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**THE ARCHAEOLOGY OF BHAKTI II**  
**Royal Bhakti, Local Bhakti**

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Cover photo: Panel and inscription in the Umāmaheśvarar temple, Kōṅēirājapuram (photo by C. Schmid, 2011)

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## Where are the Kings? Sites of Birth and Death of Campantar

Uthaya VELUPPILLAI

According to several scholars, in medieval Tamil Nadu, between the middle of the ninth and the end of the thirteenth century, Cōla kings are acclaimed as great builders of temples and exemplary patrons of religious activities, promoting for instance the Tamil Śaiva Bhakti textual tradition.<sup>1</sup> This tradition is based on the *Tirumurai*, the Tamil Śaiva canon, which is composed of twelve books. The first seven books constitute the *Tēvāram*, a corpus of 798 devotional hymns composed in Tamil in the second half of the first millennium and attributed to three poets: the *mūvars*, that is Tiruñānacampantar (Campantar), Tirunāvukkaracar (Appar) and Tirucuntaramūrṭti (Cuntarar). Each devotional hymn of the *Tēvāram* is dedicated to Śiva in one of his manifestation in a site precisely located on the present-day map of Tamil Nadu. Exception is made for the Kailāsa and 48 *potu* hymns which are not related to any particular places. Thus, the 276 places celebrated in the *Tēvāram* are called *pāṭal perṛa talams* (literally “sites which obtained hymns”). The link of Tamil devotional literature to temples and royal patronage is presented as a well-established fact in secondary literature:

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<sup>1</sup> Important recent scholarship has exposed the limits of this common assumption and emphasised for example the importance of women in patronising temples during the Cōla period (Kaimal 2003 and Orr 2000: 65–87).

The Cōla kings, from Vijayālaya who re-established the Cōla rule with Tanjore as capital city, as well as the late Pāṇḍyas, all had sacred temples, which were celebrated in the *Tēvāram*, built in stone; they had sacred images of the *mūvars* installed there; they gave the necessary agreements (i.e. they granted endowments) for the daily worship, pomp of the festivals, and the daily recitation of hymns in these sacred temples. (Veḷḷaivāraṇaṅ 1994: 28–29<sup>2</sup>)

The Pallava successors of Mahendravarman I and the Tamil Cōlas who consolidated their power in the Tamil region in the tenth century were great patrons of the Tamil *Bhakti* groups. The Cōlas, in particular, favored Śaivism and gave royal support to the institutions and practice of Tamil Śaivism. (...) The Cōla kings enlarged and rebuilt extant Śiva shrines and built great structural temples in stone, particularly in the places visited by the Nāyaṅārs, now called *pāṭal perṛa talam*, ‘a place sung by the saints.’ (Peterson 1989: 13–14)

The collection and organization of the hymns and the ritual of hymn-singing in temples were also made under direct royal initiative and patronage. The Vaiṣṇava hymns were collected in the late tenth century AD by Nāthamuni. The Śaiva hagiology received particular attention in the periods of Rājarāja I (985–1014) and Kulottunga II (1133–50). Closely linked with the collection of hymns was the apotheosis of the Śaiva hymnists and the installation of their images in Śiva temples from the period of Rājarāja I. (Champakalakshmi 1996: 73)

The association of devotional texts with temples, material or not, is uncontested. The *Tēvāram* hymns were written between the seventh and the ninth century in a context of sites/temples, the abodes of Śiva, which offered them, since the end of the ninth century, at the latest, a cultic frame in which the singing of these poems became institutionalised.<sup>3</sup> Later on, the

<sup>2</sup> My translation of: *tañcaiyait talainakarākak koṅṭu cōlar āṭciyai miṅṭum nilaiperaṅceyṭa vicayālayaṅ mutalākavulla ellāc cōlamannarkaḷum piṛkālap pāṅṭiyarkaḷum tēvāraṅ pāṭalperṛa tirukkōyilkaḷaik karṛaḷikaḷākki aṅku mūvar tiruwurvaṅkaḷai yeḷuntaruḷac ceytu nālvalipāṭṭiṛkum tiruvilāc ciṛappiṛkum tirukkōyilkaḷil nāṭōrum tiruppatikam viṅṅappañceyṭarkum vēṅṭum nivantaṅkaḷai valaṅkiyuḷḷārkaḷ.*

<sup>3</sup> The most ancient inscription available mentioning the singing of the hymns (SII 3, No. 43, l. 32–33) is dated to the 17<sup>th</sup> regnal year of Vijayanantivikkiramapamnar who is identified as Nandivarman III (Gros 1984: viii), which means that the date corresponds to circa 863. Nevertheless, this inscription of Tiruvallam temple in the district

temples received the poets' images which were installed and worshiped.<sup>4</sup> The temples are also presented as a place of safeguarding of these hymns because they used to play a role in the preservation of the manuscripts on which the hymns were written down.<sup>5</sup> Thus the temples seem to have played a primary role in the elaboration, the practice, the transmission and the conservation of the *Tēvāram* hymns in the medieval period.

The relation between, on the one hand, these texts, their authors and the temples they celebrated and, on the other, the royal patronage seems to be less obvious when studying the precise pattern of the patronage of hymned places (*pāṭal perra talams*).

In this paper, focusing on two little studied famous places of the Tamil Śaiva Bhakti textual tradition situated in the delta of the Kāvēri, i.e. Cīrkālī and Āccālpuram, I would like to highlight the importance of local patronage in the development of Śaiva Bhakti textual tradition in medieval Tamil Nadu. According to tradition, Cīrkālī and Āccālpuram are the places of birth

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of Chingelput is a copy of an original which was destroyed during the renovation of the *maṇḍapa* (l. 1–2). So the authenticity of the information it contains, particularly about the date, remains contestable.

<sup>4</sup> The first datable reference to images of the *mūvars* is found in an inscription of the royal temple of Tanjore (SII 2, No. 38) and dates to the reign of Rājārāja I (985–1014).

<sup>5</sup> In the temple, the manuscripts were generally kept in a room called *tirukkaikkōṭṭi* where the hymns were also sung (see for example ARE 1908, Nos. 203, 414, 454; ARE 1928–29, No. 350; ARE 1918, No. 381, edited in Veluppillai 2013: 296–301). According to Rangaswamy (1990 [1958]: 23), *tirukkaikkōṭṭi* is a tamilised form of the Sanskrit *śrīhastagoṣṭhī* and could derive from the fact that the hymns were sung by a group (*goṣṭhī*) beating the rhythm with the hands (*hasta*). Nevertheless, the term *śrīhastagoṣṭhī* is not attested in any Sanskrit texts as pointed out to me by D. Goodall. The hypothesis of Swamy (1972: 108) that *tirukkaikkōṭṭi* refers to a committee working in the temple rather than a space dedicated to the singing is not convincing to me because of the inscriptions mentioned above. In an example given by Hardy (2001 [1983]: 643) in order to underline the Tamil substrate of the language of the *Bhāgavatapurāṇa*, the author states that the term Kāmakoṣṇī found in the text is a faulty re-sanskritisation of the Tamil name of the temple Kāmakoṭṭi in Kāñcīpuram because the Tamil word *kōṭṭi*, like *kōṭṭam* ('temple'), is derived from the Sanskrit *koṣṭha* meaning 'treasury' and not from *koṣṇī* which is meaningless. Thus, I suggest that *tirukkaikkōṭṭi* is not a tamilised form of the Sanskrit term *śrīhastagoṣṭhī* but that the latter is a weak sanskritisation of a word which probably refers to a space in the temple (*kōṭṭi*, *kōṭṭam* from st. *koṣṭha*) associated with the hands (Tamil *kai*). See also CEC 26 in table 2.

and death of one of the *Tēvāram* hymnists, Campantar. Two shrines dedicated to Campantar were active in the twelfth century in these two temple complexes which present inscriptions from the twelfth century onwards, and which are today administered by the Dharmapuram mutt. I will first present the poet Campantar (his work, legend and iconography) and then I will concentrate on the two sites of Cīrkālī and Āccālpuram using available textual and archaeological data.

### 1. THE POET CAMPANTAR

A portrait of Campantar may be drawn from two main types of data, texts and sculpted tradition.

The first three books of the *Tēvāram* containing 385 hymns are attributed to Campantar.<sup>6</sup> Among these poems 67 are dedicated to Cīrkālī and one to Āccālpuram. The hymns attributed to Campantar are characterised by a fixed structure.<sup>7</sup> Contrary to the other two authors of the *Tēvāram*, Campantar is said to have used refined and complex literary figures (Veluppillai 2013: 37–43). His ‘signature’ in the last stanza of the hymn contains some indications about his identity. We learn that Campantar is a brahmin of the *kaunḍinyagotra*, hails from Kālī (Cīrkālī), knows the *Veda* and is an expert in Tamil. In the poems attributed to Appar and Cuntarar, Campantar is mainly described as a Tamil poet from Cīrkālī.

