CĒRA KINGS OF THE ŠANGAM PERIOD
CēRA KINGS

OF THE

ŚANGAM PERIOD

BY

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To

His Highness Vañci Pāla
Śri Bāla Rāma Varma Kulasēkhara,
Knight Grand Commander

Of The Most Eminent Order
Of The Indian Empire,
Mahārāja Of Travancore,
Who Worthily Represents
The Ancient And Historic House
Of Cēra Kings.

This Book
Is With His Highness's Gracious Permission
Respectfully Dedicated.
PREFACE.

Every student of South Indian history knows that of the three great Tamil kingdoms that flourished in ancient days in South India, the Čōla and Pāṇḍya kingdoms have long ago ceased to exist, while the Cēra kingdom still continues under the rule of its indigenous kings. Prof. K. A. Nilakanta Sastri of the Madras University has in his scholarly works on the Čōlas and the Pāṇḍyas given us the stories of those two royal houses, gathered from authentic sources; but as yet no intelligible account of the ancient Cēra kingdom based on reliable sources has been attempted. In the following pages, I have for the first time, tried to construct that story, so far as it can be recovered from ancient Tamil literature, which is the only available source from which it can be built up.

Tamil literature of the Śangam period is the oldest native source that supplies relevant material for ancient South Indian history; for it is antecedent to the era of dated inscriptions relating to South Indian kings. This important source has now been made available principally by the labours of the greatest living Tamil scholar, Mahāmahōpādhyāya Dr. V. Swaminatha Aiyar,—clarum et venerabile nomen—whose indefatigable energy and selfless work of nearly half-a-century have succeeded, not only in saving from the ravages of white ants almost
the whole range of the Sangam classics which had existed only in the form of fast-decaying palm-leaf manuscripts in remote corners of the southern peninsula, but also in bringing out critical editions of those priceless literary treasures. It is no exaggeration to say that it is impossible to repay the debt which the students of Tamil India owe to the venerable and learned Mahāmahopādhyāya, by whose great work alone it has become possible to recover the outlines of the lost history of ancient South India, and to gain some knowledge of the state of civilization, the social, literary, and political life, and the religious ideas of the Tamil people in the early centuries of the Christian era.

Almost the first to recognise and demonstrate the supreme value of ancient Tamil literature in the construction of early South Indian history was my friend Dewan Bahadur Dr. S. Krishnaswamy Aiyangar, who worthily filled the chair of Ancient Indian History and Archaeology for many years in the Madras University, and by his numerous writings and his able direction of historical research in the post-graduate courses in the University has, as Sir Jadunath Sarkar, the well-known Indian historian, once said, founded the Madras School of Indian History. At a time when archaeology and epigraphy alone were regarded as supplying relevant material for purposes of history, he emphasised that for satisfactory historical
research, close study of ancient literature was also of prime importance; and by the systematic use in his works of material supplied by ancient Tamil classics, he successfully paved the way for succeeding workers in the field of ancient South Indian history. To-day Sangam literature is freely acknowledged by all to be an indispensable, and in some cases, the only source of historical information in regard to the early Tamil kingdoms.

The material for the present work has been entirely gathered from the Sangam works. One of them, Patirruppattu, relates exclusively to the Cēras, and several other Sangam works are in some way or other connected with the Cēra kingdom and Cēra royalty. My object has been to draw as clearly as possible, from Sangam literature alone, the outlines of the story of the early Cēra kings and their achievements. Ancient South India had no Herodotus or Thucydides, Livy or Tacitus. Its literature, however, abounds in materials from which a careful student can build up a reliable story of the social and religious life of the people and their progress in arts, sciences and literature. Patirruppattu gives a dynastic list of Cēra kings, with the length of the different reigns and the outstanding events of each reign; and though chronology as such is absent, and there is an entire absence of dated inscriptions, it is not impossible to construct a sort of chronological framework for the period with which
this book deals. I have attempted to construct such a framework; and though I do not claim for it absolute accuracy, I venture to think it will not be found unreasonable or wholly unacceptable.

The book has grown out of lectures originally delivered in Trivandrum and published in Indian historical journals; and my thanks are due to the editors of those journals who readily agreed to the use of the articles for this book. It is my duty and it gives me pleasure to acknowledge my indebted-ness to Mahāmahopādhyāya Dr. V. Swaminatha Aiyar, the learned editor of the Śangam classics from which I have drawn my materials. To Mr. V. R. Ramachandra Dikshitar, M.A., Lecturer in Indian History in the University of Madras, I am particularly under obligation for his valuable suggestions and his untiring service in seeing the work through the press with scrupulous care. My sincere thanks are also due to Mr. T. V. Mahalingam, M.A., who gladly undertook the preparation of the Index and Bibliography.

Trivandrum, }  
K. G. Seshā Aiyar. 
15th January 1937. }
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ABBREVIATIONS EMPLOYED AND THEIR EXPLANATION.

*Agam* .. Aga-Nānūru

*Ain* .. Ain-Kuṟu-Nūru

*I.H.Q.* .. Indian Historical Quarterly

*J.I.H.* .. Journal of Indian History

*J.O.R.* .. Journal of Oriental Research

*Kuṟun* .. Kuṟuntokai

*Maṇi* .. Maṇimēkalai

*Marutam* .. Kalit-tokai; Marutak-kali

*Mullai* .. Mullaik-kali

*Nār* .. Nāṟrinai

*Neytal* .. Kalit-tokai; Neytal-Kali

*Pālai* .. Kalit-tokai; Pālaik-Kali

*P.p.* .. Patiṟṟup-pattu

*Puṟam* .. Puṟa-Nānūru

*Q.J.M.S.* .. Quarterly Journal of the Mythic Society

*Śilap.* .. Śilappadhikāram

*Tol.* .. Tol-Kāppiyam
CHAPTER I.

S. 1. Sources and Their Nature.

The only source from which the story of the old Cēra Kingdom can be constructed is the literature of the Šangam period, for that story is unknown to epigraphy; but even Šangam literature can help us only to prepare an outline which at best can be treated merely as tentative in regard to the results that it may disclose. Of the Šangam works, the most important for the present purpose are Puṇa-nānūru, Patirṛup-pattu, and Silappadhikāram. Puṇa-nānūru is a collection of 400 lyrics by different poets, numbering about 160; and the collection derives its name from the circumstance that the lyrics therein relate to puram, one of the two fundamental categories of poetic material according to the ancient rules of Tamil poetics and rhetoric. Puṇam or Puṇap-porul is concerned with the external relations of princes, which embrace war and politics. Though these are generally court lyrics, panegyrizing in the main a king or a chieftain of the ancient Tamil land, they are usually direct and natural in language and sentiment and free from the exaggerated artificiality of later poetry; and most poems are by singers who are contemporaries of the personages sung about. One can easily see that for purposes of history, the lyrics of the Puṇa-nānūru collection must be of supreme value. Patirṛup-pattu is a collection of poems dealing exclusively with the wars and
other achievements, including those in the art of peace, of Cēra kings. As the name implies, there were ten poems, each consisting of a decad of lyrics; but of these, two have not till now been discovered—the first and the tenth. Each one of the existing eight decades deals with the achievements and merits of a separate Cēra king, and the author of each decad is a contemporary of the hero of his song. It is, therefore, obvious that for an account of the early Cēras, *Patiṟṟup-pattu* is of incalculable value. *Silappadhikāram* is the first regular epic in the Tamil language, and it is indispensable for a knowledge of the early Cēra Kingdom, as its real hero is a Cēra monarch, Śen-Kuṭṭivan, and its author a Cēra prince.

Besides, from *Aganānūru* and *Narrinai* also, which are well-known Šangam collections of poems relating to *agam* or love, we derive some help in building up our story. I regard all these sources as of the nature of contemporary documents in respect of the kings of whom they speak. They are poetic accounts of the achievements of princes, who according to the conception of those early times were worthy of being extolled as high examples. The conception of biography as a faithful portrait of a man’s life is entirely modern; but that circumstance cannot detract from the value of these poems as sources of authentic history; and I have unhesitatingly utilized them in constructing my narrative.
In this connection, it may be mentioned that the information supplied by the author of each Patirrup-pattu is sometimes found amplified or augmented in the Patigam or epilogue appended to it; and there can be no doubt that the Patigam was added later by someone other than the author of the poem. So too, for a correct assessment of the historical value of the information conveyed by the lyrics of the Puranānūru collection, we have to rely on the colophons appended to them; and there is no means of knowing when and by whom these colophons were appended to the poems. There cannot, however, be any doubt about the antiquity of the patigams and the colophons; and it is rational to hold that their authors gave fixity to the ancient traditions of the Tamil country current in their day.

Tradition is really human testimony regarding the long past; and though like all human testimony it is liable to error, it should not on that account be discarded as wholly unworthy of attention, unless, indeed, we hold that in ancient times people were incapable of discriminating between truth and falsehood. Tradition is, in effect, reputation arising from the concurrence of many parties unconnected with each other, but all interested in investigating the subject; and in the absence of trustworthy first-hand evidence, tradition may and ought to be accepted as the ground-work for history, especially in matters where the
probability for personal bias is little. In this view, I see no reason to doubt the correctness of the information conveyed by the patigams and the colophons, and I have accepted the veracity of these very ancient documents which the Tamil world has never thought of questioning for long centuries, ever since they were written by persons who could have had no personal bias whatever.

S. 2. *Udiyan Cēralātan, the first Cēra King.*

The extant sections of *Patiṟṟup-pattu* deal with the achievements of eight Cēra kings, and they are:

- Imayavaramban Neḍum-Cēralātan,
- Pal-yānai Šel-Kelu-Kuṭṭuvan,
- Kaḻankāik-kaṇṇi-Nārmudic-Cēral,
- Kaḻal-Pirakōṭṭiya Šen-Kuṭṭuvan,
- Ādu-kōtpāṭṭuc-Cēralātan,
- Šelvak-kaṇḍunkō-Vāliyātan,
- Takaḍūr-erinta Perum-Cēral Irumporaī, and
- Kuḍakkō Iḷam-Cēral-Irumporaī.

For the names of the Cēra kings celebrated in the *Pura-nānuṟu* lyrics, we have to depend on the colophon appended to each lyric of that collection. From the colophons, we gather the names of seventeen Cēra kings; and they are:

- Cēramān Perum-Śorṟu Udiyan Cēralātan,
- Cēramān Karuvūr-ēriya Oḷvāl Köp-perum-Cēral Irumporaī,
- Cēramān Kaṇḍunkō Vāliyātan,
- Cēramān Pālaipāḍiya Perum Kaṇḍunkō,
- Cēramān Antuvaṉ Cēral Irumporaī,
Cēramān Yānaikkaṭ Šēy Māntaram-Cēral Irumporai.
Cēramān Kōk-Kōdai Mārban,
Cēramān Takadūrerinta Perum-Cēral Irumporai,
Cēramān Kuṭṭuvan Kōdai,
Cēramān Kuḍakko Neḍum-Cēralātān,
Cēramān Perum-Cēralātān,
Cēramān Kaṇaiikkāl Irumporai,
Cēramān Kuḍakko Cēral-Irumporai,
Cēramān Kōṭṭambalattut-tuṅciya Māk-kōdai,
Cēramān Vaṅcan,
Cēramān Kaḍalōṭṭiya Vēl-kelu Kuṭṭuvan, and
Cēramān Mā-Ven Kō.

As we can see easily, some of these names are re-duplications. It will be my attempt in the following pages to arrange these Cēras in their chronological order, ascertain their approximate dates and show by what deeds or achievements their names live in literature. Perhaps in the discussion, it will be possible to relate these kings to one another and to get a glimpse of the social, religious and political life of the people in the Cēra country in those distant days.

For the earliest Cēra known to Tamil literature, we have to go to Puranānūru. He is Cēramān Perum-Šorṟu Udiyan Cēralātān, who is celebrated in song by Muraṅciyūr Muḍināgarāyar in Puram 2. That lyric, which, if we except some possible references to him in Aga-nānūru, is the only poem sung in his honour, is given in translation below.

Hail, noble king! whose nature well combines
The qualities of all the elements;
Whose long forgiving suff'ring is a match
To mother earth's; whose judgment wise is wide
As all-pervading ether, and whose might
Like air illimitable, and like fire
Resistless, with refreshful mercy still
Is tempered, which thy glorious sway upholds,
As water cool enlivens nature's face.
Hail, warrior-king! Thy land, with plenty smiles,
With untold wealth the deep sea's bosom yields,
And treasures new that ceaseless to thy ports
From foreign lands rich merchant vessels bring.
The sun, that in thy eastern sea is born,
In thy foam-crested western ocean seeks
His rest at eve. Sky bounds thy land alone!
Majestic monarch! When the ten times ten
Kauravas, crowned with golden tumbai wreaths,
Wrathful in battle 'gainst the heroes five—
Lords of the fiery steeds with tossing mane—
Their patrimony lusting after, fought,
Thou didst unstinted savoury food supply
To either host, till all the Kurus fell.
Illustrious king! though luscious milk may sour,
The sun his brilliance lose, and e'en the four
Vedas themselves their holy teachings change,
Mayst thou by ministers be served, whose love
For thee and wisdom in thy councils shall
Constant through all vicissitudes remain!
Mayst thou in power and glory steadfast shine
Throughout all time like Potiya's sacred mount
And golden-peaked Himalaya, where rest
The dainty headed fawn and large-eyed deer
Securely by the holy triple fire
Which for their ev'ning rites the sages raise!

In this translation, I have followed the ancient commentator of Purã-nãnu, who
makes out that this Cēra king was a contemporary of the Pāṇḍavās and the Kauravās, and in the great battle of Kurukṣetra, he supplied the rival armies with food. The Śilappadhiķāram also seems to favour the view that there was a Cēra king who supplied food to the rival hosts at Kurukṣetra.¹ The words of the lyric need not, it seems to me, be taken to refer to him. Perhaps the king celebrated in this poem gave a memorial offering to the spirits at the anniversary of the Mahābhārata War, in which the heroes from whom he traced his descent, had died; and that is probably what the poet refers to. This seems to be supported by a lyric by Māmūlanār (Agam 233) where we read:

\[\text{[Tamil text]}\]

and Pandit R. Raghava Iyengar of Rāmnād also seems to hold that view.²

Udiyan Cēral was obviously famous for his lavish hospitality; and his kitchen has become a bye-word for sumptuous feeding. Thus Kōṭṭambalattuṇciya Cēramān has in Agam 168:

\[\text{[Tamil text]}\]

This Cēramān who is stated to have died at Kōṭṭambalam is, perhaps, identical with

1 Śilap. Vālittuk-kādai-ūsalvari, 1.
Kōṭṭambalattut-tuṇciya Māk-kōdai, the author of Puram 245, of whom we shall hear more, later on. He tells us in this lyric that Udiyan’s royal kitchen was at Kuḷumūr, perhaps Ptolemy’s Kourellour, a place, so far as I can see, situated possibly in North Travancore. I suggest that it is very probably the place now known as Kumūli, near the source of the Periyar river, in the Devikolam Division of Travancore. Kuḷumūr may, by metathesis, easily become Kumūli, just as Musiri, the seaport of the Cēra Kingdom so famous in Śangam literature, appears as Murasi in Sanskrit works. We cannot say whether Kuḷumūr was the original capital of the Cēras, taking for the present that Kuḷumūr is a proper noun denoting a place; possibly it was; but we can only say that Tamil tradition does not appear to have known a time when the Cēra capital was not Vāṇci. We see from Aga-nānuṟu that Udiyan Cēral extended his kingdom by his conquests. Māmūlanār refers to him in Agam 65 as:

ऋ शासितो भारतीय देशि

that is, Udiyan Cēral who conquered others’ territories and annexed them to his own.

In Puram 2, Udiyan Cēral is called Vānavaramban, and this term means ‘one whose kingdom is bounded by the sky’ or as explained in the Cūḍāmaṇi Nighaṇṭu, ‘by the sea’. It has been suggested that, perhaps the form of the word was originally Vānavar-anban, which
reminds one of Asoka’s Dēvānām-priya; but it seems to me that the suggestion is far-fetched. Pāṇini explains Dēvānām-priya as meaning ‘an obstinate fool’. It appears that in Vedic and allied Sanskrit literature, Dēvānām-priya is employed as a term of reproach to denote a heretic. For another liberty taken with the name of this Cēra king, some Malayalam scholars of to-day are responsible; for the grotesque transformation of the name Vāna-Varamban Udiyan Cēral into Udayan Bāna Varman is their leger-demain. Vānavaramban is a descriptive epithet, having reference to his extensive territory and conquests or his maritime kingdom. If, as we see from Aga-nānūru, he was great in war, he was also great in the arts of peace. Trade and commerce flourished in the land and foreign merchantmen called at its ports. He was a munificent patron of letters, as we see from the same Agam, where we read:

Udiyan Cēral may be regarded as the founder of the Cēra dynasty of the Śangam period. Having regard to the scheme of

3 Vide Śri Śankaracharya’s Madras Discourses. pp. 147—163. See also V. R. R. Dikshitar, The Mauryan Polity, p. 291 where reference is made to other kings bearing that title.

4 Agam 65.
arrangement adopted in *Patiṟṟup-pattu*, there can be no doubt that he was the hero of the first deced of that collection, which is now unfortu-
nately missing; for we find from the *Patigam* of second *Patiṟṟup-pattu* that Udiyan Cēral was the father of Imayavaramban Neḍum-Cēralātān, the hero of that deced. From the same source we learn that Udiyan Cēral had married Nallini, the daughter of Veliyan Vēnmān, afterwards known as Cōlan Pōrvaikkō-Perunarkillī, whose father Tittan was, perhaps, the earliest of the Cōla kings who ruled at Uraiyyūr. It is interest-
ing to note that, among the names by which the Cēra is known, the *Nighaṇḍus* mention Udiyan and Vāna-varamban, the names that this king bore. It may be permissible to suggest that, perhaps, Udiyan-pērūr, the Diamper of the Christians, which is on the northern boundary line of Travancore, was founded by him.

S. 3. *Imayavaramban Neḍum-Cēralātān.*

We may now follow the lead of *Patiṟṟup-
pattu*. The hero of the second deced of that work is Imayavaramban Neḍum-Cēralātān, the son of Udiyan Cēral by Veliyan's daughter Nallini. Imayavaramban was a great warrior, and he extended his kingdom to the north. He is said to have conquered seven kings and annexed their territories to his kingdom; and he is praised as having set or imprinted his
bow on the slope of the Himalayas, so that his prowess was known, in the words of his panegyrist, from Cape Comorin to the Himalayas. Among his successful wars were those against the 'Kaḍambu' clan. The territory of the 'kaḍambu' clan, the clan that had the Kaḍambu (Adina cordifolia) as its totem or guardian tree, is the territory of the Nannans, the 'gold producing Konkanam' of ancient Tamil literature; and the Cēras seem to have had several wars with this tribe, which apparently was a source of harassment on the border. The description in Patirrup-pattu 12 shows that Imayavaramban's victory over the Kaḍambas was an event of supreme importance; for the poet compares Imayavaramban's victory to that of the War-God Subrahmaṇya over Sūra-Padma. It was obviously first among the outstanding events of his reign; for in references to him, prominent mention is frequently made to his victory over the Kaḍambas. In Patirrup-pattu 20 the poet propounds the question: "Do you ask me who is my king?" and gives the proud answer:— "He is the invincible Neḍum-Cēralātan who utterly destroyed the Kaḍambu". In praising

6 Agam 127.
7 Patirrup-pattu 11, 12, 20; also Agam 127, 347.
8 Naṅ. 391; Agam 173.
9 Patirrup-pattu 11.
10 Ibid., 12 and 20.
the ancestry of Iḷam-Cēral Irumpōrai, Peṟum-Kunṟūr Kilār acclaims him\(^\text{11}\) as—

Māmūlar in Agam 127, begins the narration of this Cēra’s great achievements with his conquest of the Kaṟṇamba country:

It is difficult to say whether these Kaṟṇambas were the stock from which the Banavasi Kaṟṇambas came; perhaps they were. A view has gained ground among some scholars that the Kaṟṇambu clan were pirates,\(^\text{12}\) and Ptolemy’s phrase Ariake andron peiraton has at least in part been responsible for it. The latter words, as was pointed out by a recent writer may be regarded as a corruption of Andrabhrtya; but I am inclined to think that the view therein expressed, that the Kaṟṇambas were not a piratical people at all, cannot be maintained, in view of the language of the opening lines of Patiṟṟup-pattu 11 and expressions like—

\[\text{Patiṟṟup-pattu} 11\] (Agam 127.)
\[\text{Patiṟṟup-pattu} 341\] (Agam 341.)

that Māmūlar employs.

\(^\text{11}\) Patiṟṟup-pattu, 87.
\(^\text{12}\) Vide Dr. Krishnaswami Aiyangar’s Beginnings of South Indian History, p. 232.
This Cēra is also said to have won a victory over the Yavanas. There is no means of knowing where exactly the colony of the Yavanas was or who exactly they were. The term Yavana has been taken to denote the Greeks; but I am not sure if it did not originally denote the Javanese or the Arabs; and it is noteworthy that Ptolemy makes no mention of a Greek colony. The punishment meted out to the Yavanas by Imayavaramban is singular. Their arms are said to have been pinioned behind their back, and ghī poured on their head.

In Agam 127, Māmūlar also tells us of his conquest of Māntai which not improbably is the Mandagara of the Periplus.

Obviously the land of the Cēra was a rich and flourishing country. Among jewels worn in the land were those made of flashing gems set in gold. Besides rice, meat was also used as food; and drinking palm wine was prevalent. There was no limit to the bounty of this great Cēra who was as liberal as Akkūran himself, one of the reputed seven first Vaḷḷals of Tamil tradition. In the words of the poet:

13 For the latest discussion on the identification of the Yavanas, see J.I.H., Vol. XIV, Pt. I.
14 Patirru-pattu 16.
15 & 15a Ibid., 18.
The rains may fail; but never the munificence of Cēralātan". And indeed, the poet may well be acquitted of exaggeration, when we remember that, according to the colophon, he was, for composing the second decad of Patirrup-pattu, rewarded with the free gift of 500 villages in Umbark-kāḍu (literally elephant-forest), perhaps the region about the Anaimalai in North-West Travancore, and the revenue for thirty-eight years from the southern province of the kingdom. It is interesting to note that there is still, a house bearing the name of Umbarkkāḍu-vīḍu in Vaikam in North Travancore. He is praised as a man of his word; and his life was dedicated to acts of bounty and beneficence. Even in seasons of drought, he could not bear to see any one suffer from hunger. He made rich donations and presents of jewels to temples; and he shone like Viṣṇu himself. We learn that silk, diamond and gold ornaments were in use in the land. He is said to have reigned for fifty-eight years. In regard to his name also, some Malayalam scholars have taken undue liberty and transformed Imayavaramban into Imaya Varman!


Next in order comes Pal-yānai Šel-Kelu-Kuṭṭuvan, brother of Imayavaramban.
His capital stood on the banks of the broad Periyar, and near the sounding ocean. He was also a great warrior and made extensive conquests, among which the conquest of Konkar-Nādu is specifically mentioned. He was the lord of Pūli-Nādu and the Ceruppu-mountains as well as of the Aiyirai-Malai—probably the same as Aiyitai-Malai in Central Travancore near the source of the Periyar—and the region of the Periyar which even in times of protracted drought, when the falls in the hills have gone dry, is rich in water! In the early years of his reign, he seems to have been a fierce warrior; and it is significant that out of the ten lyrics in Patirrup-pattu III, as many as seven praise his irresistible prowess in war. He is eulogized as Kuṭṭuvan, "the ever victorious lord of vast armies and the protective armour of fierce-eyed warriors". The march of his army into the territories of his foes meant the utter devastation of those lands and their conversion into deserts infested by robbers. But a great change came over the spirit of his dream in later years; and like

20 Patirrup-pattu, 28.
21 Ibid., 21.
22 Ibid., 23.
23 Ibid., 22.
24 Ibid., 21.
25 Ibid., 28.
26 Ibid., 21, 22 and 24.
27 Ibid., 24, 25 and 26.
Asoka after his war in Kalinga, Pal-yānai"Sel-Kelu-Kuṭṭuvan turned away from war and carnage, and came under the influence of the spirit. As a warrior he used to worship Koṟravai, to whom he made elaborate sacrifice when starting for war;²⁸ but afterwards he followed the law of the Brahmanas; who daily performed their six-fold functions,²⁹ and accepted Neḻumbārātāyanār as his preceptor. He helped the Brahmana poet Pālai Gautamanār, the author of Patiṟṟup-pattu III, to perform ten Yāgas.³⁰ He never swerved from his word, but kept straight on even like the sun.³¹ He was a patron of letters, and all branches of learning, படம் உண்டே நாளும் செய்து ³¹α both religious and secular, throve in the land. His kingdom was so rich and prosperous, that his unstinted liberality did not affect in any manner the wealth of the country. He duly performed Dēvayajña and Atithiyajña,³² and acquired merit and greatness, 'vaster in extent than even the five elements'³³ and apparently came to deserve the name of Dharmaṇaputra.³⁴ After a reign of twenty-five

²⁸ Patiṟṟup-pattu, 30.
²⁹ Ibid., 24.
³⁰ Patigam Patiṟṟup-pattu, III.
³¹ Patiṟṟup-pattu 21.
³¹α Ibid., 21.
³² Ibid., 21.
³³ Ibid., 21.
³⁴ Puram 366.
years he followed the example of his preceptor and became an anchoret, after dividing his kingdom among his kindred.  

