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## Publishing Information

### Editors

Prof Dr Michael Friedrich  
Universität Hamburg  
Asien-Afrika-Institut  
Edmund-Siemers-Allee 1/ Flügel Ost  
D-20146 Hamburg  
Tel. No.: +49 (0)40 42838 7127  
Fax No.: +49 (0)40 42838 4899  
michael.friedrich@uni-hamburg.de

Prof Dr Jörg Quenzer  
Universität Hamburg  
Asien-Afrika-Institut  
Edmund-Siemers-Allee 1/ Flügel Ost  
D-20146 Hamburg  
Tel. No.: +49 40 42838 - 7203  
Fax No.: +49 40 42838 - 6200  
joerg.quenzer@uni-hamburg.de

### Editorial Office

Dr Irina Wandrey  
Universität Hamburg  
Sonderforschungsbereich 950  
'Manuskriptkulturen in Asien, Afrika und Europa'  
Warburgstraße 26  
D-20354 Hamburg  
Tel. No.: +49 (0)40 42838 9420  
Fax No.: +49 (0)40 42838 4899  
irina.wandrey@uni-hamburg.de

### Layout

Astrid Kajsa Nylander

### Cover

Photo: *Codex Azcatitlan*, Ms. Mexicain 59-64, fol. 5' (detail)  
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# CONTENTS

## FORUM

- 3 | A Case for the Study of Modern Literary Manuscripts  
by Christian Benne

## ARTICLES

- 15 | The ‘Marriage Charter’ of Theophanu: A Product of Ottonian Manuscript Culture  
by Bruno Reudenbach
- 31 | Medial Ambiguity: Liturgical Books of the Latin Church and their Changing Status in Mediaeval Tradition  
by Felix Heinzer
- 51 | Travelling the Time Line: The Visual Organisation of New Spanish Manuscripts about the Mexica  
by Anna Boroffka
- 73 | How Arabic Manuscripts Moved to German Libraries  
by Tilman Seidensticker
- 83 | A Manifold Heritage: Glimpses of a Family Collection of Arabic Manuscripts in Ilorin (Nigeria) and Its Transregional Links  
by Stefan Reichmuth
- 101 | Fakes or Fancies? Some ‘Problematic’ Islamic Manuscripts from South East Asia  
by Annabel Teh Gallop
- 129 | What a Multiple-text Manuscript Can Tell Us about the Tamil Scholarly Tradition: The Case of UVSL 589  
by Jonas Buchholz and Giovanni Ciotti
- 145 | The Novgorod Birch-bark Manuscripts  
by Imke Mendoza
- 160 | How to Make an Archival Inventory in Early Modern Europe: Carrying Documents, Gluing Paper and Transforming Archival  
Chaos into Well-ordered Knowledge  
by Markus Friedrich
- 174 | Contributors
- 176 | Announcement

## Article

# What a Multiple-text Manuscript Can Tell Us about the Tamil Scholarly Tradition: The Case of UVSL 589

Jonas Buchholz and Giovanni Ciotti | Hamburg

## 1. Introduction

UVSL 589 is a palm-leaf manuscript that is now kept in the U. V. Swaminatha Iyer Library (UVSL) in Chennai (Tamil Nadu, India) (Fig. 1). This multiple-text manuscript is unusual both with regards to its contents and its layout. It contains a remarkably large number of excerpts from Tamil texts, which are arranged in a systematic way and represent the domains of grammar and literature. At the same time, the layout facilitates navigation between the texts in a way rarely found in Tamil palm-leaf manuscripts. Taken together, these features invite us to investigate the cultural context of UVSL 589. This case study intends to show how a deeper understanding of the cultural history of texts can be gained by studying manuscripts as objects in their own right, rather than just as a disparate collection of texts – an approach rarely adopted in Tamil studies so far.\*

## 2. Codicological features

UVSL 589 consists of 100 folios of regular size (36.5 × 5.5 cm), all of which are made of the same palm-leaf material (Fig. 2). The general state of preservation is rather good. The first two leaves, which are presumably guard leaves, are blank, whereas the following 98 leaves contain texts inscribed on both sides by what appears to be one and the same hand. The manuscript was obviously produced very carefully. The script is neat and tiny – the scribe managed to fit between 14 and 20 lines of text on each leaf.<sup>1</sup> The text was meticulously proof-read, as shown by numerous occurrences of interlinear additions (marked in the line with a + sign) and crossed-out characters. A few uninked notes and emendations show that the manuscript was proof-read at least twice, before and after it was inked (Fig. 3). It is impossible to ascertain when the uninked elements were added, but the hand seems to be the same hand that wrote the rest of the manuscript.



Fig. 1: UVSL 589, U. V. Swaminatha Iyer Library, Chennai, side view of the bundle.

\* We would like to thank the U. V. Swaminatha Iyer Library (UVSL) in Chennai for permission to publish pictures from manuscript UVSL 589. We would also like to thank Victor D'Avella, R. Sathyanarayanan and Eva Wilden for their insightful remarks on previous versions of this article. The research for the article was carried out within the scope of the work conducted by (1) NETamil 'Going From Hand to Hand: Networks of Intellectual Exchange in the Tamil Learned Traditions', Hamburg / Pondicherry, funded by the European Research Council (ERC) and (2) the SFB 950 'Manuskriptkulturen in Asien, Afrika und Europa', funded

by the German Research Foundation (Deutsche Forschungsgemeinschaft, DFG) within the scope of the Centre for the Study of Manuscript Cultures (CSMC), University of Hamburg. Although this article is the result of a collaboration and would not otherwise have existed in its present form, the authorship of sections 5, 6 and 7 should be attributed to Jonas Buchholz and that of sections 2, 3 and 4 to Giovanni Ciotti.

<sup>1</sup> A row of circles was added by the scribe wherever the quality of the palm leaf was not good enough to support writing.

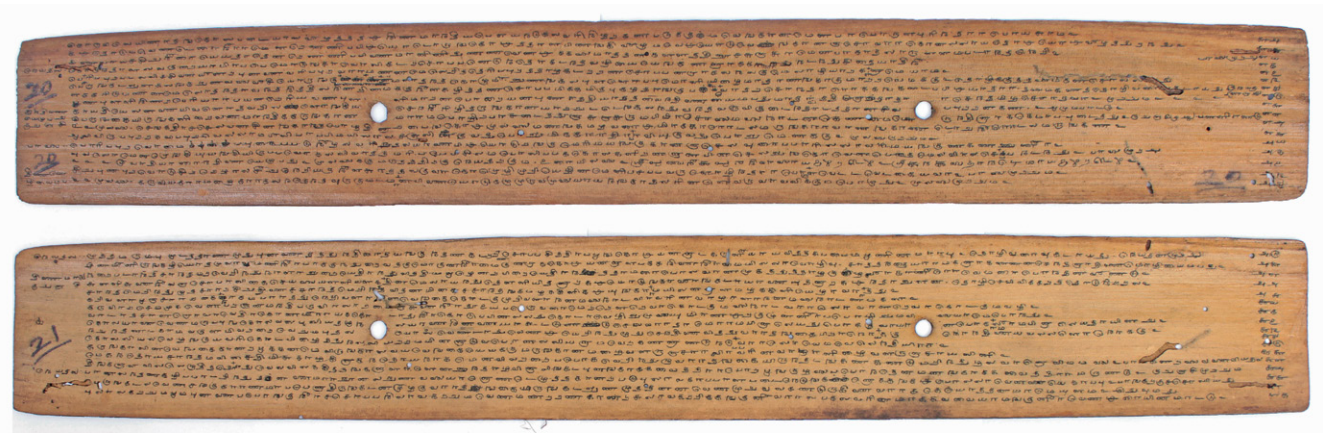


Fig. 2: UVSL 589, page 20 and page 21 (pagination in Western numerals on the left).

Table 1: Original foliation and secondary pagination in UVSL 589.