The legend of Campantar was shaped in several texts in the eleventh–twelfth centuries and was fixed in the twelfth century in the *Periyapurāṇam*, the hagiography of the 63 Śaiva devotees, composed by Cēkkiḷār. In this work 1256 stanzas, which amount to more than one quarter of the entire

<sup>6</sup> For a critical study of the hymns attributed to Campantar which celebrate Cīrkālī or which contain autobiographical references, see Veluppillai (2013: 54–64; 129–131).

<sup>7</sup> In 90% of poems of 11 stanzas, the 8<sup>th</sup> stanza is dedicated to the myth of Rāvaṇa lifting the Kailāsa, the 9<sup>th</sup> stanza depicts the myth of Liṅgodbhava where Viṣṇu and Brahmā have to recognise the supremacy of Śiva, the 10<sup>th</sup> stanza is a severe critique of the Jains and of the Buddhists and the 11<sup>th</sup> and the last stanza is the final protection (*tirukaṭaikkāppu*) containing the ‘signature’ of Campantar. Among the 385 *Tēvāram* hymns attributed to Campantar 42 contain 10 stanzas and 13 have 12 stanzas. The remaining poems are made up of six (III.24), seven (I.81; III.100), eight (III.50 and 99) and nine (I.106; III.33 and 36) stanzas.

text, describe the *purāṇam* of Campantar. According to this Tamil composition Campantar was born in a brahmin family of Cīrkālī. At the age of three he obtained divine knowledge by drinking the milk of Pārvatī and started singing poems celebrating the glory of Śiva (st. 1952–1996).

His legend is organised around six pilgrimages. The first one is to Kōlakkā (st. 1998–2003), to the North-West of Cīrkālī.<sup>8</sup> The second and the third pilgrimages (st. 2010–2025) are, like the first one, very short and took place to the South-Est of Cīrkālī, including for example Nanipalli, Talaiccaṅkāṭu and Veṅkāṭu. During the fourth pilgrimage (st. 2040–2153), Campantar goes to Tillai (Chidambaram) and its surroundings, then comes down to the West in the region of Cēyñālūr, etc. The fifth pilgrimage is longer in time and distance (st. 2177–2848). It covers the areas of Trichy, and sites like Āvaṭuturai, Mayilāṭuturai, Ārūr and Maraikāṭu, and finally Ālavāy (Madurai). The sixth and last pilgrimage (st. 2860–3043) is to the North of Cīrkālī: in Tiruvaṅṅāmalai, in Kāñcīpuram and in Mayilāpuri (Chennai). So according to the *Periyapurāṇam*, Campantar walked through the entire Tamil land and thus propagated Tamil Śaiva Bhakti in this territory with his hymns.

During his different pilgrimages his poems created miracles. He saved lives, fed people, cured patients, closed the temple doors opened by Appar, etc. And in Madurai his hymns defeated the Jains and converted the Pāṇḍya king to Śaivism. Finally, on the day of his wedding in Āccālpuram he entered, along with the bride and the guests, a pillar of light created by Śiva and attained the feet of this god.

Campantar is often represented as a child playing cymbals or as a child dancing like Kṛṣṇa. His finger points to the sky whereas the hand of the dancing Kṛṣṇa makes the *abhayamudrā* (Dehejia 1987; Lefèvre 2001).

The earliest available representation of Campantar in stone can be dated to the middle of the tenth century and is located on the southern wall of the Vasiṣṭheśvara temple in Karantai, near Tañcāvūr (Tanjore). The study of the epigraphical corpus of this temple and the location of

<sup>8</sup> Kōlakkā is at 12 minutes walking distance from Cīrkālī (see Barnoud-Sethupathy 1994: 47–48). According to the legend of Campantar Śiva gave him cymbals there to beat the rhythm.



Fig. 14.1. Campantar playing cymbals, south face, Vasiṣṭheśvara temple in Karuntaṭṭānkuṭi (photo by U. Veluppillai, 2011).



Fig. 14.2. Appar holding a hoe, south face, Vasiṣṭheśvara temple in Karuntaṭṭānkuṭi (photo by U. Veluppillai, 2011).



the image on the wall in relation to the inscriptions framing the image allow me to date the image of Campantar between 909 and 1015 (Veluppillai 2013: 187–189). On the south wall of the main shrine, *pradakṣiṇa*-wise, there are a *liṅga*, Campantar playing cymbals (fig. 14.1), a dancing Śiva (so-called Naṭarāja), Appar in the forest (fig. 14.2) and a Bhikṣāṭana walking in the pine forest.<sup>9</sup> The images of Śiva are two or three times taller than those of the poets. I suggest that Appar and the mendicant Śiva are linked to each other through the theme of the forest and that Campantar and the dancing Śiva are linked through the theme



Fig. 14.3. Child Campantar holding a cup, Musée Guimet, Inv.-no. EG 2144 (photo by C. Schmid, 2015).

of the music. With the exception of their distinctive attributes, hoe and cymbals, Appar and Campantar are wearing the same ornaments, the same dress and are of the same size and proportion. They are standing and wearing a *kaupīna*, loin-cloth worn by adult figures.<sup>10</sup> Their hair-dress is a tonsure and the only ornaments they wear are ear-pendants, rosaries (on the forehead and neck), arm-bands and bracelets. There are no attributes, jewels or any other marks that characterise the image of Campantar as one of a child. When Campantar is represented as a child he is naked, wears a specific belt and sometimes the *channavīra*, as in a bronze sculpture from Musée Guimet (fig. 14.3). Because of the resemblance of the Campantar

<sup>9</sup> Appar is standing near a small *liṅga* and holds a hoe. In the background vegetation (plants, trees) indicates that he is in the wild. In the case of the image of Bhikṣāṭana vegetation is not represented but the presence of a woman at his side illustrates the episode of his walking in the pine forest and seducing the sages' wives.

<sup>10</sup> Wearing the *kaupīna* is a distinctive feature of the medieval *śaivācāryas* of Eastern India (Chattopadhyay 2013). I would like to thank A. Griffiths for pointing me out this study.

of Karantai to the image of Appar, I propose that this earliest available image of Campantar in stone depicted him as an adult like Appar. On this ground, I suggest that the legend of the child Campantar is not definitely established at that time; several streams were in existence in the tenth century before one of them took over. It is worth noting that in this pioneer site in the representation of Campantar and Appar, where there are two royal donations (SII 5, Nos. 1405 and 1409), there is no mention of the singing of the *tiruppatikam* (Tamil Bhakti hymns) in the epigraphical corpus. Moreover, Karantai is not one of the sites celebrated in the *Tēvāram*.

In epigraphy, the first reference available and datable to an image of Campantar is found in an inscription engraved on the Bṛhadīśvara of Tanjore (SII 2, No. 38) that mentions a donation of seven copper images by the chief manager of the royal temple at the beginning of the eleventh century. Campantar is referred to by the name *Tiruñānacampantaṭikaḷ* (l. 25). He is described as having two arms and adorned with jewels including a belt (*tiruppatikai*, l. 26), which is a specific ornament of women and children. Thus it seems that the earliest image donated in a royal temple is a representation of Campantar as child. Does it suggest that the Bhakti, expressed through this donation in a royal context, honoured this devotional figure once his legend as a child conqueror in the name of Śaivism was formed? By giving the image of the child Campantar the donor, i.e. the king's manager, did not install the figure of an adult poet but that of a child who is a Śaiva leader.

After the twelfth century references to Campantar images become more common in epigraphy and particularly in sites linked to his hagiography. Shrines and monasteries were dedicated to him.<sup>11</sup> Campantar appears from that time onwards as one of the main figures of the Tamil Śaiva Bhakti textual tradition in medieval Tamil Nadu.

In the following two sections I will investigate the involvement of the ruling power in the development of this tradition by studying the patronage of two famous *pāṭal perṛa talams* which are the places of the birth and death of Campantar according to his legend.

<sup>11</sup> See Swamy (1972: 113–115), Vēṅkaṭarāmaiya (2005), and Veluppillai (2013: 184–187).

## 2. CĪRKĀLI, THE BIRTH PLACE OF CAMPANTAR

Cīrkāli is celebrated in 71 hymns of the *Tēvāram*. Among these, 67 are attributed to Campantar, three to Appar and one to Cuntarar. Traditionally Cīrkāli is glorified under 12 names which are Piramapuram, Vēṅupuram, Pukali, Veṅkuru, Tōṅipuram, Tarāy, Cirapuram, Puṛavam, Caṅpai, Cīrkāli, Koccai and Kaḷumalam.<sup>12</sup>

Today the city is called Cīrkāli and the *liṅga* Brahmapureśvara. In the inscriptions found in the Śiva temple the *liṅga* was called Uṭaiyār Tōṅipuramuṭaiyār and the city Kaḷumalam. After the thirteenth century we sometimes find the name Cīkālī or Kālī for the city. Kaḷumalam is a *brahmadeya* of the Kaḷumalanāṭu which is in the regional division of Rājādhiraṅṅaḷanāṭu.<sup>13</sup> So, only three names out of these twelve toponyms appeared in medieval historical data: Cīkālī, Kaḷumalam and Tōṅipuram.