S. 5. Nāruḍiccerāl.

Pal-yānai Šel-Kelu Kuṭṭuvan was succeeded by Kaḷankāik-kaṇṇi Nāruḍiccerāl, son of Imayavaramban Neḍum-Cēralātan. Nāruḍiccerāl is the hero of the 4th decad of Patirṟup-pattu of which Kāppiyāṟṟu Kāppiyānanār is the author. Though he was a great warrior, he treated his enemies with great clemency and magnanimity; a circumstance that the author of IV Patirṟup-pattu particularly mentions with admiration:

We shall be able to appreciate the full significance of this praise when we remember that in those early days the victors in the field of battle are said to have pulled out the teeth of their enemies, and exposed them to public view at the gates of their capital. The most important of the expeditions of this Cēra were those against Neḍumiḍal or Aṇci, and Nannan both of whom he defeated in battle. Aṇci was perhaps a predecessor of Auvai’s friend who is known in literature as Atiyamān

35 Patirṟup-pattu III, Patigam.
36 Agam 211; Naṟ. 18.
37 Patirṟup-pattu 32.
38 Ibid., 40.
Neḍumān Aṇci; if so, he must have been an Atiyamān, and the chief of Kutiraimalai with his head-quarters at Takaḍūr, now in Mysore. I suggest Atiyamān is the Satiyaputra of Asoka's inscription. The initial a becomes ha, which again becomes sa in prakrit; and mān is abbreviation for magan which means putra; and thus Atiyamān becomes Satiya-putra on the analogy of Cēramān equals Kērala-putra. I know other identifications of Satiyaputra have been suggested; but so far as I remember, previous writers have, consciously or unconsciously, read the name in the Edict as Satiyaputra, including even the latest writer on the subject, Mr. V. R. Ramachandra Dikshitar, who has contributed to the Indian Culture an article on "Who are Satyaputras"? The word is not Satyaputra but Satiyaputra; and no attempt has been made before to explain the presence of i in the name. The identification here suggested of Atiyamān with Satiyaputra satisfactorily accounts for the presence of the particle i in the name appearing in Asoka's Edict. Atiyamān's territory will

39 Agam 32.

39a Some scholars identify this with Dharmapuri in Salem District.

39b Vol. I, Pt. III, Mr. Govinda Pai in his paper on Satyaputra in Krishnaswami Aiyangar Commemoration Volume (pp. 33-47) gives the following involved equation: Śāntika (S. Kanara)—Śāntika—Śāmtika—Sātika—Śātiya—Satiya.
exactly occupy the place where, having regard to the order in which the principalities or kingdoms of South India are mentioned in Asoka’s Edict, Satiyaputra’s territory may be expected to be situate. The Atiyamāns were an independent line of chiefs till they were subdued by the Cēra, whose vassal they ultimately became. Nannan, as has already been stated, was the chief of Pūli and the head of the Kaḍambu clan.\textsuperscript{40} This Nannan appears to have recovered some of his lost territory; and Nārmudiccēral advanced against the insurgent chief and won a decisive victory over him at Vāgaipperunturai, wrested back the territory\textsuperscript{41} and subjugated the clan. Nannan became thereafter a vassal or feudatory of the Cēra. Thus in Agam 258, Parañar refers to him as Nannan Udiyan, and in Agam 44 he is referred to as one of the feudatory generals of the Cēra. We may, therefore, hold that some time after the crushing defeat at Vāgaipperunturai, Nannan became the ally and supporter of the Cēra, whom he recognised as his overlord.

Nārmudiccēral was apparently an ideal monarch; and Kāppiyāṟṟu Kāppiyanār, who has sung the fourth decad of Patirrup-pattu in his honour, tells us that the king lived for the good of others; the poet’s words being: \textit{gājāḷavaiśām kāṉṭāṉ kēṭāṉ äḷamāṉī} \textsuperscript{42}. He freely gave away elephants as

\textsuperscript{40} Vide also Patirrup-patti III Patigam.
\textsuperscript{41} Agam 119.
\textsuperscript{42} Patirrup-pattu, 38; 39.
present. Among the shrines in his kingdom, prominent mention is made of the shrine of வானவரம்பனைதமிழ் தமிழ்; and the old scholiast explains this to mean the deity in Tiruvanantapuram (i.e. Trivandrum). This explanation is probably correct. In Agam 359, Māmūlar has வானவரம்பன், which means 'like வானவரம்பன of Vāna Varamban'. This would show that in Māmūlar’s time Veliyattu or Veliyam was in the Cēra Kingdom. Veliyam is most probably the modern Viliyam, a coast town some miles south of Trivandrum, where in later years a well-known naval battle was fought. Balita, which appears to be a corruption of Veliyattu, is said in the Periplus to be in the Cōla Kingdom; but that probably is a misdescription. We may, therefore, hold, in the state of our present knowledge, that in this Cēra’s reign his kingdom embraced Trivandrum in the south, as the commentator indicates. This monarch is also called Vānavaramban, possibly because in his reign had been attained the ideal of peace and safety graphically described in Puram 2, as having existed in the land in the days of Udiyan Cēral, the first to bear the title of Vānavaramban. He was, like his predecessors, a liberal patron of letters; and we learn from the colophon that the author of the fourth decade of Patirrup-pattu was given forty lakhs

43 Patirrup-pattu, 40.
44 Ibid., 31.
of gold coins in appreciation of his poem. Nārmuḍiccēral reigned, according to the colophon, for twenty-five years.

S. 6. Śen-Kuṭṭuvan.

The next in order in the main line is Śen-Kuṭṭuvan, stated to be another son of Imayavaramban. Śen-Kuṭṭuvan’s name is, perhaps the best known among the Cēra Kings to the ordinary student of Tamil literature. He is the hero of the fifth decad of Patiṟṟup-pattu, of which the author is Paraṇar, one of the greatest poets of the Sangam age. He is also the real hero of Silappadhikāram, the well-known Tamil epic by the Cēra prince Iḷankō Adīkal, though there are some who, it seems to me, needlessly entertain doubts about it. He was a great warrior, and with his victorious army he is said to have conquered vast regions from Cape Comorin in the South to the Himalayas in the North “where the gods dwell”:

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{He was always in front in the field of battle, leading his army; and his soldiers used shields made of tough bull-hide which effectively protected them from the darts of}
\end{align*}
\]

46 Patiṟṟup-pattu, 43.
their enemies. Early in his reign, there seem to have been disturbances on the borders of his kingdom, which had to be quelled. Among the chiefs that he subjugated was Mōgur-Mannan, a proud warrior well-known in ancient Tamil literature. His name was Palaiyan, and his totem was the neem tree, which shows he was a feudatory of the Pāṇḍya. One of the Cēra's principal allies was 'Aruṇai, an enemy of the Chief of Mōgur. Palaiyan went to war against Arugai, who sought Šen-Kuṭṭuvan's help; and in that war the lord of Mōgur, though he was assisted by other reigning princes and chieftains, was utterly defeated by the great Cēra. Šen-Kuṭṭuvan also waged a successful war against the Kongar. He won a great naval victory by reason of which there came to be attached to his name the distinctive great naval victory by reason of which there epithet Kādal-Piṟakkōṭṭiya, which means, 'who destroyed the efficacy of the sea as a refuge'. It was apparently one of the most decisive naval victories in Cēra history, and Šen-Kuṭṭuvan falsified by that achievement the

47 Patirrup-pattu, 45.
48 Ibid., 44 and 49.
49 Ibid., 49; V Patigam and Šilap. XXVIII, 124-6.
50 Ibid., 44.
51 Ibid., 49.
52 Šilap. XXV, 152-5.
53 Patirrup-pattu 45, 46, 48; Agam 212.
54 Ibid., V Patigam.
55 Ibid., 45.
popular belief that an island enemy was unassailable and invincible. I consider that it was by this naval victory that Muširi was made a safe port of call; for we know that in Pliny’s days, (c. 80 A.C.) pirates were a constant source of danger in those waters, and in Kuṭṭuvan’s days Yavana ships called in large numbers at the port of Muširi and in exchange for gold took back with them cargoes of pepper and other products. The irrepressible Nannan again rose in revolt; but Šen-Kuṭṭuvan put down the disturbance and destroyed Viyalūr, one of Nannan’s strongholds, and Koḍukūr, possibly another of Nannan’s strongholds. According to Śilappadikāram, Nannan was helped in this war by the Cōla and the Pāṇḍya. As trophy of his success against the kings and chieftains he had vanquished, he wore on his breast as a personal ornament the crest jewels of seven ruling princes.

After the destruction of Viyalūr, Šen-Kuṭṭuvan turned his attention to the Cōla country where a war of succession had broken out after the death of Karikāla. We find that nine princes contested the right of Perum-Kīllī afterwards

56 Patirup-pattu, 45.
57 Agam, 149.
58 Patirup-pattu, V Patigam and Agam, 97.
59 Ibid., V Patigam.
60 Śilap., XXV, 153-5.
61 Patirup-pattu, 45 and Śilap., XXVIII, 169.
known as Nalam-Kílli Sét-Cenní, the lawful claimant, who is said to be the brother-in-law of Sén-Kuṭṭuvan. Sén-Kuṭṭuvan went to his help, defeated his rivals at Nëriväyil, and placed him securely on the throne. We also learn that this Cëra undertook an expedition to North India for consigning the remains of his deceased mother to the holy waters of the Ganges, when he met Aryan princes in battle and defeated them. Later too, he led an expedition to the Gangetic region for fetching suitable stone from that hallowed ground for the effigy of Kaṇṇaka, the apotheosised wife or Pattini-Kaḍavul, which he intended to consecrate in a temple that he proposed to build. He had received a request from his friend the Sātakarni for assistance, and he took advantage of it. The story of this northern march is not found in Patírrup-pattu. It must have taken place some time after Parañar's poem had been composed and possibly after Parañar's death. It is, however found in Śilappadhikāram; and I see no reason to reject it. I have shown elsewhere that there is no historical improbability in it; and the learned writer on Ancient India in the Cambridge Shorter History of India states there

62 Patírrup-pattu, V Patigam and Śilap., XXVIII, ll. 115-19 also XXVII, ll. 118 ff.
63 Śilap., XXV, 160 ff.
64 Vide my article 'A Problem of Ancient South Indian History' in III, J.I.H. pp. 648 ff., also Chap. VII, S. 5 infra.
is probably a substratum of fact in the account of Śen-Kuṭṭuvan’s expedition to the north.\textsuperscript{65} Reading that epic and Paraṇar’s fifth decad of \textit{Patiṟṟup-pattu}, we can easily see that Śen-Kuṭṭuvan was pre-eminently a warrior, who always sought fresh conquests. \textit{Patiṟṟup-pattu} 50 tells us that he spent long nights in thinking out plans for successful campaigns. We learn from \textit{Silappadhiṅkāram} that for fifty out of the fifty-five years of his reign, he was engaged in gaining the laurels of war.\textsuperscript{66} He was the most powerful monarch of his day in the South, and his might was such that he could domineer over the Cōla and the Pāṇḍya. This will be patent from the fact that the insignia that his royal decrees bore, consisted of the bow, the fish, and the tiger.\textsuperscript{67}

In spite of his constant wars, his internal administration of the country left nothing to be desired. He was a great patron of arts and letters,\textsuperscript{68} and he was so lavish that even the treasures he had brought from his naval victory he bestowed on bards and singers without strict regard to merit; so indiscriminate was he in his bounty. He was probably partial to \textit{Kūṭtu} or dancing and the drama which he patronised very liberally;\textsuperscript{69} and we read in

\begin{itemize}
  \item \textit{Shorter History}, p. 174.
  \item \textit{Silap.}, XXVIII, 129-32.
  \item \textit{Silap.}, XXV, 171. 2; 87-90; XXVI, 168 ff.
  \item \textit{Patiṟṟup-pattu}, 49.
  \item \textit{Ibid.}, 42.
\end{itemize}
Siлаппадхикāram that on his return from his eventful expedition to the North, a Śākkaiyan of Paravūr, a town in North Travancore, well versed in the art of Kūttu, entertained him and the queen by reciting with appropriate action the story of Tṛpura-Samhāra.\textsuperscript{70} He is said to have made a free gift of the revenue derived from Umbarkāḍu to Paraṇar in appreciation of the fifth decad of Patirṛup-pattu. He did much to develop trade and commerce; and at his ports, foreign merchantmen called and carried on brisk business. We read that large and beautiful ships of the Yavanas brought gold in great quantity to the port of Muśiri and went back laden with pepper, and that Kuṭṭuvan distributed as presents the rare products of the sea and the mountain.\textsuperscript{71} His was a rich country, with a never failing supply of water. The Periyār, the principal river of the Ċēra country, is described as full even in seasons of drought,\textsuperscript{72} and the people that it attracted for bath are stated to be ‘innumerable like the sands of the beach’.\textsuperscript{73} In luxuriance, the land was even as rich as the country ‘watered not only by the Kāvēri but by the accumulated waters of Mukkūdal’\textsuperscript{74} or the confluent waters of three

\textsuperscript{70} Siłap., XXVIII, ll. 76-7.
\textsuperscript{71} Agam, 149; and Puram, 343.
\textsuperscript{72} Patirṛup-pattu 43.
\textsuperscript{73} Ibid., 48.
\textsuperscript{74} Ibid., 50.
rivers. Toddy was freely consumed in large measure. In hot weather, he used to camp in shady forests; and we find from *Silappadhiyakaram* that it was when he was so camping on one occasion that he received news of Kanakai's death from hillmen who had witnessed it. A detailed and informing account of Cēra Śen-Kuṭṭuvan is supplied by Pandit M. Raghava Iyengar in his learned monograph on that monarch. This great Cēra King reigned for 55 years; and in his kingdom Hindus, Jains and Buddhists lived together in perfect amity. His consecration of a temple to Pattini-Dēvi was an event of international significance; and among those who attended the function was King Gaja-Bāhu of Ceylon. Probably this event contributed much to the spread of Bhagavati worship, now so common on the Malabar coast.

S. 7. 'Ādu-kōṭpāṭṭuc-Cēralātān.

Next in order to Śen-Kuṭṭuvan, *Patiṟṟup-pattu* deals with 'Ādu-kōṭpāṭṭuc-Cēralātān, alleged to be another son of Imayavaramban Neḍum-Cēralātān and brother of Nārmudic-cēral. He is the hero of the sixth decad of *Patiṟṟup-pattu*, the author of which is Kākkai-pāḍiniyār Naccellaiyār. The prefix

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75 *Patiṟṟup-pattu*, 43. Vide *Purām*, 316 for a poem in praise of toddy.
77 The book has run to a Third Edition.
ADU-KOTPATTU to his name Cerialatan is apparently explained by the statements in Patirrup-pattu 56 and 57 that he used in the flush of victory to dance with sword held high in the field of battle. The Patigam to this decad gives another explanation, namely that he recovered a herd of cattle, lifted probably as a prelude to war by a neighbouring hostile chieftain. We know that in early days cattle-lifting was a common method of inaugurating hostile operations in war. Or perhaps, āta here only means ātāp or victory, as it often does in Sangam literature. Naccellaiyār does not mention any particular battle that this Cēra fought; but her poem enables us to see that he must have been a great warrior, as he is described as

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\text{போனைய்க் புதுமையு்ம் மும்பை விள்ளை சிக்கந்தோ வாடுநாதன்}
\]

Trade and commerce on a large scale flourished in the country. She mentions that valuable commodities brought into this Cerialatan's port were stored in godowns. There were so few needy people in his city of ancient fame situated on the sea shore, that the king used to send vehicles to other places to bring men that he might bestow gifts

78 Cf. அரசன் இது சார்க்க முனை விள்ளை (Patirrup-pattu 56, ll. 4, 8).
79 Agam, 372. See also Dikshitar's Studies in Tamil Literature and History, pp. 229-30.
80 Patirrup-pattu 51.
81 Ibid., 55. சார்க்கம் முனை வாடுநாதன்
on them. Music and dancing were encouraged by him and were richly rewarded. Many feudatory chiefs owed him allegiance. His kingdom extended beyond the port of Nāravu, probably the Naoura of the Periplus or the Nitria of Pliny, which has been identified by Yule and others with Mangalore at the mouth of the river Nētravāti. This is the first mention we have of Nāravu in connection with the Cēras; and we may not unreasonably hold that Ādu-kōtpāṭṭu Cēralātan captured this sea-coast town. Perhaps, it is to this event that Vellīvitiyār alludes when she writes in Agam 45—

She must have been proximate in date to Auvai who refers to her domestic history and, therefore, proximate also to Rājasūyam-Vēṭṭa Peru-Naṟ-Killī and Cēramān Mākkōdai, and must have lived after Karikāla Cōla, as she pathetically exclaims that her fate should not be similar to that of Ādi-Manti, an alleged daughter of that Cōla; and during this period, no Cēra answers to the name or title Vānavaramban except Ādu-kōtpāṭṭu Cēralātan.

From Puṟam 65 and 66 and Agam 55 we gather that the Cōla Karikāl Vaḷavan won a battle at Vēṇṇi, and the name of his opponent

82 Ibid., 55.
83 Patirṟṟup-pattu, 57, 58 and 60.
84 Ibid., 58, IV Patigam.
85 Ibid., 60.
in that battle appears as Čēramān Pērūm-Cēralātan in the colophon; and in a foot-note we are told that another reading of the name is Perum-Tōlātan. In Agam 55 he is called only Cēralātan. The identification of the Čōla and the Čēra mentioned in these poems has caused me much anxious thought; and though I once held otherwise, I now hold that the probabilities are that Karikāla is the well-known Čōla emperor, the son of Uruva-pahrer Iḷam-Ṣeṭ-Cenni and the hero of Porunar-āṟṟu-padai and Paṭṭinap-pāḷai, and the Čēra, Perum-Cēralātan is Āḍu-kōṭpāṭṭu Cēralātan. There is no doubt that the great Karikāla did win a famous battle at Veṉni, in which the Čēra, the Pāṇḍya and the Veḷir chieftains were defeated.⁸⁶ Agam 246 is by Paranār, who has also sung of Uruva-pahrer Iḷam-Ṣeṭ-Cenni⁸⁷ and Šen-Kuṭṭuvan,⁸⁸ and the former was the father and the latter a contemporary and relation of Karikāla. I see no compelling necessity to postulate two Karikālas, each of whom won a battle at Veṉni against a Čēra. The Cēralātan that fell at the battle of Veṉni, where the great Karikāla won a signal victory, must have been proximate in date to Kuṭṭuvan; and Āḍu-kōṭpāṭṭu Cēralātan alone satisfies the test. If we be guided by Kalingattuparani, Karikāla’s victory at Veṉni must have been one of his late achievements; for

⁸⁶ Porunar, ll. 143-48; Agam 246.
⁸⁷ Puram 4.
⁸⁸ Patīṟṟup-pattu V; Puram 369.
it was after his return from his northern expedition that he engaged the Cēra and the Paṇḍya in battle and defeated them.\(^89\) Probably these two kings and the neighbouring chiefs took advantage of Karikāla’s absence from his territory in northern India, and attempted to portion out his kingdom among themselves; and hence the great battle of Veṇṇi that Karikāla fought against the confederate kings and chiefs. I am inclined to hold, therefore, that Ādu-kōṭpāṭtu Cēralātan met with his death at the battle of Veṇṇi. Perhaps Patirup-pattu 58, ll. 10-12 will afford some explanation for the alternative name Perum-Tōlātan.

The battle of Veṇṇi is of special interest, as Purāṇ 65 and 66 mention a peculiar practice among famous warriors in those early days. We are told that the Cēra king while facing his foe in battle was pierced by a shaft which ran through his body, wounding also his back; and as a wound on the back was regarded as a blot on heroism, the Cēra sat facing north and courted death by starvation. Starvation unto death as a penance has always been regarded in India, especially in ancient times, as an act of supreme fortitude and merit; and by this act the Cēra wiped out the humiliation that the wound on the back implied. Agam 55 shows that the act evoked the sympathy and admiration of several people who also gave up their

89 Kalinga, 183.
life along with him; and brilliant as his victory was, Karikāla seems to have felt that the heroism of the vanquished Cēra’s self-immolation surpassed his own as the victor of the day, and he had to be consoled with the assurance that the Cēra king was not greater than he in glory.\(^{90}\)

Nacceḷḷaiyār was richly rewarded with gold for jewels by Āḍu-kōṭpāṭṭu Cēralātan, and he further took her to himself. He is stated to have reigned for thirty-eight years.
CHAPTER II.

S. 1. Karuvur-Ériya Kō-perum-cēral
Irumporai.

At this stage a digression into Puṟa-nānūru appears necessary. The Cēra Kings we have considered so far are, according to Patirṟup-pattu, descendants of Cēramān Perum-Cōṟṟu Udiyan Cēralātan. The remaining Cēra kings sung about in that work belong to another line of which the ancestor it is impossible to determine from that work. Before, however, taking up the consideration of the kings of that line celebrated in Patirṟup-pattu, it is at this stage necessary, it seems to me, to speak of a Cēra ruler who is not mentioned in Patirṟup-pattu. It will have been seen from the foregoing account that there was a vigorous expansion of the Cēra kingdom under the early Cēras. The work of conquest of the neighbouring territories and their annexation to the Cēra kingdom which began with Udiyan Cēralātan, the first Cēra king known to Tamil literature, was steadily continued in the reigns of his two sons Imayavaramban and Pal-yānai Selkeḷu-Kuṭṭuvan. The last of these kings completed the conquest of Pūḷi-Nādu or Konkānam, the territory of the Nannans, who as ancient Tamil literature shows, were war-like chiefs who rarely missed an opportunity to harass their neighbours. He had also annexed the land of the Kongar which in those early times was the
theatre of endless warfare among the three Tamil kings. Round about that region were numerous war-like tribes. In the circumstances, the Cēra, after the conquest and annexation of these northern regions, would as a measure of political wisdom and necessity, have thought of strengthening his position by establishing a viceroyalty in the north; and I suggest that Pal-yānai Šelkeū-Kuṭṭuvan, conqueror of Pūli-Nādu and Kongu-Nādu appointed the first viceroy investing him with palatine powers, and sent him to the newly acquired northern province.

This consideration induces me to bring in here as contemporary of Pal-yānai Šelkeū-Kuṭṭuvan, a Cēra king who, so far as the materials now available go, appears to stand unrelated to any other Cēra known to literature. He is Cēramān Karuvūr-ēriya Oīvāl-Kōperum-Cēral Irumpoṟai. This name occurs in the colophon to one single poem alone¹ which is by a poet, Narivēṟṟuttalaiyār, who does not appear to have sung about any other king or chieftain. It is not possible, therefore, to state from literature alone where exactly this Cēra king should be placed. We shall find presently that there was a line of Cēras who bore the name of Irumpoṟai; and in my view, the Cēral Irumpoṟais who figure in Tamil literature, represented, perhaps a junior branch of the

¹ Puram 5.
Cēra dynasty and were in the position of Cēra viceroys with palatine powers stationed in the North Cēra country with head-quarters at Toṇḍi, after the Cēra Kingdom had extended northward. Oļvāl-Kō-Perum-Cēral Irumporai may be regarded as the first of these vicereys of the north, as he is said in the colophon to have gone to reign at Karuvūr. I take this Karuvūr to be different from Vañci, which according to me is Tiruvaṅceikalam; and I tentatively hold that Oļvāl-Kō-Perum-Cēral Irumporai, as the first king of the branch, may be placed before Cēramān Antuvan Cēral Irumporai, mentioned in Patigam of Patiruppattu VII. We have no information about Oļvāl Kō-Perum Cēral Irumporai except what is contained in Puram 5. He was apparently a great warrior, as the epithet Oļvāl (bright sword) implies. It is easy to gather from Puram 5 that his lust for war and carnage was almost insatiable; and the poet gives him a timely admonition to turn to the prime duty of protection of his subjects. The poem may be rendered as follows:

Lord of the forest region where, like herds
Of cattle, roam, among the huge black rocks
Resembling buffaloes, wild elephants!
Permit me—thou art great!—submit a word.
Detach thyself from those devoid of love
And mercy; they indeed, are marked for hell!
Be thou like parents who their children tend!
Protect thy land and people; 'tis worth-while!