1.	2 guard leaves without any foliation.	–
2.	16 folios with Telugu letter-numerals (from <i>ka</i> to <i>ta</i> ). The verso of folio <i>ta</i> is left unwritten.	pp. °1–31
3.	43 folios with Tamil digit-numerals (from 1 to 43).	pp. °32–117
4.	23 folios with Telugu letter-numerals (from <i>ka</i> to <i>ba</i> ). A little circle has been added on top to distinguish this set of Telugu letter-numerals from the one occurring before it.	pp. °118–162
5.	2 folios without any foliation.	pp. °163–166
6.	14 folios with Tamil digit-numerals (from 1 to 14). The tag <i>cin</i> , standing for ( <i>Civaka</i> )- <i>cintāmaṇi</i> , the text contained in this section, was added below each number to distinguish this series from the one occurring before it.	pp. °167–196

Folio numbers are marked on the left margin of the recto sides. The system of foliation is quite peculiar as the manuscript contains several macro-sections with individual foliation in both Tamil digit-numerals and Telugu letter-numerals. Despite such disparate numbering, we are inclined to think that the whole manuscript is the result of a single production act as the size, material and scribal hand appear to be the same for all the leaves of UVSL 589. It seems that the different foliations found in the manuscript were used

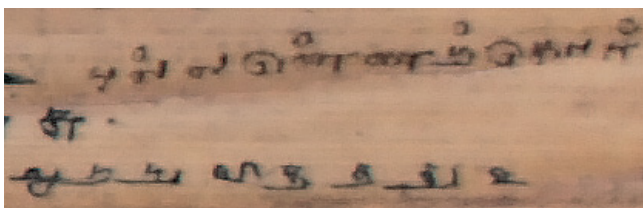


Fig. 3: UVSL 589, p.19, inked text and uninked note (detail).

intentionally in order to structure the manuscript. As we will see later, by and large, the macro-sections marked by the foliation have specific thematic foci. Secondary pagination in Western numerals from 1 to 194 (counting the recto and verso of each folio separately) was added later, most probably when the manuscript became part of the UVSL collection.<sup>2</sup> For the sake of convenience, we have decided to use this pagination for reference purposes in this article. A synopsis of the original foliation and the corresponding secondary page numbers is found in Table 1.

Unfortunately, the manuscript neither contains any record concerning the date and place of its production,

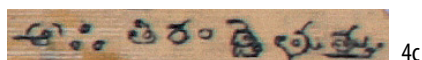
<sup>2</sup> The total number of pages should actually be 196 (excluding the two blank guard leaves), but two pages were skipped, either because they do not contain anything (the page between 31 and 32) or simply by mistake (the page between 145 and 146).



4a



4b



4c

Figs 4a-c: UVSL 589, examples of the three different languages and scripts. Fig. 4a: Text in Tamil script and language (detail of p. 21). Fig. 4b: Invocation in Sanskrit written in Tamilian Grantha script (detail of p. 20). Fig. 4c: Note partly in Telugu script (detail of p. 149).

nor does it mention the name of its scribe or of any other person potentially involved in its production (such as the commissioner or proof-reader, for example).<sup>3</sup> The catalogue of the U. V. Swaminatha Iyer Library does not contain any information about the manuscript's provenance either. As for the date of the manuscript, we can only make an educated guess. Due to the climatic conditions there, palm-leaf manuscripts had a rather limited lifespan in South India and had to be copied regularly as a result. Most of the manuscripts that have survived to this day are therefore not very old. The majority of dateable palm-leaf manuscripts from that region range from the end of the eighteenth to the end of the nineteenth century.<sup>4</sup> It is very likely that UVSL 589 was crafted sometime during this period, too.

While UVSL 589 contains little direct information about the circumstances of its production, it does provide some hints about the milieu in which it was produced. First of all, the person who produced the manuscript seems to have been an adherent of Śaivism. This is apparent from the numerous paratexts found in the manuscript. For instance, the very beginning of the manuscript is a stanza from the *Tēvāram* (3.54.1), which is quoted as an invocation.<sup>5</sup> The Śaiva affiliation is confirmed throughout the manuscript by means of numerous invocations placed at the ends of texts or sub-units of texts. These invocations are mostly in Sanskrit written in Tamilian Grantha script (Fig. 4a), but they can also be in Tamil written in Tamil script

(Fig. 4b).<sup>6</sup> Most of the Sanskrit invocations contain names of Śiva as the lord of Chidambaram, a prominent site of Śaiva worship, (e.g. Citāmbareśa, 'Lord of Chidambaram' Kanakasabhāṇaṭeśa, 'lord of dance in the golden hall [in the temple of Chidambaram]').<sup>7</sup> The Tamil invocations mostly praise the Tamil Śaiva saint Cuntarar. A complete list of the invocations along with their translations can be found in Appendix 1 below.

The presence of both Tamil and Sanskrit in one and the same manuscript should come as no surprise, considering the importance of Sanskrit as a pan-Indian scholarly and religious language. However, given that Tamil studies have long tended to ignore the history of the interaction between Tamil and Sanskrit, the use of Sanskrit invocations in a manuscript which only contains Tamil texts is notable. Moreover, there is a third language with which the scribe of UVSL 589 was obviously acquainted, namely Telugu (Fig. 4c). This is the main language of the present-day states of Andhra Pradesh and Telangana, but it is also spoken by a sizeable minority in Tamil Nadu.<sup>8</sup> We have already seen that the foliation of UVSL 589 partly uses Telugu letters. Apart from that, the manuscript also contains a few annotations that are written in Telugu script, although their language is Tamil (listed in

<sup>3</sup> Like most Indic manuscripts, one cannot exclude the possibility that a single person produced the whole manuscript, wrote and emended its text(s), and kept the object for his own use.

<sup>4</sup> The dates recorded in the colophons of palm-leaf manuscripts from the area of what is now Tamil Nadu clearly point to such a timespan; see Ciotti and Franceschini 2016.

<sup>5</sup> The *Tēvāram*, a work of devotional poetry in praise of Śiva, forms the most important part of the Tamil Śaiva canon (*Tirumurai*).

<sup>6</sup> Besides Telugu script, Tamilian Grantha (which is also known as Tamil Grantha) is the main script used in south-east India in order to write Sanskrit.

<sup>7</sup> Invocations may help link a manuscript with a specific place if they mention the local manifestation of a deity worshipped in a particular temple; see Ciotti and Franceschini 2016, 80–81. The case of Śiva in Chidambaram, though, does not allow for any conclusions about the place of production of UVSL 589 since Chidambaram is a place of worship of transregional importance.

<sup>8</sup> Secondary literature on the Telugu community in Tamil Nadu is scarce. The Census of India 2001 puts the number of Telugu speakers in Tamil Nadu at 3.5 million, which amounts to almost six per cent of the total population of that state, see <[http://censusindia.gov.in/Census\\_Data\\_2001/Census\\_Data\\_Online/Language/parta.htm](http://censusindia.gov.in/Census_Data_2001/Census_Data_Online/Language/parta.htm)>.

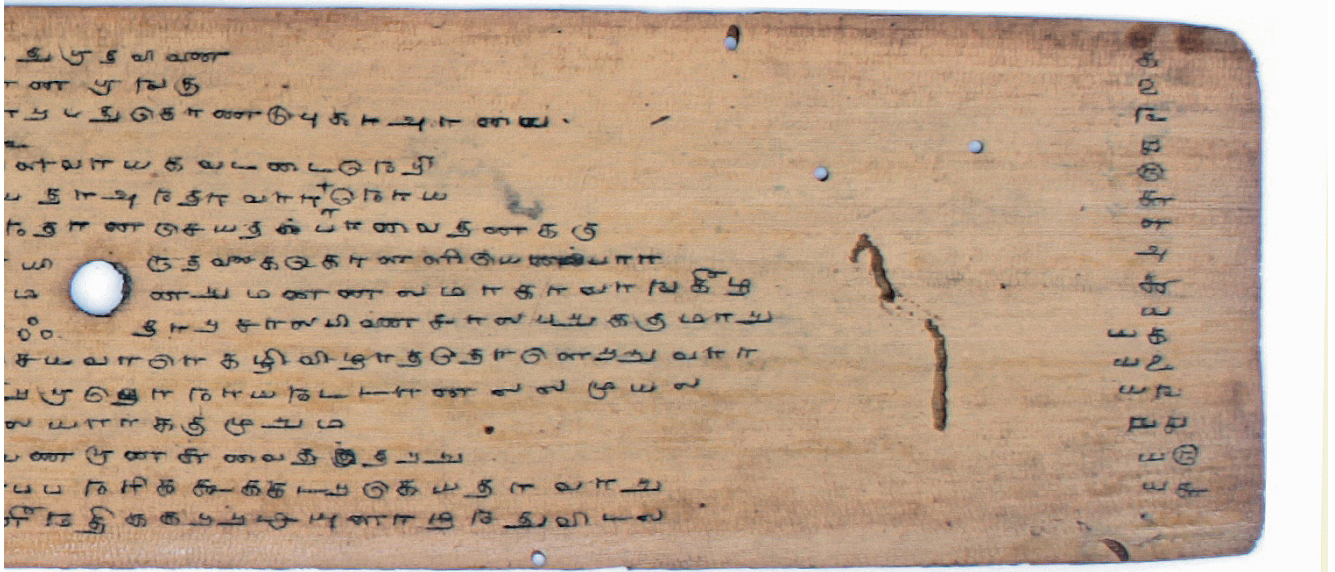


Fig. 5: UVSL 589, detail of p. 118, layout with one stanza per line and line numbers.

