

# Texts Surrounding Texts (TST)

## Kick-off Workshop

CSMC, Universität Hamburg

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### Abstracts

**ANANDAKECHINEN, Suganya and McCANN, Erin:** Tamil and Manipravalam Vaiṣṇava manuscripts at the BNF and Stabi collections.

For the TST project, we intend to work together on a common subproject, which will focus on the cataloguing and the study of the colophons of Vaiṣṇava manuscripts in Tamil and Manipravalam, held at the BNF and the Stabi. While our focus will be on Śrīvaiṣṇava works, we shall also seek to work upon other Vaiṣṇava texts, from the postclassical (i.e. the *Nālāyira Tivviya Pirapantam*) to the more modern (e.g. Aruṇācala Kavirāyar’s *Rāmanāṭaka kriti*). The study of colophons is crucial to the understanding of the history of transmission of any given tradition, and in this case it will be useful for analyzing similarities and investigating confluences between the mainstream Śrīvaiṣṇava and the non-Śrīvaiṣṇava Vaiṣṇava traditions in the Tamil land.

**CHEVILLARD, Jean-Luc:** Native and non-native knowledge about Tamil as evidenced by some items in the “Fonds Indien” of the Bnf.

As an “échantillon” of my currently ongoing exploration of the “Fonds Indien” of the Bnf, I shall discuss here three MSS and one pair of MSS, which illustrate the variety of

manners in which those precious resources are invaluable in improving our knowledge about Tamil language and Tamil literature, because they illustrate both the early attempts by westerners at mastering themselves the everyday variety (both formal and colloquial/dialectal) of this rich language (see Indien 221 and Indien 222) and the breadth/width of the extent to which they were trying to acquire original (first-hand) insider's (difficult-to-acquire) knowledge concerning the Poetic (Classical) variety of Tamil (cf. Indien 202-203 [YV] and Indien 185 [VC]).

The two first MSS discussed (which illustrate non-native knowledge about everyday Tamil) are Indien 221 and Indien 222, which appear to be hand-written copies of the printed version of Proença's *Vocabulario Tamulico* (printed posthumously in 1679 in Ambalacat), which is itself an expurgated version of a more complete MS version preserved in GOA. Both the printed version and the older MS being frequently difficult to read, the two Paris MSS are precious from the point of view of preparing a critical edition of Proença's 1679 *Vocabulario*, in which I am currently engaged (as part of a wider collaborative exploration with Cristina Muru, who is editing the GOA MS). The indebtedness of Indien 221 and Indien 222 to the 1679 book is attested for instance by the fact that they sometimes reproduce mistakes (and sometimes correct them) but never seem to contain the elements of information found in the older GOA MS which were censured.

The three MSS which I shall examine subsequently (illustrating native cultivation of Classical Tamil) are Indien 202-203 (YV, in two parts) and Indien 185 (*Vīracōḷiyam*), concerning which I shall limit myself here to the specific passages which deal with the specialized topic of *ṣaṭ pratyaya*, on which I have already worked, but on the basis of printed books until now. My central concern here is an examination of the techniques used for the representation of numbers (and especially big numbers).

**CIOTTI, Giovanni and FRANCESCHINI, Marco:** Some Aspects of the Modular Structure of Colophons in Manuscripts Written in Tamil and Tamilian Grantha Scripts.

Over the last four years, within the frame of the NETamil Project, we have been carrying out a research on the colophons found in manuscripts written in Tamil and Tamilian Grantha scripts. The first outcomes of our research were presented in a long article pub-

lished in 2016, which was based on 45 colophons. Since then we have collected and examined a great deal of new material: the number of colophons in our database is now well above 750. This presentation aims to outline the main modules that most commonly appear in the colophons of our database.

The first module is that concerning dates. We will present a comprehensive statistical summary of the abundant material we have collected and analysed. The overview will also touch upon a topic which is rarely investigated, i.e. wrong dates – or rather: dates which have no correspondence in the Gregorian calendar because one of their calendrical elements is wrong. This will give us the opportunity to shed some light on what seems to be a peculiar – and somewhat ambiguous – use which is made in these dates of the names of the lunar months, a use which, to our knowledge, has never been noticed before.

The second module concerns the people mentioned in colophons. These are mainly scribes and recipients of the manuscripts. Along with their names, one can find mention of their nicknames, families, their alleged place of residence or origin, etc. We will show the rather formulaic way in which all of this information is generally presented, and outline a few notable exceptions.

