

the manuscript transmission, as will become obvious when discussing the mss. and their inter-relations.

## 2. The Textual Basis

### 2.1 Editions, Commentaries, Translations

The first edition of the AN seems to have been published as late as 1918. It was an edition by Irā. Irākavaiyaṅkār of the first part only (*Kalirriyāṅainirai*), that is, the first 120 poems, the first 90 of them being the only portion for which an old commentary has been transmitted. Like all the old anonymous commentaries<sup>11</sup> it is not an extensive word-by-word paraphrase as is the “modern” standard, but a collection of glosses for difficult words, occasionally enriched by a summary of the content and syntactical structure of the poem plus a few discussions of imagery. This work was taken up and completed in 1926 (*Kalirriyāṅainirai*: AN KV-120), 1924<sup>12</sup> (*Maṇimīṭaipavaḷam*: AN 121-300) and 1933 (*Nittilakkōvai*: AN 301-400) by Vē. Irāja-kōpālāryaṅ, reproducing the already printed first part with the old commentary and writing his own paraphrase commentary up to AN 160. These three parts were also integrated in 1933 in a beautiful and careful edition<sup>13</sup>, virtually free from misprints and following the traditional *sandhi*, adding a number of variants, between two and six

<sup>11</sup> “Old” in the case of a commentary means, alas, certainly not premedieval. Actually, we have no clue here as to external chronology, but, expressed in internal terms, this might mean, post-ḷampūraṅar (the first *Tolkāppiyam* commentator) and pre-Naccinārkkiniyar (the most famous *Tolkāppiyam* commentator, climax of the medieval renaissance – dated in different entries of Zvebil’s Lexicon of Tamil Literature to the 13<sup>th</sup>, 14<sup>th</sup> and 15<sup>th</sup> century respectively – who has also written commentaries on the *Kalittokai* and on the *Pattuppāṭṭu*).

<sup>12</sup> My reproduction of the copy kept in the UVSL lacks the title page, but Irāja kōpālāryaṅ’s preface is dated to *rutirōtkāri v°, āṅi m°*.

<sup>13</sup> Irā. Irākavaiyaṅkār’s introduction is still reprinted there, and it makes mention of the use of seven manuscripts, a list to be discussed below at the end of section 2.2.

per poem, without, however, naming the source (as is the traditional way), and footnotes. Most of the comparatively few variants taken up and eventually even put into the text by the later editors and/or translators are already to be found here. In other words, there is no evidence that fundamental philological work on the basis of manuscripts has ever been done afterwards, with the exception of Vaiyāpurip Pillai. The UVSL keeps a copy of the brochured *editio princeps* of the first part, nowadays difficult to find, so the matrix of our text is the 1933 edition (integrating the separate volumes from 1924, 1926, 1933), as the oldest available version of the constituted text.

Next in line is Vaiyāpurip Pillai’s *Caṅka Ilakkiyam* edition of 1940, a two-volume set of the complete *Caṅkam* corpus, arranged according to the names of the poets in alphabetical order. It contains no commentary and no variants, but often deviates from the earlier text, and his preface contains the second and last list of manuscripts for the AN. The *sandhi* is on the whole retained, but, as is the case with nearly all modern editions, treated arbitrarily and dissolved in unpredictable places, without, however, tampering with the metrical feet.<sup>14</sup> Here we find the first specimens of *-il*, a locative suffix, for *-in*, an oblique suffix, to be found in the manuscripts, which has led to the unquestioned belief in *-il* as the primary locative suffix already in *Caṅkam* Tamil.

What comes closest to a reference edition in the case of AN is the *Kaḷakam* edition by N.M. Veṅkaṭacāmi Nāṭṭār and R. Veṅkaṭā-calam Pillai, first published in three volumes in 1945, 1946 and 1947,

<sup>14</sup> This seems to be partially the case also with the manuscripts, a problem which will be discussed below. As for the older editors, as far as I can see Narāyaṅa-cāmi Aiyar in his NA has preserved or restored *sandhi*, while Cāminātaiyar in all his editions has dissolved it only at the end of a line, without, however, being consistent in that respect.

and reprinted several times over the next decades. With a few variations (most of which are printing mistakes) it reproduces the text established by Irā. Irākavaiyaṅkār/Vē. Irājakōpālāryaṅ, and it gives a number (but not all of his) variants in footnotes. It contains a paraphrase, also for the first 90 poems, which means that the old anonymous commentary is not reproduced anymore. This paraphrase is supplemented by an additional commentary and parallel passages in the way developed by Cāminātaiyar. The metrical feet are left intact, but *sandhi* is partly (and again unpredictably) dissolved or modernised. Since 1973, the Kaḷakam edition has been printed with a new commentary by P.V. Cōmacuntaraṅār. As it does not try to improve on the established text and variants, it has not been consulted here.

The next significant attempt at textual improvement (although as such in some respects dubious) is the Rājam edition of 1958, a project borne by a group of scholars with the aim to make the whole classical corpus available and more easily readable to a larger public.<sup>15</sup> Again this is a version printed without commentary or variants (and thus the whole AN easily fits into a single volume). Again there are changes in the text, based on variant readings from the editions of Irā. Irākavaiyaṅkār/Vē. Irājakōpālāryaṅ and of Vaiyāpurip Piḷḷai, but again we find no kind of record of these proceedings, neither in the form of an extensive introduction nor of notes. This is the first edition where the metrical feet are broken up into a complete word split, the *sandhi* is completely modernised (apart from occasional, obviously either thorny or simply overlooked passages), and the sentence border(s) are marked by western punctuation. What has started by and by with the Kaḷakam edition, the introduction of

<sup>15</sup> The constitution of this group, the individual contributions and their general way of working, are in itself an object of research, one part of the modern history of Tamilistics that ought to be written one of these days.

modern suffixes and the disambiguation of the text in places where the *sandhi* allows for several different readings, has become the rule here.