Appendix 2 below).<sup>9</sup> The rationale for using the Telugu script is not very clear. Possibly it reflects a slip of the hand on the part of the scribe since he only used this script occasionally and in the last case even mixed Tamil and Telugu scripts.

To sum up, UVSL 589 must have been produced in a multilingual Śaiva milieu, in which Tamil co-existed with other languages such as Sanskrit and Telugu. What we still do not know is in what context the manuscript was meant to be used. In this respect, it is important to note from the codicological point of view that UVSL 589 seems to have been designed with the intention of easing its navigation. We have already seen that the manuscript is divided into several series of foliations, the end of which coincides with the end of a text or a group of texts. Furthermore, the consistent use of invocations at the end of texts or sub-units of texts can also be said to ease navigation. Text titles are often stated in the left-hand margin of the folios where the texts begin. Where stanzas start somewhere in the middle of a line or are interspersed with so much commentary that it is difficult to find them, the beginning of the stanza (*pratīka* in Sanskrit) has been put in the left-hand margin. The most striking feature of the layout, however, is that large parts of the manuscript contain one stanza per line, with a line number appearing at the right-hand side of the folio. This is in marked contrast to the usual layout of Tamil palm-leaf manuscripts, where the text is written in a continuous script without any line-breaks.

<sup>9</sup> Such annotations (words or short sentences added to the main texts) are found in several places in UVSL 589. They are usually written in Tamil using Tamil script.

It seems that the purpose of the layout in UVSL 589 was not to fit as much text as possible on a palm-leaf, but rather to make it easy to locate a given stanza in the manuscript.<sup>10</sup> Another noteworthy feature, rather uncommon at least in manuscripts from southern India, is an internal reference that guides the reader from one folio of the manuscript to another.<sup>11</sup> Certainly, the envisaged user of UVSL 589 was not expected to read the manuscript from beginning to end, but to browse through it and consult various sections according to his needs.<sup>12</sup>

One can speculate about the possible didactic character of the manuscript on the basis of the variety of navigational

<sup>10</sup> Line numbers also justify each line in accordance with the overall layout of the manuscript, which has one text-block per folio side. In this respect, one can also see that whenever the space needed to write a stanza exceeded the length of the line, what is left was written on the far right-hand side of the folio and marked with curly brackets. Was this possibly done under the influence of Western conventions?

<sup>11</sup> Page 77, line 20 has a note stating ... *immūru ceyyukum urai 42m e...* ('the commentary for these three stanzas ... [is found in folio] no. 42'). Folio 42 of section 3 corresponds to page 114, where we indeed find the commentary of the three stanzas quoted on page 77.

<sup>12</sup> It is worth noting a further codicological feature of UVSL 589 here, namely the use of *pullis* (little circles added above characters to indicate that the inherent vowel 'a' should not be read; e.g. ந 'na' vs ன் 'n'). *Pullis* are rarely used in manuscripts, but in many sections of UVSL 589 these were added when the first member of a consonant cluster is at the end of a line and the second member is at the beginning of the following line. Such a feature, which may seem like an insignificant scribal idiosyncrasy at first, helps greatly in overcoming the ambiguity of the unmarked version of Tamil script by preventing the pronunciation of an unrequired 'a' vowel. Within the same line, when one can clearly see what character comes next, *pullis* are not that necessary for anyone proficient in Tamil. However, when one has to read over two different lines, having a *pulli* in the position just described is rather convenient.

aids it incorporates. It could have been used by a teacher or a student, either in class – perhaps as a memory aid – or by a student for reference. Because of the lack of direct evidence, as is the case for many Indic manuscripts, we do not know who actually owned UVSL 589. The question of the intended use of the manuscript, however, becomes especially relevant with regard to its unusual contents, to which we will turn in the following section.

### 3. Description of the contents

UVSL 589 contains an astounding number of Tamil texts, partly in full, partly in excerpts. Their arrangement is shown in Table 2. The rationale behind this arrangement is not immediately clear, but we can make at least partial sense of it by looking at the distribution of texts on the basis of our knowledge of Tamil literature. In this way, we can see that the macro-sections group related texts together to a certain extent. The manuscript contains excerpts of fourteen literary works, for instance, all of which belong to a corpus known as *Paṭiṇeṅkīlkkanaṅku*, or just *Kīlkkanaṅku* for short. Nine of them are grouped together as part of the first macro-section (sections d to n), whereas five more are found in the third macro-section (sections w to z and bb).<sup>13</sup> Apart from the *Kīlkkanaṅku* works, we can find four other literary works at various places in UVSL 589: the first half of the *Kallāṭam* (section u), excerpts from the *Tiruvalluvamālai* (section cc), the whole *Tirumurukārruppaṭai* (section dd), and excerpts from the *Cīvakacintāmaṇi* (section ee). In addition to the literary texts, UVSL 589 contains four grammatical treatises, namely *Nanṇūl*, *Akapporuḷ Viḷakkam*, *Yāpparuṅkalakkārikai*, and *Taṅṭiyalaṅkāram*, which are placed together at the beginning of the second macro-section of the manuscript (sections p to s). Furthermore, the manuscript also includes what can be called illustrative stanzas, that is, stanzas which were specifically composed to exemplify certain poetological topics. These illustrative stanzas have been taken from the commentary on the *Taṅṭiyalaṅkāram* (sections a, c and aa) and from another treatise, the *Puṟapporuḷ Veṅpāmālai* (section b).<sup>14</sup> Finally, there are two sections which

combine stanzas from literary works (*Cīvakacintāmaṇi* and *Cilappatikāram*) with illustrative stanzas from the *Puṟapporuḷ Veṅpāmālai* (sections t and v).

Section o is a special case, which is labelled in the margin as *caṅkīraṅam* (lit. ‘mixture’, probably in the sense of ‘miscellanea’). This section contains 105 stanzas taken from a wide array of different sources. Sometimes the source is identified after the stanza, but mostly it is not. Due to the nature of this section, it was difficult to identify all of the stanzas.<sup>15</sup> The sources which we could identify include well-known literary texts such as *Cilappatikāram*, *Muttoḷḷāyiram*, and *Nālaṭiyār*, but also religious poems from the Śaiva *Tirumurai* canon, minor works of the so-called *Pirapantam* genre, and occasional stanzas which were later included in collections of individual poems (*Taṅṭipāṭal Tiraṭṭu*).

As we have seen, UVSL 589 includes both poetical works and theoretical treatises on grammar. This reflects a view prevalent in Tamil scholarly tradition, where literature (*ilakkiyam*) and grammar (*ilakkaṅam*) were seen as a complementary pair.<sup>16</sup> ‘Grammar’ in the Tamil sense of the word includes not only grammar *sensu stricto*, but also the study of poetical conventions, metrics and figures of speech. This complementarity is reflected in the terms *ilakkiyam* (from Sanskrit *lakṣya*, lit. ‘what should be described’) for literature and *ilakkaṅam* (from Sanskrit *lakṣaṇa*, lit. ‘description’) for grammar. In other words, grammar represents the toolbox for studying and producing literature. The co-existence of grammatical and literary texts in UVSL 589 is quite remarkable. Given the lack of information available to us, we can only speculate about the ways in which this manuscript was used, but it seems quite possible that UVSL 589 formed a kind of syllabus. It contains both grammatical works which a student of Tamil was expected to master and excerpts from literary works to which he could apply his theoretical knowledge. The fact that most of the literary works are only included in excerpts and come without a commentary (even in the case of texts which were regularly transmitted together with a commentary) suggests that they were not meant to be studied as pieces of literature

<sup>13</sup> *Kār Nārpaṭu* and *Aiṅṭai Aimpāṭu* are actually included twice. As we will see, the first instances of these two texts (sections d and e) are connected with the preceding section rather than with the *Kīlkkanaṅku* block.