Three shrines form this temple complex: one is dedicated to Śiva, one to Campantar (both of them date from the twelfth century) and one to the goddess (which I propose to date after the seventeenth century<sup>14</sup>). A monastery was functioning in the thirteenth century. It was named after Campantar<sup>15</sup> and was situated to the north of the temple (SII 8, No. 205 and ARE 1918, No. 10). It is never expressly named in the inscriptions of Cīrkāli but several epigraphs mention chiefs, lands and gardens belonging to the monastery.<sup>16</sup>

<sup>12</sup> On the foundation myth related to each of the twelve toponyms, on their historicity and on the question regarding the interpolation of some hymns containing these twelve names, see Velupillai (2013: chapter 3).

<sup>13</sup> A *brahmadeya* is land given to brahmins and administered locally by them through an assembly (*sabhā*); cf. Karashima (2001 [1966]), Stein (1980: chap. 4), Champakalakshmi (2004 [2001]) on the particular cases of *brahmadeya* called *taṅṅiyūr* and Veluthat (1993: 196–211) for a study including the present Kerala. On the geography and the political division of the Cōlanāṭu, cf. Subbarayalu (1973).

<sup>14</sup> See Velupillai (2013: 347).

<sup>15</sup> The monastery was precisely named Tirumuṛaittēvāraccelvaṅ, “the fortunate of the *Tēvāram* of the *Tirumuṛai*.” Because most of the monasteries were named after the *mūvars* (Swamy 1972: 113–118) and because Cīrkāli is the birth place of Campantar, I think that the designation Tirumuṛaittēvāraccelvaṅ is qualifying Campantar.

<sup>16</sup> Cf. in table 1 CEC 6, 17 and 21. According to the information I gathered from the temple office there used, until about 60 years ago, to be a monastery in front of the

The Cīrkāli epigraphical corpus (CEC) I present comprises a total of 55 inscriptions (ARE 1896, Nos. 123–125; ARE 1918, Nos. 360–401; SII 12, Nos. 210–211, 252–253; SII 5, Nos. 988–990), only seven of which have been published.<sup>17</sup> Mahalingam (1992: 547–554) collected the summaries from the ARE and the SII for 32 inscriptions and tried to date them precisely. I review the date of 37 epigraphs from the twelfth to the end of the sixteenth century (see tables 1 and 2). The corpus is dated with the regnal years of monarchs of various dynasties: the Cōlas (from Kulottuṅga II to Rājarāja III), the Pāṇḍyas (Māvarman Vikrama Pāṇḍya IV), the late Kāṭavars proclaiming themselves as Pallavas (Kōpperuñciṅkaṅ II) and the Vijayanagara kings (Viruppaṅṇa, Kṛṣṇadeva and Veṅkaṭadeva).

### 2.1. THE ŚIVA TEMPLE

All the inscriptions of the Śiva temple are found today on the walls and base of the *maṇḍapa*, the *prākāra*, the inner gallery and the *gopura*.<sup>18</sup> The earliest inscription dates to 1184 (CEC 1) under the reign of Kulottuṅga III and the last one is a Vijayanagara inscription of 1598 (CEC 23). It is worth noting that there is not a single inscription on the wall of the main shrine. It is possible that originally there were inscriptions engraved there and that during some hypothetical renovation before the twelfth century they disappeared.<sup>19</sup> Moreover, Cīrkāli is associated with the myth of the deluge (Shulman 1980: 58–59 and Veluppillai 2013: chapter 3) and is situated at twelve miles from the coast. A flood might have destroyed a temple constructed in perishable materials.<sup>20</sup> In any case there is no archaeological

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northern *gopura* which was run by a disciple of the Dharmapuram monastery. No trace of it remains today.

<sup>17</sup> The CEC gathers 37 inscriptions that I present according to a possible chronology and 18 fragments. The texts of all these 55 inscriptions has been edited in Veluppillai (2013: chapter 7).

<sup>18</sup> Behind the main *sanctum* there is today a two-storeyed building of the eighteenth–nineteenth century housing Śiva-Tōṇiyappar on the first floor and Śiva-Caṭṭainātar on the second.

<sup>19</sup> See Branfoot (2013: 23) who considers “the temple renovations – and specifically the replacement of the *vimāna* – as an ongoing process of remaking the past” in South India.

<sup>20</sup> During the tsunami of 2004 many small temples of the coast were badly damaged and the flood inundated Cīrkāli.

trace or epigraphical reference to a renovation conducted before, or even after, the twelfth century.

There is no royal donation. The king is mainly mentioned with his regnal year for dating the inscriptions. Even though the king is mentioned in four inscriptions, he is not directly involved in the transaction recorded. In the first occurrence, in the thirteenth century Rājarāja III sent an order to auction the lands of traitors and his *meykkīrtti* is engraved (CEC 7 and 8).<sup>21</sup> Secondly, in the fourteenth century, a devoted subject of the Pāṇḍya country installed images of the king Māṛavarman Vikrama Pāṇḍya IV and his queen and established their cult (CEC 6). Then, in the fifteenth century, a person named Kōṇeridevamahārāja from Kāñcīpuram gave the order to restore the practice of giving the village taxes to the treasury of the temple (CEC 20). Finally, in the sixteenth century, an inscription records the *biruda* of Viṭṭhaladevamahārāja (CEC 24<sup>22</sup>). Thus, the king or his family did not donate to this temple.

The main donors are local people. They belong to villages situated in a perimeter of 20 to 25 kilometres around Cīrkāli. Among these donors were an officer from Paḷaiyanūr who gave two lamps (CEC 1), a landlord from Karuppūr, also the representative of palanquin bearers, who gave lands to provide betel leaves and areca nuts (CEC 2), a group of men from Veṅṅaiyūrṇāṭu belonging to the coastal army who gave a lamp (CEC 3), a woman and her daughter from Paḷaiyanūr who gave lands to make a flower garden (CEC 4), a brahmin from Nālūr who gave lands to make a flower garden (CEC 10), a landlord from Āṇāṅkūr who gave lands for the same purpose (CEC 11), the temple employees who gave to the *paṭimattār* of a Cāttaṅ temple in order to bring the image of Cāttaṅ in procession to the sea (CEC 12), a landlord from Kūṭalūr who gave lands to feed Śiva (CEC 13) and a man from Uyyakkoṅṭārvaḷaṅṇāṭu who gave land (CEC 14).<sup>23</sup>

<sup>21</sup> This *meykkīrtti* is unpublished. I could not reconstruct the text as it is badly damaged and the stones have been reset in disorder during the renovation of the wall.

<sup>22</sup> I did not find this inscription *in situ* and the rubbings are not available in Mysore. So we have to rely only on the ARE summary where it is stated that the inscription records the *biruda* and the genealogy of the king Viṭṭhaladevamahārāja.

<sup>23</sup> The status of this donor is not clear. The transaction also involves the landlord of CEC 13. The mention of a tutor (*mutukan*, l. 5) suggests that the donor may belong to a lower caste.

So, on the one hand, the study of the inscriptions of Śiva temple makes clear that patronage is the exclusive affair of local people, natives of places near Cīrkāli. Not a single king made any donation to the temple. The figure of the ruling power did make a little appearance through royal eulogies and orders (CEC 7 and 8); nevertheless the king, or his entourage, did not participate in the patronage of this temple, in promoting, in any way, Tamil Bhakti. The mentions of the kings in this temple (CEC 6, 7, 8, 20 and 24) remained in the political, territorial and administrative fields and did not indicate their faith nor their religious and devotional activities. On the other hand, it is striking that in the inscriptions of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries on the walls and bases of the Śiva temple, from CEC 1 to CEC 14, there is absolutely nothing which can be related to the tradition of Tamil Śaiva Bhakti (cult of the saints, singing of Tamil hymns, etc.). Are these features to be related to the fact that there was in the twelfth century, at 50 metres distance, a shrine dedicated to Campantar?

## 2.2. THE CAMPANTAR TEMPLE

All the available inscriptions of the Campantar shrine are on the walls and base of the main shrine, on the base of the *maṇḍapa* and on the *prākāra*. The earliest inscription dates from 1135 (CEC 25) under the reign of Kulottuṅga II—it is the earliest inscription still available in the entire temple complex—and the last one is an inscription of 1219 (CEC 35).

As in the Śiva temple there is no involvement of kings here either. No donations to this temple were even made by any king or member of the royal family. The main donors are brahmin village assemblies (*sabhās*). Indeed, the assembly of Kaḷumalam, i.e. Cīrkāli, gave lands to feed Campantar with milk rice (CEC 25); then it gave lands to open the place where manuscripts of the *Tirumuṟai* were kept, to replace the damaged ones and to put in new manuscripts—this work had to be done by an expert in Tamil (CEC 26);<sup>24</sup> finally, the assembly of Kaḷumalam gave lands for the music teachers of

<sup>24</sup> The ARE 1918, No. 381 presents the following summary: “gift of land for setting up images (?) and restoring those that had been already set up and had suffered damage.” Because of the misreading of the ARE this inscriptions has been neglected. There is in this epigraph the earliest extant mention of the word “*tirumuṟai*” (cf. Velupillai 2013: 139–143).

the village who were linked to the Campantar temple (CEC 36). Other *sabhās* also sponsored this shrine. The assembly of Talaiccaṅkāṭu gave land to feed Campantar with milk rice (CEC 27), the assembly of Tiruvālināṭu exchanged lands to feed him with milk rice (CEC 29) and the assembly of Kulōttuṅkacōlaccaruppetimaṅkalam, in Āccālpuram, gave land to establish a flower garden on his behalf (CEC 28).

