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vikrama cOzan ula
English Translation by
Kausalya Hart
In unicode/utf-8 format

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VIKRAMA CHOLAN ULAA

**by OTTAKKUTHAR
(12th century)**

**Translated by
Kausalya Hart**

**Introduction by
Gita Pai**

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Berkeley, California
September, 2011**

Note: The verses of
Vikkiramacōḷaṅ Ulā in
Tamil script (Unicode

format) has been released earlier as PM release #116. You can access the text using the following link (opens up in a new webpage!

[Vikkiramacōlaṅ Ulā verses in Tamil unicode](#)

PREFACE by George Hart

The *Vikkiramacōlaṅ Ulā* is extraordinarily rich in language, symbolism, and texture. It connects the king,

his procession, his elephant, his entourage, and the women who see him in a vast and varied canvas where many things happen at once. As we read it, we become part of a happening, and are drawn from one end of this great vision to the other, slowly forgetting ourselves and, like the king's women, finding ourselves overwhelmed by his glory and splendor. Oṭṭakkūtaṇ's achievement is to have created an extraordinarily compelling

work out of a simple and rather unimaginative template. This translation makes this wonderful poem available in a form that all can enjoy. Gita has added an informative introduction about the king, the poet, and the poem. The present work grew out of work done by Kausalya Hart and Gita Pai, who read Oṭṭakkūtaṇ's Vikkiramacōḷaṇ Ulā together for research purposes. This translation is meant to make available to the general public a work

that has long been admired by students of Tamil literature. Footnotes and diacritical marks have been avoided (except in the introduction), as they often confuse everyone but scholars. And for clarity, occasional additions have been made here and there. The result is a fine translation that can be enjoyed by the Tamil public in general.

INTRODUCTION by Gita

Pai

The *Vikkiramacōlaṅ Ulā* is a panegyric poem relating the military valor and sexual magnetism of a prominent king of the Chola dynasty, which ruled for four centuries (849-1279 CE) over much of southern India, Sri Lanka and parts of Southeast Asia. The Chola sovereigns were one of the longest-lived imperial lineages in the history of

south Asia. They are known for their efficient administrative system, which combined a vigorous central control with a very large measure of local autonomy[1] . The great temples of Tañjāvūr, Gangaikondacōlapuram, Dārācuram and Tribhuvani as well as the smaller temples in other parts of Tamilnadu, attest to the grandeur and majestic excellence of Chola temple architecture and stone sculpture. As patrons of the

arts, the Chola monarchs liberally commissioned other fine arts such as painting, music, poetry, drama, dance and bronze cast sculpture. The Chola dynasty was the dominant culture, artistic, religious and political force in south India from the 9th to the 13th centuries.

The references to the Chola dynasty are ancient.

Northern inscriptions of the Mauryan emperor Ashoka refer to the Cholas, and

Sangam literature produced roughly around 300 BCE to 300 CE detail the dominance of three dynasties over the areas of modern day Tamilnadu and Kerala: The Pandyas were based in Madurai to the south, the Cholas in Uṛaiyūr (modern Tiruccirāppalli) and the Cheras west of the Cholas in Karur and Kerala in the west[2]. The frequent attacks of the Pallavas, Cheras, and the Pandyas diminished the Chola power and it was not until the 8th

century CE that their glory began to shine when the Pallavas' power declined.

[1] Stein, Burton. "The Segmentary State in South Indian History" in *Realm and Region in India*, Robert Fox, editor, Duke University Press, 1977, p. 3-51.

[2] Heitzman, James. *Gifts of Power: Lordship in an Early Indian State*, New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1997, p. 2.

Vikrama Chola's rule dates from 1118 although his father Kulōttuṅga lived for four more years. The seventeen years of his reign are considered a period of relative peace[3]. He is known for regaining the Chola control over the Vengi, an area of constant dispute between the Cholas and Western Chālukyas, and for taking control of a portion of Gangavādi. He made extensive additions to the temple at Cidambaram,

a temple of particular attachment for the Chola monarchs, as well as to the shrine of Ranganātha at Śrīrangam.