**D'AVELLA, Victor:** The Corpus of Tamil Grammars in the BnF.

The collection of Tamil manuscripts at the BnF offers us several fascinating incites into the literary canons as they were available during the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> centuries. One particular genre well represented in the collection is that of grammatical texts (Tamil: *ilakkaṇam*). Works from the earliest period (*Tolkāppiyam*) up to more recent times (*Pirayōkavivēkam*) are well represented and bear witness to the variety of grammatical literature being studied at the time. At present, I will give a brief overview of the grammatical texts in the collection and further details about some of the paratexts and other diagrams available. Since none of these manuscripts have ever been consulted for published editions, they also give us hope of improving our printed texts.

**DE SIMINI, Florinda:** The Transmission of the Śivadharma in South India: An overview.

Works of early Śaiva literature, such as the *Śivadharmaśāstra* and the *Śivadharmottara*, have enjoyed growing popularity in late medieval and early modern Tamil Nadu. Starting from the 12<sup>th</sup> century, we observe a progressive assimilation of these works, which were conceived for an audience of lay Māheśvaras around the 6<sup>th</sup>–7<sup>th</sup> century, into the Śaiva Siddhānta tradition of Tamil Nadu. This process is at first detectable in the Sanskrit scriptures that were composed in the area, while culminating in the 16th century in the composition of a Tamil translation of the *Śivadharmottara*, and a Tamil commentary thereupon. Such works were part of the *oeuvre* of Nigamajñāna I and II, both based at Cidambaram, and arguably impacted later production of Śaiva literature in the region.

Extensive research on the attestations and influence of the Śivadharma works in Tamil Nadu has just begun, and it promises to uncover important facets of the process of cultural translation and adaptation of an older tradition to a modern audience. In this presentation, following a general introduction to the topic, we will consider the main features of the manuscript transmission of these texts in the South of India, with a special focus on Tamil Nadu, and highlight what research perspectives we can pursue in the frame of the ANR/DFG-funded project “Texts Surrounding Texts”.

**FRANCIS, Emmanuel:** Stanzas, Imprecations, and Syllabics.

In the framework of the TST project, besides producing catalogue entries, my principal targets will be satellite stanzas of the Tamil manuscripts of the Murukaṇ devotion, imprecations, and Tamil and Grantha syllabics.

As for the satellite stanzas of the Murukaṇ devotion, earlier work has shown that several stanzas found in the manuscripts of the *Tirumurukārruppaṭai* are, in the age of print, exclusively associated with the Kantappurāṇam. I will thus collect satellite stanzas from manuscripts (*Kantappurāṇam*, *Tiruppukal*, *Kantar Antāti*), mainly from the BnF collection, in order to assess whether, conversely, stanzas found in the printed editions of the *Tirumurukārruppaṭai* were found, in the manuscript culture, associated with other texts. In a broader perspective, I hope to throw light on the origination and circulation

of devotional satellite stanzas in devotional circles.

As for imprecations, that is prose benedictions and curses, the first aim is to document them across time and space (geographical as well as social), so as to compare the epigraphical practices with those observed in the manuscripts: e.g. the inscriptional *svasti śrī* or *śubham astu* vs. the *piḷḷaiyār culi* and other prose benedictions, such as *X tuṇai*, used in manuscripts.

As for Tamil and Grantha syllabics, fairly well represented in the BnF collection, documenting and studying them may throw light on the sources of knowledge of the western missionaries and scholars who produced them, notably by comparison with contemporary inscriptions and, whenever possible, manuscripts.

**KĘDZIA, Ilona:** Para-textual portions in selected Tamil Siddha medico-alchemical manuscripts.

My research for the TST project will be focused on the Tamil medical and alchemical manuscripts related to the Tamil Siddha tradition. I intend to concentrate mostly on the two manuscripts housed in the BNF, namely *Vayittiyam mūṇru* (number 122) and *Cāstiram aintu* (135). The tentatively selected manuscripts contain, among others, works ascribed to Siddha Irāmatēvar, whose medico-alchemical works have been the object of my doctoral studies. I shall search for para-textual stanzas in the texts, such as prefatory parts, glosses and colophons, which may shed important light on the history of the transmission of the texts, the figure of their author, and the community in which they has been transmitted.

**MÜLLER, Monika E.:** The collection of Palm Leaf Manuscripts in the State and University Library – history and concepts of presentation.

The State and University Library of Hamburg (SUB) has a rich collection of around 500 Indian Palm leaf manuscripts. Most of them were presumably made in the 17<sup>th</sup> to the 19<sup>th</sup> centuries. The library owes several Indologist basic research. So, the Indologist Raghavan is responsible for a typescript with short catalogue entries of all palm leaf manuscripts

written in the 1950s. Klaus Janert and N. Narasimhan Poti contributed as collaborators of the Verzeichnis der orientalischen Handschriften in Deutschland (VOHD) to several catalogues in which they described a part of the manuscripts in the 1980s. Besides these activities, there is only little known about the collection, its history or the content of the manuscripts until now.