Nevertheless a few private individuals also appear in the inscriptions of Campantar shrine: a donor belonging to the *parikkirakam* (a group carrying out the protection of the village) from Vīracōlanallūr in Kaḷumalam gave land to feed the image of Maṅkaiyarkkaraci<sup>25</sup> installed in Campantar temple (CEC 30); a landlord from Veṇmaṇi gave land to feed Campantar daily, on auspicious days and during the annual festival (CEC 31); and a donor from Kaṅkaikoṇṭacōlapuram gave money to repair the enclosure of Campantar temple (CEC 35).

Through the study of the inscriptions of the Campantar shrine it is again evident that the patronage of the Tamil Śaiva Bhakti tradition here is conducted by the locality and particularly by the brahmin assemblies in the surroundings of Cīrkāli.

I suppose that the temples of Śiva and Campantar were separated originally with a distinctive administration and a distinct “public” and that they were brought together after the fourteenth century. Indeed up to that period the inscriptions of the Śiva temple do not mention the Campantar shrine and vice-versa. After the fourteenth century the inscriptions are only engraved on the Śiva temple even if they record a donation to the Campantar shrine. The donors are still local. They are mainly brahmins who worked or lived near the temple. For example in an inscription of 1393 (CEC 17), a piece of land of 60 *vēlis*<sup>26</sup> is divided into seven parts: one to Campantar, one to a initiate named Aruṇagiriśiva, one to an officiant, one to the head of the monastery, one to another officiant and one to a watchman.

<sup>25</sup> Maṅkaiyarkkaraci is one of the 63 Śaiva devotees. According to the legend she is originally a Cōḷa princess who married a Pāṇḍya king. She is one of the rare ‘royal Bhakti’ figures found in the *Campantar purāṇam*.

<sup>26</sup> A *vēli* is a land measurement equivalent to 20 *mās*. The size of land here, 60 *vēlis*, corresponds generally to the extent of an entire village (Karashima 2009: 69).

The study of the epigraphical corpus of temple complex of Cīrkālī, the birth place of Campantar, underlines the importance of local patrons and local devotional communities in the development of the temple in the medieval period. The administrative officers and powerful landlords endowed the Śiva temple whereas the local brahmin assemblies donated to the Campantar shrine. The development of the Tamil Śaiva Bhakti in Cīrkālī temple depended only on local Bhakti while the royal *bhaktas* are absent. What is the configuration in Āccālpuram, the place where Campantar attained liberation?

### 3. ĀCCĀLPURAM, THE PLACE OF CAMPANTAR'S DEATH

In the *Tēvāram* corpus only hymn III.125 attributed to Campantar is dedicated to the site of Āccālpuram which was called Nallūrperumaṇam or Perumaṇanallūr. According to the *Periyapurāṇam* (st. 3053–3153), Campantar agreed to marry the daughter of Nampāṇṭār Nampi, a brahmin from Perumaṇanallūr. On the wedding day, while circumambulating the fire, Campantar wanted to reach the feet of Śiva. Campantar and his wife then went to the temple. As Campantar sang, the temple disappeared and Śiva appeared in the form of a pillar of light asking Campantar and his guests to go into the light to attain him. Campantar sang again and invited his guests to get into the light. Once everybody had entered the light, Campantar, holding his wife's hand, walked around the pillar of light and went in. The pillar disappeared and the temple re-appeared as it was before.<sup>27</sup>

The temple is situated at approximately 10 kilometres north-east of Cīrkālī. Nineteen inscriptions have been registered and summarised (ARE 1918, Nos. 522–540; table 3, below). Out of these, eight have been recently published in *Āvaṇam* by Vijayavenugopal et al. (2010; 2013). The inscriptions are engraved on the southern, western and northern base of the main shrine, on the southern wall of the *maṇḍapa*, on the first *prākāra* and on a slab near the *dhvajastambha*. The earliest inscription dates from 1121 (AEC 1) under the reign of Vikrama Cōla and the last one is an inscription of 1682 under the Maratha Ekoji I (AEC 19).

<sup>27</sup> The celebration of Campantar's wedding and his fusion with the divine used to be celebrated during the annual temple festival in Āccālpuram. In May 2005 I observed this event, which has not been celebrated for the past few years due to financial restrictions.



Today the city is called Āccālpuram and the *liṅga* Śivalokatyāgeśa. In the inscriptions, the *liṅga* is called Uṭaiyār Tiruperumaṇamuṭaiyār and the village Pañcavaṇ Mātēvi alias Kulōttuṅkacōlacaruppetimaṅkalam in the Veṅṅaiyūrṇāṭu.<sup>28</sup>

The temple complex contains two main shrines: one for Śiva, datable to the twelfth century, and one for the goddess which can be dated after the thirteenth century (AEC 11). Even though the inscriptions mention a separate shrine for Campantar and his wife Cokkiyār in the twelfth century (AEC 13),<sup>29</sup> the small superstructure situated in front of the Śiva temple today is a very recent one. It seems that the ancient shrine, if this is really its original location, has been entirely remade. The epigraphical data also contain information about a monastery (AEC 8) in the beginning of the twelfth century named Paracamayaḷari after Campantar with reference to his hostility towards heretics (AEC 1).

In studying the Āccālpuram epigraphical corpus (AEC) in table 3, it appears that the kings were not much involved in its patronage. Indeed, apart from their mentions in the regnal year for dating the inscriptions, the kings are mentioned only four times. The *meykkīrtti* of Kulottuṅga II is recorded in AEC 2 but the registered transaction does not depend on the ruling power. Even though AEC 4 and 6 register the *meykkīrtti* of Rājādhiraḷa II, the recorded transaction deals with an order of the local brahmin assembly to reduce several taxes applied to the temple lands. The engraving of a *meykkīrtti* does not signify that the king is involved in the transaction. It may just be a way to give importance and prestige to local transactions.<sup>30</sup> The unique direct involvement of the king seems to be recorded in AEC 3 which registers a royal order, executed by the assembly, to cancel taxes on temple lands. The kings did not personally donate to the temple. Then, two cases of indirect involvement of the royal authority can be traced through the intervention of its scribes, *tirumantira ōlai*, not as donors but as administrative representatives: Malaiyappiyarāyaṅ who

<sup>28</sup> The assembly of this brahmin village is among the donors to the Campantar temple of Cīrkāḷi (CEC 28).

<sup>29</sup> It seems that AEC 13 is the most ancient source which gives the name of the wife of Campantar. The *Periyapurāṇam* does not mention it.

<sup>30</sup> See Francis & Schmid (2010).

worked under Rājādhiraīa II (AEC 5) and Neriyuṭaiccōlamūventavēḷāṅ who was active under Kulottuṅga III and Rājarāja III (AEC 11).<sup>31</sup>

The donors are generally local people. A certain Pirutukaṅkāyār from Purakkuṭi gave land to feed and worship dancing Śiva (AEC 9 and 10). A landlord from Nerkuṅṅram constructed the goddess' shrine and gave it a piece of land. Several military officers made a grant of land to the temple (AEC 19).

The brahmin village assembly of Kulottuṅgacōlacaturvedimaṅgalam alias Paṅcavaṅ Mādevi appears to be one of the main promoters of Tamil Śaiva Bhakti in this temple. This assembly gave lands to conduct the procession of Campantar and his wife Cokkiyār in Tiruveṅkāṭu, Tiruṅṅpaḷḷi, Tiruvākkur and Perumpaṅṅrapuliyūr in AEC 13. Two other inscriptions register grants made to Campantar.<sup>32</sup> The assembly of Parākramacōlacaturvedimaṅgalam gave land to feed Śaiva devotees in the Campantar monastery called Parasamayakōlari (AEC 1). A local individual from Kulottuṅgacōlacaturvedimaṅgalam gave land to establish a flower garden for Campantar's shrine (AEC 7). In short, the patronage of Campantar's temple and monastery was principally conducted by very local agents such as the local political authority, the village assembly of Kulottuṅgacōlacaturvedimaṅgalam and a private individual from this same village.

According to the available data, there is no differentiation between the categories of donors in this temple as in Cīrkāḷi, but it is obvious that here too the patronage of the site was very local. Kings were not involved in this patronage.

## CONCLUSIONS

In secondary literature, as quoted in the introduction, the Cōḷa kings are described as having taken the lead in the development of the Tamil Śaiva Bhakti textual tradition in temple context. Indeed, the ruling power is said

<sup>31</sup> See also CEC 7 in table 1.