Vikkiramacōlaṅ Ulā falls in the category of the literary genre called ulā. Ulā means “procession” from the root ulavu, to move. As a genre, the poem is the description of the king’s procession in the street. Its nascent origins appear in the grammar Tolkāppiyam (2-5 century CE?), where it is said to be

appropriate for a person to make his appearance in a city in a procession [4]. Subsequently, the idea of a procession was incorporated into three Tamil epics. In *Peruṅkatai* of the 7th century, a chieftain at the time of his coronation and later during his marriage proceeds in the street for the very purpose of being seen [5] and this kindles feelings of love in the women who rush to see him [6]. In *Cīvakacintāmaṇi* by *Tiruttakkattēvar* around the

10th century, a small section in fourteen stanzas describes how the women fall in love and lose their chastity when they behold the king Cīvakaṇ in procession as he returns from a victorious battle [7]. And in Kampaṇ's Rāmāyaṇa of the 12th century, women swoon as they see king Rāma when he comes on the street in a procession [8]. In all these epics, the procession is a standard feature but is not elaborated in great detail nor

is it the primary subject of the literary work.

What was once a brief and recurrent pattern in these earlier works evolved through the centuries to appear as a prabandham or separate minor literary genre. The ulā is defined purely in terms of its subject matter and not in formal terms, i.e. meter, number of stanzas, etc [9]. The general content of the ulā literature is the symbolic moment in the life of the king or deity.

He emerges from his palace or shrine in order to parade through the streets before his subjects or worshippers after a coronation, marriage, or battle while being elevated on a palanquin, chariot, horse or elephant. The procession lasts from one to seven days. Women of seven age groups see the hero, desire him sexually and in their fascination grow thin and pale, lose their beauty, become confused, and drop their bracelets. In the process, their mental

chastity is destroyed and they desperately long for eye contact with their hero, at least the smallest of glimpses through the corner of his eye!

[3]. Nilakanta Sastri, K. A. A History of South India from Prehistoric Times to the Fall of Vijayanagar (3rd edition), London: Oxford University Press, 1966, p. 193.

[4]. Kalaikkalañciyam. (Tamil Encyclopedia), first edition, volume 2, Madras:

Association of Tamil
Development, 1955, p. 344.

[5]. Ibid, p. 345.

[6]. This same theme is
found in Kalidasa's
Raghuvamśa, a Sanskrit
poem written during the 4th
century C.E. In the seventh
book of this work, the ladies
of the city crowd to see
prince Aja as he passes by
from the svayamvara where
the princess Indumatī has
chosen him as her husband.

[7]. Ibid.

[8]. Ibid.

[9] Cutler, Norman. Songs

of Experience: The Poetics
of Tamil Devotion,
Bloomington: Indiana
University Press, 1982, p.
81.

The ulā genre has two parts.
In the first section are
details of the hero's
genealogy, glorious
victories, bathing with
sandalwood, going in
processional grandeur on his
vehicle, and escorts. The
traditional requirements
include the royal hero's

description and ten parts must be acknowledged: the king's country, his capital city, his city of birth, his mountain, his river, his name, his mode of transportation, his army, his drum, and his garland [10]. In the second section, the poet's attention shifts from the hero to the feelings and actions of the women in the hero's kingdom whose hearts were captivated. While the king is specifically mentioned by name, the women remain

nameless, a long-established practice seen in the akam (romantic) and puṛam (heroic) poetry of the Tamil Sangam literature belonging to the first three centuries of the Common Era. The emotional responses of the love stricken women in the seven age groups are recounted. The women belong to a conventional division: pētai (5-7 years of age), petumpai (8-11 years), maṅkai (12-13 years), maṭantai (14-19 years), arivai (19-25 years), terivai

(26-31 years) and pēriḷampēṇ (31-40 years) [11]. An important aspect of the ulā is the one-sided nature of the love, as the king never reciprocates the undying love the women have for him.

The first important ulā appeared in the 9th century when Cēramāṇ Perumāl's chief achievement was his innovation of the ulā as a distinctive literary form [12], which he diverted and elaborated for a religious

purpose. In his poem *Āti Ulā*, Śiva while on Mount Kailāsa and upon the request of his devotees goes around in procession, royally adorned. The women in Kailāsa are all eyes to take in his royal splendor and as he passes in state, girls and women of different ages react differently. Their reaction is the subject matter of *Āti Ulā*. These women's infatuations with the divine hero suggest the devotee's ardent and devotional

feelings for the supreme deity.