One further edition of the AN has been published by the U.V.S. library in three volumes in 1990. The editor is Vē. Civacupiraṅaiyaṅ, who has also written a commentary of his own. Whether he has made wide use of the extensive manuscript materials of his library (on which see below), is unclear. The text printed by him contains a number of uncommented deviations and he gives no variants. Here we find, however, the first text with a virtually completely restored classical *sandhi* (as is found in manuscripts, but also with Irā. Irākavaiyaṅkār/Vē. Rājakōpālāryaṅ), including some possible hyper-corrections. Since 2004, in the wake of the Classical Tamil debate, a number of further editions have appeared, but none of them goes back to the sources.

As for translations, for the longest time, it has to be stated, the AN was not translated at all. While for nearly all the other anthologies we find, from the 1960s onwards, a variety of more or less poetic renderings – with the exception only of the *Kalittokai*, which is extremely difficult<sup>16</sup> – translating the AN was restricted to an occasional poem in one of the many lyrical anthologies.

The first complete English translation of the AN was accomplished in 1975 by V.M. Cupiramaṅaiya Aiyar. This is one of the sad chapters of *Caṅkam* philology, since this careful and erudite work has never seen the light of day. It rests unpublished in the library of the French Institute in Pondicherry, and I thank M Pierre Grard, then the director of the IFP, for allowing me to make use of the original typoscript, enriched by many handwritten notes on the

<sup>16</sup> The first complete, and poetic, translation of the *Kalittokai* by V. Muruhan was published in 1999 by the Institute of Asian Studies.



2. one handwritten copy made after seeing a palm-leaf at Perumpalaṅai
3. one ms. by Śrīmān Nelliayappak Kavirāyar from Tirunellvēli
4. after some time(?) one palm-leaf ms. by Śrīmān Ti.Ta. Kaṅakacuntirampiḷḷaiyavarkaḷ from Ceṅṅai
5. one paper ms. by Aiyar
6. one ms. by Śrīmān Kā.Rā. Namaccivāyamutaliyar, Tamil pandit at the Queen-Mary Highschool(?) in Ceṅṅai
7. one damaged palm-leaf ms. by the Vidvan Śrīmān Caṅmukam Piḷḷai from Tirumayilai

manuscript list for the AN from Vaiyāpurip Piḷḷai 1940:

1. one complete palm-leaf ms. from the *Kampar Vilāsam, Vē. Irājakōpālaiyaṅkāṅ* in good condition
2. one incomplete paper ms. from *Kampar Vilāsam, Vē. Irājakōpālaiyaṅkāṅ*, very dilapidated; noting down variants from comparison with many mss.
3. one complete paper ms. from Madras University, Department of Indian History, in between some verses missing
4. one complete paper ms. from GOML, in between some verses missing

When comparing the actual list with the two historical ones it transpires that it is possible to identify three of Vaiyāpurip Piḷḷai's mss. with a satisfactory degree of certainty. Additionally, we know that two of them must have also been part of Irākavaiyaṅkāṅ's list because the former received them from Vē. Irājakōpālaiyaṅkāṅ, the publisher of *Kampar Vilāsam* where the AN was first printed. The only palm-leaf mentioned by VP must be the one from his collection kept today in Kolkatta, NL. Since he received it from Irājakōpālaiyaṅkāṅ, we can surmise it has been used for the *editio princeps*,

though we do not know which of his apparently complete palm-leaf mss. number 3, 4 and 6.

VP's number 2, the incomplete paper ms. obtained from Irājakōpālaiyaṅkāṅ, dilapidated and noting down variants, seems to correspond to C7, the manuscript already mentioned as the one closest to the text printed by Irākavaiyaṅkāṅ. The counterpart in the latter's list must be either number 1 or number 2, the two paper copies for which comparison, and thus annotation, is mentioned. VP's number four from the GOML may well be identical with the only complete paper copy kept today in that library, G1. The only uncertain candidate is VP number 3, a complete paper copy from Madras University's history department, either lost today or else identical with one of the paper copies kept in the UVSL, most likely C6 or C8, since reference is made neither to damage nor to annotation.

When going back, then, to Irākavaiyaṅkāṅ's list matters remain somewhat less conclusive. The two paper copies, based on comparison and probably both annotated, number 1 and 2, correspond with high likelihood to today's C7 and C9, although there is no way of telling which is which. The remaining complete paper copy received from "Aiyar" (~ Cāminātaiyar?), number 5, may be today's C6 or C8. The situation is less clear for the four palm-leaf manuscripts. As Irākavaiyaṅkāṅ published the AN along with the old commentary, one of them should correspond to C4, and since only number 7 is described as damaged, this might be the commentary manuscript, although it is fairly clear that not quite as many folios could have been reduced to half, because the commentary text up to AN 90 is printed without major lacunae. Since Tiruvāṇṇai is not mentioned, it is probable that Irākavaiyaṅkāṅ did not see the mutt's copy, today's TT. This leaves the list's palm-leaf mss. number 3, 4 and 6 for today's NL, C1, C2 and C3, in which ever exact