<sup>14</sup> The *Puṟapporuḷ Veṅpāmālai* is unusual if compared to the other grammatical treatises insofar as the illustrative stanzas are not contained in the commentary, but in the text itself (Zvelebil 1995, 584). Whether or not these stanzas are later additions is hard to tell on the basis of the information available.

<sup>15</sup> A substantial number of Tamil literary works exist as e-texts on various websites on the internet. In many cases, it has therefore been possible to identify the stanzas simply by using a web search engine. The limitations of this kind of approach are obvious, of course. What is really needed is a comprehensive, searchable electronic corpus, but unfortunately, the situation in Tamil studies is far from ideal – much more has been achieved in Classical Studies thanks to the *Thesaurus Linguae Graecae*, for example.

<sup>16</sup> See Zvelebil 1992, 129–132.



Table 2: Macro-sections marked by a change of foliation, indicated here by blue horizontal lines.

a.	Selection of illustrative stanzas from the commentary on the <i>Taṇṭiyalaṅkāram</i>	pp. 1–2
b.	Selection of illustrative stanzas from the commentary on the <i>Puṟapporu! Venpāmālai</i>	pp. 2–13
c.	Selection of illustrative stanzas mostly from the commentary on the <i>Taṇṭiyalaṅkāram</i> (labelled <i>aṇican̄kīraṇam mēkam</i> , ‘miscellanea on figures of speech – [dealing with] clouds’)	pp. 13–14
d.	<i>Kār Nārpatu</i> (11 stanzas)	p. 15
e.	<i>Aintiṇai Aimpatu</i> (2 stanzas)	p. 15
f.	<i>Iṇṇā Nārpatu</i> (10 stanzas)	pp. 15–16
g.	<i>Iṇṇiyavai Nārpatu</i> (11 stanzas)	pp. 16–17
h.	<i>Kār Nārpatu</i> (15 stanzas)	p. 17
i.	<i>Kaḷavalī Nārpatu</i> (17 stanzas)	p. 18
j.	<i>Aintiṇai Aimpatu</i> (25 stanzas)	pp. 19–20
k.	<i>Aintiṇai Eḷupatu</i> (6 stanzas)	p. 20
l.	<i>Tiṇaimoli Aimpatu</i> (4 stanzas)	pp. 20–21
m.	<i>Tiṇaimālai Nūṟraimpatu</i> (63 stanzas)	pp. 21–24
n.	<i>Kainnilai</i> (5 stanzas)	pp. 24–25
o.	Selection of stanzas from various sources (labelled <i>caṅkīraṇam</i> , ‘miscellanea’)	pp. 25–31
p.	<i>Naṇṇūl</i>	pp. 32–49
q.	<i>Akapporu! Viḷakkam</i>	pp. 49–66
r.	<i>Yāpparuṅkalakkārikai</i>	pp. 67–71
s.	<i>Taṇṭiyalaṅkāram</i>	pp. 71–76
t.	Three stanzas from the <i>Civakacintāmaṇi</i> and one illustrative stanza from the commentary on the <i>Puṟapporu! Venpāmālai</i> , with commentary	p. 77
u.	<i>Kallātam</i> (stanzas 1–57)	pp. 78–114
v.	One stanza from the <i>Cilappatikāram</i> , twelve from the <i>Civakacintāmaṇi</i> and three illustrative stanzas from the commentary on the <i>Puṟapporu! Venpāmālai</i> , with commentary	pp. 114–117
w.	<i>Paḷamoḷi Nāṇūru</i> (135 stanzas)	pp. 118–126
x.	<i>Cīrupaṅcamūlam</i> (31 stanzas)	pp. 127–128

y.	<i>Mutumolikkāñci</i> (31 stanzas)	pp. 128–129
z.	<i>Ēlāti</i> (10 stanzas)	p. 129
aa.	Selections from the <i>Taṅṅiyalaṅkāram</i> with commentary and illustrative stanzas	pp. 130–156
bb.	<i>Ācārakkōvai</i> (87 stanzas)	pp. 156–162
cc.	<i>Tiruvalluvamālai</i>	p. 162
dd.	<i>Tirumurukāruppaṭai</i>	pp. 163–166
ee.	Selections from the <i>Civakacintāmaṇi</i> , with commentary	pp. 167–194

in their own right, but rather for illustrative purposes. Seen against this background, the selection of texts in UVSL 589 becomes meaningful. In the following sections, we will try to find out just what this selection can tell us about the learned milieu in which UVSL 589 was produced and used.

#### 4. Strategies of transmission of grammar

The selection of grammatical treatises found in UVSL 589 mirrors the predominant configuration of Tamil grammar, which includes five sub-domains respectively focusing on the study of *eḷuttu*, *col*, *poruḷ*, *yāppu*, and *aṇi*. These domains roughly correspond to phonology, morphology, poetics, metrics, and the study of figures of speech. In particular, UVSL 589 contains the *Naṅṅūl* of Pavaṅanti Muṅivar (twelfth century), which deals with phonology and morphology, the *Akapporuḷ Viḷakkam* of Nārkaivirāca Nampī (thirteenth–fourteenth century), which deals with poetics, the *Yāpparuṅkalakkārikai* of Amitacākarar (tenth–eleventh century), a treatise on metrics, and the *Taṅṅiyalaṅkāram*, a twelfth-century adaptation of the *Kāvyadarśa* by the Sanskrit scholar Daṅḍin (seventh–eighth century), which deals with figures of speech. As such, all five domains of grammar are represented in the manuscript. One should note that the *Akapporuḷ Viḷakkam* only deals with one of the two subdivisions of Tamil poetics, namely the study of love poetry (*akam*). The other genre of heroic poetry (*puram*) is also represented in UVSL 589, but by illustrative stanzas taken from the *Purapporuḷ Venṅpāmālai* by Aiyaṅ Āritaṅṅār (prob. ninth century). Even though the treatise itself is not included, it can be argued that the person who produced the

manuscript considered the *Purapporuḷ Venṅpāmālai* to be an important reference work for analysing heroic poetry.

We know that some of these texts were popular at the time the manuscript was produced. In particular, despite its antiquity, the *Naṅṅūl* was broadly used for teaching Tamil well into the nineteenth century.<sup>17</sup> The popularity of the *Naṅṅūl* is corroborated by the numerous commentaries, printed editions and translations that were published during that time.<sup>18</sup> Similarly, the *Akapporuḷ Viḷakkam* seems to have been the standard text on poetics during that period, as is shown by the fact that nineteenth century poetical compositions generally followed its rules.<sup>19</sup> Furthermore, it seems that the five treatises which we find in UVSL 589 were frequently combined in order to cover the five domains of grammar. This can be inferred from secondary sources. For instance, the eighteenth-century missionary C. G. Beschi hinted at this fivefold list in his grammar of the high register of Tamil,<sup>20</sup> where he mentions exactly the same texts we find in UVSL 589 (with the exception of the *Purapporuḷ Venṅpāmālai*).<sup>21</sup>

<sup>17</sup> See Gover 1874, 54; Cāminātaiyar 1950, 115.

<sup>18</sup> Ebeling 2009, 244–246.

<sup>19</sup> Ebeling 2010, 92, n. 84.

<sup>20</sup> See Beschi 1822. 1822 is the year of publication of the English translation by Benjamin Guy Babington. The original Latin work was only published in 1917 (Trichinopoly: St. Joseph's Industrial School Press).

<sup>21</sup> Reading Beschi, though, one has the impression that he thought that the *Akapporuḷ Viḷakkam* also deals with *puram* topics. In fact, he probably did not even know the title *Akapporuḷ Viḷakkam*, as this is the only work he refers to by the name of its author rather than its title.

There are also a number of primary sources, manuscripts and early printed books that somehow intersect with this ideal syllabus. It is clear, in fact, that there is a discrepancy between the ideal five-fold composition of Tamil grammar, the selection of texts forming the corpus used to engage with it, and the actual material realisation of the corpus. For instance, various libraries throughout Tamil Nadu host multiple-text manuscripts containing some of the five grammars of UVSL 589, sometimes together with non-grammatical texts.<sup>22</sup> However, none of these manuscripts contain all five grammars, and each collection of texts has some unique characteristics. UVSL 601, for instance, combines three of the five grammars (*Nannūl*, *Yāpparuṅkalakkārikai* and an incomplete copy of the *Akapporuḷ Viḷakkam*) together with a selection of ethical texts, including the *Tirukkuraḷ*, the *Nāḷaṭiyār*, and the *Tirikaṭukam*. In this respect, it comes close to being an ideal counterpart to UVSL 589, which combines grammars with texts that are mostly literary.