Such is not the case with royal ulās, where the procession of a regal figure speaks of “the symbolic quality of south Indian kingship: the king is there in order to be perceived, and to perceive himself, in highly formalized and emotionally powerful ways.” [13] Poetry has been widely recognized as a power to confer immortality of kings and Oṭṭakkūttar, the court poet

popularly known by the epithets of Kaviccakkaravartti or Emperor of Poets, Kavirākṣasan or Giant Poet, Varakavi or Divinely Gifted Poet, was commissioned by Vikrama Cōḷa (1118-1135), his son Kulōttuṅga Cōḷa (1133-1150), and his grandson Raja Raja Cōḷa (1146-1173) for this very purpose.

Oṭṭakkūttar was born in a poor Ceṅkuntar (weaver) family in Malari, a village in

the Chola country. He sought service under Caṅkaraṇ, who was the chieftain of Pudukai as well as the father of Caṭaiyaṇ, the patron of the celebrated poet laureate Kampaṇ. Oṭṭakkūttan had other patrons like Gāṅgēya whom he praised in Nālāyirakkōvai and Soman of Tribhuvani [14]. When he achieved fame, he was invited to the imperial Chola court and was entertained there as Kaviccakkaravartti (Emperor of Poets) by the

three successive monarchs beginning with Vikrama Cōla. Erudite in Tamil and Sanskrit, he wrote what is widely considered to be the best of this type of poetry called Muvar Ulā, a collection of three ulās in honor of these three monarchs. Although the ulā genre continued during the Vijayanagara period (1200 to 1650) as a minor literary form and later during the Nāyaka [15] and Maratha periods (1650-1800), the Muvar Ulā is believed to be

the finest and the most popular [16]. In addition to the three ulās, he composed a paraṇi [17] on the Kalinga war of Vikrama Cōḷa titled Kalingattu-p-paraṇi, and a piḷḷaitamiḷ [18] on Kulōttuṅga Cōḷa II, Vikrama Cōḷa's son titled Kulōttuṅga-Cōḷan Piḷḷai-t-tamiḷ, which is the oldest extant poem in this genre [19]. He is credited with developing the piḷḷaitamiḷ into a definite literary form [20]. Oṭṭakkuttar also wrote Takka-yāka-p-paraṇi which

describes the battle between Śiva's general and his father-in-law, as well as other poems titled Arumpaittoḷḷāyairam, Kānkeyaṇ Nālāyirak Kōvai (which is not extant) and perhaps Īṭṭiyelupatu. According to historian K.A. Nilakanta Sastri, the village of Kūttaṇūr located on the banks of the Aricil River in the Tañjāvūr district “keeps the poet's memory alive,” and has a Sarasvatī temple with a record from the 12th century that mentions the

installation of the image of the goddess by Kavippperumāl, also known as Ōvātakūttar, the grandson of Oṭṭakkūttar [21].

[10]. Kalaikkalañciyam, p. 344.

[11]. Zvelebil, Kamil V. Tamil Literature, Wiesbaden, Germany: Otto Harrassowitz, 1974, p. 197.

[12]. Jesudasan, C. and Hephzibah Jesudan. History of Tamil Literature (Heritage of India series), Calcutta: Y.M.C.A.

Publishing House, 1961, p. 92.

[13] Shulman, David. *The King and the Clown in South Indian Myth and Poetry*, Princeton University Press, 1985, p. 312.

[14]. Nilakanta Sastri, p. 377.

[15]. According to Narayana Rao, Velcheru, David Shulman, and Sanjay Subramaniam (*Symbols of Substance: Court and State in Na[̄]yaka Period Tamilnadu*, Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1998) the

Nayaka public svāri, in which the king would show himself to his people through a procession, is the direct descendant of the Chola period royal ulā processions” (p. 60).

[16]. Meenakshisundaran. P. A History of Tamil Literature, Hyderabad: Marathi Sahitya Parishad, 1965, p.143.