1a Puram 5.
S. 2. Antuvan Cēral.

We may now pursue the study of the other decades of *Patiṟṟup-pattu*. The *Patigam* to the seventh decade of *Patiṟṟup-pattu* tells us that the hero of that decade was the son of Antuvan. His full name is Cēramān Antuvan Cēral Irumpoṟai. There is a complete lack of materials about the activities of this Cēra. We can, however, say from the occurrence of Irumpoṟai in his name that he belonged to the northern line that began with Karuvūr-ēṟiya Perum-Cēral Irumpoṟai. I hold that Antuvan Cēral was, perhaps, the son and successor of Karuvūr-ēṟiya Perum-Cēral. The only incident connected with him of which we can be reasonably certain, is gathered from the colophon to *Puram* 13, sung by Uṟaiyūr Ēṅicēri Muḍa-Mōsiyār. We read that, by misadventure, the Cōla, Muḍittalai Kō-Perunaṟkilli, entered the precincts of Karuvūr, which then belonged to the Cēra, on a rutted elephant; and the poet in this poem tries to dissuade Antuvan Cēral from falling into the mistake of regarding the entry as an act of hostility on the part of the Cōla King. This was a period when in the land of the Cōlas, rival chiefs or clans, the Cennis and the Killis, were striving to extend their territory with a view to gain supremacy over the whole Cōla Kingdom. Sometimes as a diversion from their internal feuds and fights, a Cenni

2 *Puram* 13.
now a Killi at another time led a raid into the neighbouring Cēra Kingdom; and Antuvan Cēral had, therefore, good reason for his mistake, if mistake it really was.

However, another predatory invasion of the Cēra territory seems to have been led by Neytalankānal Iłam-Ṣeṭ-Cenni, probably a contemporary in the Cenni line of Muḍittalai Perunar-Killi. We cannot affirm whether this Cenni was the same as Uruvapahrer Iłam-Ṣeṭ-Cenni or was different from him; probably they were the same. The invading Cenni succeeded in capturing Pamalūr, which belonged to the Cēra, and this act of war naturally led to retaliation by the Cēra who advanced into the territory of the Cōla. The Cēra and the Cōla met in battle at Pör, a place in the Cōla territory in the basin of the Kāvērī, and both the royal combatants met with their death in that battle. These two kings are said in the colophon to have been Cēramān Kuḍakko Neḍum-Cēralātan and Cōloan Velpahradakkai Peru-Viṇaṇ-Killi, who had an alias Perunar-Killi. Possibly Velpahradakkai Perunar-Killi and Muḍittalai Perunar-Killi are the same; and the Cēra may be taken to be Antuvan Cēral, who was undoubtedly a contemporary of that Cōla. In this view, we may hold that Antuvan Cēral

3 Puṟam 203.
4 Ibid., 62; 63.
5 Agam 186; 326.
6 Puṟam 62; 63.
also went by the name of Nedum-Cēralatān at least in the latter part of his reign. We do not know how long his reign lasted.

S. 3. Śelvak-kaṭunkō-vāliyātan.

The next king we read of is his son, Śelvak-Kaḍunkō-vāliyātan, the hero of the seventh decad of Patirrup-pattu, which was sung by Kapilar, one of the greatest of the Sangam poets. It is recorded that this king won a victory over the combined armies of the Cōla and the Pāṇḍya; and he was in such plentitude of power, that soon he had no enemy anywhere. His country was very prosperous; and there was pearl fishery in his sea ports. Kapilar went to his court after the demise of Pāri, whose name has come to be a by-word in Tamil literature to denote a most munificent patron of literature and art. What Maccenas was to Virgil and Horace, that Pāri was to Kapilar, who was his staunch and faithful friend and admirer. Kapilar says this Cēra King rivalled Pāri in munificence; and his bountifulness, says Paraṇar, became a by-word. The poet exultantly exclaims: “There are many kings; but what benefit do we derive from them? If bards appear even on the outskirts of your capital

7 Patirrup-pattu 63; also 85.
8 Ibid., 69.
9 Ibid., 67.
10 Ibid., 61.
11 Agam 142.
city, it is your command they should be liberally rewarded, and they should not be put to the trouble of even seeing you. You shower ambrosia even more profusely than the clouds pour down rain.\textsuperscript{12} Whatever may happen, your word remains unshakeable. Foes who have won renown in battle with others, gladly bow to you, regarding it as a privilege; and your benign love and generosity to them are unlimited.”\textsuperscript{13} He held Brahmanas in great respect.\textsuperscript{14} The Patigam tells us that at the close of a Yāga he dedicated, as a gift, Okantur, a village, to Viśṇu, the deity he worshipped. He rewarded Kapilar beyond the dreams of avarice. We are told that the poet was given 100,000 gold pieces or coins, and all the land that one could see from the top of a hill. Apparently this gift of land is not a myth; for we find Perum-Kuṇrūr-Kilār, another Śangam poet, exclaims\textsuperscript{14a} \textit{திருக்கைர்பூர் கீற்றூர்} which means, ‘more numerous than the villages that the renowned poet Kapilar obtained’.

Selva-Kañ̄ṇun Kō was almost an idol of the poets. Besides the VII decad of Patirrup-pattu, Kapilar has also sung two lyrics in Puram-nānūru about this Cēra.\textsuperscript{15} In Puram 8 the king is extolled as transcending the sun and the moon

\textsuperscript{12} Patirrup-pattu 64.
\textsuperscript{13} Ibid., 63.
\textsuperscript{14} Ibid., 63, 1.1.
\textsuperscript{14a} Patirrup-pattu 85.
\textsuperscript{15} Puram 8; 14.
in glory; and thus inferentially we are told that he is greater than the Cōla and the Pāndya, who are regarded as descended from the Sun and the Moon respectively, and that they owned his supremacy. I give below a translation of the poem:

The Cēralātan of victorious arms,
Though small his kingdom, yet in prowess stands
Without a rival 'mong the ruling kings
Who his supremacy dare not contest!
In his munificence he stands alone!
Canst thou, O Sun! with that great king compare?
E'en though thou hast the wide expanse of heaven,
Thou shinest but by day! Thou turnest back
And dost conceal thyself before the moon!
Canst thou, O Moon! whose light streams down at night?

Thou art too füful! Thou dost often change
And close behind the mountain safety seek!

Purāṇ 14 is also interesting, as throwing light on the might, greatness and geniality of this Cēra. The king seems to have made a playful remark about the softness of the poet's hand; and then the poet sang the following praise of the monarch:

Thy hands, O King! that to thy knees extend,
Control with well-shaped iron goad in time
Thy fierce-eyed elephant that breaks with ease
Fortified gates, with tough wood bolted fast,
And rein thy rushing charger that can clear
Deep trenches filled with water. Seated high
In thy war-chariot, from thy quiver slung
O'er thy broad back, thou dost with forceful skill
Rain darts on foes and so thy hands are sealed,
Which on the poets presents rich bestow!
Like Muruga thou shinest, gracious king!
Thy chest, as tough and broad as earth itself,
Though threatening to thy foes, fills womankind
With pain of love insatiate. Thy hands
With constant kingly acts are firm and strong,
While we, thy bards, who thriving on thy gifts
Employ our hands in doing nothing else
Than eating meat well seasoned in sweet smoke,
Or rice with condiments and curry mixed,
Have hands that are effiminate and soft!

Paranar too has sung about the unparalleled liberality of this Cēra in Agam 142, in language that reminds us of Māmūlanār’s praise of Udiyan Cēral’s bounty in Agam 65. He writes: ‘Rejoice, O heart! like the suppliants who return from the court of Kaḍunkō, laden with largesse’. The king is there called Māntarān Pōraiyān Kaḍunkō; and perhaps it is to the same king that reference is made in Agam 62 as Pōraiyān, in Agam 303 as Pāsum-pūṭ-Pōraiyān and in Kuruntogai 89 as Perumpūṭ-Pōraiyān. Šelvak-Kaḍundō-vāliyātan reigned for twenty-five years and died at Cikkarpalī.\(^6\) We learn from Patirrup-pattu 67 that his territory included Koḍumānam, probably the modern Kumānam near Coimbatore.

S. 4. Perum-Cēral Irumporai.

He was succeeded by his son, Perum-Cēral Irumporai, a great warrior in whose praise Ariśil Kilār has sung the eighth decade of Patirrup-pattu. He defeated Kaḷuval, the

\(^{16}\) Puram 337.
Idayar chief,\(^{17}\) and won a great victory at Takaḍur in Kollikkurrām against Atiyamān Elini and two great kings.

It is said that his conquest of Takadur has been celebrated in an old Tamil work *Takaḍur Yattirai*, now missing. His fame as a hero spread so rapidly that soon princes and chiefs and others bowed to him in submission;\(^{18}\) and he spared the lives of his foes when they submitted to him and paid him tribute, ‘even as spirits spare their victims when sacrifice is offered to them.’\(^{18a}\) His sway and power extended so far that he was not only the lord of Kolli and ‘the protecting armour’ of the people of Puli-Nādu, but he was even regarded as the lord of Pugār.—

His ministers were men of wisdom who made the good of the people their chief concern.\(^{19}\) Both inland and sea-borne trade flourished in the land.\(^{20}\) The king performed *Yāgas* in accordance with the rules laid down,\(^{21}\) and the

\(^{17}\) *Patirrup-pattu*, 71.
\(^{17a}\) Ibid., 78, VIII *Patigam* and *Puram*, 230.
\(^{18}\) Ibid., 75.
\(^{18a}\) Ibid., 71.
\(^{18b}\) Ibid., 73.
\(^{19}\) Ibid., 72.
\(^{20}\) Ibid., 76.
\(^{21}\) Ibid., 74.
whole country was rich and prosperous. He was a great patron of learning; and the respect and regard with which he treated bards that sought him are exemplified by a supremely lovable act of high-souled magnanimity recorded in Puram 50 by Mōṣu Kīranār. The poet's art yielded him in those days high praise and rich gifts, and made him a welcome guest in every court. Mōṣu Kīranār, when he arrived at the court of this great Čēra King, found the latter had gone out for a hunt; and the bard, who was tired, fell asleep by mistake on the couch intended for the king's drum. The king discovered the poet sleeping; and with a greatness and nobility of heart that was beyond all praise, he not only did not disturb him but kept fanning him till he awoke refreshed! King and hero as he was, Perum-Cēral found light and life in the immortal song of the poet, whom he held in the greatest esteem. The colophon says that as reward he offered to Ariśil Kīlār, the author of the eighth decad of Patirrup-pattu, even his very throne, and everything of value in the palace, which the poet, wisely declined to accept; and the king thereupon made Ariśil Kīlār his minister. This king reigned for seventeen years. It is interesting to note that this king is addressed as Kōdai Mārba which means: he who holds Lakṣmi in his breast. It

22 Patirrup-pattu, 71.
23 Ibid., 79.
must be after him that a subsequent Čera came to bear that name.

S. 5. Iḥam-Cēral Irumpōrai.

He was succeeded by his son Iḥam-Cēral Irumpōrai, the hero of the ninth decad of Patiṟṟup-pattu of which the author is Perum-Kuṇṟur Kīḷār. This poet had met with bitter disappointment once when he sought this Čera’s bounty.²⁴ I give Puṟam 210.—

Forgetting thy high duty to protect
Mankind, thou seest with eyes devoid of love
And helpful charity thy suppliants.
If other kings unsympathetic prove
Like thee, it would be best if men like me
Were never born! My pure and blameless wife
Devoted unto me, if there be left
Breath in her body, will be thinking still
Of me. Afraid am I if even now
Unjust and coward Death hath snatched her off!
I hasten home this instant her to save.
She hath, unable her distress to bear,
Been wishing oft in dire despair for death!
Live long, O King! Behold! Weighed down in heart,
I hence depart and carry back with me
My indigence, as helpless as the forts
Of foes that cannot stand 'gainst thy attack!

Later, the king and the poet understood each other, and the poet says: "I had thought that Iḥam-Cēral was a fierce prince, as all had been lauding his great prowess in war. I now see I was mistaken. Having known him personally, I see he is as sweet as the waters of
"Vāṇi river." Parenthetically, it may be observed that Vāṇi (Skt. Vāhini) is a river running north of Coimbatore, and is different from Bhavāṇi, and also from Ani-Vāṇi which is another name for the Periyār. He sustained the glory and munificence of his illustrious ancestors like Selvak-Kaṇṭunkō and the victors of Vāgai-parantalalai and Vīyalūr. His land abounded in sandal wood, agil (Dysoxylum malabarium) and sugar-cane. He was the lord of Toṇḍi, Kongar-Nāḍu, Kuṭṭuvār-Nāḍu and Pūli-Nāḍu. He defeated Perum Cōla, Iḷam Paḷaiyan Māraṇ and Vicci, and destroyed the ‘five forts’. He was a brave, good, just and impartial ruler; and the poet pronounces in exultation the following benediction: "As the result of thy just and impartial rule, may the clouds never fail to yield bounteous rain! May there be rich pasturage for cattle; may the joyous birds thrive in groves; may fruits and edible roots be plenteous; may grain grow in abundance; may the whole land offer thee reverent praise! May good and virtuous men fill the land! Swerve not from thy kingly duty! May thy arms be victorious; and may thou and thy consort be blessed with long life, health

25 Patirup-pattu 86.
26 Ibid., 88, 90.
27 Ibid., 87.
28 Ibid., 88, 90.
29 Ibid., IX Patigam.
and happiness." 30 There can be no doubt that peace and plenty reigned over the land of this bountiful king. It is no wonder that Perum-Kunrur Kilár asks his brother bards to proceed to the court of this monarch, where they would have liberal largesse bestowed on them. 31 Perum-Kunrur Kilár 32 was most munificently rewarded with land, money and jewels for his poem by Ïlam-Ceral Irumporai, who seems to have delighted in rewarding secretly. 33 He reigned, according to the colophon, for sixteen years.

30 Patirrup-pattu, 89.
31 Ibid., 87.
32 Perum-Kunrur Kilár is said to have sung Purom 266 in honour of Uruvapahrer Ïlam-Set-Cenni (Colophon to Purom 266); but it seems to me the name of the Cola is wrongly given there, and it should be Nalam-Killi alias Set-Cenni, who is also referred to as Ter Van Killi.
33 Colophon of Patigam IX, Patirrup-pattu.
CHAPTER III.

Examination of Results.

This finishes the list of Cēras sung about in Patīṟṟup-pattu. Of the Cēras we have so-far considered, we can assert with confidence that Oḻvā! Perum-Cēral Irumporai, Antuvan-Cēral Irumporai, Šelva-kaḏunkō-vāliyātān; Perum-Cēral Irumporai of Takaḏūr fame and Iḷam-Cēral Irumporai ruled over the northern palatinate with Toṇḍi as their capital; and we may similarly assert that Vānnavaramban Udiyan Cēralātān, Imayavaramban Nedum-Cēralātān, Palyānai Šelkelu-Kuṭṭuvan, Kaḷaṇ-kāikaṇṇi-Nārmudic-Cēral and Šen-Kuṭṭuvan ruled at Vānći in the south. There can be no doubt that both branches were of the same family. Iḷam-Cēral Irumporai, the last of the Irumporais celebrated in song in Patīṟṟup-pattu is described as descendant of Imayavaramban and Nārmudic-Cēral as well as of Perum-Cēral Irumporai.¹ How the necessity for two lines of Cēras may have risen I have already tried to explain; and it may be remembered that Palyānai Šelkelu-Kuṭṭuvan is also stated to have divided his kingdom among his kin. To which group should Ādu-kōṭpāṭṭu-Cēralātān be assigned? After anxious consideration, I have come to the conclusion that

¹ Patīṟṟup-pattu, 88.
he should be regarded as a ruler of the northern palatinate which had its capital at Tondi.

Let us try to examine the results we have obtained. We saw Imayavaramban reigned for fifty-eight years. He had a brother, Palyānai Šelkelu-Kuṭṭuvan, who succeeded him and reigned for twenty-five years. Imayavaramban is said to have had three sons, all of whom are said to have been reigning Cēras. Of these three, Nārmudiccēral reigned for twenty-five years; and on his death he was succeeded by Šen-Kuṭṭuvan who reigned for fifty-five years. Supposing Ādu-kōtpāṭṭu-Cēralātan was a son of Imayavaramban and ruled in Vañci, he must have succeeded Šen-Kuṭṭuvan; and even on the supposition that Ādu-kōtpāṭṭu-Cēralātan was but a babe in arms when Imayavaramban died—and that is obviously all but impossible—he must have been at least one hundred and five years old when he became king, and thereafter reigned for thirty-eight years. This is palpably absurd. We may be told that, perhaps, the high eminence that Imayavaramban and Šen-Kuṭṭuvan occupied as conquering heroes, who made the military prowess of their armies felt even in North India, induced the ascription of an exaggerated period to the reign of each of these two kings; but this hypothesis alone would not help us to solve the difficulty; for even if we allowed the conventional period of twenty-five years to each king that preceded Ādu-kōtpāṭṭu-Cēralātan, he must have waited
seventy-five years after his father's death to ascend the throne of the Cēra kingdom. If, however, we could possibly hold that one of the alleged three sons of Imayavaramban ruled at Toṇdi, instead of regarding all the three of them as having ruled at Vañci, the difficulty would be almost entirely obviated.

I may here glance at a suggestion that the learned author of  "Cēraṇ Šen-Kuṭṭuvan" has made. He is inclined to hold that there were not only two lines of Cēras ruling simultaneously in Vañci and Toṇdi, but there was also a third line co-existing with them that ruled in Māntai! He accordingly thinks that while Šen-Kuṭṭuvan was reigning in Vañci, Nārмуḍiccēral was reigning in Māntai, and the Irumpoṇais in Toṇdi. There is no warrant for this suggested disintegration of the Cēra kingdom into several small Cēra principalities. This was the time when the Cēra kingdom was growing into power, and stood in need of consolidation; and there was particularly a strong line of kings who were capable of keeping the Cēra kingdom intact, not to speak of further extending it. When for the elucidation of a difficulty, a hypothesis has perforce to be postulated, the hypothesis should be as simple and free from complication as possible. We know as a fact of history that there were two lines of Cēras, one ruling in Vañci and the other at Toṇdi. If we can find authority for holding that one of Imayavaramban's sons
ruled at Toṇḍi and not at Vaṅci, the compli-
cation will be easily resolved.

Patiṛṛup-pattu affords some material that
would help us in this direction. The Patigam
of sixth Patiṛṛup-pattu says that the lifted
cattle which Āḍu-kōṭpāṭṭu-Cēralātan recovered
from Daṇḍāraniyam, a place in Ārya-Nāḍu, was
removed by him to Toṇḍi and he there distri-
buted cows among Brahmans, to whom a village
in Kuḍa-Nāḍu was also given. From this we
may assume that Āḍu-kōṭpāṭṭu-Cēralātan was
ruling in Toṇḍi. This assumption receives
support from the fact that he is associated with
Naṟavu or Mangalore.² I have before postulated
that Oḻvāl-Perumcēral Irumporai of Karuvūr
fame was sent by Palyānai Šelkelu-Kuṭṭuvan
as the first viceroy of the northern palatinate
and that he was succeeded probably by Antuvan-
Cēral as ruler at Toṇḍi. Of these two Cēras, little is known definitely. We do not know how
long they reigned. In dealing with Antuvan-
Cēral Irumporai, I have suggested that his
reign witnessed an invasion by a Cōla who
succeeded in capturing Pamaḻūr, and that
Antuvan-Cēral died in the battle of Pōr, which
was fought against the Cōla. In the circum-
stances, a strong man was needed in the
northern province to succeed Antuvan-Cēral,
and I suggest that such a man was found in
Āḍu-kōṭpāṭṭu-Cēralātan. Even if he be held to

² Patiṛṛup-pattu 60.
be the brother of Nārmuḍic-Cēral, I suggest that he was sent by his elder brother, the reigning king of the Cēra kingdom, to rule over the Toṇḍī province, as perhaps, Selvak-kadunkō-Vāliyāṭan was too young to succeed his father Antuvan-Cēral as ruler in the critical and troublous times that then existed.

This is not a preposterous suggestion. But, was Ādu-kōṭpāṭṭuc-Cēralāṭan, really the brother of Nārmuḍic-Cēral? Are Cēralāṭan, the father of Nārmuḍic-Cēral and Kuḍakkō-Neḍum-Cēralāṭan, the father of Ādu-kōṭpāṭṭuc-Cēralāṭan, identical? I venture to hold that they are different, and that while Cēralāṭan, the father of Nārmuḍic-Cēral according to the patigam of IV Patirrup-pattu, belonged to the Vaṇci line, Kuḍakkō-Neḍum-Cēralāṭan mentioned in patigam of VI Patirrup-pattu as the father of Ādu-kōṭpāṭṭu belonged to the Toṇḍī branch. In dealing with the battle of Pōr, I made the suggestion that the Cēra King, Kuḍakkō-Neḍum-Cēralāṭan who died in that battle was Antuvan-Cēral Irumporai; and if that identification be accepted, it makes it easy to hold that Ādu-kōṭpāṭṭu Cēralāṭan’s father was otherwise known as Antuvan-Cēral, that Ādu-kōṭpāṭṭu and Selva-Kadunkō were consanguined brothers of whom the former was the elder, and he naturally succeeded Antuvan-Cēral as the ruler of the northern Palatinate. On this hypothesis which does not seem to be violent, the following table of contemporaneous kings
in the two branches may be constructed tentatively.

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CHAPTER IV.


For the remaining Čeras of whom we read in Śangam literature, we have to depend mainly, on the colophons appended to Puṇa-nānūru lyrics; and our results can only be tentative. And first as regards the main line, we see from the fifth decad of Paṭiṟṟup-pattu that Šen-Kuṭṭuvan had a son Kuṭṭuvan-Cēral, who was delivered by the former to Paraṇar.

Pandit M. Raghava Aiyangar makes a happy suggestion that this probably means that the king entrusted his son for training and literary culture to the great poet. Accepting this suggestion, we may conclude that on the death of Šen-Kuṭṭuvan, Kuṭṭuvan-Cēral probably succeeded him. We find among the Cēramāns a king bearing the name Kuṭṭuvan-Kōdai; and I have little doubt that he is the same as Kuṭṭuvan-Cēral. Kuṭṭuvan-Kōdai is eulogised in Puṟam 51 by a poet called Kōnāṭṭu Ericcalūr Mādalān Maturaikkumāranār. This poet has also sung of Naḷavantippalliṭ-tuṇcīya Naḷam-Killī Šeṭ-Cenni,¹ the Cōla whom in the war of succession that followed the death of Karikāla, we saw Šen-Kuṭṭuvan helped to ascend the throne. This renders it probable that Kuṭṭuvan-Kōdai was the next king in the main line after

¹ Puṟam, 61.
Sen-Kuṭṭuvan. If Ādu-kōtpāṭṭuc-Cēralātan had reigned at Vañci, preceding Kuṭṭuvan-Kōdai, Maturaik-kumāranār must have waited at least 40 years after he had sung *Puṟam* 61 to sing *Puṟam* 54; and this circumstance lends additional strength to my suggestion that Ādu-kōtpāṭṭuc-Cēralātan belonged to the Tonḍi line. Possibly Kōdai’s reign was not eventful and hardly counted in the way of wars and conquests. However it be, it is clear from *Puṟam* 54 that poets had easy access to his presence and that they were lavishly rewarded. This is not to be wondered at in a pupil of the great Paraṇar. It is my belief that Kuṭṭuvan-Cēral *alias* Kōdai is identical with Kōṭṭambalattut-tuñcia Māk-Kōdai, a royal poet, who like Hrothgar in Beowulf, ‘the harp’s sweet note awoke, and a song entoned both sooth and sad.’ We have already referred to his poem, *Agam* 168, when dealing with Perum-Śōṛṛu Udiyan-Cēralātan. I give below an English adaptation of a pathetic lyric, he has sung on the demise of his queen.