In addition, there are at least two books printed in the nineteenth century that seem to present the same corpus or part of it. As early as 1835, which was quite early in the history of Tamil printed books, Tāṇṭavarāyamutaliyār, a pioneer in the field of Tamil printing, published a volume entitled *Ilakkaṇappañcakam* ('The Five on Grammar') together with Mānēcar A. Muttuccāmpipiḷḷai.<sup>23</sup> Despite its title, however, this book only includes the *Nannūl*, the *Akapporuḷ Viḷakkam* and the *Purapporuḷ Venpāmālai*.<sup>24</sup> Another book dated 1864 and edited by a certain Naraciṅkapuram Vīrācāmi Mutaliyār is said to contain copies of the rules of all five grammatical treatises found in UVSL 589 (including the rules of the *Purapporuḷ Venpāmālai*).<sup>25</sup> Notwithstanding, this editorial choice does not seem to have been particularly successful, as each work was usually printed in a separate volume.

<sup>22</sup> So far, it has been possible for us to consult the following multiple-text manuscripts: UVSL 45, 67, 438, 601, Government Oriental Manuscripts Library (Chennai) 5549-52, Madurai Tamil Sangam (Madurai) 127, Oriental Research Institute and Manuscripts Library 6368 (Thiruvananthapuram), and Perur Adheenam Library (Perur) 13. The latter two were digitised by N. 'Babu' Ramaswamy and the late G. Ravindran for the NETamil project.

<sup>23</sup> On Tāṇṭavarāyamutaliyār, see Blackburn 2003, 100–102.

<sup>24</sup> These works jointly cover three domains of Tamil grammar, viz. phonology, morphology, and poetics. Even if we were to regard the two genres of love and heroic poetry as two different grammatical domains, the book would still only cover four disciplines. A rare copy of this book is kept at the Roja Muthiah Library (Chennai).

<sup>25</sup> This information is taken from Vēṅkaṭacāmi 1962, 151; we do not have direct access to this book at present.

Generally speaking, our understanding of how grammar was studied and transmitted from teachers to pupils is still inadequate.<sup>26</sup> What is intuitively clear, though, is that in order to master grammar properly, one must be acquainted with all five branches of grammar. At the present stage of research, there are many more or less sensible ways in which the history of grammar can be narrated. One of these ways would envisage a fluid scholarly practice: teachers transmitted different texts, or parts of texts, to intermediate students – in other words, students deemed ready to venture into a rather sophisticated technical literature – in order to cover all branches of grammar. Attempts at stabilising this situation have been made in the past: the very first extant grammar of Tamil, the *Tolkāppiyam* (first half of the first millennium), and, later on, two more works, namely the *Vīracōḷiyam* (eleventh century) and the *Ilakkaṇaviḷakkam* (seventeenth century), cover the whole gamut of grammatical topics.<sup>27</sup> On the one hand, the fact that we still have manuscripts preserving these works bears witness to their success, as it means that they were studied and copied. On the other hand, as one might expect in any scholarly context, the intention of these works to encompass the entire field of grammar raised controversies and was not accepted by the whole community of scholars; at a time close to UVSL 589, for instance, the *Ilakkaṇaviḷakkam* was vehemently criticised by Civañña Cuvāmikal (alias Civañña Muṇivar), possibly the most influential Tamil scholar of the eighteenth century, in his *Ilakkaṇaviḷakkaccuṟāvaḷi* ('Cyclone on the *Ilakkaṇaviḷakkam*').<sup>28</sup> As works such as the *Ilakkaṇaviḷakkam* were only successful in part, schools and individual scholars may have opted to combine texts, or parts of different texts, in order to create effective grammatical syllabi. UVSL 589 seems to befit such a historiographical reconstruction.

### 5. Bridging grammar and literature

The interplay between grammar and literature in the Tamil scholarly tradition is exemplified in UVSL 589 by the way

<sup>26</sup> See also Chevillard 2014, 257.

<sup>27</sup> It should be noted that the *Tolkāppiyam* and the *Ilakkaṇaviḷakkam* only consist of three sections: on phonology, morphology, and poetics respectively. Metrics and figures of speech were not treated separately, but as part of poetics. On the other hand, printed editions of the *Vīracōḷiyam* contain four sections on phonology, morphology, poetics and metrics, with the latter containing a subsection devoted to figures of speech.

<sup>28</sup> See Chevillard 2014, 265 for a brief summary of this controversy and for further bibliographical references.

in which both quotations from literary works and illustrative stanzas from the grammatical literature are used in order to introduce particular poetological topics. What can be called illustrative stanzas are poems which were specifically composed to illustrate the topics discussed in the grammatical works. In particular, UVSL 589 contains illustrative stanzas from the commentary on the *Taṅṭiyalaṅkāram* and from the *Puṛapporuḷ Venpāmālai*. In some cases, the stanzas are given in the order in which they appear in the text from which they are taken, as is the case with section aa.<sup>29</sup> In other cases, the illustrative stanzas were selected according to thematic criteria. This is the case with sections a and b, which deal with a common topic: the praise of a patron. In section c, which mostly contains illustrative stanzas from the commentary on the *Taṅṭiyalaṅkāram*, the common topic is the rainy season (an important theme in Tamil and, indeed, pan-Indian poetry).<sup>30</sup> This section is directly followed by a selection of poems from two literary works, the *Kār Nārpatu* and the *Aintiṇai Aimpatu* (sections d and e), which also deal with the rainy season. Here we can observe how both stanzas from the grammatical tradition and excerpts from literary works were used as illustrations of the same poetological topic.

Another example of how quotations from literary works were used in poetological discussions is provided by sections t and v, which contain a number of stanzas from the epics *Cīvakacintāmaṇi* and *Cilappatikāram* as well as illustrative stanzas from the *Puṛapporuḷ Venpāmālai*, all supplemented by commentary.<sup>31</sup> The starting point is a stanza from the *Cīvakacintāmaṇi* (657), which describes a beautiful lady singing and playing the lute in such a tantalising way that trees shed their leaves, stone pillars produce offshoots, and birds fall from the sky. What follows is a commentary discussing various aspects of this stanza, substantiated by further quotations. The following stanza of the *Cīvakacintāmaṇi* (658) is quoted to show how the poet describes the lady's beauty in accordance with poetical conventions, while another stanza from the *Cīvakacintāmaṇi* (31) and an illustrative stanza from the *Puṛapporuḷ Venpāmālai* (357)

provide parallels for the effects of music on nature. Finally, a quotation from the *Cilappatikāram* (7.1, lines 5–7) elaborates on the various ways of playing the lute, which were mentioned in *Cīvakacintāmaṇi* 657. The discussion contains numerous cross-references such as ‘this stanza, too, is an example of the stanza [beginning with] “*cilaittoḷir rirunutaḷ*” [i.e. *Cīvakacintāmaṇi* 657]’ (*icceyyuḷuñ cilaittoḷir rirunutaḷ eṇṇuñ ceyyuṭk’ utāraṇam*, p. 114, line 14). What we are witnessing here is a sophisticated discussion of poetological topics, illustrated by quotations from various literary and theoretical sources. Unlike this section, most of UVSL 589 contains quotations without the pertaining discussion, but we can easily imagine that the manuscript could have provided the basis for similar discussions taking place in an oral setting.

## 6. Glimpses of a pre-modern canon

As we have seen, UVSL 589 makes use of excerpts from poetry in order to illustrate poetological topics. Seen against this background, the selection of literary works found in the manuscript becomes meaningful, as it allows us to infer which works the person who produced the manuscript deemed exemplary literature. We are therefore in a position to catch a glimpse of what might have constituted a canon of Tamil literature at the time the manuscript was produced, which was probably sometime in the nineteenth century. Of course, it is impossible to draw far-reaching conclusions from a single manuscript, but UVSL 589 certainly opens up a window into Tamil literary culture during a crucial period of its history.

The most striking feature about the literary works contained in UVSL 589 is possibly what is missing, namely the so-called *Caṅkam* literature. The *Caṅkam* texts – 18 works of erotic and heroic poetry, which are divided into two groups of texts, the ‘Eight Anthologies’ (*Eṭṭuttokai*) and the ‘Ten Songs’ (*Pattuppāṭṭu*) – form the oldest stratum of Tamil literature. They were probably composed during the early centuries of the Common Era (though dating is a matter of dispute). The *Caṅkam* works are thought to have been rediscovered during the late nineteenth and early twentieth century by men like U. V. Swaminatha Iyer (1855–1942), who collected the surviving manuscripts and produced printed editions of them, triggering a process known as the

<sup>29</sup> Section aa contains illustrative stanzas from the *Taṅṭiyalaṅkāram* commentary. Sometimes these are quoted together with the rules of the *Taṅṭiyalaṅkāram* which they exemplify.