[17]. Paraṇi is a minor literary form consisting of a war poem that celebrates the victory of a killer of seven hundred elephants

(Jesudasan 1961, p. 186).

[18]. Pillāittamiḷ is a “genre of Tamil devotional poetry to an extraordinary deity or person addressed in the form of a child” Richman, Paula. *Extraordinary Child: Poems from a South Indian Devotional Genre*, Honolulu: University of Hawai’i Press, 1997, p. ix.

[19] Ibid, p. 35.

[20]. Jesudasan, p. 192.

[21]. Nilakanta Sastri, p. 377.

Vikkiramacōḷaṅ Ulā is a

lengthy poem written in the kalivenṇpā meter consisting of 342 kaṇṇis (couplets), or 684 lines.

Kaṇṇis 1 to 112 form the first section of the poem where primary emphasis is placed on the king: Kaṇṇis 1 to 14 describe the accomplishments of the mythological and legendary ancestors of the king to establish the greatness of the hero's illustrious dynasty, their military conquests, and other achievements.

Given that royal ulās represent the king's duty to present himself to his subjects outside the walls of his palace, it is not surprising that

Vikkiramacōlan Ula begins with this genealogy in the first fourteen couplets.

Kaṇṇis 15 to 23 trace the genealogy up to the king's father.

Kaṇṇis 24 to 27 relay the achievements of the hero's father.

In Kaṇṇis 28 to 35 the

hero is praised. Filled with formulaic royal titles, the epithets are panegyric and hyperbolic as the purpose is to introduce the hero and to glorify this perfect and powerful king.

Kaṇṇis 36 to 52 describe the hero's bedroom, his bath, prayers, dress and his queen.

Kaṇṇis 53 to 64 give a vivid account of the gallant deeds of the royal elephant that carries the king. This elephant is

compared to Indra's heavenly elephant called Airavata.

Kaṇṇis 65 to 90

elaborately describe the procession and its participants as well as their exploits. The king's generals, council of ministers, chieftains, commanders-in-chief, soldiers, priests, treasurer, and elephant trainer who accompany the mighty king are mentioned

Kaṇṇis 91 to 112 evoke the ulā moving along the

street where beautifully
bejeweled women
wearing effulgent
ornaments live. While
complimenting the king
in this way, these women
become thin and they try
desperately to prevent
their bracelets from
falling by folding their
hands in worship.

Kaṇṇis 113 to 342
constitute the second
section of the poem
called peṇ ēlu nilai where
the activities of the
women, who become

lovesick at the sight of the hero, are described.

The origin of ēlu paruva makalir (division of womanhood in seven stages) is unknown and was not present in

Sangam poetry:

Kaṇṇis 113 to 133

describe the reactions of an innocent girl in the pētai stage, ages 5 to 7.

Kaṇṇis 134 to 162 depict the reactions of a young girl in the petumpai stage, ages 8 to 11.

Kaṇṇis 163 to 192

illustrate the reactions of an adolescent girl in the maṅkai stage ages, 12 to 13.

Kaṅṅis 193 to 227 show the reactions of a nubile girl in the maṅantai stage ages, 14 to 19.

Kaṅṅis 228 to 262 portray the reactions of a maiden in the arivai stage, ages 20 to 25.

Kaṅṅis 263 to 305 display the reactions of a woman in the terivai stage ages, 26 to 31.

Kaṅṅis 306 to 342

present the reactions of a
mature woman in the
pēriḷampēṇ stage, ages 32
to 40.

Vikrama Cholan Ulaa
Kausalya Hart

Whether the poet describes
the king as he begins his
procession, or the king
carried in parade by his
elephant, or the feelings of
women as they see the king,
this poem is written as if its

author were painting a picture. To convey this sense, we use the present tense in our translation even though the text sometimes uses the past tense. The poem begins with an extended description of the lineage of Vikrama Chola, after which it describes that king parading through the city, the elephant Airavata that carries him, the beauty of the women (in seven categories determined by their age) who see the king and his elephant and the

feelings of those women
about the king and his
elephant.

King Vikrama Chola's lineage

Vishnu the divine one, dark
as cloud
is the beloved of beautiful
Lakshmi
who stays on a lovely lotus.
He is the first one of the
lineage of Vikrama Chola.