Important turning points in the collection history or its deep sleep are the engagement of the Sonderforschungsbereich Manuskriptkulturen at the University Hamburg (SFB) which digitized the whole collection with great commitment last summer in the SUB. Furthermore the collection is attracting the scientific curiosity of Prof. Eva Wilden and the group of researchers around her.

In my talk, I will trace the development of the collection history as far it is known until now. Furthermore, the library's concept will be explained how to present the digital copies online.

**MURU, Cristina:** Persuading and informing: paratexts, lexicon and argumentative structures in Christian missionary manuscripts.

Within the TST project, my research focuses on the analysis of Christian linguistic tools—grammars, manuals, and dictionaries mainly from the BnF (but not exclusively). The primary hypothesis from which I start is that it is possible:

1. to reconstruct a technical lexicon of the *Christian Tamil*;
2. to identify the persuasive strategies within missionaries' discourse and in the packaging of their manuscripts;
3. to document the 'transmission of knowledge' related to language description and religious translations across time and space.

As for 1) the first objective is to construct the religious word lists from the missionaries' lexicographical works and translations; to attest the presence of the word list built from the lexicographical works within the translations. The second objective is to observe

the concordance of a most recurrent set of religious terms identified among transliteration, new sense for existing words, combinations of terms for new sense. I hope to shed light on the negotiation of meanings in the Christian religious discourse and its progression across time.

As for 2), I assume that the analysis of paratexts (both surrounding and within the text) and argumentative structures, above all in paratexts, can be studied as socio-pragmatic devices for presenting, thus for persuading, and influencing the public/reader. I also assume that paratexts are useful for 3). The primary target for 1) and 2) is to shed light on the variety of Tamil used among missionaries.

As for 3) paratexts, as well as the observation of how metalanguage changed across language descriptions, may throw light on the transmission of manuscripts across time and individuals. The focus on grammatical metalanguage may also contribute to the History of the Language Sciences.

**PETIT, Jérôme:** TST in the history of the Indian manuscripts collection of the BnF.

Built by the Jesuit Fathers in the 1730's, the Indian manuscripts collection of the National Library of France (BnF) is rich of around 3,000 manuscripts divided into two main collections, one "Sanskrit" and one "Indien" that gathers together the manuscripts written in the modern languages. Among them, some specific collections were the subject to dedicated and detailed catalogues like Sanskrit Buddhism, Veda and Sanskrit Epics, Urdu, Punjabi, Sindhi, Singhalese, Bengali, Marathi and Telugu manuscripts that have progressively replaced the temporary catalogues published by Antoine Cabaton at the beginning of the 20th century. Many has been done but much remains to be done. Description and analysis of the Sanskrit manuscripts in some peculiar branches like Philosophy (particularly the manuscripts from Bengal and Kashmir) and Jainism is highly needed, as well as a detailed catalogue of the Tamil collection. Archives of the BnF shed light on the history of the treatment of the Indian manuscripts collections and on the efforts made by scholars like Julien Vinson, Léon Feer or Jean Filliozat. TST appears to be a great opportunity to continue and to achieve important works in the manuscriptology field, at the digital age of humanities.

**TRENTO, Margherita:** Two groups of Catholic manuscripts in Tamil.

In the context of the TST project, I plan to work on two groups of manuscripts preserved in the BnF. The first is a relatively small group of paper and palm-leaf manuscripts containing prose and poetry works composed in Tamil by missionary Costanzo Giuseppe Beschi (1680-1747). These manuscripts were produced and collected in different contexts, often rather close to the date of composition of the texts (in one case, we might have an autograph). I intend to analyze their paratexts—including scribal colophons, lists of difficult words, introductions, and satellite stanzas—to throw light on the modes of manuscript circulation and the readership of Beschi’s corpus in the 18th and early 19th century. A second step will be comparing these paratexts with those included in the printed editions of the same texts, often produced by the Mission Press of Pondicherry in the mid-19th century, in order to understand the relationship between the manuscript and print circulation of Beschi’s works.

Second, I will begin exploring manuscripts containing retellings of the lives of the saints in various Tamil genres. The BnF catalogues, together with observations from other archives, suggest that the genres most commonly used for this purpose were popular narratives in verse (*ammānai*) and prose (*carittiram*), plays (*nāṭakam*, *vācakappā*), and more rarely cirrilakkiyam genres (*maṇimālai*, *piḷḷaittamil*). This corpus has not been studied systematically so far, and is difficult to date, but represents the earliest literary expression of indigenous Tamil Catholicism. My immediate goal is to get a sense of the archive by exploring scribal paratexts, and maybe investigate more in detail the production and circulation of some specific manuscripts