<sup>32</sup> Without any proof I can only suppose that, like in Cīrkāḷi, inscriptions recording grants to Campantar could have been engraved on the ancient shrine of Campantar.

to have established the ritual singing of the hymns, the worship of the saints in temples, the compilation of the Tamil Śaiva canon, the *Tirumurai* and to have rebuilt temples which have been hymned. This common opinion is mainly based on three arguments: the concentration of *Tēvāram* temples in the Cōlanāṭu, the exceptional royal temple inscriptions of Tanjore and the text of the *Tirumuraikaṇṭapurāṇam*, “legend of the formation of the *Tirumurai*.” 70% of the *Tēvāram* hymns celebrate temples situated in the Cōlanāṭu, which corresponds to the delta of the Kāvēri river: 556 hymns sing the glory of Śiva in 191 temples concentrated in the Cōlanāṭu, a political and administrative territorial division named after the dynasty. The systematic use of the dynastic label “Cōla” in secondary literature to qualify many different artistic and religious productions and activities that occurred in the region of the Kāvēri river during the reign of the Cōla dynasty, such as “Cōla bronzes,” “Cōla temples,” etc. is one of the reasons that brought in the commonplace of crediting the Cōla kings with the patronage of artistic and religious developments of this era. But, it has been demonstrated that Cōla kings were far from being the leaders in the construction or patronage of temples (Kaimal 1996 and Orr 2007: 118–119). Although the patronage of Tamil Śaivism conducted by Rājarāja I Cōla is obvious in the royal temple of Tanjore at the beginning of the eleventh century,<sup>33</sup> it remains an exceptional practice. The Tanjore manifestation of royal devotion has however been the principal argument used in secondary literature to identify the king of the *Tirumuraikaṇṭapurāṇam* as Rājarāja I. The *Tirumuraikaṇṭapurāṇam* narrates the legend of the compilation by a Cōla king of the Tamil canon, the *Tirumurai*. This text is attributed to an Umāpati from Chidambaram and is dated to the fourteenth century.<sup>34</sup>

<sup>33</sup> Inscriptions of the Bṛhadiśvara temple in Tanjore record the installation of the images of the three *Tēvāram* poets (SII 2, No. 38), the employment of 48 singers of Tamil hymns (SII 2, No. 65), and the installation of the images of Śaiva devotees (*nāyanmārs*) like Caṇḍeśa (SII 2, No. 29), Meypporuḷ (SII 2, No. 40) and Ciṛuttoṅṭar (SII 2, No. 43). A few narrative panels represent the legend of Kaṇṇappār and Caṇḍeśa.

<sup>34</sup> The *Tirumuraikaṇṭapurāṇam* narrates how Nampi Āṇṭār Nampi, patronised by a king named Rājarāja Abhayakulaśekhara, found the manuscripts of the texts in Chidambaram and compiled them into a corpus. See Rangaswamy (1990 [1958]: 19–24), Veḷḷaivāraṇaṅ (1994: 9–15), Gros (2001: 23–24), Prentiss who analysed the creation of the canon (2001a) and translated the text (2001b), and Veluppillai (2013: 136–143) for a historical discussion of the text.

There are no historical sources that permit to affirm that “the collection and organization of the hymns and the ritual of hymn-singing in temples were also made under direct royal initiative and patronage” (Champakalakshmi 1996: 73). Based on CEC 26, I argue that we do not need in the twelfth century a divine intervention nor a royal support to find in a room of the temple a corpus named *Tirumurai* which was locked in and eaten by ants. Here, the local brahmin assembly gave the order to a Tamil expert to clean, copy and reset the *Tirumurai* manuscripts. And thus, it participated to the preservation and the transmission of this textual tradition.

Contrary to what might be expected from two famous places of Tamil Śaiva Bhakti deeply linked with Campantar’s legend and cult, we are dealing here with local temples and local donors. The kings seem to have stayed out of the cult of the saint Campantar and of the ritual of hymn singing in these two sites whereas, in contrast, brahmins, through the authority of the village assemblies, were very active. It is surprising to read that “the Cōlas kings enlarged and rebuilt extant Śiva shrines and built great structural temples in stone, particularly in the places visited by the Nāyaṅārs” (Peterson 1989: 14) when in the places of birth and death of one of the *Tēvāram* hymnists there is no kind of royal involvement in the religious activities of the temples.

The twelfth century appears to be a turning point in the history of the cult of the Śaiva devotees with the elaboration of the *Periyapurāṇam*. This text might have brought a kind of “boosting” to this cult and to the hymns which the *bhaktas* are supposed to have composed, as is observable in CEC 26. And it seems that, since the twelfth century, local actors, here predominantly the brahmin village assemblies, supported and promoted Tamil Śaiva Bhakti freshly celebrated in the *Periyapurāṇam*, a new masterpiece on the legends of Śaiva saints. As the ruling power was absent in the patronage of these two sites, local authorities by associating themselves with patronage of these places sacred to Campantar, and so by protecting these religious institutions, might have tried to gain some kind of prestige and to strengthen their position in the society.

## APPENDIX: TABLES OF THE EPIGRAPHICAL CORPORA OF CĪRKĀLI AND ĀCCĀLPURAM

The summaries in these tables are mine. In tables 1 and 2, I present 37 out of the 55 recorded inscriptions of the CĪrkāli epigraphical corpus (CEC) in a probable chronological order on each part of the temple complex (Śiva's temple: *maṇḍapa*, *prākāra* and inner gallery; Campantar's temple: main shrine, *maṇḍapa* and *prākāra*). In my thesis I edited and translated or, when that was not possible, summarised the inscriptions (see Veluppillai 2013: chapter 7).

In table 3, I present in a chronological order the summaries of the Āccālpuram epigraphical corpus (AEC). This work is based on the different publications, on a reading *in situ* and on the photographs taken by the EFEO in 2006 and myself in 2013.

TABLE 1. THE CĪRKĀLI EPIGRAPHICAL CORPUS, ŚIVA TEMPLE.<sup>35</sup>

	Location	Reference	Date & Summary
CEC 1	Śiva's temple <i>maṇḍapa</i> , southern wall.	ARE 1918 No. 363	6 <sup>th</sup> RY of Kulottuṅga III, i.e. 1184 CE. Grant of land to provide daily oil for two lamps for/at the Tōṇipuramuṭaiyār (Śiva) temple. The donor is Vāṇātirāyaṇ alias Karuṇākaratevaṇ Vetavanamuṭaiyāṇ, an administrative agent and a landlord from Paḷaiyaṇūr in the Melmalaippaḷaiyanūrṇātu of the Jeyaṅkoṭṭacoḷamaṇṭalam. <sup>36</sup>
CEC 2	Śiva's temple <i>maṇḍapa</i> , southern wall?	ARE 1918 No. 360	7 <sup>th</sup> RY of Kulottuṅga III, i.e. 1185 CE. Grant of land to provide daily and forever betel leaves and areca nuts to the divine couple. The donor is Utaiyañceytāṇ Tāḷi alias Coḷentiraciṅka Viḷupparayaṇ, a landlord of Karuppūr. He assumed the function of <i>cāmutāyam</i> , <sup>37</sup> representative of palanquin bearers.

<sup>35</sup> For the proper names presented in the three tables I reproduce the spelling found in the epigraphical texts themselves, that is, for instance, I do not restore *ē* and *ō* where expected.

<sup>36</sup> On the identification and the career of this donor see Veluppillai (2013: 231–233).

<sup>37</sup> On the meaning of the word *cāmutāyam* see Veluppillai (2013: 237–238).

	Location	Reference	Date & Summary
CEC 3	Śiva's temple <i>maṇḍapa</i> , northern basement.	ARE 1896 No. 125 ARE 1918 No. 365 SII 5 No. 990	9 <sup>th</sup> RY of Kulottuṅga III, i.e. 1187 CE. Grant of land to maintain a perpetual lamp offered to the divine couple. The donors are from Veṅṅaiyūrṅaṭu and belong to the costal army.
CEC 4	Śiva's temple <i>maṇḍapa</i> , northern and western walls.	ARE 1896 No. 124 ARE 1918 No. 364 SII 5 No. 989	14 <sup>th</sup> RY of Kulottuṅga III, i.e. 1192 CE. Grant of five lands to establish flower gardens for Śiva. The donors are the daughter and the grand-daughter of Jenanātakarṅpakam Araiyaṅ, a landlord of Āṅṅānkūrkkunṅram in the Naṭuvilnāṭu alias Irājarājavaḷanāṭu. They are, respectively, Etirilāpperumāl, the wife of Uṭaiya Nāyakaṅ, a landlord of Vetavaṅam and Paḷaiyaṅūr, and Umaiyaḷvi, the wife of Tiruvekampamuṭaiyaṅ Nāyaṅ, a landlord of Perumpūr.
CEC 5	Śiva's temple <i>maṇḍapa</i> , southern wall.	ARE 1918 No. 362	17 <sup>th</sup> RY of Rājarāja III (?), i.e. 1233 CE (?) Damaged. Gift of a golden vessel ( <i>vaṭṭil</i> ) to offer drinking water to Śiva. The donor's name is missing in the lacuna, but the transaction is connected to the brahmin community ( <i>paṭṭar</i> ).
CEC 6	Śiva's temple <i>maṇḍapa</i> , southern basement?	ARE 1918 No. 366	6 <sup>th</sup> RY of Māravarman Vikrama Pāṅḍya IV, i.e. 1339 CE. Grant of land made by Uṭaiyaṅāyakaṅ, a landlord of Eṭṭirāma Poṅparri of Naṭuvilkūrṅru in the Miḷalaikkūrṅram (Pāṅṭimaṅṭalam), for the images of Uṭaiyaṅ Irācākkāyaṅāṅār (the king Māravarman Vikrama Pāṅḍya IV) and of Marakataccokkiyaṅār (the queen) he installed on the border of the temple sacred tank. The gift was meant to worship these images, to maintain a garden named after the king's image name, for the brahmins and to feed <i>mābeśvaras</i> (devotees) who may come to eat at the monastery.