“*What charm hath life hence-forth for me?*”

The king in his bereavement cried.

“My queen, how good and sweet was she!

The innocent of soul hath died.

My swelling sorrow knows no bound.

Alas! like to the common dead

I bore her to the burning ground

Where nought but spiny cactus spread.

A heap of fuel there arrayed.

Stood smould’ring her remains to claim;
OF THE SANGAM PERIOD

With cruel hands my queen I laid
Upon her couch of rising flame.
My queen hath left me. Like the sea
Though deep and surging is my grief,
It has no strength, alas! to me
From hated life to bring relief.
Would that grim death had come to me!
• The fairest queen on earth is dead!
The mainstay of my life was she!
And I survive, when she hath fled!"

S. 2. Iḷam-Kuṭṭuvan.

Aganānuṟu mentions as the author of Agam 153 one Cēramān Iḷam-Kuṭṭuvan. This Iḷam-Kuṭṭuvan or Kuṭṭuvan the younger is, perhaps, the son of Kuṭṭuvan-Cēral, the son of Śen-Kuṭṭuvan. Kuṭṭuvan is the name of the king; and the descriptive word Iḷam is prefixed to it to distinguish him from, perhaps, Śen-Kuṭṭuvan, the great Kuṭṭuvan. Except that he was a Cēramān or reigning Cēra, nothing further is known about him. The following is an English translation of Agam 153 attributed to this Cēramān—

My heart with grief and pain intense is filled!
E'en when with sweet-voiced playmates she pursued

The shining ball, tired out she used to feel!
And now, cajoled by one hard-hearted, she Hath sudden yeilded to his warm embrace,
And with him left at night, deserting us!
How can her tender feet traverse the dry
And trackless desert, where from bamboos tall,
That in the wind against each other rub,
Burst leaping flames, and to the mountain slope
Convey her, where tall Kongu trees, which reach
The star-bespangled sky, shook by the wind,
Shed flowers honey-filled, like flambeaux flung,
Which are too hot to hold, by hands away!


Perhaps next in order in the main line
came Pālaipādiya-Perum-Kaṭumkō. As it is,
Pālaipādiya-Perum-Kaṭumkō stands unrelated to anyone. We can see from his
Pālaikkali that he was a friend of the
Pāṇḍya, and the Pāṇḍya Kingdom was well-known to him; and we see from Puram 11,
perhaps the only poem sung about him, that he was the ruler of Vaṇci, and was a liberal patron
of bards and minstrels. I give here an English rendering of the poem, the author of which is a
lady named Pēy-makal Ṭa-Vēyini.

The valiant king renowned in song, who rules
O'er far-famed Vaṇci, rising to the skies,
Where bashful maids with rounded arms that shine
With glistening hair and decked with jewels bright,
To images of sand make offerings
Of flowers gathered from o'erhanging boughs,
Before they plunge into the waters cool
Of Porunai, he through the fortress broke
Of valorous foes and made them turn and flee!

2a Pālai, 34; 29 and 30.
With jewels rare of burnished gold immense
Did he reward her who his prowess sang?
And on him, who her song accompanied
Bestowed he lotus flow’rs of flaming gold
With threads of shining silver closely strung.

In the scheme of succession that has been so far constructed from material supplied by ancient Tamil literature, there appears to be no room for introducing another reigning prince between Udiyan Cēralătan and Ilaam-Kuṭṭuvan. Pālaipādiya-Perum-Kaḍumkō is not an imaginary figure; but he was undoubtedly one of the ancient Cēra Kings who reigned in Vañci-on-the-Porunai. I had once suggested that he was anterior in date to Śen-Kuṭṭuvan; but on further consideration, I have come to entertain the belief that he was posterior to Śen-Kuṭṭuvan. He must be somewhat anterior to Nallantuvanār, the redactor of Kalit-tokai. Nallantuvanār has been sung about by Marudan Ila-Nākanār, who was a contemporary of the Pāṇḍya, Ilavantikaippallit-tuñciya Nanmāran of whom another contemporary was Nakkīrar; and Nakkīrar, as we shall see presently, has sung of a succeeding generation of Kings. I, therefore, propose to place Pālaipādiya-Perum-Kaḍumkō after Ilaam-Kuṭṭuvan. It is obvious that Pālaipādiya Cēra cannot be placed later, as it was at the instance of the Pāṇḍya King Ugrap-peruvaluti, that Kalit-tokai was redacted.

3 Agam, 59.
4 Puram, 55.
5 Ibid., 56.
About the kingly exploits of Pālapādiya Perum-Kaṭumkō, we have no record; but as I have shown elsewhere he has left an imperishable name as a Tamil poet. His poems, all of which relate to Pālai-tīnai in Agap-porul, reveal the highest spirit of chivalry. In Naṟṟinai 9, he says that the gaining of the lady that one loves is like meeting the god one seeks. In Agam 185, he says that the man who leaves his love must be one with a heart of hard iron. It is pleasing to note in his poems the loyalty and tenderness of the wife, and the fidelity of the lady's companion. In Agam 267, where the lady's maid tries to comfort the lady, whose husband has left in quest of riches, the wife declares that if a husband leaves his spouse, it is due entirely to the inability of the latter to detain him with her. He frankly denounces the unsympathetic minister who misleads the king into deeds of injustice and oppression.\(^6\) It is clear from Naṟṟinai\(^7\) that the lighting of lamps on Kārtigai day was common even in those days, as he likens a tree in blossom to the appearance of a town illuminated on Tirukārtigai day. In Pālai I he refers to the reaction of elephants to music, which has the power of soothing them. Toddy was a favourite drink in his day,\(^8\) and people believed in

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6 Pālai, 7 and 9.


8 Pālai, 3.
Women wore along with their tāli (तालि) a gold jewel fashioned like or encasing the teeth of leopards.10

I have elsewhere given English renderings of several lyrics by this Cēra from his Pālaik-kali and from Kuruntokai.11 He is a master of Pālaī-tiṇai. The appropriate motif of Pālaī amatory poetry is separation; and it describes the effect on the wife when her husband proposes to go to distant lands across an intervening desert in quest of wealth. As an illustration of the royal poet’s art, imagery and poetic imagination, I shall give here an English echo of the opening lines of his Pālaik-kali and of a short poem by him included in Kuruntokai.

As blazed the wrath of Śiva, when to save
Ayan and other gods, who sought his aid,
He smote the dreaded, troubous Rākaṣasas,
And their destructive triple fortress laid
In utter ruin, with like fierceness burns
The sun, whose heat intense beats on the rocks
And bursting them, with wreckage blocks the way
In that vast desert!

—Pālaī, 1.

Great is my spouse’s love for me!
His early coming I foresee!
Where he has gone, he eke will see
Bull elephant with gallantry
Break branches from the Atti tree

9 Pālaī, 10.
10 Agam, 7.
11 J.I.H., XI, Part 2; Q.J.M.S., XXIII, No. 3.
And give them to its famished mate,
It may its hunger satiate!
That sight will speed him on to me!

—Kurma, 37.


Next, perhaps, came Cēramān Mā-Veŋkō, of whom there is mention made in the colophon to Purām 367. We may gather from it that he was a friend of Ugrap-peruvaluti, the Pāṇḍya, and Rājasūyamvēṭṭa Perunār-killi, the Cōla, whom I regard as the same as Neḍumudik-killi mentioned in Manimēkalai as the Victor of Kāriyāru.¹² No other information is available about him.

We have no means of knowing who succeeded this Cēra at Vaṅci; but I hazard the guess that, perhaps, it was Cēramān Vaṅcan whose capital is described as the unapproachable ancient city of renown, Purām 398. We see from Agam 149, that a Pāṇḍya, probably Ugrap-Peruvaluti’s successor, sacked Mūṣiri, the port of Vaṅci and Purām 373 records that Vaṅci itself was invested and captured by Killi-valavan. From Purām 36, in which Ālattūr Kīḷār tries to dissuade him from his march on Vaṅci, we gather that the Cēra ruling then at Vaṅci was effeminate and afraid to take the field against the advancing Cōla. However, the Cōla advanced and Vaṅci-mūṭūr fell, an

¹² Mani, XIX, 1. 126.
event over which even a poetess of Killi-
valavan's court, Mārōk-kattu Nappaśalaiyar,
expresses grief in Puram 37. The fall of
Vañci was obviously an event of great moment,
and was unexpected; and in Puram 39, the
same lady, addressing the Cōla exclaims: 'In
what strains shall I praise thy great might
and glory when thou hast brought down the
renowned Cēra, whose ancestor had set the
imprint of his bow on the long, golden peaked
range of the Himalaya and whose impregnable
capital city of Vañci has fallen before thy
advance!' Killi-Valavan is said to have in-
vaded Kūḍal also, and he is referred to as the
Cōla of that name who died at Kuḷamurṟam.
Dr. Pope thinks, and perhaps he is correct,
that Kuḷamurṟam and Kurāppalli are the same.

13 paṇḍitē saṟṟai sarāṟ unfolds sarāṟ
amaratēṟṟuṟṟuṟ sunṟṟai sarāṟ sarāṟ
pattēṟṟuṟṟuṟṟuṟ Government sarāṟ sarāṟ
sarāṟ sarāṟ sarāṟ sarāṟ sarāṟ sarāṟ sarāṟ
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14 Agam 346.
CHAPTER V.

S. 1. Yānaik-kaṭ-Śēy Māntaram-Cēral.

We may now turn to the northern line. In that branch, the outstanding figure is Yānaik-kaṭ-Śēy Māntaram-Cēral Irumpoṇai, whom I would place some time after Iḷam-Cēral Irumpoṇai; for before Māntaram-Cēral we must place Ātan-Avini, of whom Īrampōkiyar has sung in Ain-kūrūnuṟu, a Sangam collection which was redacted at the instance of Yānaik-kaṭ-Śēy Māntaram-Cēral.¹ Nothing is known of this prince; but we may be safe in regarding him as the immediate predecessor of Yānaik-kaṭ-Śēy. Yānaik-kaṭ-Śēy Māntaram-Cēral² is wrongly asserted by Mr. Kanakasabhai, in his ‘Tamils 1800 Years Ago’ to be the son of Šen-Kuṭṭuvan; and this incorrect statement has unfortunately been repeated by Dr. S. Krishnaswami Aiyangar and others, and has found its way into a recent text-book of Indian History.³ He is an outstanding figure among the later Čēras of the Sangam period; and we find as many as six poems relating to him in Puṇanāṇuṟu. We can see from the poems that he was a wise ruler, beloved of his subjects who enjoyed peace and prosperity, and protection from external

¹ Vide Ain. 1-10.
³ Banerji’s Junior History of India, p. 94.
enemies. He was also a great warrior, and in his early wars he seems to have had uniform success; but we have no details of those wars.

_Pûrâṇam_ 20 gives us a vivid description of this king; and I give below an English rendering of it as it shows how highly he was loved and adored.

The deep sea may be sounded; and the width
Of the vast earth, the air-pervading space
And eke the shapeless, overhanging sky,
May all be measured; but, O mighty King!
Thy wisdom, love and generosity
Defy all measure! Those who in the shade
Of thy protection live know but the heat
Of kitchen fire and of the glowing sun!
They only know the rainbow in the sky
But not the bow of slaughter! Nor do they
Another weapon know except the plough!
Illustrious King! Thy valiant foes thou hast
With mighty armies vanquished, and their lands
Their fruits for thy enjoyment yield! Thy earth
But pregnant ladies eat to satisfy
Their craving, and is never touched by foes!
In thy well guarded forts thy arrows rest;
And in thy sceptre righteousness resides!
What though new birds may come or old birds leave,
What-e'er betide, thou dost thy kingdom guard
And peace ensure. And so with anxious hope
The world doth pray no harm should thee befall.

In _Pûrâṇam_ 53 we read that he won a victory at Viñankil, though it does not appear over whom. He had also his reverses. Among his wars was one he waged with Talaiālam-kānattuc-Cēruvēṇra Neûum-Sēliyan, one of the greatest kings of the Pāṇḍya dynasty; and in
that war, we learn from Puṣṭam 17 that he was made a captive by the Pāṇḍya. We read that his previous successes in war had been so constant that this reverse filled all with surprise. However, by his own strategy and valour he escaped, and the incident is immortalised in song in Puṣṭam 17, by Kurumkōliyūr Kilār. I give its translation below, as it supplies a good and interesting portraiture of the early Čeras, as also of Yānaik-kaṭ-Śēy.

Scion of the royal house whose kings have ruled
As undisputed monarch o'er the land
Which from Kumari on the south extends
To the high mountain on the north, and lies
Between the eastern and the western sea!

Thy sires their royal sceptre even held
O'er all their subjects whereso-e'er they lived,
In hill or mountain, forest or in town;
Protecting them with equal justice, they
Chastised all wrong and, as their due, received
The share of yield from land by law allowed.

O Toṇḍi's lord! Thy land the mountain fence
Protects. Its sandy beach like moon-light shines;
There flourish stately palms which star-high grow,
Laden with bunches of sweet cocoanuts.
There spread extensive fields; and in the ponds
Of water clear bright flaming lotus blooms!

E'en as a strong and stately elephant
Regardless of the treach'rous pit whose mouth
Is cunningly o'erlaid, impetuous
Unto it rushes, and with tusks, full-grown
And murd'rous, gores the sides and fills it up
With earth it has dug up, and getting out
Goes back and joins the herd in its old haunt,
So thou, the victor in thy wars, whose foes
Bereft of their possessions bow in fee
To gain thy friendship or from policy,
Urged by thy courage irresistible,
Unmindful of thy foe, didst rush to war,
And when, to the bewilderment of all
Thy kith and kin, thou wert a captive made,
By thy unaided strength and stratagem
Thou didst redeem thy lapse and didst escape
And to thy realm and relatives return.

O king of Kuḍapād! I come to praise
Thy valour and thy fame. Unlimited
Is thy munificence! Thy warriors’ shields
For rain-clouds are mistook! Large swarms of bees
Settle on thy war-elephants, which they
Mistake for mountains huge! Thy battle hosts,
The terror of thy enemies, are vast
As the great sea to which the clouds resort
For their supply of water! And the sound
Of thy war-drums resemble so the roar
Of thunder that dread snakes and venomous,
Trembling with fright, hang down their hooded
heads!

It must be noted that the battle referred
to in this poem cannot be the well-known battle of Talaiālamkānam, which the Pāṇḍya Neḍum-Śeliyan, won against the confederate army of the Cēra, the Cōla and the five Vēḷir chiefs: for we learn from Puram⁴ and Agam⁵ that in that battle the Cēra, the Cōla and the chiefs that were their allies were slain by the Pāṇḍyan hero. We read also that in a battle

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⁴ Puram, 76 and 77.
⁵ Agam, 36.
between Rājasūyam-vēṭṭa Perunār-Kiḷḷi and Yānaik-kaṭ-Śēy, the latter met with defeat.  

His internal administration appears to have been a blessing to his subjects. Poruntill Iḷam-Kīranār, who is one of the poets that have sung about him, says it requires a bard of the eminence of Kapilar to sing the praises of this king. Another poet extols him for his just rule under which his subjects enjoyed the benefits of peace, ‘knowing no bow except the rainbow, and no weapon except the plough’, and praises the Ĉēra kingdom as a heaven on earth. He was also a great patron of learning; and it was at his instance that Ain-kurunūru was collected. Puṇa-nānūru has a touching lament on his death which one of his bards, Kiḷḷar-Kiḷḷar had dreaded would happen as he had witnessed the falling of a meteor at midnight, when the planets and stars were in a particular conjunction. Unfortunately the astronomical details cannot help us to discover the date of his demise. I am tempted to suggest that he is, perhaps, the hero of the missing 10th Patirṟṟup-pattu.


The next in that line will be Kōk-kōdai-Mārban. Poigaiyār, his court poet, tells us

6 Puṟam, 125
7 Ibid., 53.
8 Ibid., 20.
9 Ibid., 22.
10 Ibid., 229.
that he ruled at Tōṇḍi, and that his country was the sea-board region; and though it was Neytal land, it also abounded in Kuriṇci and Marutam land or rich forests and paddy fields. The poet Nakkīrar tells us of an invasion of Kūḍal or Madura by Kīḷḷivalavāvan who slew Paḷaiyan-Mārān in that campaign, to the great joy of Kōḍai-Mārban. Possibly Paḷaiyan-Mārān, who we saw had been defeated in battle by Ịḷam-Cēral Irumpoṇai, began to give trouble to the Cēra, whose power after the defeat of Yānaik-kaṭ-Śēy Māntaram-Cēral by the Cōla and the Pāṇḍya had begun to wane; and hence Kōḍai-Mārban was rejoiced to see this troublesome chief defeated and killed by the Cōla. No details relating to this Cēra are available.

He apparently took his name Kōḍai-Mārban from his great ancestor Perum-Cēral Irumpoṇai.


The next in order in that branch is Kāṇaikkāl Irumpoṇai. Poigaiyār was his court poet. Mūvan, a chief who had incurred this Cēra’s displeasure, was punished by having his teeth pulled out and fixed on the gate at Tōṇḍi as warning. Kāṇaikkāl Irumpoṇai does not

11 Puram, 48, 49.
12 See Agam, 366.
14 Narriṇai, 18.
stand alone in inflicting this mode of punishment; for we read of other similar instances. 15
We do not know anything about his reign; but we have definite information about his end, which was very heroic. We gather from Agam 16 that Kaṇaiyan, a feudatory and general of the Cēra, along with other feudatory chiefs owing allegiance to the Cēra, met in battle Paḷaiyan, the Cōla general, who lost his life in the engagement. This infuriated Śen-Kaṇān, the Cōla King, who marched against Kaṇaiyan, killed him in battle and captured Kaḷumalam, a city of the Cēra. 17 Kaṇaikkāl Irumporai, the Cēra King, could not stand this, and naturally went to war with Kō-Śen-Kaṇān. At the battle of Pōr, he was defeated and taken prisoner by Kō-Śen-Kaṇān, and confined at Kuḍavāyil-Kōṭṭam. 18 It was on that occasion that Poigaiyār sang Kaḷavaḷi-Ṇāṟpatu in praise of Śen-Kaṇān, and won the release of his patron, Kaṇaikkāl Irumporai. In the meantime, Kaṇaikkāl feeling thirsty, asked for water which was not readily supplied; and he was so much stung by the insult that he preferred to die, rather than accept the water that the warders were so tardy in supplying. Before the order for release could be carried out, the proud and heroic Cēra had breathed his last;

15 Vida Agam, 211.
16 Agam, 44.
17 Agam, 270.
18 Puram, 74.
but he left a short poem, full of true epic grandeur, explaining the circumstances of his death. I give below a translation of Kaṇaikkāl Irumporai’s swan-song.

Lo! Issue born but as a lifeless child,
Or even as a shapeless mass of flesh,
Amongst the kingly class with sword is clove!
But meaner e’en than these am I, confined
Like a chained dog, condemned to live in shame!
Can he be king-born who with his own mouth,
Too weak his body’s craving to resist,
Begs for a cup of water from his foe?
‘Tis better far to die than thus to live! 19

We have now dwelt with all the Cēra Kings mentioned in Patirṟup-pattu and Pura-nānūru. From the foregoing account, we are in a position to continue the line of succession in the two branches, from where we have left before.

**Vaṇci Branch.**

1. Kuṭṭuvan-Cēral or Kuṭṭuvan-Kōdai.
2. Cēramān Ilam-Kuṭṭuvan.
5. Cēramān Vaṇcan.

**Toṇdi Branch.**

1. Ātan-Avāni.
2. Yānaik-kaṭ-Śey Māntaram-Cēral.

Though we have no means of knowing the exact relationship in which each succeeding

19 Pūram. There is a fine play in Tamil, bearing the title Māṇa Vijayam, written by the late Pandit V. G. Suryanarayana Sastri, based on this incident.
ruler in the above succession list stood to his predecessor, I think we may safely suppose the correctness of the above order of succession in either branch. Kuṭṭuvan-Kōdai or Māk-Kōdai may be regarded as contemporaneous with Perum-Cēral Irumpōrai and to their period may perhaps be assigned Kāriyāṟṟut-tuṇciya Neṭum-Killī besides possibly Cōla Naḷam-Killī Șeṭ-Cenni. Mā-Veṅkō and Yānaikkkaṭ-Șey were both contemporaries of the Cōla Rājasuyamvēṭṭa Perunār-Killī; and Kō-Kōdai Mārban was contemporaneous with Killī-Valavan, whom I regard as the same as the Cōla of that name who died at Kuḷamuṟṟam.²⁰ Lastly Kaṇaikkāl Irumpōrai and Cōla Śen-Kaṇān were contemporaries. Thus the Sangam works enable us to gain a connected account of the Cēras for about twelve generations from Udiyan-Cēral to Kaṇaikkāl Irumpōrai; and during all this period the Cēra dynasty had continuous social or political relation, the latter sometimes friendly and sometimes hostile, with the Cōla line of kings from Tittan’s son, Pōrvaikkō Perunār-Killī to Śen-Kaṇān. The statement found in some books that the Cēra ascendancy passed away in the course of one generation is wrong.²¹

²⁰ Puram, 373.
²¹ E.g. Dr. S.-Krishnaswami Aiyangar’s Beginnings of South Indian History, p. 131.
S. 4. Rule of Succession.

In our account of the succession, the rule of lineal descent from father to son has been followed. Recently it has been sought to make out that the rule of succession followed among the Sangam Cēras was collateral, not from father to son, but from uncle to nephew. This is a gratuitous attempt suggested, perhaps, by the prevalence of Marumakkattāyam succession in modern Malabar. When and in what circumstances Marumakkattāyam law of inheritance came to be followed in Malabar, need not now be investigated; but it is quite certain that succession among Sangam Cēras was not regulated by Marumakkattāyam law. Mr. M. Srinivasa Aiyangar in his Tamil Studies cavalierly assumed that the Sangam Cēras were succeeded by their nephews or sister's sons; but the assumption fell flat on the Tamil world. Quite recently, however, Mr. Somasundara Bharati of the Annamalai University has revived the story. It seems to me that he has proceeded on a misunderstanding of the relevant texts in Patirrup-pattu. The portions bearing on the question appear in the patigams, and they are extracted below:

1. Patirrup-pattu, II Patigam.

22 See p. 103 ff.
23 See Šen Tamił, Vol. XXVII.
In the first extract Vēnmānallini is composed of Vēl (வேல்) Māḷ (மாள்) and Nallini (நல்லினி). Māḷ (மாள்) means Magal (மாகல்), daughter, as
Mān (மன்) means Magan (மகன்) son. So the passage literally means: Imayavaramban Neḍum-Cēralātan, the son born to Udiyan-Cēral by Nallini, the daughter of Veliyan Vēḷ, or Veliyan, the Vēḷir chief. The translation of the second extract is: Nārmudic-Cēral, the son born to Cēralātan by Vēḷ-Āvikkōmān Paduman-Dēvi, that is, Paduman-Dēvi, the daughter of Vēḷ-Āvikkōmān. It was not unusual, and even today in the Tamil country it is usual, to place before the name of the daughter a surname denoting her father. In the preceding extract we have Veliyan Vēḷ-māḷ Nallini. A classical example of this usage is supplied by the name of the authoress of Puram 83, 84 and 85, Perumkōḷī Nāykan Magal-Nakkanñaiyār.23a Dēvi does not mean here wife as it has been mistakenly construed; nor does it mean daughter, as contended by others. It is really a part of the name of the lady. The text in the third extract is apparently faulty as there is no lady mentioned in it, unless we take Maṇakkilli to denote a lady's name. Then Cōḷan Maṇakkilli would mean Maṇakkilli whose father was the Cōḷa. Śilappadhikaram, however, tells us that Šenkuṭṭuvan’s mother’s name was Naṟcōṇai, and I

23a Cf. மன்னியின் உருவாக்கம் செய்யும் கவனம்; Agam, 352.
சுருக்கமின் வாழ்பாடு; Agam, 163; 217;
235 and 294.