<sup>30</sup> The section bears the marginal title *aṇicāṅkīraṇam mēkam*, ‘miscellanea on figures of speech – [dealing with] clouds [i.e. with the rainy season]’.

<sup>31</sup> Sections t and v are linked by a cross-reference, which was mentioned above.

Tamil Renaissance.<sup>32</sup> Thanks to printing, the *Caṅkam* works were widely disseminated and caused a major transformation of the Tamil literary canon.<sup>33</sup> While there is reason to believe that the *Caṅkam* works were not forgotten entirely, as is often thought, it does seem that they had become a rather marginal part of Tamil literary culture by the nineteenth century.<sup>34</sup> UVSL 589 appears to confirm this verdict; in the manuscript, the *Caṅkam* texts are conspicuous by their absence.

The only exception here is the *Tirumurukāṟruppaṭai*, one of the ‘Ten Songs’ (*Pattuppāṭṭu*). This is the only *Caṅkam* work which seems to have been more widely known before the Tamil Renaissance. Unlike the other *Caṅkam* works, this text belongs to neither of the genres of *akam* or *puṟam* poetry, but contains a hymn to the Hindu god Murugaṅ. Due to its religious contents, it came to be included not only in the *Pattuppāṭṭu*, but also in the Śaiva canon (*Tirumurai*). As such, it enjoyed great popularity and was transmitted in numerous manuscript copies.<sup>35</sup> Given the Śaiva affiliation of the manuscript, it stands to reason to assume that the *Tirumurukāṟruppaṭai* was not included because of its being part of the *Caṅkam* corpus, but because of its religious significance.

While the *Caṅkam* texts seem to have been marginalised in the nineteenth century, they were still alive in people's minds to some extent. The names of the *Caṅkam* texts were known from a series of three so-called mnemonic stanzas which listed the constituent works of the *Eṭṭuttokai* and the *Pattuppāṭṭu* (the two collections which make up the *Caṅkam* corpus) as well as the *Kīlkkanaṅaku* corpus in a versified and easily memorable form.<sup>36</sup> These mnemonic stanzas are also found in UVSL 589 (as part of the ‘miscellanea’ section on p. 31). The person who produced the manuscript thus knew

that the *Caṅkam* works existed, but there is no evidence that he had any first-hand knowledge of them.

In contrast to the *Caṅkam* texts, the works of the *Kīlkkanaṅaku* corpus are quite well represented in UVSL 589. The *Kīlkkanaṅaku* texts were composed in the period directly following the *Caṅkam* texts, that is, probably in the middle of the first millennium. Most of them represent a new genre, which can be called ‘ethical literature’, i.e. they deal with questions of right conduct. Seven out of the 18 texts, however, represent the ancient genres of love poetry (*akam*) and heroic poetry (*puṟam*) and thus continue the tradition of the *Caṅkam* literature. In UVSL 589 we find excerpts from 14 of the 18 *Kīlkkanaṅaku* works, arranged in a way which reflects the order and sub-grouping found in the mnemonic stanza.<sup>37</sup> Even the most obscure *Kīlkkanaṅaku* text is represented: the *Kainnilai*, whose inclusion in the corpus was contested for some time.<sup>38</sup> This shows that the *Kīlkkanaṅaku* works were transmitted as a corpus and that the *Kainnilai* was accepted as a part of the corpus.

Notably, the two most popular *Kīlkkanaṅaku* texts – the *Tirukkuṟaḷ* and the *Nālaṭiyār* – are missing in UVSL 589, except for a few quotes from the *Nālaṭiyār* in the miscellanea section. The manuscript also contains a part of the *Tiruvaḷḷuvamālai*, a poem in praise of *Tiruvaḷḷuvar*, the author of the *Tirukkuṟaḷ*, which was often prefixed to the *Tirukkuṟaḷ*.<sup>39</sup> Nowadays, the *Tirukkuṟaḷ* is the most famous work of Tamil literature and it seems to have enjoyed great popularity throughout the ages. Though less renowned today, the *Nālaṭiyār* seems to have come close to the *Tirukkuṟaḷ* in popularity in pre-modern times.<sup>40</sup> Given that UVSL 589 contains stray stanzas from the *Nālaṭiyār*

<sup>32</sup> The manuscripts collected by U. V. Swaminatha Iyer formed the basis of the collection of the U. V. Swaminatha Iyer Library, the institution which holds the manuscript discussed in this article. It is quite possible that UVSL 589 was collected by Swaminatha Iyer himself, but there is also the possibility that the library obtained the manuscript from another source (no records exist, unfortunately).

<sup>33</sup> Venkatachalapathy 2005.

<sup>34</sup> Scholarship of previous decades (e.g. Ramanujan 1985, xi–xiv and Zvelebil 1992, 144–153) has tended to overemphasise the rediscovery narrative. Recent publications which question the rediscovery of *Caṅkam* literature include Tieken 2010 and Rajesh 2014.

<sup>35</sup> Wilden 2014, 43.

<sup>36</sup> See Wilden 2014, 177–215 and 2017, 321–326.

<sup>37</sup> The order given in the mnemonic stanza is *Nālaṭiyār*, *Nāṇmaṇimmaṭikai*, the four *Nāṟpatus* (*Iṇṇā Nāṟpatu*, *Iṇṇiyavai Nāṟpatu*, *Kār Nāṟpatu*, *Kaḷavali Nāṟpatu*), the four *Aintiṇais* (*Aintiṇai Aimpatu*, *Aintiṇai Eḷupatu*, *Tiṇaimoli Aimpatu*, *Tiṇaimālai Nūṟraimpatu*), *Tirukkuṟaḷ*, *Tirikaṭukam*, *Acāṟakkōvai*, *Paḷamoḷi Nāṇūru*, *Cīrupaṅcamūlam*, *Mutumoliḷkāñci*, *Ēlāti*, *Kainnilai*. For the order of the *Kīlkkanaṅaku* texts in UVSL 589, see Table 2.

<sup>38</sup> In the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, scholars disagreed on the interpretation of the mnemonic stanza which lists the *Kīlkkanaṅaku* works. Some claimed that the eighteenth work was a text named *Iṇṇilai*, while others maintained that the remaining work was called *Kainnilai*, see Vēnkaṭācāmi 1962, 317–338. The *Kainnilai* was first edited as late as 1931. The text as we have it today is fragmentary, as large parts of it have been lost in transmission.

<sup>39</sup> Zvelebil 1995, 689–690.

<sup>40</sup> Numerous manuscript copies of the *Tirukkuṟaḷ* and the *Nālaṭiyār* survive, and from secondary sources we know that these two works were taught to pupils at a very early stage of their studies; Cutler 2003, 277.

and the *Tiruvalluvamālai*, it seems certain that the person who produced the manuscript knew the *Tirukkuraḷ* and the *Nālaṭṭiyār*. We assume he chose not to include them because the user of the manuscript was expected to know them already.

It is quite remarkable to find the *Kīlkkanaṅaku* works so prominently represented in the manuscript. This is especially true of those that represent the genres of love poetry (*akam*) and heroic poetry (*puṛam*). Nowadays, classical Tamil *akam* and *puṛam* poetry is almost invariably associated with the *Caṅkam* works. The *Kīlkkanaṅaku akam* and *puṛam* works are usually viewed as an inferior imitation of the latter, if they are not ignored completely. The attitude prevalent in modern scholarship is epitomised by Kamil Zvelebil's statement in his *History of Tamil Literature*: 'As poetry, they are not much'<sup>41</sup>. UVSL 589, on the other hand, includes excerpts of all six *Kīlkkanaṅaku akam* works and of the lone *puṛam* text.<sup>42</sup> This shows that *akam* and *puṛam* literature was still read at the time this manuscript was produced. Moreover, for the person who produced the manuscript, the texts which were exemplary of *akam* and *puṛam* poetry were not the *Caṅkam* texts, but the *Kīlkkanaṅaku* works. This may simply be due to the fact that he had no access to the *Caṅkam* works or, possibly, he deemed the *Kīlkkanaṅaku* texts to be better suited as illustrations than the *Caṅkam* works, which are linguistically more difficult and do not always follow the poetological conventions described in the grammars. In any case, UVSL 589 suggests that the *Kīlkkanaṅaku* works might have had a better standing in the pre-modern scholarly milieu than modern literary histories would have us believe.

