for writing, increasingly available and reasonably priced? Was palm-leaf really cheaper than paper? Was the available paper not considered of good quality or seen as worthy material? Were professional scribes on palm leaf still largely available while people skilled in writing on paper were not? It seems that in South India, in contrast to North India, paper remained rare and more expensive compared to palm leaves.²⁷ As K. Nachimuthu pointed out to me, palm leaf was used in Kerala as government stationary till the middle of the 20th century. In that configuration, the selection of the material support of a book was not a matter of choice: paper was simply less available and more expensive than palm leaf. But one still wonders. Was palm leaf chosen instead of paper out of respect for the traditional material, like in the

27 On the use of paper in India, see Brac de la Perrière 2008, 87–101, Falk 1993, 312, Janert 1956, 75–87.

case of the modern Indonesian practice mentioned by A. Acri? Could the commission of a manuscript copy of a printed book on palm leaf be more often than thought linked to the prestige and status of the traditional book—or even the cult of the book? In other words, from a traditional point of view, a book should be a manuscript, and thus it was felt necessary to have a printed edition—the more so for a valuable work such as that of *Āṣumukanāvalar*—converted into manuscript form. Was the act of writing a text still considered a meritorious act?

I must admit that there is much speculation here. Unfortunately, no paratext in the four manuscript copies of the *Tirumurukāṛruppaṭai* can help us clarify the reasons of their existence. In fact these manuscripts raise more questions than they answer. Their value, for the time being, is that they brought forth these questions, which further investigations might help to answer.

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Appendix

Selected list of (proven, strongly suspected or possible) manuscript copies of printed books. This list is very basic, providing information (when available) concerning the name of the work, the language and script of the manuscript, its material, location, catalogue/access No. and internal date, the printed book copied, references (if any) and, if appropriate, the name of the scholar to whom I owe the first information about this manuscript.

- 1) *Aintiṇai Eḷupatu* — Tamil language and script — Palm leaf — Sri Chandrasekharendra Saraswathi Viswa Mahavidyalaya, Kanchipuram — No. 903488 — Seemingly copied from a printed edition²⁸ — Information obtained from Jonas Buchholz.
- 2) *Apoḥasiddhi* and/or *Kṣaṇabhaṅgasiddhi* of Ratnakīrti — Sanskrit, Nepālākṣara script — Nepal National Archives, Kathmandu — All or some copied from *Six Buddhist Nyāya Tracts in Sanskrit*, ed. Haraprasād Shāstri, Calcutta: Asiatic Society, 1910 (Bibliotheca Indica, New Series; 1223) — Information obtained from Elliot M. Stern.
- 3) *Dharma Pātañjala* — Old Javanese (prose) and Sanskrit (a few verses), Balinese script — Palm leaf — In possession of Ida Dewa Gede Catra of Amlapura — Copy made in 2007 from an early draft of the edition of the text (in Roman script) established by Andrea Acri and later published in *Dharma Pātañjala, A Śaiva Scripture from Ancient Java Studied in the Light of Related Old Javanese and Sanskrit Texts*, by Andrea Acri, Groningen: Egbert Forsten, 2011 (Gonda Indological Studies; 16) — See Acri (2013, 72 n. 4; forthcoming) — Information obtained from Andrea Acri.
- 4) *Kaivalliya Navanītam* — Tamil language and script — Palm leaf — Oriental Research Institute & Manuscripts Library, University of Kerala, Trivandrum — No. 12491 — Dated to Malayalam Era 1016 = 1840/1 CE — See *Catalogue*, No. 1399: ‘copy from a printed book.’
- 5) *Kaḷavaḷi Nārpatu* — Tamil language and script — Palm leaf — Sri Chandrasekharendra Saraswathi Viswa Mahavidyalaya, Kanchipuram — No. 903710 — Seemingly copied from a printed edition²⁹ — Information obtained from Jonas Buchholz.
- 6) *Kaṇakkatikāram* — Tamil language and script — Palm leaf — EFEO, Pondicherry — No. EO-0541 — Incomplete copy of *Kaṇakkatikāram*, ed. by Ārumukamutaliyār, [Ceṇṇai]: Vittiyaṅvilācamuttirākṣaracālai, Pirapava year, Paṅkuṇi month (i.e. March–April 1868) — Information obtained from Jean-Luc Chevillard.

28 Provenance and features shared with No. 10 in this appendix lead to consider that this manuscript is copied from a printed edition.

29 Provenance and features shared with No. 10 in this appendix lead to consider that this manuscript is copied from a printed edition.