Brahma with four heads
the ancient one, the creator

of the world
came forth from Vishnu's
navel.

He belongs to the lineage of
Vikrama Chola.

Brahma's beloved son king
Kasiban,
king Marisi the great,
faultless one and
the Sun who rides on a
chariot
with matchless wheels to
lighten the world,
belong to the lineage of
Vikrama Chola.

The heroic king Manu put
his son
under his magnificent
chariot and rode over him
to give justice to the
grieving cow.

He belongs to the lineage of
king Vikrama Chola.

The victorious king
Manthaathaa
nourished with water from a
flourishing pond
the murderous tiger and the
grass-eating deer.

He belongs to the lineage of
Vikrama Chola.

A Chola king rode alone
on a high chariot in the wide
sky
the abode of gods.
He belongs to the lineage of
Vikrama Chola.

The Chola king Bhupathi
flourished and protected the
world.
He belong to the lineage of
Vikrama Chola.

The Chola king Killivalavan
brought
Manu's precious law for a

sacrifice
and argued with Yama to
establish justice.
He belongs to the lineage of
Vikrama Chola.

The protector of the earth,
Suraguru ,
fought with Yama and drove
him into hiding,
after he made pots for the
elders to escape.
He belongs to the lineage of
Vikrama Chola.

A Chola king conquered the
hanging walls

of the enemies in the sky
and became famous as
'thungeyil erinda cholan'
He belongs to the lineage of
Vikrama Chola.

The king Samharshana
Chakravarthy
connected the abundant
water
of western ocean to the
eastern ocean.
He belongs to the lineage of
Vikrama Chola.

The famous
Nedungillivalavan,

went beneath the earth to
the world of the Nagas
and married a daughter of
their family.

He belongs to the lineage of
Vikrama Chola.

The chola king Sibi happily
climbed on the scale
in front of all the people of
the earth
to protect a small dove from
an eagle.

He belongs to the lineage of
Vikrama Chola.

The chola king Chivuhan

cut through
the high peaks of the tall
Kudagu hills
to bring down the water
of the Kaveri river with
rolling waves.

He belongs to the lineage of
Vikrama Chola.

Karikalan, the monarch,
planted the tiger banner
on the tops of hills
where the beautiful, clear
waterfalls descend,
and he constructed a bank
for the Kaveri river.

He belongs to the lineage of

Vikrama Chola.

The Chola king Kochengan
heard

the wonderful poems of
the poet Poykaiyaar of
Chera land,

and cut the chains of the
Chera king Irumborai

the bow-bannered one,
and released him from the
prison.

He belongs to the lineage of
Vikrama Chola.

The victorious king,
protector of the earth

Vijayalaya Cholan received
ninety-three wounds
on his body, in the
battlefield.

He belongs to this lineage of
Vikrama Chola.

The protector of the land,
the first Parandaha Chola
lovingly decorated with
gold
the divine pavilion in Thillai
where faultless three eyed
Siva, sweet as honey
dances.

He belongs to the lineage of
Vikrama Chola.

The emperor, the first
Rajaraja Chola
for the sake of his
messenger,
crossed eighteen forest one
day
and took over the
Malainaadu.
He belongs to the lineage of
Vikrama Chola.

The king Rajendra Chola,
generous as Karpaga tree
that gives whatever one
wants,
went with his army,

conquered
and ruled and protected the
land,
where Ganges flows and
Kadaram.
He belongs to the lineage of
Vikrama Chola

The king Rajaraja Chola,
the incomparable warrior
conquered his strong
enemies in Vangam
and invaded the city of
Kalyani three times.
He belongs to the lineage of
Vikrama Chola.

The king Rajadhiraja Chola
with his one elephant in a
fierce war,
conquered his enemies in
the city of Koppam
and took over their thousand
elephants.
He belongs to the lineage of
Vikrama Chola

The king Rajamahendra
Chola
made a snake bed studded
with glorious jewels
for Vishnu, praised by
ancient divine Vedas,
in Srirangam in the south,

surrounded by waves.
He belongs to the lineage of
Vikrama Chola

The king Virarajendra
Chola,
killed countless shining,
rutting elephants
in the city of Kudala
Sangamam and
he was praised by poets in a
great Parani poem.
He belongs to the lineage of
Vikrama Chola

All other kings who ruled
after

and protected the whole
earth

belong to the lineage of
Vikrama Chola (1-46)

The valor of the Kulothunga
Chola, father of the king
Abhayan.