சேர்க்கினா மரபிக்கார் Agam, 160.
பொருங்கிய நூற்றாண்டு கலாச்சாரம் Agam, 154.
சேர்க்கினா புராணம் Puram, 11.
would, therefore, insert Naṅcōṇai after Maṅak-kiḷḷi to get the true reading. In the next extract Dēvi is the name of the lady, her father being Vēḻ-Āvikkomān; and she bore a son, Ādu-kōṭpātu-Cēralātan to Nēḻum-Cēralātan. In the fifth extract Poṇaiyan Perum-Dēvi, the daughter of Orutantai bore Antuvan a son, Selvak-kaḍunkō. Here Poṇaiyan Perum-Dēvi may either be the name of the lady or, as is probable, it may mean the 'Queen of the Poṇaiyan' or Cēra. In the next extract, the name is the same as in the second extract and the same explanation as that given in that connection will apply. The last extract says, Maiyūrkiḷān Vēṃmāl Antuvan-Śellai bore ᴼḷam-Cēral to Kuṭṭuvan-Irumporai. It is clear that the name of the lady is Antuvan-Śellai, the daughter of Maiyūr-Kiḷān-Vēḻ. Reading the relevant portions, therefore, carefully, we see there is no warrant for saying that there is any trace in them to suggest that the succession was not linear, from father to son, but was collateral, from uncle to nephew.

In Patiṟṟup-pattu, Imayavaramban and ᴼḷam-Cēral Irumporai are urged to rival the ancestors of their race and it will be difficult to believe that the ancestors whom they were exhorted to rival were not their paternal forefathers. Again Selvak-kaḍunkō is addressed as

24 Patiṟṟup-pattu, 14 and 85.
the illustrious son of great ancestors and Śenkuṭṭuvan is described as a descendant of Čēra who imprinted the mark of his bow on the Himalayas, alluding to Imayavaramban. It will again be difficult to say that the references in these instances are not to direct lineage and ancestry. The advocate of Maṟumakkattāyam succession among the Sangam Čēras would have us believe that Čēra women belonged to a matriarchal family, but they were freely married by Vēls and Cōlas, who were not Maṟumakkavāli people. The children born of these marriages had no right to their father’s estate, but perforce took their uncle’s to the prejudice of their uncle’s sons, whose mothers might quite conceivably have been daughters of Cōla, Pāṇḍya and Vēlir families. The Čēra’s sons would, as a result, have no right in their parental family; nor would they have any in the families from which their mothers came, unless those families also followed the Maṟumakkattāyam system. And nobody will suggest that the succession among the Cōlas, Pāṇḍyas and Vēlir was from uncle to nephew and not from father to son.27

25 Patirrup-pattu, 67.
26 Śilap., XXV, ll. 1–3.
S. 5. A strange view of Patirrup-pattu.

Before we conclude this account, which has been constructed solely from the Sangam classics, we may just glance at a strange assertion about Patirrup-pattu in which a recent critic has indulged.23 He says that all the decades of Patirrup-pattu or at least a good portion of it should be the work of a single author, and the redactor with no clue about the authorship, might have ascribed the poems to different poets. Or the redactor had a number of poems by various authors and he made a judicious selection and arranged them on a uniform plan. The marked difference in style, thought and literary execution that any one can easily see between one decad and another rules out the probability, and even the possibility of the whole of Patirrup-pattu being the work of a single poet. If, however, it was the work of a single author, how was it that his very name had been forgotten? He could not have wantonly suppressed it. We are not told why a poet should have practised such a deliberate and calculated joke on the literary world. Surely his name and eminence as a poet would not have suffered if he had owned them as his; on the other hand, the indisputable merit of the poems would have at once won for him an enviable position of pre-eminence among the

ancient poets of the Tamil land. By the device that he has adopted, he has wilfully achieved obscurity; for even his very name is unknown. And was there even an absence of tradition about the authorship when the redaction was made? Speculations like this are unprofitable. Each decad has come to us as the work of a different poet; and the poems contain internal evidence to show that all the decades cannot have had the same authorship. Each decad professes to be a contemporary record of the achievements of its hero; and making full allowance for the predilections of court poets, one can still accept them as cogent contemporary documents, as there is not sufficient reason for questioning their authenticity.


I should say a word about Kēralōṭpatī, which is regarded as the oldest account in Malayalam relating to Kērala history. It, however, seems to me that to glean history from this work is as hopeless as to seek for a needle in a haystack. Some one has not inappropriately, though with unnecessary severity of language, described it as a farrago of legendary nonsense. It is a work of about the 18th century; and it professes to tell us the story of Kērala from the time when at Paraśurāma's command the country arose from out the azure main. The floating traditions on which the narrative was sought to be built were unhappily
far too hazy to present any picture in perspec-
tive; and thus even as a source-book of early
Kērala history it cannot unfortunately be of
any real use. It tells us that after a period of
indigenous kings, who were generally inkom-
pent, the people selected kings from the
neighbouring countries and brought them to
Kērala, on the understanding that each was to
rule for twelve years! These foreign rulers
who were brought into the country were known
as Perumāls; and the earliest of them is said to
be one Kēya Perumāl, who made Allur or
Kodungallur his capital. A suggestion has
been made that this Perumāl is Perum-Śōṛru
Udiyan-Cēralātan; but I see absolutely no
warrant for this. It is said that after him
were brought in succession into Kērala, Cōla-
perumāl, Pāṇḍī-perumāl, Cōliya or Kērala-
perumāl, Taḷubham-perumāl, Indra-perumāl,
Ārya-perumāl and others! It is obvious that
the author had heard of invasions of Kērala by
some Pāṇḍya, Cōla and other neighbouring
kings or chiefs, who probably retired to their
territory after their raid; and from that he
wove this fanciful list of Perumāls brought by
the people into Kērala to rule over the country!
Even upon a most sympathetic consideration of
the legendary mess presented in the pages of
Kēralōtpatti, all that has been claimed for the
work is that it may supply materials ‘to fill up
some parts of the wide gap in the history of the
country from the fourth to the ninth century
A.C. 729 The epoch we have been studying is, as will be shown later on, anterior to this period; and Kēralōtpatti cannot, therefore, be of any use for our purpose, even supposing it were possible to make it serve the purposes of history.
CHAPTER VI.

Vañci-mūtūr.

S. 1.

Among the problems of ancient Cēra history, nothing is of greater interest or importance than the identification of Vañci, the capital of the ancient Cēra Kingdom.

Puram 11 conveys the information that a Cēra king, said to be Pālai-pādiya Perum Kaḍunkō, was ruling in Vañci, where the cool waters of the Porunai flow; and the scholiast, of whom unfortunately nothing is known, explains Vañci as Karuvūr, and Porunai as Ānporuntuṁ. This has recently given occasion for learned disquisitions by some Tamil scholars,1 who have tried to establish that Vañci is Karūr in the Trichinopoly District. That Vañci is Kodum-kolūr (Cranganore) of which Tiruvañci-kālam is a suburb, has been held as an undisputed axiom by Tamil scholars from the beginning; and the reasoning by which that view has recently been attempted to be controverted is more perplexing than convincing. I propose to state a few relevant facts of outstanding significance, that will help us in the solution of the question.

The close connection of Śilappadhikāram and Maṇimēkalai with the Cēra country and

1 See for example Mahāvidvān R. Raghava Aiyangar's Vañcimānagar.
its capital city is well known; and it is worthy of note that, while they speak of Vañçi or Vañçi-mūtūr, they do not mention Karuvūr at all. *Patiṟṟup-pattu*, which is devoted entirely to the praise of the Cēras, does not so much as even mention Karuvūr, while it refers to Vañçi-mūtūr. The *Puranānūru*¹ collection, which contains many lyrics in praise of Cēra kings, refers by name to Vañçi; but it does not mention Karuvūr anywhere. Among the *Aga-nānūru* collection, two poems mention Vañçi, and one mentions Karuvūr;² and this is the only instance in ancient poetic literature, so far as the published works of the Sangam age go, of Karuvūr appearing in the text. In *Paripādal*, no mention of Karuvūr is made; but Vañçi³ occurs, and is described as of equal importance with Madura, and Kōli (Uṟaiyūr). So too, in the *Pattup-pāṭtu*⁴ collection, Vañçi alone occurs; and its position in the Cēra kingdom is described to be of the same eminence as Madura in the Pāṇḍya kingdom and Uṟantai in the Cōla kingdom. *Kālavaḷināṟpatu* was composed by Poigaiyār to secure the release of Cēramān Kanaikkāl Irumporai, who had been made a captive by Cōḷan Kō-Śeṅkaṇṭān; and in that poem too, only

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1a See *Puram*, 11, 32, 39, etc.
2 See *Agam*, 263, 396 and 93.
3 See p. 175 (ed. 1918).
4 See *Śīṟupāṇāṟṟuppaḷai*, 1. 50.
Vañci occurs and not Karuvūr. An examination of the Sangam works thus shows that the ancient poets knew the capital city of the Cēra as only Vañci; and except in only one solitary lyric in Aganānūru, they have not mentioned Karuvūr at all. Even this solitary instance need not be regarded as really an exception; for Karuvūr, as it occurs there, may be explained as a descriptive name meaning simply the prominent or impregnable city, and need not be regarded as a proper noun. That the city which was known to the poets as Vañci and was celebrated by them under that name was not Karuvūr of the Trichinopoly district, also seems to be clear from Agam 263, where Karuvūr Kaṇnampāḷanār sings of Vañci as the capital city of the Cēra. Obviously Vañci and Karuvūr in Trichinopoly were regarded as two different places.

This is also seen from another fact we gather from ancient Tamil literature. That the Karuvūr region enjoyed the unenviable distinction of having frequently been the cock-pit of the Tamil country is patent from ancient works. Kongu-nāḍu was originally under its independent chief; but it afterwards passed into the possession of the rulers of each of the three Tamil kingdoms. Patirṟup-pattu

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5 Kaḷavaḷi, St. 39.
6 Agam, 93.
7 Patirṟup-pattu, 22, 88 and 90.
shows that it once became subject to the Cēras. Puram 373 shows the territory had been conquered by the Cōḷas; and Agam 253 shows that the Pāṇḍyās had also brought it under their sway. A place in such a region would obviously be ill-suited for the metropolis of a flourishing kingdom like Cēra-nāḍu. Puram 5 is sung by a poet called Nariverūt-talaiyār in praise of a Cēra, whose name is given as Cēramān Karuvūr-ēriya-Olvāt-Kōpperum-Cēral-Irumporai. This Cēral Irumporai must have gone to reign at Karuvūr, as his description signifies, from some other city which was the metropolis of the Cēra kingdom; and there can be no doubt that that city was Vañci. I have stated that the extensive conquests towards the north made by Udiyan Cēralātan, Imayavaramban and Palyānai-śel-keḻu-Kuṭṭuvan, the three earliest Cēra kings known to Tamil literature, necessitated the establishment of a viceroyalty at Karuvūr, which as frontier town was perhaps coveted as a key position; and this Cēral Irumporai, apparently a junior member of the house, went there invested with palatine prerogatives about the close of Palyānai’s reign. From that time, the Cēral Irumporais of whom we read in literature probably occupied the position of Cēra viceroys of the north, with their seat of government at Toṇḍi, a sea-port town on the West coast; but the Cēra king himself had his capital at Vañci and not at Karuvūr. To avoid
all possibility of confusion from the use of the expression Karuvūr in the Aganānūru lyric already referred to, the early Tamil lexicons, Pingalantai and Śēntan Divākaram explain by a separate sūtra that Karuvūr denotes Vañci. That sūtra was necessitated because of the occurrence of the unfamiliar word Karuvūr in a classical lyric; but, perhaps, owing to that very circumstance, later generations in course of time came to give the name Karuvūr the same currency as Vañci, little suspecting that it might lead long years afterwards to confusion.

Another fact that we gather from ancient Tamil classics may also be noticed here. Karuvūr of the Trichinopoly district is, as every one will admit, in what was known as Kongu-nāḍu and not in Malai-nāḍu. The third decad of Patirṟup-pattu is written by Pālai-gautamanār, in honour of Palyānai-śel-keḷu Kuṭṭuvan, the younger brother of Imaya-varamban-Neḍum-Cēralātan; and one of the poems in that section tells us that the hero of that decad effected the conquest of Kongu-nāḍu. Clearly then, Karuvūr of the Trichinopoly District could not have been the original capital of the Cēras; for the Cēras, as we know from literature, had already, before the conquest of

8 Pingala, p. 86 and Divākaram, P. 62.
9 Patirṟup-pattu, 22.
Kongu-nādu, established their fame and power as a ruling dynasty in the Tamil country. Again, we gather from Agam 29 that Kāri, the chief of Mullūr, slew Ōri, the chief of Kolli-malai, and delivered it to the Cēra; but Paraṇar who has sung in honour of Šen-Kuṭṭavan refers in Agam 208 to Ōri as still lord of the Kolli-mountains. These circumstances will show that Kongu-nādu and the adjacent region did not belong to the Cēras originally, but they were acquired by them only later. All this clearly indicates that the capital of the Cēra kingdom, Vaņci-mūtūr, lay elsewhere than in Karuvūr situate in Kongu-nādu.

S. 2.

Though Vaņci and Karuvūr had come to be regarded as convertible terms, it did not, however, mean that, in the conception of the Tamil literary world, the capital of the Cēra kingdom was not Vaņci in Malai-nādu, but was Karuvūr in Kongu-nādu. The commentators, who came several centuries after the Šangam period, when they explained Vaņci as Karuvūr, took care also to state that it was not the Karuvūr of the Trichinopoly District. Thus Aḍiyārkkul-nallār tells us that Vaņci is Koḍuṅkōlūr;¹⁰ and Mahāmāhōpādhyāya Dr. V. Swaminatha Aiyar, to whom all lovers of

¹⁰ See P. 19 of the Śilap. (3rd ed.).
ancient Tamil literature owe an immense debt of endless gratitude, writes the warning note that Karuvūr, the capital of the Cēra, is the city in Malai-nādu and not the Karuvūr situate in Koṅgu-nādu. 11 Šēkkiḷār, the author of Periya-purāṇam, states clearly that Vañci is Koḍunkōlūr, and that Karuvūr in Koṅgu-nādu is a town of the Cōla. 12 The inscriptions found in the latter place are all Cōla inscriptions; and there is nothing in them or anywhere in literature that I know which attributes its origin and rise to the Cēras. When Tiruvijñāna-sambanda sang a hymn in praise of this place, he called it Karuvūr-ānilai, obviously to distinguish it from Karuvūr or Vañci of the Cēras in the West coast. Modern Tamil lexicons, e.g., Abidhāna-cintāmaṇi, explain that Vañci is Koḍunkōlūr near Cochin. It is the place that Sundaramūrti has in his Tēvāram, described as ‘Āṅcaikkālam, of which Makōdai on the sea-coast is the ornament,’ and which in his day was the capital city of his royal friend, Cēramān Perumāl, the well-known Šaiva devotee. Makōdai or Muṣiri in the seaport in the delta of the Periyār, the Tiruvanācālimukham of Kēralōtpatti, and is a part of the ancient royal city which Laksṉmi-Dāsa

11 Maṇimēkalai, pp. 190—1, 376.
12 Tiruttōṇḍar Purāṇam, Veḻānai Šarukkam, St. 28.
in his *Sukasamāndeśa*¹³ (c. 900 A.C.) calls Rājadhāni Mahādayapuri, of which Tiruvaṅci-
kalam in the centre formed the royal residence. This ancient royal town extended from the bar
at the coast to Trākaṅamatilakam, about four
miles inland north-eastward, the seat of a
famous Śaiva shrine, now unfortunately de-
stroyed, to which the temple at Guruvāyūr
and other places were once subordinate. Another
name for Trākaṅamatilakam was Guṇapuri or
Guṇaka apparently the Guṇavāyil of Silappadikāram;
and in his description of the
place, the author of the *Sukasamāndeśa* employs
in relation to the neighbourhood the expression
*Kanakabhavana*¹⁴ which reminds one of the

13 *Sukasamāndeśa* was published about 60 years ago
by the late Viśākhām Tirunāl Mahārāja of Travancore in
the J.R.A.S. The references given in this book are to
the edition of the Mangalodayam Company, Trichur, in
1913. Śloka 68 describes Mahādayapuri as follows:—

“उच्चीस्तानमुद्धितिविद्वायद्वेशाऽप्रयोग
राज्यतिरिक्तिपहुपथानातिर कर्मे
राजामास्मिनियमिन्तुपामानामतैरिथिमां
राजा राजेत्यवनिवलये गीतये यत्रितिके” ||

*Pūrvasamāndeśa*, Śl. 68 (p. 14).

14. “काम्यकल्पः कनकभवने यत्र चौकान्तसीमाः
भक्तुकत्वं जगति गुणकानाथ इत्यूदकीर्ति: ||
आस्ते गौरीकल्यणमुरायक्षे वेषालकानां
बीरीभिष्माचरणविमुखान्तरलिङ्गालस्तः ||”

*Uttarasaṃdeśa*, Śl. 15 (p. 19).
Ādaka-mādām of Śilappadhikāram. It is interesting to note that, immediately to the north of Cranganore, the modern anglicized name for Koṇḍunkōlūr, and forming its approach from the backwater leading to Ernakulam, there is a place bearing the significant name of Karūr-paṭaṇa or as it is more generally called Karūr-paṭanam, meaning probably the salt pans of Karuvūr. It is only four or five miles north of Tiruvaṅcikāḷam and this fact suggests that for some reason not now obvious, Tiruvaṅcikāḷam had also come to be known as Karuvūr.

These considerations lend strong support to the view that Vaṅci is Tiruvaṅcikāḷam. In Śilappadhikāram, we read that Šen-Kuṭṭuvan left Vaṅci-muṟṟam to go to the forests. It will be seen that Vaṅci-muṟṟam and Vaṅci-kāḷam have the same meaning. Besides, it is seen from that epic that, when Šen-Kuṭṭuvan was about to start on his northern expedition, prasādam was brought to him from a neighbouring Viṣṇu temple situated at Ādaka-mādām which, according to the commentator was the temple at Trivandrum or at Iravipuram. Trivandrum may be rejected as being far away; but Iravipuram was close to Tiruvaṅcikāḷam; for I am told that in a Malayalam Campu, Nārāyaniyam, (c. 1600) Tripunittura is called Ravigrāmam; and besides a portion of Ernakulam still bears the name Iravipuram. It

14a Or does it mean ‘the port of Karuvūr’.
seems to me, however, that we need not travel even to Iravipuram for the temple; for as I have already stated, within the limits of Trkanaṁatilakam was Kanakabhavana, though unfortunately the place is now in ruins. Besides, Keralotpatti mentions in more than one place a pon-māḍam in Tiru-Kāriyūr,14b a place close by, which the late Mr. Kanakasabhai attempted to identify with the Ėra capital.

S. 3.

It has, however, been objected to this identification that the name of the place near Cochin is properly Ańcaik-kālam as that is the name which it bears in Sundarar’s hymn.15 No doubt, in Tamil Šaivite literature, Tiruwaćcaik-kālam is the consecrated name for the place; but I cannot regard this insignificant difference in spelling as a serious objection. Place-names often changed in form, owing to various reasons; and the change here by no means presents an insurmountable obstacle. In two Vaṭṭeluttu inscriptions found in the Šiva temple at Tiruwaćcikkālam, the name of the place is written as Tiruwaććacak-kālam. Is it not possible that by a pardonable mistake va may have been regarded as a transformed, owing to rules of liaison or sāndhi, and i changed into ai innocently in pronunciation,
or from false analogy? We know that there is a tendency for Tamil place-names to end in ai (c.f. Urantai, Karantai, Tañjai, Nellai, Anantai, Mailai, Kailai). Thus Tiruvañcik-kañam may have in course of time been unconsciously changed into Tiru-añcaik-kañam. However that be, the objection appears to me to be too trivial for serious consideration. It may also be noted that, in the inscriptions found in the Śiva temple at this place, the name of the deity is given as Vañculeśa.¹⁶ For some reasons, which at this distance of time it is not possible to ascertain, Vañci, the ancient capital of the Čeras, also came to bear an alternative name Karuvūr; but, as stated above, it misled no Tamilian into believing that that Karuvūr was the town of that name in the Trichinopoly district. It may, perhaps, be that the alternative name of Karuvūr for Vañci was known even in the second century of the Christian era, as Ptolemy (circa 150 A.C.) mentions Karoura as the royal seat of Kerobothras. If there were evidence that, even in those early days, the name Koñunkolūr had become current, then we might posit that Ptolemy’s Karoura had nothing to do with Karuvūr, but was a corruption of Kölūr in Koñunkolūr. In the absence of such evidence, we may regard Karoura as a corruption of Karuvūr. Bishop Caldwell, influenced by the similarity of names, suggested the identification of Ptolemy’s Karoura with

¹⁶ Vide Travancore Arch. Series, VI, pp. 191–2.
"Karur, an important town in Coimbatore district originally included in the Cēra kingdom", and this wrong lead which the learned bishop unwittingly gave has now been followed by some scholars, with what I am compelled to regard as misdirected zest. Possibly when he suggested the identification, Dr. Caldwell had momentarily forgotten that Pliny in his *Natural History* (before 77 A.C.) had mentioned Muziris as the capital of the Cēras. After stating that Muziris was "the first emporium of India", he said: "The station for ships is at a distance from the shore and cargoes have to be landed and shipped by means of little boats. There reigned there, when I wrote this, Coelobothros". A few years after Pliny, the Periplus (circa 89 A.C.) contained the statement that Musiris "a city at the height of prosperity", was "two miles distant from the mouth of the river on which it is situated" and was "the seat of Government of the kingdom under the sway of Keprobotras". From the language of the classical writers, there can be no doubt that the two places Karoura and Musiris were not regarded as essentially different. By Karoura Ptolemy denoted, perhaps, the interior where the Cēra's palace was, the present Tiruvaṅcik-kaḷam, while Muziris properly denoted Musiri or Makōdai, the commercial mart or port about a mile and a

17 Comparative Grammar of the Dravidian Languages.
half lower down at the mouth of the Periyār—the Periyārū of Patirrūp-pattu\(^{18}\) or the Tiruvāṇcāli-mukham of Kēralōtpatti and the Pseudostomos of the Greek writers. The same fact that Musiri is the Cēra’s capital and sea-port is conveyed by Puram 343 where we read: “Sacks of pepper are brought from the houses to the market. The gold received from the ships in exchange for commodities sold is brought to the shore in barges at Musiri, where the roar of the surging sea never ceases and where Kuṭṭuvan presents the rare products of the sea and the mountains to those that visit him”.

S. 4.

If Vaṇci is Koḍunkōlūr or Tiruvāṇcik-kaḷam, it must follow that the river Porunai or An-poruntam could not be the river Amarāvati as has been suggested by some, but should be the Periyār which falls into the sea on the southern side of Koḍunkōlūr. Kōṭṭaimukku, which is the site of an old fort at the north-eastern corner of Cranganore, is washed by the river Periyār on the south. The river is mentioned and described in Patirrūp-pattu as the most important of the rivers in the Cēra kingdom. That Vaṇci is on the bank of the Porunai river is patent from Puranānūru,\(^{19}\) and Śilappadhikāram.\(^{20}\) Porunai is apparently

\(^{18}\) Stanzaś 28, 43, 88, Agām, 149, Śilap. etc.

\(^{19}\) Lyrics 11 and 387.

\(^{20}\) Śilap. canto. 20.
the Tamil variant Parṇi in Tamra-parṇi, for which river it is the recognized name in classical Tamil; and according to the lexicons an alternative name for Porunai is Poruntam. Tamraparṇi is, as is well known, a river of the Pāṇḍya kingdom flowing east-ward; and obviously to distinguish the Porunai of the Čera country from the Porunai of the Pāṇḍya kingdom, the prefix an was sometimes added to the former. Thus we have tan ān porunai in Purāṇam 36 and Agam 93, meaning, the cool Ān-porunai. These are the only two instances in old literature that I have come across, where the prefix appears. It has been suggested that in these instances ān, is perhaps, a mistake for ār; but it is, I think, a needless suggestion. The ancients may have thought that both the Tamraparni and the Periyār had the same source; and, indeed, their sources are not far distant from each other.\(^{21}\) They both rise, to use the words of Messrs. Ward and Connor, "in the Alpine chain of the peninsula separating the Tinnevelly district from Travancore"; and so both rivers come to bear the same name, Porunai; but to distinguish one from the other, the above particle was prefixed to the river in the west; and both Pingalantai and Divākaram mention a river Ānporuntam, besides Porunai

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\(^{21}\) The Tamraparni rises Agastya-malai, and the Periyār in Alitaimalai, probably the Ayirai-malai of the Saṅgam works.
or Poruntam. I may state here that Lakshmi-Dāsa in his Šukasainḍėśa describes the river flowing near the Rājadāhāni Māhōdayapurī as the sister of the Tāmrapārṇī. After the manner of Kālidāsa, Lakshmi-Dāsa employs a parrot as messenger to take his message to his wife at Tṛkaṇamatilakam or Guṇapuram. The expression occurring in the poem for the river is Cūrṇī. Perhaps it is a variant of Cullī-āru, which is another name for Periyār, found in Sangam literature; and there still exists a place called Cullī a few miles north of Kālaḍī. Or it is a mislection for Pūrṇa; for written in grantha characters, one may easily be mistaken for the other. I also learn that in Śāṅkara-Vijaya, wrongly attributed to Vidyāraṇya, Kālaḍī the birth-place of Śrī Śāṅkara is said to be situate on the banks of the Pūrṇa river. This work, I am convinced, is spurious, being not more than a century old; but I refer to it only to show that in a Sanskrit work written very long before the present controversy arose the Periyār bears the name Pūrṇa. We may also note the evidence of Tirupūnaturai or Tirupūrṇaturai, the town situated on the holy Pūrṇa river. Tirupūnaturai is the residence of the Mahārājas of Cochin.

