

tive relationship: for instance, in *Kalittokai-2*, where the three *tāḷicai*s have four lines each, there is alliteration between *tolaiivāki*, *malaiyirantu*, *nilaiyiya* and *mulaiyākam*, for the first *tāḷicai*, between *illēna*, *kallirantu*, *tolliyal* and *pullākam*, for the second *tāḷicai*, and, between *iṭaninri*, *kaṭanirantu*, *vaṭamīnpōl* and *taṭamenrōl* for the third *tāḷicai*.

The *etukai* feature is also prominent in the literary corpus which stands chronologically between Caṅkam poetry and Bhakti poetry, and which contains such works as the *Kuraḷ* and the *Nāḷaṭiyār*, both being part of what is called the *Patineṇ Kīlkaṇakku*. The verses contained in it are (mostly) composed in a metre called *veṇṇā*, the development of which has been studied in a seminal article by V.S. Rajam (1992). We find for instance in the *Nāḷaṭiyār*, which contains four hundred quatrains, that these fall, from a metrical point of view, under two main patterns, one of them being called *nēricai veṇṇā* (and found in three hundred quatrains), the other one being called *innicai veṇṇā* (and found in the remaining hundred quatrains).⁴⁷ Both can be illustrated, from the point of view of *etukai*, by the following templates (See Figure C and Figure D):

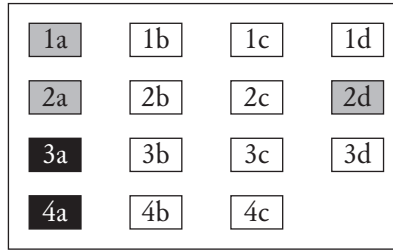


Fig. C: Alliteration (*etukai*) in the four lines and the fifteen *cīrs* of a *nēricai veṇṇā* stanza

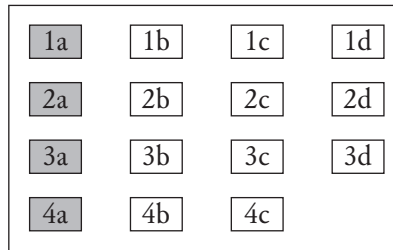


Fig. D: Alliteration (*etukai*) in the four lines and the fifteen *cīrs* of an *innicai veṇṇā* stanza

⁴⁷ See G.U. Pope (1893).