At the same time, it has to be conceded that the number of surviving *Kīlkkanaṅaku* manuscripts other than *Tirukkuraḷ* and *Nālaṭṭiyār* is relatively small. Probably, not very many people were studying the other *Kīlkkanaṅaku* texts at the time UVSL 589 was produced. The fact that we find these texts in the manuscript suggests that its envisaged users must have been rather well acquainted with Tamil literature. A similar point can be made for another text, which is partly contained in UVSL 589: the *Kallāṭam*. This is a mediaeval (probably eleventh-century) work of Śaiva affiliation, which

combines religious themes and *akam* poetry.<sup>43</sup> Though rarely read today, in the nineteenth century this difficult work had the reputation of being the touchstone of erudition: only the most capable of scholars were thought to be able to study this complicated text. According to a saying quoted by U. V. Swaminatha Iyer in his autobiography, 'one should not argue with those who have studied the *Kallāṭam*' (*Kallāṭam karṛavarōṭu collāṭātē*).<sup>44</sup> Clearly, the reader for whom UVSL 589 was meant was an accomplished scholar, or at least a very advanced student.

There is one more text whose presence in UVSL 589 is remarkable: the *Cīvakacintāmaṇi*. This is one of the five epics of the late-classical period, probably composed in the tenth century by a Jaina author.<sup>45</sup> The *Cīvakacintāmaṇi* had a special place in the history of the putative rediscovery of classical Tamil literature. In a widely quoted passage in his autobiography, U. V. Swaminatha Iyer describes how he met a certain Salem Ramaswami Mudaliar, a wealthy government official and connoisseur of literature, in 1880. During their meeting, Ramaswami Mudaliar urged Swaminatha Iyer, who was not acquainted with classical Tamil literature at the time, to study the ancient texts, and he handed him a manuscript of the *Cīvakacintāmaṇi*. Swaminatha Iyer recounts how he started studying it and thus gained access to the world of ancient Tamil literature for the very first time.<sup>46</sup> In his autobiography, Swaminatha Iyer gives the impression that no-one at the time was familiar with the *Cīvakacintāmaṇi*, except for members of the Jaina community, who recited the text on the grounds of its religious merits.<sup>47</sup> The fact that we find the *Cīvakacintāmaṇi* in our manuscript, which has a clear Śaiva affiliation, however, shows that the text was read as a piece of literature across religious borders.<sup>48</sup> It seems that Swaminatha Iyer's account is somewhat exaggerated. As A. R. Venkatachalapathy has shown, the *Cīvakacintāmaṇi*

<sup>41</sup> Zvelebil 1974, 119.

<sup>42</sup> The *akam* works are *Aintiṇai Aimpatu*, *Aintiṇai Eḷupatu*, *Tiṇaimoli Aimpatu*, *Tiṇaimālai Nūṛraimpatu*, *Kainnilai*, and *Kār Nāṛpatu*. The lone *puṛam* work is the *Kaḷavaḷi Nāṛpatu*.

<sup>43</sup> Zvelebil 1995, 312–313.

<sup>44</sup> Cāminātaiyar 1950, 504.

<sup>45</sup> Zvelebil 1995, 169–171.

<sup>46</sup> Cāminātaiyar 1950, 726–734.

<sup>47</sup> Cāminātaiyar 1950, 735–745.

<sup>48</sup> As Norman Cutler has pointed out (drawing on U. V. Swaminatha Iyer's autobiography), the Vaiṣṇava *Kamparāmāyaṇam* (the Tamil version of the *Rāmāyaṇa*) was studied in a Śaiva environment because it was similarly seen as belonging to the literary rather than the religious domain, Cutler 2003, 279.

was not as unknown as Swaminatha Iyer would have us believe. Part of it had already been published at that time, and the text was even prescribed reading in the Madras University curriculum.<sup>49</sup> UVSL 589 is another testimony to the relative importance of the *Cīvakacintāmaṇi*.

To sum up, then, what we find in UVSL 589 is a glimpse of what a highly erudite person of the period immediately preceding the Tamil Renaissance could have considered a canon of Tamil literature. This canon had strong classicist leanings. The genres which played the most prominent role in contemporary literary production, *pirapantam* and *purāṇam*, are absent, except for a few stray quotations in the ‘miscellanea’ section.<sup>50</sup> All the literary works included in the manuscript belong to the first or early second millennium. On the other hand, the very oldest stratum, which today would be characterised as the epitome of classical Tamil literature, namely *Caṅkam* literature, is missing. In some respects, such as the absence of the *Caṅkam* works, UVSL 589 seems to confirm existing notions about the pre-modern Tamil literary canon. In other respects, it further consolidates doubts about dominant narratives, e.g. U. V. Swaminatha Iyer’s account about the *Cīvakacintāmaṇi*. In yet other respects, UVSL 589 seems to provide new insights; for example, it gives us reason to wonder if the *Kīlkaṇakku* texts played a more important role in the period pre-dating the Tamil Renaissance than we would generally assume today. What is needed is more research which would allow us to place our conclusions on a stronger footing than what was possible in this case study.

## 7. Conclusions

The selection of texts in UVSL 589 and the way in which these were put together provides us with some valuable insights on the transmission of grammatical and literary knowledge and their intimate connection within Tamil scholarship. We have seen how different grammatical treatises were put together in order to cover the whole spectrum of grammatical knowledge and how excerpts from literary works were used to illustrate poetological theory. From the latter, we were able to deduce which literary works the person who produced UVSL 589

deemed exemplary. Furthermore, the arrangement of texts in UVSL 589 together with its codicological features, which make its contents readily accessible, suggest that the manuscript served as an educational tool. As such, UVSL 589 provides a snapshot of the Tamil scholarly tradition at the time just before the printing press and Western education caused a definitive transformation of the Tamil scholarly landscape.

Such insights can only emerge by studying the manuscript in its entirety. There is nothing special about the texts contained in UVSL 589 in themselves. It is their co-occurrence in UVSL 589 that makes it such a remarkable object. As Dominik Wujastyk has recently pointed out, Indology has long tended to equate manuscripts with texts. Catalogues of Indic manuscripts usually contain lists of titles rather than of physical objects.<sup>51</sup> This is also true of the U. V. Swaminatha Iyer Library catalogue ([Anonymus] 1956–1962). In this catalogue, texts are listed under their respective titles, but there is no list of the texts contained in the same physical object. Thus, it is simply impossible to gather information about a multiple-text manuscript as a whole unless one is already familiar with its contents. If we take our list of the contents of UVSL 589 as a starting point, however, and try to look up the individual texts, it emerges that the catalogue lists the sections that can be identified with a particular work, but omits the composite sections t and v, which contain material assembled from various texts.<sup>52</sup> In other words, anything which is not a text in the narrow sense is excluded from the catalogue. As we hope to have shown in the case of UVSL 589, however, it is only by engaging with manuscripts as objects in their own right that we are in the position to place their textual dimension in a broader cultural frame.

<sup>49</sup> Venkatachalapathy 2005, 539.

<sup>50</sup> *Pirapantam* (from Sanskrit *prabandha*, ‘composition’) or *ciṅṅilakkīyam* (‘minor literature’) is the cover term for a number of diverse poetical genres, all of which are characterised by their rather strong formalistic rigour. *Purāṇam* in this context mostly means temple-legends (*sthalapurāṇa*) expounding the greatness of a particular sacred place. See Ebeling 2010, 55–57.

<sup>51</sup> Wujastyk 2014, 173–174. As for Tamil manuscripts, a felicitous exception is represented by the catalogue of the collection held at the Maharaja Sarfoji’s Saraswathi Mahal Library of Thanjavur (e.g. Olaganatha Pillay 1964).

<sup>52</sup> In fact, the first part of the manuscript (up to section o in our counting) is not reflected at all in the catalogue. This is most probably due to a mistake, since most of the sections found there can easily be identified with a particular text and would be expected to be found in the catalogue. We find the following entries for the rest of the manuscript: UVSL 589-A: *Nappūl*; UVSL 589-B: *Akapporuḷ Viḷakkam*; UVSL 589-C: *Yāpparuṅkalakkārikai*; UVSL 589-D: *Taṅṅiyalaṅkāram*; UVSL 589-E: *Kallātam*; UVSL 589-F: *Paḷamoḷi Nāṅūru*; UVSL 589-G: *Cīrupaṅcamūlam*; UVSL 589-H: *Mutumōḷikkāñci*; UVSL 589-I: *Elāti*; UVSL 589-J: *Taṅṅiyalaṅkāram*; UVSL 589-K: *Ācārakkōvai*; UVSL 589-L: *Tiruvallūvamālai*; UVSL 589-M: *Tirumurukāṅṅruppaṭai*; UVSL 589-N: *Cīvakacintāmaṇi*.