22 Pūrvasainḍėśa, Śloka 65.

“सा चाद्रे प्रवहति सरित्र सोदरी तात्रपण्याः-
इच्छुर्वी माहोदयपरग्रहरोजचूर्णिक्ष्टोमि: ”

Accepting Ānporunai or Ānporuntam as an approved literary name for the river on which Vaṅci is situate, we have still no warrant for taking those names to denote the Amarāvati river. The name Amarāvati is unknown to the Sangam poets, lexicographers, or the commentators. It is said that in Karuvār-Sthala Purāṇam, a recent work by a comparatively unknown author, a line occurs in which Amarāvati is said to be otherwise known as Ānporunai; and on this statement found in a work of fancy or imagination, is rested the momentous conclusion that Ānporunai is Amarāvati. Another reason given is that āmbhīram means the mango tree; and as the Pingalantai gives cūtam as a name for Ānporuntam, and as cūtam also means the mango tree, Amarāvati and Ānporunai are identical! I may add in passing that Divākaram does not mention Cūtam as one of the names of Ānporuntam. All the lexicons—Pingalantai, Divākaram and Cūḍāmani—agree in mentioning Āni-vāni as a name for Ānporuntam; but it is significant that Amarāvati is not mentioned anywhere as an alternative name.

We thus see that the evidence alike of ancient and medieval Tamil literature, of ancient Cēra history and of approved and long established Tamil tradition points to the
conclusion that Vañci is Tīru-Vañcikālama or Koḍum-kölür; and the recent attempt to un-settle this view by drawing a red herring across the track is, it seems to me, gratuitous.
CHAPTER VII.

The Date of the Šangam Epoch.

S. 1.

What is the approximate date of the Šangam period? The question has proved to be one of the greatest puzzles of South Indian chronology, if we are to judge by the bewildering diversity of answers given to it. Indeed, one cannot help thinking that the methods of investigation that have been pursued must have been vitiated by some radical defect, when one notices that all possible dates from before the first to the tenth century after Christ have been assigned with greater or less confidence to the Šangam period. For example, the *Encyclopædia Britannica* informs us that the 'Augustan age of Tamil literature,' as the late Dr. Caldwell called this period, is to be placed somewhere between the ninth or tenth century and the thirteenth century A.C. Mr. L. D. Swamikannu Pillai and the officers of the Madras Archæological department tell us that we should seek for the Šangam period in the seventh or eighth century A.C. Pandit Raghava Aiyangar of the Tamil Lexicon Office has attempted to place the Šangam period in the fifth century A.C. Other scholars, of whom I may particularly mention the late Mr. Kanakasabhai Pillai, Dr. S. Krishnaswami Aiyangar, and Mr. Srinivasa Pillai of Tanjore,¹

¹ Tamil Varalāru in 2 Vols.

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have maintained that the Šangam period should be sought for in the second century A.C. There are yet others who would look for the Šangam period before the Christian era. The expounders of every one of these views are scholars of proved ability and established reputation; but obviously all of them cannot be right, and possibly all of them may be wrong. Each one has attempted to carry on research along his own line, and to state results independently of others; and everybody knows that the pursuit of special lines of investigation easily tends to beget prejudices, and in the statement of results it is not always easy to avoid the fallacies due to individual prepossessions.

In examining the various answers returned to the question, we should remember that a hypothesis, however high the authority for it, can have no significance, if it has no real connection with the facts which it is supposed to explain. Nor can the validity of a hypothesis be inferred from its agreement with a single fact alone. It is a rule of inductive logic that a hypothesis is valid in proportion to the number and variety of facts which it is able to explain. In other words, the guarantee for the validity of a hypothesis consists in the consilience of results. A hypothesis may be accepted as reasonably established, when a number of independent facts point towards it as the one conception fitted to bring them all into intelligible relation. It will be my attempt
here to test the various dates that have been advanced, and see how far they satisfy this rule.

S. 2. The Ninth or the Tenth Century Theory.

In spite of the high authority of the Encyclopædia Britannica, the view there expressed may be rejected as obsolete. That view was first stated about a century ago by the Rev. Dr. Caldwell, when the materials for the investigation of the problem were extremely scanty. In his article in the ninth edition of the Encyclopædia Britannica, Dr. Rost repeated that view: and that article has been bodily reproduced in the eleventh edition of that work. When Dr. Rost wrote his article, the old Šangam works, excepting the immortal Kural, had not been made available in print; but since then, many of the Šangam works have been published, and much valuable research has been made; and it is strange that the literary and historical material since brought to light has been totally ignored by the editors of the eleventh edition of the Encyclopædia Britannica. How far out of focus is the date given in the Encyclopædia Britannica will be patent if we remember that upon that view the Šangam age will be posterior by several centuries to the earlier Šaiva hymnists, Jñānasambandar and Appar, who were the contemporaries of the great Pallava Narasimha I, the destroyer of Vatāpi. The
late Prof. Sundaram Pillai of Trivandrum thoroughly exposed the unsustainability of this hypothesis in his "Some Mile-stones in Tamil Literature"; and one can only express one's wonder, not unmixed with pain, that the error should still persist, and find its way into some works, intended to be of authority, like Frazer's Literary History of India and the Imperial Gazetteer of India.

S. 3. The Seventh or the Eighth Century Theory.

If the view expressed in the Encyclopædia Britannica may be summarily dismissed as out of date, the view expressed by Mr. Swamikannu Pillai cannot be dealt with so easily. He is a recognized authority on astronomical calculation; and it is with his assistance that the dates of many of the South Indian kings mentioned in inscriptions have been determined. The service that he has done to South Indian chronology is incalculable; and naturally, therefore, a date fixed by him as the result of astronomical calculation will prima facie command acceptance. And when to his personal authority, which is deservedly high, is added the fact that his date has won ready acceptance among the experts of the Government Archaeological department and some other scholars, his view would appear to be too well entrenched.

2 Published in the Madras College Magazine. Republished in the Tamilian Antiquary now defunct.
to be easily assailed. From certain astronomical data found in śilappadhiḥkāram and the eleventh Paripādaḷ, both Sangam works, he tells us⁴ that the former work cannot be anterior to 23rd July 756, and the latter must have been written after 17th June 634. The startling definiteness of the dates arrests attention, and tempts, not to say compels, acceptance. 'To beard the lion in his den, the Douglas in his hall' were, perhaps, less hazardous than to oppose Mr. Swamikannu Pillai on the question of an Indian date which he has fixed by calculation; nevertheless, with due deference, I venture to state that his dates in this matter cannot be accepted. To place the Sangam period between the middle of the seventh and the middle of the eighth century would be to ignore altogether the political condition of Tamil India as depicted in the Sangam works, and of the rest of India in that period as now known to us. From the time of Simhavishṇu (c. 575–600 A.C.) the Pallava supremacy was the most outstanding fact of South Indian history for nearly three centuries. The period indicated by Mr. Swamikannu Pillai is covered by the reigns of, among others, Mahēndra Varman I, Narasimhavarman I, Paramēśvaravarman I, Narasimhavarman II, and Nandi Varman II, all Pallavas of Kāñci; and during this period of Pallava domination, the Cēras and Cōḷas and to some extent

the Pāṇḍyas did not count for anything practically. The Śangam works make no reference to the Pallavas at all; not one Pallava king, great or insignificant, is even casually mentioned in those works. On the other hand, a large number of Cēras, Cōlas and Pāṇḍyas, with names some of which may be regarded as unpronounceable and almost forbidding, and many feudatory chiefs under them are sung about by the Śangam poets.

It is significant that not one Pāṇḍya or Cōla king of the seventh or eighth century whom the inscriptions have brought to light is referred to in the Śangam works, while they belaud the prowess and munificence of a host of kings and chieftains that ruled and exercised authority over the Tamil kingdoms. No one would have the temerity to say that the Tamil kings and their achievements detailed in the Śangam works could be made to fit into the epoch of the Pallava ascendancy. These rulers must necessarily belong to a prior age. About the middle of the seventh century the Pāṇḍya king of Madura was Kūn Pāṇḍya alias Ninraṣir Neḍu-Māran, and the Pallava king of Kānci was Narasimha Varma I; while about the middle of the eighth century, the Pāṇḍya and the Pallava kings were respectively Jaṭila Neḍuṇjaḍaɪaɪan Parāntaka, the donor of the Vēlvikudi grant, and the well-known Nandivarman Pallava Malla. The Vēlvikudi plates, the text of which was first published
by Mr. K. G. Sankar, in the Quarterly Journal of the Mythic Society, Bangalore, mention the Pāṇḍyan Mutu Kuḍumi of the Śangam period as a remote ancestor of Ninḍasir Neḍu-Māran or as he is called in the grant, Māra Varman the victor at Nelvēli. This Neḍu-Māran was converted to Śaivism by Jñānasambanda, whose date is now definitely settled. Jñānasambanda and his elder contemporary Appar, who is said to have converted to Śaivism the Pallava Mahēndra Varman, son of Narasimha I, have in their Tēvāram hymns referred to the Cōla king Śen-Kaṇṇān, with reverential devotion; and it is seen from the references that by the time of the two hymnists, a hoary and consecrated legend had become woven about the name of that Cōla monarch. Dr. Hultzsch thinks that even at the time of the earliest of the dynastic Cōlas brought to light by epigraphical research, Śen-Kaṇṇān must have been only a name; and we see from the Tiruvālangādu plates of Rājēndra Cōla I, that Karikāla Cōla ‘of extensive glory’ was an ancestor of the ‘emperor’ Kō-Śen-Kaṇṇān. All this indisputably shows that we should seek for the Tamil kings of the Śangam era long before the middle of the seventh century.

Besides, as already stated, the middle of the seventh century coincides with the date of
Jñānasambanda and Appar, and their royal disciples Nināśir Neḍu-Māran and Mahēndra Varman. Those were the days when the Jains were most mercilessly persecuted both in the Pāṇḍya and the Pallava country. It is difficult to believe that it was during this period of bitter persecution, that the growth of classical Tamil literature went on apace, mainly under Jain auspices; for everybody conversant with Sangam literature knows to what great extent we are indebted to the Jains in that respect. The Sangam age witnessed a predominance of the Jains in Tamil letters. The author of Śilappadhiṅkāram was a Jain; while his brother, the Cēra King, Šen-Kuṭṭuvan, was a Śaivite. It is patent that there was then perfect religious toleration, and the differences in religious belief did not break asunder the bonds of family; much less did they affect the amenities of social life. Again to look for the Sangam period in the seventh and the eighth centuries will be to regard the Sangam poets as contemporaries of the Śaiva hymnists and the Vaiṣṇava Āḻvārs; and to do so would be to ignore the evidence supplied by the language, matter and verse-form and metre employed in the works of the Sangam and the hymnal period respectively.

Apart from the historical difficulties noticed above, it has also been shown that none of the dates supplied by Mr. Swamikannu Pillai can really be obtained from the astronomical
data given in Śilappadhipatikāram and Paripādal. In a paper on ‘The Date of Śilappadhipatikāram’ which I published in 1917 in the Madras Christian College Magazine, I showed that in spite of Mr. Svamikannu Pillai’s emphatic statement that 756 A.C. satisfies all the astronomical conditions mentioned in Śilappadhipatikāram, not even one condition could, without very material alteration, be made to apply to that year. Similarly, in regard to 634 A.C. which that distinguished scholar has arrived at from astronomical data found in XI Paripādal, Mr. S. Somasundara Desikar of Tiruarur has examined its correctness in a series of articles contributed by him to Sen Tamil, the organ of the Madura Tamil Sangam, and demonstrated its inaccuracy. Mr. K. G. Sankar, in a learned contribution to the Journal of Oriental Research, has shown that on 27th July 17 A.C. the major planets were exactly in the positions attributed to them in the Paripādal text and there was also coincidence of lunar eclipse and Agastyōdayam, as required by the text.

Mr. Svamikannu Pillai seeks support for his date from the mention of a week-day—Friday—in Śilappadhipatikāram; and there are others who say that the mention of solar signs in Paripādal and in Manimēkalai prove that they are late works. I have dealt with this

5 Vol. 20, pp. 182-188; Ib. 22, pp. 301 ff.
7 Canto XXIII, l. 135.
subject elsewhere in some detail. The argument is that India borrowed the planetary week-days and the solar signs from the Greeks at some time not earlier than the fifth century after Christ. It is said that the earliest known genuine instance of the use of a planetary week-day is afforded only by the Eran inscription of Budha-Gupta, which has been assigned by Dr. Fleet to 484 A.C.; and according to that great authority, there was no general practice of using the planetary names of days till the eighth century. From this it is argued that the composition of Śilappadhikāram may be as late as the eighth or the ninth century. In Vol. III of Dr. Fleet's Corpus Inscriptionum Indicarum, which contains the inscriptions of the early Guptas and their successors, besides the Eran inscription, there are only two other inscriptions, the Verawal inscriptions of 1246 and 1264, that mention a planetary week-day; would we be justified in saying from this that till the middle of the thirteenth century the people in the regions of the early Guptas and their successors were not familiar with the use of planetary week-days? As a matter of fact, the planetary week-days seem to have been known in India centuries before the fifth century. The expression Vāra, which imports a regulated division of the month, occurs in Ātharva

8 Vide The Date of Śilap., (Madras Christian Magazine, Sep. 1917); Solar Signs in Indian Literature, (Q.J.M.S., 1922).
**Jyotisha.** In *Paithāmaha Samhitā*, which is said to be of the same type as *Vedānga Jyotisha*, Tuesday is said to occur. In *Gāthāsaptasati*, which is attributed to Hāla Śatavāhana, and which Sir R. G. Bhandarkar thinks was either written by Hāla or was dedicated to him, we come across *Angārakavāra* (Tuesday). We have to place Hāla probably in the closing years of the first century B.C. or the opening years of the first century A.C. Āryadēva (c. second century) employs week-days. The *Hitopadēśa* mentions *Bhaṭṭāraka vāra* or Sunday. In the *Vaikhānasa Dharmasūtra* (c. third century) *Budhavāra* or Wednesday is mentioned. Yājñāvalkya mentions planetary days. The *Matsya Purāṇa*, which is regarded as the earliest of the *Purāṇas*, is not only cognizant of the planetary week, but also deals with astral theology, for a chapter is devoted to the worship of the Sun on *Ādityavāra*.

In southern India, Tiruvalluvar, who is considerably anterior in date to the authors of *Silappadhikāram* and *Maṇimēkalai*, has a couplet in his *Kurāl* which indicates the adoption of the seven-day week. One of Jānasaṃbanda’s *patigams* in the *Tēvāram* collection mentions all the days of the week in their

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9 Now published by Dr. R. Shama Sastri in the *Mysore Government Series*.

10 Ch. 70.46; Ch. 253.7.

11 *Kurāl* 1278.
order; and it is clear from that passage that in the minds of the people each day of the week had a well-understood beneficent or malignant influence associated with it. As regards the solar sign, Baudhāyana, whom Prof. A. B. Keith places in the fifth century B.C., and Āryadēva (c. second century A.C.) mention the zodiacal signs; and so do also some of the Smṛtis. Even supposing that the planetary names of the week-days and the solar zodiac were borrowed by India from elsewhere, literary evidence shows that it must have been long before the fifth century of the Christian era. It has been conclusively established that there was extensive intercourse and traffic between India and Babylonia and Assyria; and the recent discoveries at Harappa in the Punjab and at Mohenjo-Daro in Sind, prove the existence in India in the remote past of a civilization and culture closely akin to those of the Sumerians. The borrowing, if indeed there was a borrowing, may well have been from the Babylonian or Chaldean astrologers direct; and that is the view of the late Shankar Bala-krishna Dikshit. In any event, India need not have waited till the fifth century A.C. to borrow this knowledge. Indeed Dr. Fleet himself practically concedes this when he admits in his article on Hindu chronology in the eleventh edition of the Encyclopaedia Britannica that

12  சும்பு கோயில் பதிகம் கொண்ட நூற்றாண்டு புராத்தாக இருந்தது தேர்வியல் வழக்கங்கள் தொட்டும் கூடாதென கூறுகிறேன்.
some of the astronomical books perhaps postulate an earlier knowledge of 'the lords of the days', and other writings indicate a still earlier use of the period of seven days.  

S. 4. The Fifth Century Theory.

The fifth century has been suggested as the date of the Tamil Sangam by Pandit M. Raghava Aiyangar in his scholarly monograph on Cēran Śen-Kuṭṭuvan. His argument has been largely influenced by a mislection of the Samudragupta inscription on the Aśoka Pillar at Allahabad, for which Dr. Fleet was originally responsible. The text of the inscription as published by Dr. Fleet contained the words Kaurālaka-Mantarāja, and Dr. Fleet thought that Kaurālaka must be a mistake for Kairālaka, and he translated the expression as Mantarāja of Kerala. Following this interpretation, the learned Pandit cast about to discover what he thought was confirmation in Tamil literature of Samudragupta's supposed invasion of the Kerala kingdom. He equated Mantarāja with Māntaram Cēral of Sangam literature, and noticing in an Aḥanānūṟu lyric reference to a military expedition by Vampa Mōriyar₁⁴ he stated that the expression Vampa Mōriyar meant the 'new Mauryas' or Guptas. Unfortunately for this reasoning, Dr. Kielhorn,

₁³ See also my 'Solar Signs in Indian Literature' (Q.J.M.S., 1922).
₁⁴ Aḥāmi, 251.
in studying the Aihohe inscription, identified Kunala therein mentioned with the ‘Kaurala’ of the Allahabad inscription, and pointed out that Kaurala was a misreading. The proper rendering of the passage was settled by Dr. Kielhorn and Dr. Fleet in 1898; and it is now understood by all that the reference in the Allahabad inscription is to Samudragupta’s victory over the king who was reigning over the region round Kollera or Colair lake. Nobody has yet claimed for Samudragupta conquest of any territory, south of Kāṇci; and Professor J. Dubreuil is of the definite opinion that Samudragupta did not advance south of the Krishna. However, this reasoning has now been given up by the learned Pandit, as in the second edition of his Cēran Šen-Kuṭṭuvan, he has omitted his arguments based on Vampa Mōriyar.¹⁵

Some have sought to make out that Śangām literature cannot have been anterior to the fifth century, as Mañimēkalai makes a reference to the Gurjaras. The expression Kuccara Kuḍigai¹⁶ occurs in Mañimēkalai but in my view it has been wrongly interpreted to mean ‘a building in the architectural style of the Gurjaras’. I understand the expression to mean ‘a hut fashioned

¹⁵ Vide my article on The Kośar and the Vamba Mōriyar, (Q.J.M.S., 1924).

¹⁶ Canto XVIII, l. 145.
or cut in a rock', 'a rock-cave'; Kuccara being a corrupt form of Kudhra (कुड़ा) a rock. The context seems to leave no room for doubt that this is the meaning. Prince Udayakumaran, in spite of Maṇimēkalai having become a Buddhist nun, lecherously seeks her in a dhammaśāla where she was serving food to the poor. She at once suspects him, and entering an inner apartment transforms herself with the help of a mantra into a strange lady, and then comes out. The prince does not recognize her, and after a vain search in the inner apartment, leaves the place. It is to denote this inner apartment that the expression Kuccara Kuḍigai is employed in the poem.17

It has also been sought to make out that canto 29 of Maṇimēkalai shows that, that work must have been written after Dinnāga; but this view has been successfully controverted by Professors S. S. Suryanarayana Sastri,18 K. A. Nilakanta Sastri19 and S. Krishnaswami Aiyangar.20

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18 J.I.H., VIII, 322 sqq.
19 Colas, I, p. 72.
20 Intro. to his Maṇimēkalai in its Historical Setting. Vide also my article on the Date of Maṇimēkalai in J.O.R., Vol. iii. There is a comparative study of great erudition under the title Niyāyap-piravēsa and Maṇimēkalai, published as a serial by Pandit Tirunārāyana Iyangar, the learned Editor of Śen Tamil, in Vols. XXXII and XXXIII of the Journal.
S. 5. The Second Century Theory.

The theory that assigns the Sangam epoch to the second century A.C. falls next to be considered; and if it explains, as I shall presently show it does, facts gatherable from the Sangam writings in such manner as no other date so far considered does, no a priori consideration of the remoteness of the date should deter us from accepting it. I have already referred to the astronomical data found in two of the Sangam works; and there is no reason to suppose that the authors of those works were only romancing when they mentioned those data. Taking the astronomical details found in Silappadhikaram, I have pointed out in my paper on the "Date of Silappadhikaram" that 171 A.C. will thoroughly satisfy the conditions in the text for the great fire that consumed Madura. In 171 A.C. Ādi twenty-sixth was Friday; Kṛṣṇa Saptami ended and Aṣṭami began 25 gh. 43 p. after sunrise, and Bharani star ended and Kārtigai began at 49 gh. 57 p. after sunrise. Thus twenty-sixth Ādi 171 A.C. will fit in exactly for the fire at Madura; and if 171 be accepted as the date of the fire, then Sen-Kuṭṭuva Čēra must be taken to be living at that time. Let us see if this hypothesis will satisfy other facts relevant to our inquiry. Sangam literature discloses that when Sen-Kuṭṭuva was reigning, Musiri was a flourishing

scaport, frequented by foreign ships. Pliny, who wrote his geography about 80 A.C., says that Musiri was unsafe for ships to call at, owing to the existence of pirates; but apparently that danger had ceased to exist by the time of Ptolemy who died about 161 A.C.; for he speaks of that scaport as a great emporium, which it certainly was in Šen-Kuṭṭuvan’s time. Šen-Kuṭṭuvan was a king of great prowess; and one of the titled names Kaḍalōṭṭia Vēl-Kelu-Kuṭṭuvan or Kaḍal-pirakkōṭṭia-Šen-Kuṭṭuvan, by which Šangam poets refer to him is reminiscent of a decisive naval engagement, which, perhaps, resulted as already opined in driving away the pirates from the coast.

Again the value of synchronisms in fixing dates in Indian history is well known; and the matter contained in Šīlappadhikāram affords scope for several applications of that method. That epic recounts that Šen-Kuṭṭuvan went on an expedition to North India, in which he was assisted by his ally Nūṟṟavar Kannar, that on that occasion he fought a battle on the banks of the Ganges, where he was opposed by the combined army of certain “Aryan” princes, among whom Vijaya, son of Balakumara, Rudra and others are mentioned; and that, after defeating the allied Aryan forces he returned with a slab of stone from the trans-Gangetic region for fashioning the image of Kannaki—the pattini-dēvi or wife-goddess—which he intended to consecrate in a temple
to be built in her memory and honour. At the consecration which the author of the poem attended, the epic tells us that kings of various countries were present, and among them was Gayabāhu, king of Ceylon; and Gayabāhu, on returning to his country, ordered the erection of a shrine in honour of pattini-dēvi and ordained the annual celebration of a festival for her in the month of Āḍī. Now, nobody will question that for an invasion of the north by the Cēra King, the political condition not only in the other Tamil kingdoms but also outside Tamil India should be exceptionally weak and perturbed; and if we examine the political history of ancient India, there seem to be, so far as the materials now available go, only two or three periods when the Tamils could have marched into North India with any degree of success.