- 7) *Kātyāyanaśrautasūtra* — Sanskrit, Devanāgarī — Material not specified — Nepal National Archives, Kathmandu — No. 4/211 — Dated to 1986 (of unspecified era) — Copied from *The Çrautasūtra of Kātyāyana, With Extracts from the Commentaries of Karka and Yājñikadeva*, ed. Albrecht Weber, Berlin: Dümmler & London: Williams and Norgate, 1859 — NGMCP: id: 119037 — Information obtained from Michael Witzel.
- 8) *Kriyākramadyotikā* of Aghoraśiva — Sanskrit, Devanāgarī — Paper — Transcript used by Richard Davis and made accessible to him as early as 1984 when working on that text at the Kuppusvami Sastri Research Institute, Chennai³⁰ — Copied from *Kriyākramadyotikā* of Aghoraśivācārya with the commentary (*Prabhāvyaḅhyā*) of Nirmalamaṇi, ed. by Rāmaśāstrin and Ambalavānajñānasambandhaparāśaktisvāmin, Chidambaram, 1927 — Information obtained from Dominic Goodall and Richard Davis.³¹
- 9) *Patārttakuṇa Vaittiya Cintāmaṇi* — Tamil language and script — Palm leaf — Oriental Research Institute & Manuscripts Library, University of Kerala, Trivandrum — No. 12151A — Dated to Malayalam Era 1043 = 1867/8 CE — See *Catalogue*, No. 3417: ‘seems copied from a printed book?’
- 10) *Tiṇaimālai Nūṛraimpatu* — Tamil language and script — Palm leaf — Sri Chandrasekharendra Saraswathi Viswa Mahavidyalaya, Kanchipuram — No. 901659 — Copied from an edition later than 1936³² — Information obtained from Jonas Buchholz.
- 11) *Tutur Aji Sangkya* — Balinese language and script — Palm leaf — Pusat Dokumentasi Budaya Bali — No. T/I/12 = K31 — Copied from or model for one of the printed editions of *Aji Sangkya* by Ida Ketut Jelantik (first published, as a mimeographed pamphlet, in 1947) — See Aciri (2013, 75 n. 12),

³⁰ The e-text available on the Muktabodha site under catalogue number M00126 (http://muktabodha.org/DL_CATALOG/DL_CATALOG_USER_INTERFACE/dl_user_interface_frameset.htm) is based on that transcript.

³¹ Dominic Goodall also pointed out to me a partial *Pauṣkarasaṃhitābhāṣya* of Umāpati, transcribed into Devanāgarī, that Jayandra Soni used in the 1980s and guesses was prepared by someone at the Madras University Library. R.H. Davis 2010, 4 mentions a Devanāgarī transcript of the Grantha edition of Aghoraśiva’s *Mahotsavavidhi* published in Chennai in 1910, which was prepared at the Kuppusvami Sastri Research Institute.

³² Several features of the manuscript (unusual lay-out, with columns and line-splits; use of *pulli*; distinction between *rakaram* and *kāl*; use of single and double *kompū*; western punctuation such as exclamation mark; *sandhi* mostly resolved; lacunae in the text restored as per printed editions) have lead Jonas Buchholz to the convincing conclusion that this was copied from a printed edition.

who however informed me that he found out later that the present manuscript's provenance is Kasimpar, Abang, Karangasem; in other words his initial impression of 2013 that there were two different manuscripts copies of the *Aji Sangkya* (one in Pusat Dokumentasi Budaya Bali and another in a private collection in Kasimpar, Abang, Karangasem) proved wrong — Information obtained from Andrea Acri.

- 12) *Yogavāsiṣṭha* — Sanskrit, Śāradā script — Paper — Research and Publication Department, Jammu & Kashmir Government, Śrīnagar — No. 4797/2281 — Written over a period of four years, between 1934/5–1938/9 — Copied from *The Yogavāsiṣṭha of Vālmīki, With the Commentary Vāsīṣṭha-mahārāmayaṇatātparyaprakāśha*, ed. by Wāsudeva Laxmaṇa Shāstrī Paṇsīkar, Bombay: Nirṇaya-Sāgar Press, 1911¹, 1918², 1937³ — See Slaje (2005, 46) — Information obtained from Jürgen Hanneder.

Abbreviations

EFE0	École française d'Extrême-Orient
GOML	Government Oriental Manuscript Library, Chennai, IFP: Institut français de Pondichéry
MS/MSS	manuscript/manuscripts
RMRL	Roja Muthiah Research Library, Chennai

Conventions

The sign ‘^o’ precedes initial vowels.

Tamil characters in Roman. Unless otherwise mentioned bold marks Grantha characters.

((mācam)): word *mācam*, ‘month,’ expressed by the abbreviation **𑌕𑌃**.

((nāl)): word *nāl*, ‘day,’ expressed by the abbreviation **𑌕𑌃**, which is identical to or very similar to the *piḷḷaiyār cuḷi*.

((varuṣam)): word *varuṣam*, ‘year,’ expressed by the abbreviation **𑌕𑌃**.

c = column.

lm = left margin.

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