Appendix 1: Invocations in UVSL 589. The invocations are provided in a diplomatic transcription. In this respect, one may note the unusual spelling of *mamgaḷam* for *maṅgaḷam*. At times, the same invocation occurs in a slightly enlarged version. These variants are reported in round brackets.

	Invocations	Occurrences	Page no.: line no.
1.	<i>(śrī) dānanāthāya mamgaḷam / śrī tānanātāya maṅgaḷam</i> (Sanskrit: 'prayer to the (holy) lord of liberality [i.e. Śiva]').	14	13:12, 32:5, 42:8, 44:12, 49:10, 61:8, 63:13, 70:6, 71:4, 72:7, 75:5, 76:12, 114:5, 194:17
2.	<i>(śrī) puṅḍarikapureśāya mamgaḷam</i> (Sanskrit: 'prayer to the (holy) lord of the Lotus Town [Chidambaram; i.e. Śiva]')	12	1:1, 24:15, 32:5, 42:8, 49:10, 63:3, 71:4, 75:10, 76:13, 129:17, 162:15, 194:17
3.	<i>śrī puṅḍarikapurānīvāsāya mamgaḷam</i> (Sanskrit: 'prayer to the holy dweller of the Lotus Town [Chidambaram; i.e. Śiva]')	8	20:15, 25:4, 71:4, 114:5, 135:11, 149:5, 156:8, 162:4
4.	<i>śrī kanakasabhānaṭeśāya mamgaḷam</i> (Sanskrit: 'prayer to the holy lord of dance of the golden hall [in the temple of Chidambaram; i.e. Śiva]')	8	20:15, 25:4, 71:4, 75:10, 76:13, 156:8, 162:15, 194:17
5.	<i>śrī citambareśāya mamgaḷam</i> (Sanskrit: 'prayer to the holy lord of Chidambaram [i.e. Śiva]')	2	76:13, 166:7
6.	<i>(nampi) tampirāṅ rōḷa(nā)r tiruvaṭikaḷē caraṇam / yām uṭaiya paṛṇu</i> (Tamil: 'the holy feet of the companion of the (supreme) lord [i.e. Cuntarar] are the refuge / our devotion')	10	76:14 (3x), 114:5 (2x), 162:4, 162:15, 166:8 (2x), 194:17
7.	<i>aṅavaratātāna nāyakar tiruvaṭikaḷē caraṇam / kati</i> (Tamil: 'the holy feet of the lord of incessant liberality [i.e. Śiva] are the refuge / support').	3	49:10, 55:10, 76:13
8.	<i>śrī anavaradānanāthāya mamgaḷam</i> (Sanskrit: 'prayer to the holy lord of incessant liberality [i.e. Śiva]')	1	75:10
9.	<i>vaṅṛoṅṭaṅār tiruvaṭikaḷ</i> (Tamil: 'the holy feet of Vaṅṛoṅṭaṅār [i.e. Cuntarar]')	1	76:13



## Appendix 2: Annotations written in Telugu script in UVSL 589.

	Annotations	Translations and explanations	Page no.: line no.
1.	<i>paṁḍḍāraṁ</i> (for Tamil <i>paṅṅāraṁ</i> )	Lit. 'Śaivite devotee'. Appended to <i>Puṟapporu! Venpāmālai</i> 232 to give the gist of the stanza, which is about what one may achieve by worshipping Śiva.	4:18
2.	<i>kaivel kaḷirruḍuṁ</i> (for Tamil <i>kaivēl kaḷirruṅṅuṁ</i> ).	Lit. 'also [the poem which begins with] 'kaivēl kaḷirru[ṅṅu]' [i.e. <i>Tirukkural</i> 774]'. Appended to <i>Puṟapporu! Venpāmālai</i> 142, which is similar in content, to point out the parallel.	10:15
3.	<i>śuruṁbivarśaṁdduṁmedurartamuttuṁ ve</i>	[So far no explanation]	29:16
4.	<i>iḍainilaiṭṭivakaṁ</i> (for Tamil <i>iṭainilaiṭṭivakaṁ</i> ).	This is the technical term for a particular figure of speech. Appended to a stanza from the commentary on the <i>Taṅṅiyalaṅkāraṁ</i> , which illustrates this figure of speech.	31:8
5.	<i>iḱtiraṁḍḍeḷuttu</i> (for Tamil <i>iḱt'iraṅṅ'eḷuttu</i> ).	Lit. 'this [only contains] two letters'. Appended to a stanza from the commentary on the <i>Taṅṅiyalaṅkāraṁ</i> , which only employs two different consonants. The first two characters of this brief annotation are written in Tamil script, whereas the rest is written in Telugu script.	149:6

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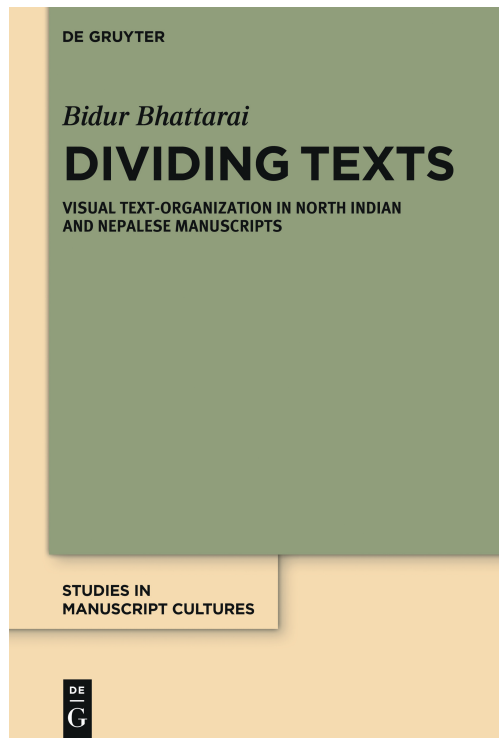
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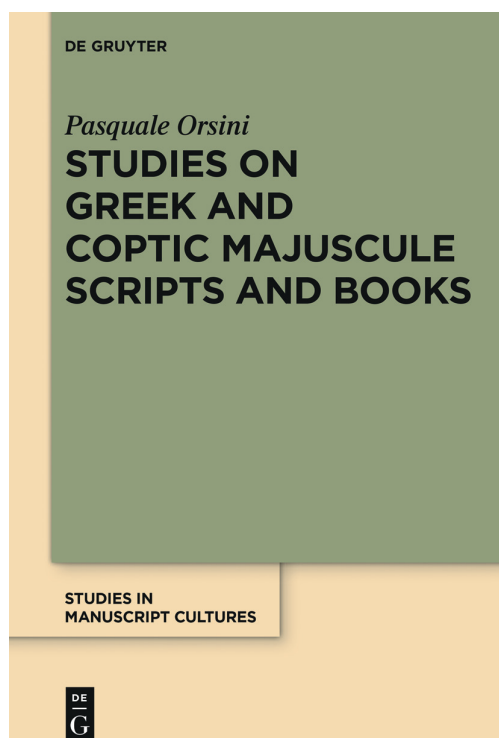
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The number of manuscripts produced in the Indian sub-continent is astounding and is the result of a massive enterprise that was carried out over a vast geographical area and over a vast stretch of time. Focusing on areas of Northern India and Nepal between 800 to 1300 <sup>ce</sup> and on manuscripts containing Sanskrit texts, the present study investigates a fundamental and so far rarely studied aspect of manuscript production: visual organization. Scribes adopted a variety of visual strategies to distinguish one text from another and to differentiate the various sections within a single text (chapters, sub-chapters, etc.). Their repertoire includes the use of space(s) on the folio, the adoption of different writing styles, the inclusion of symbols of various kind, the application of colors (rubrication), or a combination of all these. This study includes a description of these various strategies and an analysis of their different implementations across the selected geographical areas. It sheds light on how manuscripts were produced, as well as on some aspects of their employment in ritual contexts, in different areas of India and Nepal.

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