	Location	Reference	Date & Summary
CEC 7	Śiva's temple <i>prākāra</i> , eastern wall.	ARE 1918 No. 392	8 <sup>th</sup> RY of Rājarāja III, i.e. 1224 CE. Starts with an unpublished Rājarāja III's <i>meykkīrtti: cīr maṇṇi malar makaḷum cī[...]c celviyum</i> . Then, it deals with a land forfeited and sold in auction (l. 7–11). Finally, a royal order re-recorded the transaction (l. 14). <sup>38</sup>
CEC 8	Śiva's temple <i>prākāra</i> , eastern wall.	ARE 1918 No. 393	8–10 <sup>th</sup> RY of Rājarāja III, i.e. 1224–1226 CE. Royal order to sale in auction lands forfeited from traitors (l. 1–5). Records the new <i>devadāna</i> status of lands belonging to the temple (l. 5–9).
CEC 9	Śiva's temple <i>prākāra</i> , northern wall.	ARE 1918 No. 393 <sup>39</sup>	10 <sup>th</sup> RY of Rājarāja III, i.e. 1226 CE. Records the new <i>devadāna</i> status of lands belonging to the temple.
CEC 10	Śiva's temple <i>prākāra</i> , northern wall.	ARE 1918 No. 390	18 <sup>th</sup> RY of Rājarāja III, Wednesday 11 <sup>th</sup> January 1234 CE. Grant of five lands for establishing a garden and providing flowers for Śiva. The donor is a brahmin from Nālūr named Mātevapaṭṭaṇ.
CEC 11	Śiva's temple <i>prākāra</i> , northern wall.	ARE 1918 No. 389	24 <sup>th</sup> RY of Rājarāja III, i.e. 1240 CE. Grant of land to establish a garden and provide flowers for Śiva. The donor is an administrative agent, Purriṭaṅkoṅṭāṇ Vayiranallūḷāṇ Araiyaṇ from Āṇāṅkūr in the Naṭuvilnāṭu.
CEC 12	Śiva's temple <i>prākāra</i> , southern wall.	ARE 1918 No. 391 SII 12 No. 253	Kōpperuñciṅkaṇ II, i.e. circa 1243 CE. Grant of land made by the Śiva temple employees to the <i>paṭimattār</i> of Cāttāṇ temple so that the latter might go procession to the sea.

<sup>38</sup> The identification of the “royal secretary” Neriyuṭaiccōḷamüventavēḷāṇ and a close study of his service have permitted me to identify the ruling king as Rājarāja III (Veluppillai 2013: 256–258).

<sup>39</sup> CEC 8 and CEC 9 have been reported together. Because CEC 9 is not the direct continuation of CEC 8 and because it is engraved on a different wall I consider it a different inscription and present it separately.

	Location	Reference	Date & Summary
CEC 13	Śiva's temple <i>prakāra</i> , eastern wall.	ARE 1918 No. 394 SII 12 No. 210	19 <sup>th</sup> RY of Kōpperuñciṅkaṅ II, Wednesday 24 <sup>th</sup> January 1263 CE. Grant of land to feed Śiva. The donor Tevarkaḷtevaṅ is a landlord from Kūṭalūr in the Jayakoṇṭacolaṅaṅaṭu.
CEC 14	Śiva's temple <i>prakāra</i> , eastern wall.	ARE 1918 No. 395 SII 12 No. 211	19 <sup>th</sup> RY of Kōpperuñciṅkaṅ II, i.e. 1263 CE. Grant of land. The donor is Iḷantevaṅ Poṅṅampalakkūttar Ciṅkaraṅaḷamuṭikavittān. <sup>40</sup>
CEC 15	Śiva's temple inner gallery, northern basement?	ARE 1918 No. 371	1384 CE. Damaged. Order from a brahmin, Tiruñānacampantaṅpaṭṭaṅ, addressed to those who planted areca trees to offer areca nuts.
CEC 16	Śiva's temple inner gallery, northern basement?	ARE 1918 No. 370	Friday 29 <sup>th</sup> December 1391 CE. Grant of land to give bath to Śiva and Campantar. The donor could be the signatory Tirumañcaṅamaḷakiyāṅ who is probably in charge of the bath.
CEC 17	Śiva's temple inner gallery, western basement?	ARE 1918 No. 373	1393 or 1394 CE. Grant of land that has to be shared in seven parts and given to Campantar, an initiate named Aruṅagirīśiva, Rāmanādha <i>bhaṭṭar</i> , the chief of the monastery Tiruñeṅimālikai, the priest Tiruñānacampantar <i>paṇṭitar</i> , the supervisor Kāḷikarpaka Kāśyapaṅ <i>bhaṭṭar</i> and to another person (the text is damaged). The donor may be Dharmmacāṅappaṭṭaṅ, the brahmin who gave the order to engrave the transaction on copper plates.
CEC 18	Śiva's temple inner gallery, southern basement?	ARE 1918 No. 400	Wednesday 6 <sup>th</sup> March 1398 CE. Deals with the constituting details of the salaries of the employees of the temple. The signatories are the temple officers ( <i>cikāriyam</i> , <i>paṭṭar</i> , <i>kaṅakku</i> , etc.).

<sup>40</sup> The donor of CEC 13 and his grant are mentioned.



	Location	Reference	Date & Summary
CEC 19	Śiva's temple inner gallery, western basement?	ARE 1918 No. 372	<i>Siddhārti varuṣam</i> . Grant of land to Śiva and Campantar. The signatories are a group of brahmins. They seem to be the donors ( <i>kuṭuttom</i> , l. 3).
CEC 20	Śiva's temple, <i>gopura</i> , northern wall.	ARE 1918 No. 396	Wednesday 29 <sup>th</sup> October 1488 CE. Order of Koneridevamahārāsa stipulating that the taxes of 42 <i>vēli</i> lands in several villages have to re-integrate the temple treasury as previously.
CEC 21	Śiva's temple, <i>gopura</i> , southern wall.	ARE 1918 No. 397	Friday 11 <sup>th</sup> April 1511 CE. Registers that the chief of the monastery gave out for rent lands belonging to the temple.
CEC 22	Śiva's temple, <i>gopura</i> , eastern inner basement.	ARE 1918 No. 399	circa 1535 CE. <sup>41</sup> Grant of land donated by Irāmappanāyakkar, son of Koṭal Vacavaṇanāyakkar, in order to offer, along with the food, different items ( <i>appam</i> , <i>vaṭai</i> ), areca nuts and betel leaves during the worship ( <i>canti</i> ) established in the name of the king Kṛṣṇarāyaṇ.
CEC 23	Śiva's temple, <i>gopura</i> , southeastern inner wall.	ARE 1918 No. 398	Monday 28 <sup>th</sup> August 1598 CE. Registers the installation of the image of Āpaduddhāraṇar <sup>42</sup> and a grant of land to give it the grand bath ( <i>mahābhiṣekam</i> ) for the merit of the <i>rājaṛṣi</i> Viṭṭaleśvaraccolakoṇār. The donor is missing in this damaged inscription.
CEC 24	Śiva's temple inner gallery, southern basement?	ARE 1918 No. 401	Sixteenth century. Records the titles ( <i>biruda</i> ) of the king Viṭṭhaladevamahārāja and describes his genealogy.

<sup>41</sup> The donor appears in an inscription of Tiruviṭaimarutūr (SII 23, No. 271) dated to 1535.

<sup>42</sup> Āpaduddhāraṇar is the name of the form of Bhairava who is actually the main attraction of Cirkālī temple. In Tamil he is called Caṭṭainātar because he wears Viṣṇu's skin as a coat (Velupillai 2013: 363–369).

TABLE 2. THE CĪRKĀLI EPIGRAPHICAL CORPUS, CAMPANTAR TEMPLE.

