Mēlappaḻuvūr, Agastyeśvara temple, time of Parāntaka I, year 36

Valérie Gillet and Emmanuel Francis

Authors of digital edition: Valérie Gillet, Emmanuel Francis

Identifier: DHARMA_INSMelKil00001

Repository: Mēlappaḻuvūr & Kīḻappaḻuvūr (tfa-melappaluvur-kilappaluvur-epigraphy)

File path: DHARMA_INSMelKil00001.xml

Language: Tamil [Grantha, Tamil]

Commit: 2026-09-29 11:09 (3c1804e), last modified 2026-09-29 11:09 (3c1804e)

Summary

AIM, southern shrine; lowest inscription on the central wall section of the *ardha-maṇḍapa* of the northern façade; 36th regnal year of *matirai koṇṭa* Kōpparakesarivarman = Parāntaka I (*circa* 943 A.D.).

Edition

〈1〉 **svasti śrī**

matirai koṇṭa kō-p-para-kēcari-paṉma〈r〉¡ki!〈kku〉 yā〈2〉ṇṭu 3 10 6 Āvatu

Avaṉi-ka¡ṉ!〈n〉taṟpa-purattu **mah¿a?〈ā〉-de**vark〈3〉ku kaṇṭaṉ n(e/ē)(ṟ/r)iyāṉ tirutta kuḷattiṉ k¡i!〈ī〉ḷ A**poha**naṅ kiṭa¡ṉ!〈n〉〈4〉(ta) **(bhūmi)**(yai macakki Itin nirk kiṭaṉṭa nilam) [ca. 8×] (ṟi) [ca. 1×]〈5〉 t(u) Uṭump' ōṭiy āmai tava¡ṉ!〈n〉tatu Eppē¡ṟ!〈r〉paṭṭatu Uṇṇilam Oḷiv' iṉṟi(y)〈6〉 (Aka)-v-ēriyum puṟa-v-ēriyum m¡i!〈ī〉ṉ poṉṉum vaḷaiyiṟ

cuṟṟu Eppē¡ṟ!〈r〉paṭṭatum tāṇi [1×]〈7〉[2×](k) koṇṭu Iraṇṭu taḷiyilum Orō no¡ṉ!〈n〉tā-viḷakku Erippōm āṉō[m]〈8〉 It-[ta]ḷi paṭṭuṭaiyōm Ēḻuvōm

Apparatus

〈4〉 (ta) **(bhūmi)**(yai macakki Itin nirk kiṭaṉta nilam) • The reading of this phrase is based on the parallel in INSMelKil00002, line 4.

Translation by Gillet 2024

Fortune! Prosperity! 〈This is〉 the 36th year of Kōpparakesarivarman who has taken Madurai. For Mahādeva of Avaṉikaṉtaṟpapuram, Kaṇṭaṉ Neṟiyāṉ/Nēriyāṉ, when he improved (*tirutta*) 〈the land which〉 was lying (*kiṭaṉta*) without enjoyment (*a**poha**naṅ*) under (*kīḻ*) 〈the irrigation〉 of the tank (*kuḷattiṉ*), having prepared (*macakki*) the land (*bhūmiyai*) [...] the land where the turtles (*āmai*) crawl (*tavaḷṉtatu*) and the lizards (*uṭumpu*) run (*ōṭi*),[1] the inner lands (*uṇṇilam*) of whatever name (*eppērpaṭṭatu*) were exempted (*oḷiviṉṟiya*), the *akavēri*, the *puṟavēri*, the *mīṉapoṉ*,[2] and whatever name (*eppērpaṭṭatum*) inside 〈this land〉 (*vaḷaiyiṟ cuṟṟu*); having taken (*koṇṭu*) [...], we will burn (*erippōm āṉō[m]*) a perpetual lamp respectively (*orō*[3] *nontāviḷakku*) in the two temples (*iraṇṭu taḷiyilum*), we the Paṭṭuṭaiyārs of this temple (*paṭṭuṭaiyōm*), we the Seven (*ēḻuvōm*).[4]

Commentary

〈3〉 Nēriyāṉ is a name of the Cōḻa kings (as lords of the Nēri hill) or alternatively a personal name meaning "one of subtle intellect" (see MTL s.v. *nēriyaṉ*). Neṟiyāṉ, as derived from *neṟi*, could mean "religious one", that is, devotee, or "virtuous/righteous one".

[1] That is, uncultivated lands.

[2] Literally: the inner lake (*aka-v-ēri-y-um*), the outer lake (*puṟa-v-ēri-y-um*), and the gold that the fishes are (*mīṉa-p-poṉṉ-um*). The interpretation of *mīṉappoṉṉum* was suggested to me by E. Francis. I did not translate the original words because it is not clear whether they refer to proper ponds and fishes, as their literal meanings suggest, or to types of lands and other elements. For similar expressions, see INSMelKil00007.

[3] Instead of considering *oro* as a variant of *oru*, G. Vijayavenugopal convinced me to take *orō* as a distributive of *oru*, that is *oru oru*, i.e. one each.

[4] *paṭṭuṭaiyār* and *ēḻuvār* each have a first person plural marker (*-ōm*), suggesting that it could be taken as two separate groups, that is, the Paṭṭuṭaiyārs and the Seven, or as a single group, made of Seven Paṭṭuṭaiyārs. It makes more sense, in my view, to interpret this sequence which appears regularly in the inscriptions of this temple complex as the Seven Paṭṭuṭaiyārs.

〈5〉 *Uṭump' ōṭiy āmai tavaḻṉ!〈n〉tatu*, "where the lizzard (*uṭumpu*) runs (*ōṭi*) and the turtle (*āmai*) crawls (*tavaḻntatu*, literally "that which [the turtle] crawls"). This formula, designating uncultivated lands, is also used in the late Pallava copper-plate grants.

〈6〉 *(aka)vēriyum puṟavēriyum*. Literally: "the inner tank (*aka-v-ēri-y-um*) and the outer tank (*puṟa-v-ēri-y-um*)". This appears to refer to the tanks comprised by or nearby the plots, but the details remain unclear. See also INSMelKil00007 for a similar formula.

〈6〉 *mīi!〈ī〉ṉ poṉṉum*. Dr. G. Vijayavenugopal suggested to us to interpret *poṉṉum* as "gold", to read the previous word as *mīṉa* as a mistake for *īḻa* (*īḻam*), and to understand the phrase as "Lankan gold". We tentatively take the phrase in the sense of the "gold of fish", that is, the donation includes the income raised from the fishes in the two tanks just mentioned.

〈7〉 *erippōm āṉōm*. Literally "we have become, we are" (*aṉōm*) "those who will burn" (*erippōm*).

〈8〉 *it-taḷi*, "this temple", that is the temple in Avaṉikantaṟpapuram.

Bibliography

Reported in ARIE 1923–24 (ARIE/1923-1924/C/1924/368).

Edited and translated in Gillet 2024, based on autopsy and photographs (by Valérie Gillet, 2016-2018).

This digital edition by Valérie Gillet and Emmanuel Francis.

Primary

[VG] Gillet, Valérie. 2024. *Minor Majesties: The Paḻuvēṭṭaraiyars and their South Indian Kingdom of Paḻuvūr, 9th-11th centuries A.D.* New York: Oxford University Press. DOI: 10.1093/oso/9780197757710.001.0001. [URL]. Pages 136–137, item 1.

Secondary

ARIE 1923–24. *Annual report on South-Indian epigraphy for the year ending 31st March 1924*. Edited by G. Venkoba Rao. Madras: Government Press, 1925. Page 74, appendix C/1924, item 368.