Going not further back than the third century B.C., we can state definitely that such an invasion could not have been possible in the times of Chandragupta Maurya, Bindusāra and Aśoka. It could not have occurred in Pushya-mitra's time. It could have taken place between Aśoka's death and Pushya-mitra's accession, perhaps; that is between 234 and 184 B.C. The period of the later Śungas appears to have been one of confusion; but the Śatavāhanas or Śatakarnis were already attempting to become powerful, and by the close of the first
century B.C., they seem to have supplanted the Kañvas, and in the early years of the second century A.C. Gautamiputra Śri Śātakarni is seen from the Nasik inscription\(^2\) to have succeeded in defeating the Kṣaharatas and annexing their territory. So another date for the northern invasion might be found, after Pushyamitra's long and eventful reign, possibly in the disturbed and confused period of the later Śungas and Kañvas, that is between c. 148 B.C. and the closing years of the first century B.C., provided the Andhras or Śātavāhanas would have presented no obstacle. After Gautamiputra Śri Śātakarni (c. 109 to c. 135 A.C.) came Pulumāyi who is said to have reigned for about thirty years. He came into collision with Rudradāman I, the Śaka Satrap of Ujjain, who took from him most of the territory which Gautamiputra Śri Śātakarni had won from the Kṣaharatas (Girnar inscription); but Gautamiputra Yajña Śri (c. 173 to 202 A.C.) seems to have again defeated the western Satraps and recovered some of the lost provinces. Rudradāman's aggrandizement is held to have been about 150 A.C. and perhaps, between that date and the date of Yajña Śri's accession, the Śātavāhanas were not powerful and could not have successfully opposed a southern army in its northward march. With the close of Yajña Śri's reign, we enter on the third century

\(^2\) Ep. Ind., VIII, p. 61.
which, in the words of Mr. Vincent Smith, "is one of the dark spaces in the spectrum of Indian history, and almost every event of that time is concealed from view by an impenetrable veil of oblivion". In this dark century too an invasion of North India might have taken place.

The fourth and the fifth century of the Christian era is the well-known period of the mighty imperial Guptas; and as Dr. Jouveau Dubreuil observes, in his Ancient History of the Deccan, the fifth century is the century of the Vākāṭaka dynasty, which, the learned doctor affirms, is the most glorious and the most important of the dynasties of the Deccan between the third and the sixth century. By the sixth century we are in the period of the powerful Pallavas and Chālukyas who, till the latter were overthrown by the Rāṣhtrakūṭas in 753 A.C., were striving against each other for the mastery of the South. It is clear that the political conditions in the fourth and the succeeding four centuries so far as now known were not at all favourable to an attempt by a Cēra king to invade Northern India; and there is no need to pursue our analysis further. Now if the fire at Madura occurred in August 171 A.C., and therefore Șen-Kuṭṭuvan was ruling then, how would it

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23 Early History of India (1924), p. 226.
24 See Ch. IV. A reference in this connection may be made with profit to K. P. Jayaswal's History of India.
agree with the political situation we have been examining? The poem tells us that Šen-Kuṭṭuwan started on his northern expedition on hearing of Kaṇṇaki’s apotheosis after the fire, and after he had ascertained through his spies that Nūṟṟuvar Kannar had promised to assist him and desired to maintain friendly relations with him. Nūṟṟuvar Kannar can be no other than Śātakarni; and we may conclude that Šen-Kuṭṭuwan and Śātakarni entered into a treaty for mutual assistance.

We learn from the poem that Šen-Kuṭṭuwan had been away from his state for thirty-two months, when he was on the bank of the Ganges. We may consequently suppose that about the beginning of 175 A.C. the Cēra king was occupying the bank of the Ganges. This synchronizes with the period when Yajña Śri Śātakarni would have been seeking the aid of a friendly power to regain from the Satraps the territory lost by his ancestor Pulumāyi. Thus if we hold that Šen-Kuṭṭuwan was, during a portion of his long reign, contemporaneous with Yajña Śri, we will be able to explain satisfactorily his northern invasion, which, while it served the Cēra’s object, must also have afforded material assistance to the Śātakarni in vanquishing the Satrap. We are told that at the battle of the Ganges, several northern princes were ranged against Šen-Kuṭṭuwan and his ally; and one of the opposing princes was Vijaya, son of Bālakumāra. I suggest that
Bālakumāra is Ptolemy’s Baleokouros. I know that it has been suggested by some historians that Baleokouros was probably one of the Śatavāhanas. The surmise may be unfounded; but there can be no doubt that he was historically connected with the Śatavāhanas; and as Ptolemy mentions him in his geography as a contemporary ruling prince, he must have been in existence before 160 B.C. His son may well have been among the princes that opposed Śen-Kuṭṭuvan at the battle of the Ganges. Yajña Śrī himself was according to the Matsyapurāṇa\textsuperscript{25} succeeded by a Vijaya; but it is not stated how they were related. Can that Vijaya be the Vijaya mentioned in Śilappadhi-kāram; and if so, was he an usurper, or did he come of a collateral line to which, perhaps, Baleokouros or Bālakumāra belonged? Then, another of the princes that Śen-Kuṭṭuvan defeated at the battle of the Ganges was Rudra; and about this time we have Rudrasimha, if not also Rudrasena of the Satraps, from whom Yajña Śrī must have recovered his lost territory. My suggestion is that the battle of the Ganges was fought by Yajña Śrī and his ally against the forces of the Satraps and their allies.

There is also another important synchro-nism that has to be considered; for, Śilappadhi-kāram informs us that among the various kings

\textsuperscript{25} Ch. 273, 15.
that attended the consecration of the image of Pattini-dëvi, Gajabåhu, the king of Ceylon, was one. According to the Mahåvamsa, Gajabåhu was reigning between A.C. 173 and 191. The Råjavali says that Gajabåhu took with him some relics of Pattini-dëvi to Ceylon; and this lends material corroboration to the statement in the poem that on his return Gajabåhu ordered a shrine to be constructed and an annual festival to be celebrated in his dominion in honour of Pattini-Kaďavuľ or Pattini-dëvi. This account enables us to explain the hold that the tradition of Pattini-dëvi, the ‘wife-goddess’, has long had on the people of Ceylon, where as Dr. A. K. Commaraswamy observes some of the images in temples that depict the old art of that island are those of the apotheosised wife.

S. 6. Conclusion.

Thus we see that 171 A.C. as the date of the fire at Madura satisfies the test afforded by a consilience of results; and we may therefore reasonably conclude that Šen-Kuṭṭuvan who was then the king of the Cēra kingdom must be assigned to the second century A.C.; and as according to Šilappadhikāram he had been fifty years on the throne when he built and consecrated the temple of Pattini-dëvi, his reign must have begun in the first quarter of that century. It may be noted that the remarkable
concurrence of testimony between Śangam works and the *Periplus* on the conditions of maritime trade in the Indian seas considerably strengthens this conclusion. The latest attempt to determine the chronology of the Śangam is by Mr. K. N. Sivaraja Pillai, sometime senior lecturer in Tamil in the University of Madras, in his recent book *The Chronology of the Early Tamils*. Mr. Sivaraja Pillai has scant faith in the historical sense of those who have worked on the basis of the Śen-Kuṭṭuvan-Gajabāhu synchronism, because forsooth *Silappadhi-kāram* and *Mahāvamsa*, are likely to twist and pervert historical facts as the result of artistic and religious motives.

I have always held that the Śen-Kuṭṭuvan-Gajabāhu synchronism cannot be lightly rejected, simply because these two works are not professedly works of secular history. Such rejection of relevant evidence on a priori grounds is not sound; and the scientific inquirer must be prepared to accept light from whatever source it may proceed. The value of synchronism in fixing dates in early Indian history is well known. I cannot reject the Śen-Kuṭṭuvan-Gajabāhu synchronism as fanciful. Gajabāhu is seen to have been reigning between 173 and 195 A.C.; and we may reasonably postulate that the building and consecration of the temple was
about 176 A.C. As Śen-Kuṭṭuvan had been on
the throne for 50 years when he built the temple,
he may be held to have ascended the throne
about 125 A.C. In our present state of know-
ledge, I have no hesitation in regarding this as
the ‘sheet anchor’ of early South Indian history;
and I am strengthened in this view by
the result arrived at by Mr. Sivaraja Pillai,
who had conducted the inquiry along lines
which he claims to be more reliable and less
objectionable. I have already stated that Śen-
Kuṭṭuvan helped Nalam-Killi-Śēṭ-Cени to
gain the throne of the Cōla kingdom; and the
synchronistic table accompanying Mr. Pillai’s
book assigns this Cōla to the period 100 to
125 A.C. Śēṭ-Cени’s period may as well be
125 to 150 A.C., for Mr. Pillai’s date is only
conjectural, after all. When we remember
that in that table the conventional 25 years’
period for each king is what is adopted, the
coincidence between our results will be
admitted to be remarkable. As the Śangam
period did not obviously begin and close with
the reign of Śen-Kuṭṭuvan, but there were
several generations of kings and poets of the
Śangam age both before and after him, we may
for the present hold as a safe hypothesis that
the Śangam epoch covered the first three
centuries of the Christian era. This is the
view I have all along maintained; and this
is the considered conclusion of the late
Mr. Kanakasabhai. This is also the view adopted by Dr. Krishnaswami Aiyangar and Prof. Nilakanta Sastri in their works and in the Cambridge History of India.²³

²³ See also Dikshitar, Studies in Tamil Literature and History, Ch. I.
CHAPTER VIII.

Chronology of the Sangam Cēras.

I propose to take 125 A.C. as the first year of Śen-Kuṭṭuvan’s reign, and with that as the starting point ascertain, with the help of the materials at our disposal, the dates of Śen-Kuṭṭuvan’s predecessors and successors.

According to Patirrup-pattu, the following kings had, before Śen-Kuṭṭuvan, reigned for the period mentioned against each.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>King</th>
<th>Years</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Imayavaramban Neḍum-Cēralātan</td>
<td>58 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Palyānai Śelkelu-Kuṭṭuvan</td>
<td>25 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kaṅkāi-kaṇṭi Nārūdīccēral</td>
<td>25 years</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

So, counting back from 125 A.C., the year when Śen-Kuṭṭuvan’s reign commenced, we see Imayavaramban Neḍum-Cēralātan must have begun his reign in c. 17 A.C., Palyānai Śelkelu-Kuṭṭuvan in c. 75 A.C. and Kaṅkāi-kaṇṭi Nārūdīccēral in c. 100 A.C.; and if we, for the present, assign to Vānavaramban Udiyan-Cēralātan the conventional 25 years, which cannot, having regard to the character of his reign, be held to be an exaggerated estimate, that king must on this basis be regarded as commencing his reign in about 8 B.C. It must be confessed that the acceptance of these terms of years does present some difficulty. It may be asked: If Imayavaramban reigned for fifty-eight years, at what
age did his brother become king after him? Palyānai Ŝelkešu-Kuṭṭuvan must be at least about 60 when his reign commenced; and his age must have been 85 when he passed away. Such ripe old age may be uncommon, but is certainly not unknown, as a reference to Kushana, Gupta and Pallava history will show. For instance, Kuzulo Kadphises ruled for nearly 55 years,¹ and was over eighty, when he died and was succeeded by his son Wima Kadphises who reigned for 30 years;² and after him followed the great Kaniška whose reign covered not less than 45 years. Nandi-Varman Pallavamalla reigned for nearly sixty-five years (715-780 A.C.) and his son Dantivarman, who succeeded him, reigned for fifty years (780-830).³ In recent history, we may instance William I who became King of Prussia in his 64th year and Emperor of Germany in his 74th year and lived to be 91 years old. The Ex-German Emperor William II, who ascended the throne in 1888, is now 76 years old. Frederick the Great of Prussia reigned for 46 years, and was 74, when he died. Queen Victoria reigned for 64 years and was 82 when she passed away. Edward VII succeeded her, when he was about 60 years of age; and George V, the Silver Jubilee of whose reign was celebrated

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1 Rapson’s Ancient India, p. 185.
2 Sten Konow, I.H.Q., III.
3 Cambridge Shorter History of India.
last year, passed away in his 71st year. The advanced age of Palyānai Śelkelu-Kuṭṭuvan need not present any difficulty, and it would afford another very cogent reason for the institution of a viceroyalty in the northern province during his reign.

There is another difficulty which we cannot ignore. If Śen-Kuṭṭuvan was the son of Imayavaramban, he must have been, at the lowest calculation, over fifty years of age, when he became sovereign of the Cēra Kingdom; and if we accept the statement that he ruled for fifty-five years, he must have been something more than a centenarian when he died. Nor can we construe the statement in the patigam to mean only that he lived for fifty-five years; for that will give to his reign not more than five years’ duration! The only resolution of the tangle that suggests itself to me is to take that Śen-Kuṭṭuvan was not a son, but was a grandson of Imayavaramban. I venture to suggest that Neḏum-Cēralātan in the Patigam of fifth Patirrup-pattu, means only ‘the great Cēralātan’, the king referred to being Kaḷankāikaṇṇi Nārmudic-Cēral. I do not forget the passage in Silappadhikāram which describes Śen-Kuṭṭuvan as குத்துவன் குரு அனைத்து நீர்மசத்துக் கோன்றிய. Here the expression கோன்றிய need not necessarily mean son; it may denote a descendant. From the narration of Iḷankō-Adigal’s early history, where Dēvanti praises his self-sacrifice in favour of
Šen-Kuṭṭuvan, by taking holy orders that the latter may become king, we can see that Šen-Kuṭṭuvan’s father has only two sons, Šen-Kuṭṭuvan and Iḷankō-Adigal, and the setting given to the incident there related completely negatives the existence of other sons. This to my mind, is significant as making it impossible that Šen-Kuṭṭuvan could be one of four sons of Imayavaramban, as is now usually believed. Two things are clear from this incident; and they are that when Šen-Kuṭṭuvan’s father’s reign was about to close, he had only two sons and immediately on the death of the father, one of the two sons and not the brother stood to succeed him. I propose, therefore, to regard Šen-Kuṭṭuvan as the son of Nārmudic-Cēral. At any rate, the construction I suggest will remove the almost insuperable difficulties we have to encounter, if we regard Šen-Kuṭṭuvan as a son of Imayavaramban, as is now usually done. If this interpretation is accepted, the duration given for Šen-Kuṭṭuvan’s reign may be allowed to stand. Roughly then, Udiyan Cēral’s reign may be held to have begun about 8 B.C. or practically at the beginning of the 1st century, and Šen-Kuṭṭuvan’s to have terminated about 180 A.C.

In the main or Vañci line, we have seen that there are five kings after Šen-Kuṭṭuvan and in the absence of any material for ascertaining how long they reigned, we

4 Śilap. 30, ll. 170 seq.
may provisionally regard them as representing five generations, and thus bring the story of the kings of that line to the close of the third century of the Christian era. In the northern line, we read about ten kings; and of these, we see from Patirrup-pattu that four kings reigned for 96 years in the aggregate. For the remaining six, even if we assign to each of them only twenty years on the average, their reigns may be taken to have occupied 120 years, so that practically we have the story of that line for over two centuries. As I have explained before, there is good reason to think that that line began in the later years of Palyānai Selkeḷu-Kuṭṭuvan’s reign, that is, some years before the close of the first century A.C.; and so, we have the story of the northern Čēras also up to the close of the third century A.C. During these three centuries, the Čēras were brought into relation with the Čōlas and the Pāṇḍyās very often; and from the Puranānāru lyrics, we can identify most of them. The following statements give the pedigree, the probable dates and contemporaneity of the Čēras of the two branches, and the names of the Čōlas and Pāṇḍyās, whose periods more or less synchronised with theirs. It is needless to say that the tables cannot pretend to be strictly accurate; but they are the best that can be constructed from the materials, and are tentatively offered as acceptable.
Probable Genealogy and Chronology.

CĒRAS OF VAṆCI

1. Vānavaramban.

Udīyan-Cēral. (c. 17 A.C.)

2. Imayavaramban. (c. 17—75 A.C.)


(c. 75—100 A.C.)

4. Nārmuḍic-Cēral. (c. 100—125 A.C.)

5. Śen-Kuṭṭuvan. (c. 125—180 A.C.)

6. Kuṭṭuvan-Kōdal. (c. 180—205 A.C.)

7. Ijam-Kuṭṭuvan. (c. 205—230 A.C.)


(c. 230—255 A.C.)

9. Mā-Veqkō. (c. 255—280 A.C.)

10. Vaṇcan. (c. 280—305 A.C.)

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5 Does Cēramān Vaṇcan simply mean the Cēramān who ruled at Vaṇci? If so, the name of this Cēramān is missing.
CÉRAS OF TONDI LINE

1. Karuvñir-épiya Perum-Céral Irumpooval (c. 90—100 A.C.).

2. Antuvan-Céral Irumpooval (c. 100—120 A.C.).

3. Ādu-kōt-pāṭtu Céralătan (c. 120—158 A.C.).

4. Selva-Kadumkō-Valiyătan (c. 158—183 A.C.).

5. Perum-Céral Irumpooval (c. 183—200 A.C.).

6. Ijam-Céral Irumpooval (c. 200—216 A.C.).

7. Ātan-Avini (c. 216—236 A.C.).

8. Yānai-kaṭ-sēy Māntaram-Céral Irumpooval (c. 236—266 A.C.).


<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Cēras of Vañci</th>
<th>Cēras of Toṇdi</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Vānavarāmban</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Udiyan-Cēral</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Imayavāravāmban</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neṣum-Cērālātan</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Pāliyānai Šelkelu-Kuṭṭuvan</td>
<td>1. Karuvūrēriya</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Perum-Cēral</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3. 'Ādukōṭpāṭṭu</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Cērālātan</td>
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<tr>
<td>5. Šēn-Kuṭṭuvan</td>
<td>4. Šelvak-Kadumkō</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Vāli-Ātan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Kuṭṭuvan Kōdai or</td>
<td>5. Perum-Cēral</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mā-Kōdai</td>
<td>Irumpōrāi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Iḷam-Kuṭṭuvan</td>
<td>6. Iḷam-Cēral</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Irumpōrāi</td>
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<td></td>
<td>{ 7. Ātan Avini</td>
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<td></td>
<td>8. Yānaikaṭsēy</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Māntaran-Cēral</td>
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<td>9. Mā-Veṅkō</td>
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<td></td>
<td>10. Vañcan</td>
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<td></td>
<td>10. Kaṇaiikkāl</td>
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<td>Irumpōrāi</td>
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<td>Colas.</td>
<td>Pandyas.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Pörvaikkō Peru-Nārkīlī</td>
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<tr>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Uruvapahṛēr Iḷam-śet-Cenni</td>
<td>..</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Karikāla Cōla</td>
<td>Āriyappādai</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nalamkīlī Šēt-Cenni</td>
<td>Kadanta.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Nedunjēliyan.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vēṟivēr Šēliyan.</td>
<td>Ḭavantikaippalli-tūncia Nan-Māran.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Talaiālam Kānattu Nedunjēliyan.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rājasūyam Vēṭṭa Perunārkīlī</td>
<td>Ugra-Peruvaluti.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kulamuṟṟattutuṉciya Killī Valavan</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Šen-Kaṅṅān</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>
CHAPTER IX.

Political, Social and Religious Background.

S. 1.

We have now pieced together the story of the earliest Cēra kings known to Tamil literature. The antiquity of the Cēra kingdom is beyond dispute. From the occurrence of Cēra-pādah in Taittiriya Āranyakā, Mr. P. T. Srinivasa Aiyangar concludes that the Cēra country had even in that long distant past come under the influence of Brahmanical or Aryan rites and rituals, and he cites the authority of Prof. A. B. Keith for construing the expression as relating to the Cēras. Perhaps this is doubtful, as Sāyana takes Cēra to mean snake. Leaving this aside, as also the evidence of the Mahābhārata and the Rāmāyaṇa, we have in more recent times inscriptive evidence of the existence of an independent Cēra kingdom afforded by the Gīrñar inscription of Aśoka of c. 250 B.C. which mentions the country of Kēralaputra as one of the southern kingdoms. With one possible exception, Tamil literature, however, does not take us to that distant period in the history of South India, though it is clear from Tolkāppiyam that at the date of that ancient work the Cēra kingdom had been in existence for a long time. The exception is this.

1 History of the Tamils, p. 29.
There are references to the Mōriyar in Aganānūru² and in those poems, the passage of their war-chariots through a mountain-pass, which possibly had been thought to be impassable, receives prominent mention. It is also clear from Agam 281, that the objective of the Mōriyar army was South India; and that the Vaḍukar, (literally 'northerners') a ferocious people³ probably formed the van-guard. It has been suggested that the reference in these poems is to a Mauryan invasion.⁴ If so, the alleged Mauryan advance must have occurred before Aśoka; for Aśoka tells us that the Tamil kingdoms of the South were politically free; and there is no possibility of a Mauryan invasion after his time. Tārānāth, the Tibetan historian, speaks of Bindusāra's conquests in the Dekhan and South India; and perhaps, the Aganānūru lyrics refer to one of those invasions, as I suggested many years ago.⁵ Or possibly, Mōriyar is not the correct reading;⁶ and if so, the reference would be, as suggested by me elsewhere,⁷ to a southerly march into

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2 Agam, 69; 251; 281.
3 Agam, 107 and 381.
4 The latest writer on the subject, Mr. V. R. Ramachandra Dikshitar takes this view in his book "The Mauryan Polity", pp. 58–61. My own view is that the alleged Mauryan invasion is a myth.
5 Date of Silappadhikāram: Madras Christian College Magazine, 1917.
6 Cf. Puram, 175.
7 Kośar and Vamba Mōriyar. Q.J.M.S., 1924.
India, through a north-eastern pass of the Himalayas, of a trans-Himalayan martial tribe at some remote period. However, to whatever occurrence the passages in Aganānūrũ may refer, they do not relate to the Cēra kingdom; and the account we have been able to gather from the Šangam works about the Cēra kingdom, does not take us earlier than the first century of the Christian era.

Let us try to get a glimpse of the political, social and religious background of the Cēra history of this period as presented by Šangam literature. It is clear that the rules of Hindu or Aryan polity mainly governed the administration. There is abundant evidence to show that the enunciation of the three-fold duties of the king given in the Mānavadharma Śāstra was followed. The king was an indispensable institution; and his authority rested on Dharma of which he was the guardian. Emphasis is laid on his position as a father of his people. It is the duty of the king to know and remember that he is the source of the life of the world, and not cereals and water.

Hereditary monarchy seems to have been the prevailing form of government. We read

8 VII, 88.
9 Puram, 55. புர பத சமிபலாம ஆக மு.
10 Ibid., 5. சமி சிரம்ப பாரியம.
11 Ibid., 186. புரா சமிபலம் சிரம்ப பாரியம் மேம் பாரியம்.
of no disputed succession or civil war in the Cēra kingdom during the period we have studied, though during this period there were instances in the Cōla kingdom. The King was essentially an absolute monarch, but he respected and followed the wise counsel of Ministers and other learned men. He extended equal protection and justice to all his subjects. The minister was a responsible officer; and the unsympathetic and tyrannical minister who misleads the kings to oppress the people is denounced even by the royal poet Pālaipādiya-Perum-Kaḍuṅkō. Thus, in Pālaik-kali, he likens the scorching sun of the sandy deserts to ‘a king, who by a minister bad, unsympathetic and unjust, is led’; and in Pālai 9, he writes that the desolate region of the desert is

Like a land where the ministers fleece without scruple
And grind without mercy the people who groan
Under crushing misrule.

The minister’s position was obviously delicate, and he could not be always certain of the king’s favour. Thus in Pālai 7, we read—

The minister who in the sunshine basks
Of royal favour, working still with zeal
But for his master’s good, without regard
For his own benefit, doth sudden fall
Under displeasure and he loses all!

12 Puram, 17 and 55.
13 See Pālai, 7.
From the occurrence of the expressions மன்மேலை and பெருமகடை in some ancient works like Silappadhikāram, Maṇimekālai and Perum-kadai, some scholars have committed themselves to the view that in the Śangam period government was conducted with the aid of popular assemblies and representative councils. This is an entirely fanciful view. A reference to Divākaram for the meaning of these terms would conclusively show that these groups connoted well-known adjuncts to royalty or royal paraphernalia. They comprised ministers, purohits, army captains, embassage, spies, astrologers, near relations, citizens, and various denominations of soldiers. The ideal king was a benevolent autocrat, and the people were devoted to him, under whose protection they were able to follow their pursuits in peace. Ancient Tamil literature does not seem to record any instance of resistance to the will of the king by his subjects; and in those ancient days, the fundamental value and importance of peace between the ruler and his people was also prominently recognized. Thus we read in the Kūṟaḻ:

"Blest though the land in all things else, it naught avails
If there's no peace between the people and the King."
—Kūṟaḻ, 740.