	Location	Reference	Date & Summary
CEC 25	Campantar's main temple, southern basement.	ARE 1918 No. 380	3 <sup>rd</sup> RY of Kulottuṅga II, Monday 19 <sup>th</sup> August 1135 CE. Grant of land to feed with milk rice Campantar (Āḷuṭaiṇṇaiyār). The donor is the brahmin village assembly ( <i>sabhā</i> ) of Kaḷumalam (Cīrkāli).
CEC 26	Campantar's main temple, southern wall.	ARE 1918 No. 381	4 <sup>th</sup> RY of Kulottuṅga II, <sup>43</sup> i.e. 1136 CE. Grant of land to re-open the <i>tirukkaikoṭṭi</i> of Campantar's shrine where were kept the manuscripts of the <i>Tirumuṟai</i> in order to replace the damaged pieces. The donor is the brahmin village assembly ( <i>sabhā</i> ) of Kaḷumalam.
CEC 27	Campantar's main temple, northern basement.	ARE 1918 No. 374	10 <sup>th</sup> RY of Kulottuṅga II, Wednesday 27 <sup>th</sup> January 1143 CE. Grant of land to feed with milk rice Campantar. The donor is a group belonging to the brahmin village assembly ( <i>mūlaparuṣai</i> ) of Talaiccaṅkāṭu in the Ākkūrṇāṭu.
CEC 28	Campantar's main temple, northern wall.	ARE 1918 No. 378	10 <sup>th</sup> RY of Kulottuṅga II, i.e. 1143 CE. Grant of land to establish a flower garden and to provide various offerings to Campantar. The donor is the brahmin village assembly Kulottuṅkacoḷaccaruppetimaṅkalam of Āccālpuram.
CEC 29	Campantar's main temple, northern wall.	ARE 1918 No. 377	12 <sup>th</sup> RY of Kulottuṅga II, i.e. 1145 CE. Exchange of land made by the brahmin village assembly of Tiruvālināṭu. The newly granted land is, as the previous one, reserved for feeding with milk rice Campantar.

<sup>43</sup> The ruling king was not identified in the ARE and the text was not dated. The location of this epigraph engraved above CEC 25, the proximity of the regnal years of CEC 25 and 26, and the mention in both epigraphs of the same assembly member allow me to argue that CEC 26 dates to the 4<sup>th</sup> regnal year of Kulottuṅga II.

	Location	Reference	Date & Summary
CEC 30	Campantar's main temple, northern wall.	ARE 1918 No. 375	12 <sup>th</sup> RY of Rājarāja II, Monday 21 <sup>st</sup> April 1158 CE. Grant of land to feed the image of Maṅkaiyarkkaraci Nācciyār set up in Campantar's shrine. The donor is a <i>parikkirakam</i> (group carrying out the protection of the village) from Vīracōlanallūr in Kaḷumalam.
CEC 31	Campantar's main temple, southern basement.	ARE 896 No. 123 ARE 1918 No. 379 SII 5 No. 988	11 <sup>th</sup> RY of Rājādhirāja II, i.e. 1174 CE. Grant of land to feed Campantar daily, on auspicious days and during the annual festival. The donor is Aṭṭkoṭṭanāyakan Titunaṭṭapperumāl, a landlord from Veṇmaṇi.
CEC 32	Campantar's main temple, northern basement.	ARE 1918 No. 376	6 <sup>th</sup> RY of Kulottuṅga III, Thursday 1 <sup>st</sup> March 1184 CE. Exchange of land between the representatives of Campantar's temple and the officer Utayañceytān Centāmaraikkaṇṇaṇ alias Ticaiviḷaṅkucoḷa Viḷupparaiyaṇ, a landlord from Veḷūr in the Tirunaraḷiyūrṇāṭu.
CEC 33	Campantar's temple <i>maṇḍapa</i> , northern basement.	ARE 1918 No. 382	Thirteenth century. Copies on stone of documents dealing with the properties <i>tirunāmattukkāṇi</i> of the <i>brahmadeya</i> Kaḷumalam.
CEC 34	Campantar's temple <i>maṇḍapa</i> , northern basement.	ARE 1918 No. 383	3 <sup>rd</sup> RY of Rājarāja III, Wednesday 13 <sup>rd</sup> February 1219 CE. Lists of lands in Tirumullaivāyil purchased as <i>tirunāmattukkāṇi</i> of Campantar.
CEC 35	Campantar's temple <i>prākāra</i> , southern wall.	ARE 1918 No. 388	3 <sup>rd</sup> RY of Rājarāja III, i.e. 1219 CE. Gift of money and gold to repair the enclosure wall of Campantar's shrine. The donor is Ārampūṇṭān, son of Vempan Vaiciyār, lord of Vāṇamāḷikai on the great street Uttamacōḷa, in the northern part of Kaṅkaikoṇṭācoḷaṇ enclosure, in Kaṅkaikoṇṭācoḷapuram.

	Location	Reference	Date & Summary
CEC 36	Campantar's temple <i>prākāra</i> , eastern wall?	ARE 1918 No. 387	Thirteenth century? Grant of land to maintain the music teachers who were associated with Campantar's shrine. The donor is the brahmin village assembly of Kaḷumalam.
CEC 37	Campantar's temple <i>gopura</i> , southern side.	ARE 1918 No. 386	? Gift to finance temple works. The donor's name is missing.

TABLE 3. THE ĀCCĀLPURAM EPIGRAPHICAL CORPUS.

	Location	Reference	Date & Summary
AEC 1	Śiva's temple <i>prākāra</i> , western wall.	ARE 1918 No. 534	3 <sup>rd</sup> RY of Vikrama Cōla, i.e. 1121 CE. <sup>44</sup> Grant of land to feed Śaiva devotees and the <i>āṇṭār</i> (literally the gods) who may come to the Paracamayaḷari monastery (l. 4). The donor is the assembly of Parākramacōḷacaturvedimaṅalam in Veṅṇaiyūrṇāṭu.
AEC 2	Śiva's temple basement, western and southern wall.	ARE 1918 No. 523	Kulottuṅga II, circa 1133 CE. <sup>45</sup> Starts with the <i>meykkīrtti</i> commencing with <i>pūmēvivaḷar</i> . Seems to register a grant of land for the expenses of the temple of Śiva Tiruperumaṇamuṭaiyār.

<sup>44</sup> The epigraph contains ten long lines. During the restoration of the enclosure cement was put between the stones. Due to this, the lines 1 and 7 have become mostly unreadable. Although the name of the ruling king Vikramacōḷadeva (Vikrama Cōla) is still readable *in situ*, the regnal year is totally covered by cement. The information about the date given here is based on the ARE and T.V. Mahalingam (1992: 539).

<sup>45</sup> T.V. Mahalingam (1992: 539) proposed this date because the royal eulogy praises Kulottuṅga II. The regnal year is not readable in this epigraph engraved on stones which seem to have been displaced and which are now damaged.

	Location	Reference	Date & Summary
AEC 3	Śiva's temple <i>prākāra</i> , northern wall.	ARE 1918 No. 528 <i>Āvaṇam</i> 24 No. 23.2 <sup>46</sup>	Kulottuṅga II, Monday 11 <sup>th</sup> January 1143 CE. <sup>47</sup> Registers a royal order making the lands belonging to Śiva's temple tax-free. The order is executed by the village assembly of Kulottuṅkacoḷacatturvetimaṅkalam.
AEC 4	Śiva's temple <i>prākāra</i> , eastern wall.	ARE 1918 No. 539	Rājādhiraḥa II, circa 1163 CE. Starts with the <i>meḃkkīrtti</i> commencing with [ <i>kaṭal</i> ] <i>cūlnta pār mātarum</i> . <sup>48</sup> The epigraph is unfinished and built in. The third and the last line is incomplete. The inscription contains unengraved spaces and ends with the name of the king Rājādhiraḥa.
AEC 5	Śiva's temple basement, northern and western wall	ARE 1918 No. 522 <i>Āvaṇam</i> 21 No. 10.4 <sup>49</sup>	10 <sup>th</sup> RY of Rājādhiraḥa II, i.e. 1173 CE. <sup>50</sup> Fixes a quantity of salt, sandal paste, etc. to be given to the temple and provided by the village of Nallūr alias Mahipālakulakālappaṛaḷam. The transaction is signed by the royal scribe officer <i>tirumantira olai [XX]va neriyuṭaiyāṅ malaiyappiyarāyan</i> (l. 11–12).

<sup>46</sup> In the edition of this inscription in *Āvaṇam* 24, No. 23.2, there is a confusion. Indeed, the first line of the epigraph reported in ARE 1918, No. 526 is presented as the first line of ARE 1918, No. 528 and vice versa (see *Āvaṇam* 21, No. 10.2).

<sup>47</sup> This is the date proposed by the ARE 1919, part I, appendix E according to astronomical details and followed by T.V. Mahalingam (1992: 539). Vijayavenugopal et al. (2010: 42), without any explanation, placed this epigraph under the 10<sup>th</sup> regnal year of Kulottuṅga III, in 1188.

<sup>48</sup> This version of the *meḃkkīrtti* commencing with [*kaṭal*] *cūlnta pār mātarum* is identical to the one registered in ARE 1918, No. 538 (AEC 6) and is slightly less developed than the version presented by Cuppiramaṇiyam (1983: 139).

<sup>49</sup> Only the first seven lines engraved on the northern base have been published in *Āvaṇam*. The next five and last lines engraved on the western base are missing in the edition. They recapitulate the transaction and give the name of the royal scribe Malaiyappiyarāyan who signed it.

<sup>50</sup> The dating range of twelfth– thirteenth centuries proposed in *Āvaṇam* can be here refined because of the identification of the royal scribe officer Malaiyappiyarāyan and thus of the king under whom he worked, Rājādhiraḥa II (see SII 5, No. 646 and SII 6, No. 438).

	Location	Reference	Date & Summary
AEC 6	Śiva's temple <i>prākāra</i> , southern wall.	ARE 1918 No. 538 <i>Āvaṇam</i> 21 No. 10.1	14 <sup>th</sup> RY of Rājādhiraṅga II, i.e. 1177 CE. Starts with the <i>meykkīrtti</i> commencing with [ <i>kaṭal</i> ] <i>cūlnta pār mātarum</i> . Order of the assembly of Pañcavaṇmātevi alias Kulottuṅkaḷacaruppetimaṅkalam reducing several taxes on lands and fixing the duties and privileges of certain classes of persons (slaves, women, etc.). <sup>51</sup>
AEC 7	Śiva's temple <i>prākāra</i> , western wall.	ARE 1918 No. 531	13 <sup>th</sup> RY of Kulottuṅga III, Wednesday 22 <sup>nd</sup> November 1195 CE. <sup>52</sup> Grant of land to provide a flower garden for Campantar. The donor is Jayantikaṛuṅṅālaiyaṅ alias Tiruvātavūrpillai, a resident of Apaiyamāṅikkacceri in Kulottuṅkaḷacaruppetimaṅkalam.
AEC 8	Śiva's temple basement, southern wall.	ARE 1918 No. 524	12 <sup>th</sup> century? <sup>53</sup> Damaged. Registers a grant of land to the temple for the maintenance of a monastery. The donor's name is missing.
AEC 9	Śiva's temple <i>prākāra</i> , western wall.	ARE 1918 No. 532	24 <sup>th</sup> RY of Kulottuṅga III, i.e. 1202 CE. Grant of land to feed and worship Nāyaṅār Paṅ Pataikka Āṭūvār <sup>54</sup> installed in the temple. The donor is Pirutikaṅkāyar from Puṛak[kuṭi].
AEC 10	Śiva's temple <i>prākāra</i> , western wall.	ARE 1918 No. 534	24 <sup>th</sup> RY of Kulottuṅga III, i.e. 1202 CE. Copy of the grant made by Pirutikaṅkāyar from Puṛakkuṭi. <sup>55</sup>

<sup>51</sup> A detailed study of this epigraph is presented in ARE 1919, p. 97–98.

<sup>52</sup> This is the date proposed by the ARE 1919, part I, appendix E, according to astronomical details and followed by T.V. Mahalingam (1992: 541).

<sup>53</sup> Because of the emplacement of this epigraph and of its delicate palaeography, I am tempted to date it in the twelfth century as the other inscriptions engraved on the main shrine base (see AEC 2 and 5).

<sup>54</sup> Seems to be a name of dancing Śiva meaning literally “he who dances quivering the melody.”

<sup>55</sup> I did not find this inscription *in situ*. I follow the information given in the ARE 1918, No. 534.

	Location	Reference	Date & Summary
AEC 11	Śiva's temple <i>prākāra</i> , western wall.	ARE 1918 No. 530 <i>Āvaṇam</i> 24 No. 23.4	32 <sup>nd</sup> RY of Kulottuṅga III, i.e. 1211 CE. Grant of land to the goddess shrine constructed by the donor himself, Candracekaṇ Pañcanativāṇaṇ, a landlord from Nerkuṇṇam in Kulottuṅkacoḷavaṇaṇāṭu. The royal scribe officer <i>tiruma[n*]tira olai</i> Neriyuṭaiccoḷamuventaveḷāṇ <sup>56</sup> signed the transaction (l. 10).
AEC 12	Śiva's temple <i>prākāra</i> , western wall.	ARE 1918 No. 533	36 <sup>th</sup> RY of Kulottuṅga III, Tuesday 21 <sup>st</sup> January 1214 CE. <sup>57</sup> Grant of land to feed the <i>apūrvin</i> (stran- ger) who comes to worship at the temple. <sup>58</sup>
AEC 13	Śiva's temple <i>prākāra</i> , northern wall.	ARE 1918 No. 527 <i>Āvaṇam</i> 21 No. 10.3 <sup>59</sup>	2 <sup>nd</sup> RY of Rājarāja III, i.e. 1218 CE. Order and grant of land made by the village assembly to provide worship and food for the images of Campantar and Cokkiyār which go in village procession through Tiruveṅkaṭu, Tirunaṇṇipalli, Tiruvakkūr and Perumparrapuliṅṅūr and which stopover in the temple of Kai[[āsa]muṭaiyār for the offerings. The assembly orders also to worship in front of the brahmins who came as <i>apūrvin</i> (l. 6).
AEC 14	Śiva's temple <i>prākāra</i> , northern wall.	ARE 1918 No. 526 <i>Āvaṇam</i> 21 No. 10.2 <sup>60</sup>	17 <sup>th</sup> RY of Rājarāja III, Saturday 14 <sup>th</sup> May 1233 CE. <sup>61</sup> Order of the <i>mahājana</i> , village assembly, who abolished the tax of <i>sabhāvinīyokam</i> applied on the temple lands.

<sup>56</sup> This royal officer appears in CEC 7.

<sup>57</sup> This is the date proposed by the ARE 1919, part I, appendix E according to astronomical details and followed by T.V. Mahalingam (1992: 542).

<sup>58</sup> I did not find this inscription *in situ*. I follow the information given in the ARE 1918, No. 533.

<sup>59</sup> In this edition two lines covered by cement—one after the second line and one at the very end—remain unmentioned.

<sup>60</sup> Concerning the edition of this epigraph, see above, footnote 46 on AEC 3.

<sup>61</sup> This is the date proposed by the ARE 1919, part I, appendix E, according to astronomical details and followed by T.V. Mahalingam (1992: 542).

	Location	Reference	Date & Summary
AEC 15	Śiva's temple <i>prākāra</i> , northern wall.	ARE 1918 No. 529 <i>Āvaṇam</i> 24 No. 23.1 <sup>62</sup>	18 <sup>th</sup> RY of Rājarāja III, i.e. 1234 CE. Long list of lands belonging to the temple.
AEC 16	Śiva's temple <i>maṇḍapa</i> , southern wall.	ARE 1918 No. 536	9 <sup>th</sup> RY of Jaṭavarman Sundara Pāṇḍya, i.e. 1312 CE. <sup>63</sup> “Records sale of land to a certain Kaṇḍaṇ Śōḷaṇ Śōḷiyadaraiyaṇ of Taṇḍalai in the eastern division of Miḷalai-kūrṛam which was a district of Pāṇḍi-maṇḍalam, by two residents of Rājasūrya-chaturvēdimāṅgalam in Veṇṇaiyūr-nāḍu.” <sup>64</sup>
AEC 17	Śiva's temple <i>maṇḍapa</i> , southern wall.	ARE 1918 No. 537	9 <sup>th</sup> RY of Jaṭavarman Sundara Pāṇḍya, i.e. 1312 CE. Related to the transaction contained in AEC 16.
AEC 18	Śiva's temple <i>maṇḍapa</i> , northern wall.	ARE 1918 No. 525 <i>Āvaṇam</i> 24 No. 23.3	8 <sup>th</sup> RY of Māravarman Parākrama Pāṇḍya, Wednesday 30 <sup>th</sup> April 1343 CE. <sup>65</sup> Built in at the beginning and at the very end. Other engraved stones here and there in the northern wall of the <i>maṇḍapa</i> may belong to this epigraph. Seems to refer to the lands received between the 10 <sup>th</sup> regnal year of Kulottuṅga and the 7 <sup>th</sup> regnal year of Parākkkīramapāṇṭiya and gives a list of lands.
AEC 19	On a slab near the <i>dvaja-stambha</i> . <sup>66</sup>	ARE 1918 No. 540 IMT 110	Ekoji I, 5 <sup>th</sup> April 1682. Grant of land situated in Caṇḍeśvaranallūr made by several officers to the temple.

<sup>62</sup> The edition of this epigraph presents only seven lines. There are actually 26 long lines in this lengthy inscription which covers a great part of the northern wall.

<sup>63</sup> In the ARE, appendix E, it is noted that the dates of ARE 1918, Nos. 536 and 537 “presumably found near each other are both erroneous.”

<sup>64</sup> I reproduce here the summary of the ARE as I could not find and read this epigraph *in situ*.

<sup>65</sup> This date is proposed in ARE 1919, part I, appendix E, according to astronomical details. However it is clarified in ARE that the “*tithi* was 6<sup>th</sup>, not 5<sup>th</sup> in the bright fortnight.”

<sup>66</sup> This slab is no longer visible. It may have been covered by bricks. All the information given here is based on the edition of the IMT.



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## ABBREVIATIONS

AEC	Āccāḷpuram Epigraphical Corpus. Followed by number as given in table 3.
ARE	<i>Annual Report on Epigraphy</i> . Followed by year of copy and number.
CEC	Ācāḷpuram Epigraphical Corpus. Followed by number as given in tables 1 and 2.
IMT	<i>Inscriptions of the Marathas of Thanjavur</i> , 1987.
RY	regnal year.
SII	<i>South Indian Inscriptions</i> .

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