14 Vide also Maṇi, p. 10 foot-note.
The effective protection of his people is stressed in Sangam literature as the essential function of the king. Whether for the satisfactory discharge of that essential function or from motives of personal ambition, or from sheer irresistible blood-lust, kings often indulged in war, and not infrequently in such excess that learned men seeking their bounty felt compelled to remind them that peace had its victories no less renowned than war.\(^{16}\) Almost every great king of the Sangam period appears to have been a great warrior, and the Cēra monarchs were no exception. Necessarily, they maintained armies of well-equipped soldiers, who wore defensive armours \(\text{(\textit{E	extit{ppi}}\textit{mmi\textit{ppa}})}\) and were armed with bows and arrows, spears and swords, and used shields made of tough bull-hide.\(^ {18}\) Before starting for war, elaborate sacrifice to \textit{Korravai},\(^ {17}\) the Dravidian \textit{Durgā}, and the presiding deity of the war-drum was made.\(^ {18}\) The kings themselves often led their armies in person in the field of battle; and the first act of provocation by an invading army seems to have been the felling of the \textit{Kāvalmaram} or totem tree of the enemy from the encircling woods.\(^ {19}\) The lifting of the enemy’s

\(^{15}\) Cf. \textit{Puram}, 5.

\(^{16}\) \textit{Patt\textit{r}\textit{rup-pattu}}, 45.

\(^{17}\) Literally ‘The Goddess of Victory’.

\(^{18}\) \textit{Patt\textit{r}\textit{rup-pattu}}, 30; \textit{Patigam III}.

\(^{19}\) \textit{Puram}, 36.
cattle was also a prelude to war. The forts were well guarded and the gates secured with bolts of tough wood; and the fortifications were surrounded by moats filled with water. On the field, the kings used war-chariots; and besides foot-soldiers, they employed horses and elephants in war. Appalling slaughter, and utter devastation and destruction by fire followed in the wake of war, and frequently personal humiliation, often brutally vindictive, were inflicted on the vanquished foe and even on his women-folk. Indeed, showing clemency to a vanquished enemy evoked surprise and wonder. The souls of heroes slain in battle were believed to attain Vīra svarga, which corresponds to the Valhalla of Gothic mythology; and so firmly was this notion rooted that among the warrior clan, a still-born child was cleft in twain at birth that it might attain 'the heroes' heaven'. The hero could not bear to receive a wound on the back in the field of battle; and he atoned for the disgrace by self-immolation by starvation on the scene.

20 Agam, 372.
21 Puram, 20.
22 Ibid., 14 and 37.
23 Ibid., 14.
24 Patīr̥rup-pattu, 25, 26, 43 and 48.
25 Ibid., V Patigam.
26 Patīr̥rup-pattu, 32.
27 Puram, 74.
28 Ibid., 65.
It is interesting to note that in those days, the martial spirit animated not only the men, but also the women of the land. At a time of war, the women-folk urged their male relations to march to battle, resolved to win or die like heroes. The wife rejoiced to see her husband display his valour, and the mother was proud of her son who showed his bravery; and neither was troubled by the thought of any possible danger to the life of her hero. They regarded a dastard in war with contempt. *Puram* 278, given below, depicts vividly this significant trait in the character of the ancient Tamil dame.

The dame of ancient age, with shrunken veins,
And loosely hanging tissues, heard her son
Had from the battle turned in fear and fled.
In towering rage she vowed, if that be so,
She would for very shame cut off her breasts
That gave the despicable coward suck.
She snatched a sword, swept with impetuous speed
Into the gory battle-field, and searched.
The heaps of warriors slain, when lo! she found
Stretched on the field of glory, cut in twain,
Her valiant son. Then swelled, indeed, with pride
The mother’s heart, which was with gladness filled,
Intenser far than when she gave him birth!**

*Puṟap-poruḻ-Veṇbā-Mālai*, the author of which is a Cēra, gives the grammar of warfare as understood in ancient Tamil India; and we see from it that the approved rule was that the invading army should not molest the enemy’s cattle, which before the battle began, should be

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28a Cf. *Puṟam*, 277; 279; 295; 86.
removed to a place of safety. The rules also enjoined that the invading army should—

Spare the temples where sacrifices are offered;  
Spare the consecrated dwellings of the ascetics;  
Spare the residence of the holy Vedic Brahmanas.

It is seen that the vanquished king was sometimes kept in confinement as a prisoner by the victor, possibly in expectation of suitable ransom.  

S. 3.

Watered by perennial streams, the Cēra country was very fertile, and its prosperity was maintained by the Cēra kings. A large proportion of the population pursued agriculture; but other occupations, such as fishing and hunting were also followed. Arts, trade and commerce were also pursued. The Cēra Kings, as Kuṟumkōliyūr-Kilār, writes in Puṟam 17—

Their royal sceptre even held  
O'er all their subjects, where-so-e'er they lived,  
In hill or mountain, forest or in town;  
Protecting them with equal justice, they  
Chastised all wrong, and as their due, received  
The share of yield from land by law allowed.

This share is explained by the commentator to be one-sixth, the Sadbhāga of the Dharmaśāstra and the Arthaśāstra. Among the industries pursued in the country, were spinning  

29 Puṟam, 74 and 17.
and weaving. Spinning cotton was an occupation of women,\textsuperscript{30} who also prepared beaten rice (\textit{tulānu}) with wooden pestles (\textit{ṭāṇās}).\textsuperscript{31} Besides cotton cloth, also silk was woven,\textsuperscript{32} and they were of superior quality. Files, axes and other iron implements and metal-lamps supported by metal-stand were produced,\textsuperscript{33} and jewellery in gold, silver and precious stones were made.\textsuperscript{34} Carpentry and work in hides also flourished. We have definite mention that hides were fashioned into shields for the use of soldiers in battles,\textsuperscript{35} cut into thongs and circlets for use in Yāgas\textsuperscript{36} and into straps which were ‘stitched with ease and dexterity for cots’ by cobblers.\textsuperscript{37} Salt was manufactured in salt-pan and carried in carts for sale.\textsuperscript{38} There was also extensive trade in fish\textsuperscript{39} in which fish-women took an active part. The land grew spices, especially pepper, which was much sought after in the western world,\textsuperscript{40} and it abounded in

\textsuperscript{30} Puram, 125.
\textsuperscript{31} Patirup-pattu, 29.
\textsuperscript{32} Ibid., 12.
\textsuperscript{33} Puram 36; and Patirup-pattu, 47 and 52.
\textsuperscript{34} Puram 66; Patirup-pattu, 16.
\textsuperscript{35} Patirup-pattu, 45.
\textsuperscript{36} Ibid., 74.
\textsuperscript{37} Puram, 82.
\textsuperscript{38} Neytal, 21; Nar. 4; Agam, 119; 310; and Kurun., 165.
\textsuperscript{39} Puram, 343.
\textsuperscript{40} Agam., 149.
cocoanut palms,¹¹ sandal-wood, Agil and sugarcane.¹² Its elephants gave ivory; its mines yielded precious stones and its seas yielded pearls.¹³ The country was beyond doubt very flourishing and wealthy.

S. 4.

Ship-building industry does not appear to be mentioned in Sangam works; but the people of the Cēra country were familiar with navigation of the high seas⁴⁴ and from early times they had trade relations with foreign nations. We have evidence that in the very dim past, the rare products of Malabar found their way to Babylon and Egypt, and later the Phoenicians controlled the spice trade of Malabar. Chinese junks were also attracted to the ports of the Cēra country, with which it seems obvious the trade relations of the Chinese, which probably began long before the ships of Greece and Rome called at the Cēra ports, must have continued for a long time; and from the architecture of the buildings on the Malabar coast, which reproduces the distinctive features of the architecture of Mongolian countries, particularly in its temples, one may conclude that a Chinese colony had been established, where, as generally happened with people living

⁴¹ Puram, 17.
⁴² Patirrup-pattu, 87.
⁴³ Ibid., 67.
⁴⁴ Pālai, 4; Mani, IV, ll. 29—34.
in an alien land, the Chinese settlers lived in houses built in the style of their native country. To my mind the Mongolian curves and the upturned eaves and gables that we see in Travancore houses and temples supply strong evidence of Chinese influence which must have sprung from Chinese trade relationship with the Cēra country.

With the discovery of Hippalus about the beginning of the first century of the Christian era, that, by taking advantage of the monsoon winds, ships could sail straight from the Red Sea and reach India in 40 days, a new era in the commercial activity of the Cēra kingdom was inaugurated. The direction of the wind led the ships straight to Musiri which Pliny described as the nearest mart in India. The Patirrup-pattu and Puranānūru poems bear eloquent testimony to the commercial activity of Musiri and other ports of the Cēra kingdom; and we are told that in exchange for gold that foreign vessels brought, they took home pepper and other valuable products from those ports. To what extent trade in pepper and other products was carried on with Rome will appear from the words of Pliny who says: 'In no year does India drain us of less than 550,000,000 sesterces, giving back her own wares which are sold among us at fully 100 times their first cost.' Large quantities of Roman gold and silver came into the Cēra kingdom, as the result of export of pepper to Rome, and thousands of Roman
coins, mostly of the reigns of Augustus, Tiberius, Gaius and Claudius, have been discovered on the Malabar coast, and in the districts of Madura and Coimbatore. The trade at the Cēra ports was so extensive, that warehouses had to be erected. We notice from Pliny that in his days (c. 50 A.C.) a safer and more convenient port than Musiri was Barake, to which pepper was brought down the river in dugouts or boats scooped out of a single tree from Kottanāra (Kuṭṭa-nādu). Barake has now been rightly identified with Porakad, south of Alleppey. By the time of the Periplus, however, Musiri, modern Cranganore, had become the gate of India, and the foremost port for foreign trade.

Indeed, in the days of the Periplus, it was a very busy port. The author of the Periplus says that from this port were purchased pepper, pearls, ivory, silk, spikenard, malabathram (Skt. Tamālapatra), transparent stones like beryl, diamonds and rubies, and tortise shell; and according to Mr. Schoff, the latest translator of the Periplus, pepper supplied, perhaps, three-fourth of the total bulk

45 See Warmington "Commerce between Rome and India", Chap. 7.
46 Patirrup-pattu, 55.
47 The credit of this identification belongs to Mr. I. C. Chakko, a former Director of Industries, Travancore. Is Nilcynda the present Nindakara, just north of Quilon?
of the average west-bound cargo. Pliny's language is almost furious when he writes of the import of pepper into Rome. He says: "It is quite surprising that the use of pepper has come so much into fashion, seeing that it is sometimes by their substance and sometimes by their appearance that articles attract our notice; whereas pepper has nothing in it that can plead as a recommendation to either fruit or berry, its only desirable quality being a certain pungency; and yet it is for this that we import it all the way from India! Who was the first to make a trial of it as an article of food? And who, I wonder, was the man that was not content to prepare himself by hunger only for the satisfying of a greedy appetite?" In spite of such strictures, the Roman import trade in pepper grew; and we are told that when Alaric the Visigoth laid seige to Rome, among the terms he offered for raising the seige was the immediate payment of 3,000 lbs. of pepper. It is clear from the accounts that there was flourishing foreign trade on an international scale at the port of Musiri. Besides pepper, pearl was another important export from South India; and about the craze for pearls in Rome, Pliny writes: "Our ladies glory in having pearls suspended from their fingers, two or three of them dangling from their ears, delighted even with the rattling of the pearls as they knock against each other; and now, at the present time, the poor classes are
even affecting them. They put them on their feet, and that, not only on the laces of their sandals, but all over the shoes.” He mentions Lollia Paulina, the wife of the Emperor Caius, who was seen on an ordinary betrothal-wearing pearls to the value of 40,000,000 sesterces or roughly £333,000!

There is thus remarkable concurrence of testimony, as already stated, between the Sangam works and the Periplus on the commercial activity of the ports of the Cēra country; and at these sea-ports there were warehouses maintained for storing foreign merchandise. It is interesting to note that the valuable products of the country were sold to foreign merchants for gold; while apparently paddy was adopted as the usual measure of value for internal trade. Thus in Puṟam 343, we learn that fish was bartered for paddy. There were recognized measures for measuring paddy (Patiṟṟup-pattu, 55; 67 and 74. A gam, 149 and Puṟam, 343. Patiṟṟup-pattu, 66 and 71. Ibid., 66.) and tribute paid in paddy, we read, was measured into the state granaries. Apparently, metallic currency alone was employed in foreign trade.

S. 5.

The Tamils appear to have been a brave, warm-hearted and warm-blooded people who
cared much for the mere joys of living. They cultivated poetry, music and dancing. Their staple food was rice; but fish and meat were also used. They had almost a partiality for palm-wine. One might say that, perhaps, wine and women, war and song, largely claimed the attention of at least the leisured classes in those early days. The Cēra kings liberally patronized poetry and song, and were easily accessible to poets and singers. These came from both sexes and from all castes and classes; and they were all very munificently rewarded without distinction of caste, creed or sex. The author of the *History of the Tamils* cynically observes:—“Besides protecting his subjects, the only other function of Rajas was to be surrounded by beggar bards, who eulogized them in their poems and were plied with food and drink as reward.” 52 There seems to be some warrant for the last statement, afforded by *Patirrup-pattu*, 43, lines 34 and 35, which run as follows:—

but there is ample evidence that the bards were also more substantially rewarded. The variety of Yāls mentioned in Śangam literature, and the institution of pānar indisputably show that the times and conditions were specially favourable for the art of music to flourish.

52 Page 191.
Minstrelsy was much patronized not only in courts but also in urban life; and we read of special adaptations of musical instruments for entertainment in rural areas. Šangam poetry is full of life and colour, and affords a faithful mirror of ancient Tamil Society. It may be noted that several Cēra kings and other members of the Cēra royal family occupy an honoured place among the Šangam poets.

Adult marriage was the normal rule among the ancient Tamils. From Tolkāppiyam it is seen that the approved form of marital union was of the nature of what is known amongst Sanskrit law-givers as the gāndharva form of marriage. It consisted in voluntary union in secrecy from reciprocal desire; and Tamil usage required no religious rite to give it validity. Tolkāppiyam explains that in course of time the sanctity of Kalavu or secret union was violated by deceitfulness and treachery; and so Aryans or learned men—Aiyar is the term employed and it is either a corruption of Āryar or is a derivative from Ārya, meaning अर्य (Tolkappiyam) and denotes ‘men who evoke admiration’—enjoined the rule of Karpu or open marriage, following the usage of the higher classes (Mēn-makkaḻ), and thus publicity, which distinguishes a recognized marriage from an illicit connection or concubinage, was secured to the union. Karpu

53 Tol: karpiyal, 3 and 4.
consisted in the bride being given away in marriage by her parents or other relations; and it was usually a convention that concluded the relation that had begun and had continued for some time in the Kaḷavu form. It is interesting to note that the approved forms of marriage according to the Sanskrit Śrīvatsis were regarded by the Tamils as inappropriate or unapproved marital unions—Poruntāk-kāmam. Sometimes the bride-groom was chosen by a trial of strength in bull fight (mullai 9) and occasionally bride-price was paid.\(^{54}\) When the choice of a husband by the parents happened to be different from a woman’s own choice, she over-reached them by eloping with her lover,\(^ {55}\) a procedure which custom recognized. An unsuccessful wooer often succeeded in getting his sweet-heart to marry him, by having recourse to maṭal-ṭal, which consisted in his wearing a wreath of senna (avirai) and madar flowers and going about in a vehicle of palmyra fronds, beseeching public sympathy and help.\(^ {56}\)

There was no rule against polygamy; and concubinage seems to have been prevalent,

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\(^{54}\) Nar., 300.

\(^{55}\) Pālai, 8 and Agam, 153.

\(^{56}\) Neytal, 21, 22, 24 and Kural, 1,133; 1,135. Vide my ‘Glimpses into the Married Life of the Ancient Tamil People’, XXII, Q.J.M.S. For a description of Maṭal-ṭal see Dikshitar’s Studies in Tamil Literature and History, pp. 275-6 and my translation of Neytal 22 in the article cited (XXII, Q.J.M.S.).
especially in urban areas, *Maruta-nilam*, where a life of ease and luxury, wealth and pleasure was possible. The frequent mention in *Agam* literature of hetaerae and their influence shows that they formed a recognized institution, in early Tamil society; and we read that they used also to throng at festivals, where acting and dancing prevailed. The danseuse not infrequently acted as a procuress. The following extract from *Marutak-kali* voices the piteous complaint of a faithful wife addressed to her husband guilty of marital disloyalty.

Hard-hearted, long hast thou forsaken me!  
My beauty’s wasted; and my eyes have known  
No sleep! And if unable to sit up,  
I seek my couch at times to close my eyes,  
The sounding drums that do announce each day  
Thy visit to thy artful courtezans,  
Who fragrant garlands wear, prevent my rest!  
Thou hast neglected me! my weeping eyes,  
Deprived of sleep so long, seek transient rest,  
Comforted by my darling’s son’s caress;  
The merry song thy youthful mistresses  
Sing as they dance in jollity in homes  
Thou hast provided, drives such rest away!

—*Marutam*, 5.

Though there is overwhelming evidence in Śangam literature of the husband’s infidelity to his wife, the ancient Tamil wife apparently never swerved from loyalty to her husband even in very trying circumstances. The following

57 *Agam*, 326 and 222.
58 *Nār.,* 310.
pocm from Palaiikkali is illustrative of the typical Tamil wife of those days.

Thou tellest me the desert is so parched
For utter want of rain that the wild deer
On prickly cactus plant is forced to feed;
And, by the shafts of heartless robbers pierced,
Wayfarers in that arid region lie
Writhing with thirst which they attempt to slake
With tears that trickle to their dried-up tongues!
My lord and husband! Thou dost not, perhaps,
My nature comprehend. It is not meet
Thou shouldst our bond thus disregard and go!
To go with thee and in thy journey share
With thee the perils of the desert track,
Know that alone can give me happiness!

—Palai, 5.

When the husband left on a long journey, the wife kept count of the number of days he was away by making marks on a wall, a method of keeping count of days then common as it is even now in some villages.

Women were very fond of jewels, and this trait was so pronounced in their nature, that even in Sangam literature they came to be referred to, by metonomy as Čalāy and Čalāy. Besides ordinary jewels like bangles, anklets, belts, rings, etc., there was in use a jewel fashioned like or made of tiger’s teeth which

59 Agam, 351.
60 Agam, 61 and 289.
61 Puram, 3 and Patirppu-pattu, 65 and 88.
62 Neytap, 22.
ladies wore along with the tāli.\textsuperscript{63} Music and
dance were cultivated; and there were profes-
sional minstrels called pānar and virali and
dancers. In Marutam 14, we read of ‘the circlet
which accomplished dancers wear on their fair
forehead, when they appear upon the stage’. Among musical instruments frequent mention
is made of the shepherd’s reed\textsuperscript{64} and the seven
stringed Yāl,\textsuperscript{65} which from its synonym
\textit{vāl} may, perhaps, be thought to have
been shaped like a plough. Collyrium was used
by women; and men smeared themselves with
sandal-paste and wore garlands of flowers and
strings of pearls.

S. 6.

Fasts and ceremonial baths were common.\textsuperscript{67} It is clear that belief in omens and astrology
was general. For example, Kākkai-pādiniyār
Nacellaiyār writes in \textit{Kuruntokai} 210 that the
cawing of the crow presages the arrival of a
guest,\textsuperscript{68} a belief that exists even now in Tamil
villages. It is due to this circumstance that the
term Kākkai-pādiniyār is prefixed to her name.

\textsuperscript{63} \textit{Agam}, 7. Even now tiger-claws cased in gold are used as jewel for
children.

\textsuperscript{64} Cf. \textit{Neytal}, 13 and 14.

\textsuperscript{65} Cf. \textit{Pulai}, 8.

\textsuperscript{66} Cf. \textit{Puram}, 206. (Commentator’s note).

\textsuperscript{67} \textit{Patippup-pattu}, 31, 1, 6.

\textsuperscript{68} \textit{Pāndita Nītra Kapānī Charit}. 
The throbbing of a woman's left eye-lid or her left shoulder or arm, was believed to betoken the happening of something good to her; while in the case of a man that significance was conveyed by the throbbing of his right eye-lid, arm or shoulder, a belief that persists to this day. The 'click-click' of the wall-lizard prognosticated good or evil according to the direction from which it proceeded, and even today that belief persists among country folk. We see from Aganānūru, that omens used to be consulted before going to battle. Knowledge of planetary astronomy and astrology existed among the Tamils in those early days; and lunar asterisms and months of the year were also known. The appearance of a comet or the falling of a meteor, it was believed, indicated the approaching death of a king.

Among the mythological stories then current, we may mention Tripura-Samhāra by Śiva, Śūrapadma-Samhāra by Subrahmanya and the Kṛṣṇa legends.  

69 Pālai, 10.
70 Pālai, 10; Agam, 9; 151, 289, 351 and Nar, 246 and 333.
71 Paripādal, XI; Śilap., and Patirrūp-pattu, 24.
72 Puram, 229; Agam, 137 and 141.
73 Puram, 229.
74 Pālaik-kali, V and Puram, 55.
75 Patirrūp-pattu, 12.
76 Śilappadikkāram refers to boyish sports and dances of Kṛṣṇa.
illumination on Tiru-Kārttigai day was common even in those early days;" and we read of a Panguni festival (Agam 137)."

With much that belonged to non-Aryan practices and primitive culture, Aryan rites and culture had also widely spread over the land. Worship of departed heroes was common. Purānānāru and Aganānāru contain several poems, from which we see that dolmens or rather stones were set up for the departed, whose weapons were placed leaning on the stones. These stones were decorated with red flowers and peacock feathers, and the name of the deceased hero was inscribed on them; and intoxicating liquor and worship were offered to them. Malignant demons were propitiated with sacrifice. Korrāvaī, was worshipped with elaborate sacrifices, especially before going to war. The dead were cremated, though burial also seems to have been practised. There is abundant proof that Vēdic religion had spread over the land, and Vēdic rites and rituals prevailed.

77 Nar., 202.
78 Pungunni-Utsavam, which falls in March-April, is the most important festival in Śri Padmanabha Svāmi temple at Trivandrum as also in temples of Tamil districts.
80 Patirrup-pattu, 71.
81 Puram, 245 and 246.
82 Patirrup-pattu, 44.
83 Ibid., III, and VII.
the deities that were worshipped were Śiva, Viṣṇu, Kṛṣṇa, Balarāma and Muruga or Śkanda. Brahmanas performed their Vedic rites and pursued their six-fold duties. They discharged the onerous duty of expounding Dharma to the kings, and they were chosen as king’s ministers. In speaking of Palyānai Šelkelu-Kuṭṭuvan, Pālai Kaudamanar writes in Patirrup-pattu, III:

Patiṟṟup-pattu, 24.

As preceptors of Dharma, they were held in respect by kings. In Patirrup-pattu, VII, Kapilar in his praise of Šelvak-kaḷumkō Vāḷi Ātan writes: பாண்டைநிலா சொன்ன சொம்பாளி அனம். From the testimony of Šangam literature, it is clear that Vedic rites were not infrequently performed even by kings, and Brahmanas were liberally helped to perform Yāgas. Gifts of cows and land were freely bestowed on them. We also read of Brahmana ascetics and one Cēra king, as we saw, became, after a life of military glory, an ascetic like his Brahmana preceptor. Though Brahmanism was predominant in the land, Buddhism and Jainism also prevailed among the people, and the adherents

84 Nceyal, 2 and 13.
85 Pālai, 8.
of all the three religions lived in the country in perfect friendliness. 86

Such is the political, social and religious background that Sangam literature presents in regard to the Cēra kingdom, which, richly endowed as it was by nature, was ruled over by sympathetic monarchs, who besides being great warriors, were also liberal patrons of learning and art, and made the welfare of the people their dominant concern. The Cēra Kingdom still flourishes like the bay tree; for it is gratifying to note that, though of the three Tamil kingdoms celebrated in Sangam literature, the Pāṇḍya and Cōla kingdoms have long ago ceased to exist, there still thrives under the rule of its own kings the Cēra kingdom,—

"Bright breadth of plain, blue-veined by many a stream,
Umbragcous hills, sweet glades, and forest fair."

86 This is evident from a study of Śīlappadhikāram.
Original Sources.

Abidhānacintāmaṇi.
Aganānūru, edited by Rajagopala Ayyangar.
Ainkūru-nūru.
Atharva Jyotisha.
Cudāmaṇi Nighaṇṭu.
Divākaram.
Gāthasaptasati.
Hitopadēśa.
Kalavali-nārpatu.
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