The first Kulothunga Chola
conquered the Pandya king
with his fish banner
and the Chera king with his
bow banner.

He defeated his enemy
kings in Kanthalurchalai,
two times and took over the

lands of Konganam
and Karnataka.

Defeating warriors on the
battlefield,
he subdued the valor of the
Marata kings.

His rule spread until the
northern lands.

He removed and crushed
poverty and reduced taxes.

His wheel of dharma
encircled
the world surrounded by the
ocean.

He, the king Abhaya Chola
decorated
with his shining Athi

garland
gave grace to his land.
Such is the glory of the
father of Vikrama Chola.

The glory of the king
Vikrama Chola

The king Vikrama Chola
was born to glorify the
earth.

He wears a Thumbai flower
garland.

His three drums roar always
like the clouds.

He is crowned to guard the
three mighty worlds,

heaven, earth and the
underworld.

His unequaled scepter rules
the world in all directions.

His eminent royal canopy
encloses all the eight

directions

guarded by the eight divine
elephants.

Other kings remove their
shining crowns

decorated with garlands

before him and bow to him.

His perfect rule covers the
seven earths,

and the seven vast oceans

making them belong only to

his kingdom.

The lovely goddess of earth
decorated

with mekalai on her waist,
lives on his shoulders.

His queen , praised as the
most beautiful one

on all the seven earths,

who comes from a famous
lineage,

stays embracing the king's
chest.

The goddess of wealth who
lives on a lotus

rests on his long eyes.

Such is the glory of the king

Vikrama Chola. (47-70)

The king Vikrama Chola
wakes up with his queen

One day,
the king's feet are decorated
with pearls,
given by the southern kings
as tribute.

His body is fragrant with
sandal paste
that comes from the hills of
the Southern kings.

The breeze from the
Southern land touches his
feet.

Women who could wage
war
with their swordlike eyes
praise him.

He is under a canopy
decorated with pearls.

He rests on a bed
where the moon throws his
bright rays .

Her shoulders are decorated
with garlands.

Her long eyes are black with
kohl.

She is lovely as a joyful
swan

with large eyes and breasts.

He wakes up sweetly from
his bed,
with his queen lovely as a
goddess
decorated with flowers on
her hair. (72-80)

The preparations of the king
Vikrama Chola for the Ulaa

He bathes in the holy water
of the Kaveri river.

He wears on his hands as an
amulet a bracelet
made of tender shoots of
arugu grass
given by priests.

Shiva is the three eyed one.
the divine shining light
with black neck, red color
body.

He is the origin of the Vedas.
The king of the silver
mountains

He wears crescent moon on
his Jata.

He is sweet as fruit.

and gives his grace to all his
devotees.

The king worships him.

The king orders his servants
to bring him

suitable and splendid
ornaments

The beautiful goddesses
who stay with the king
Vikrama Chola

The goddess of the Arts,
Saraswathi
who has a beautiful face like
lotus,
swarming with bees, stays
with him.

His ears are decorated fish
shaped ear rings.

The goddess of earth,

Bhudevi with round breasts
stays on his arms decorated
with
keyuram ornaments studded
with bright jewels.

The goddess of fame
whose undiminished glory
spreads everywhere
stays on his hand adorned
with bracelets studded with
diamonds.

The goddess of wealth,
Lakshmi,
who was born in the milky
ocean

embracing him stays on his
chest
ornamented with lovely,
shining diamonds

The goddess of victory,
Durga
giving endless success,
stays on his waist together
with its heroic sword.

He wears on his radiant
body shining ornaments
such that there is nothing
that could add to his
splendor.
He is as magnificent as the

god of love was
when he bent his bow
to disturb the meditation of
the three-eyed Siva.

Kama, the king of Spring
saw that the king was even
more handsome than he
lowered his head decorated
with garlands
before him. (81-100)

The Royal Elephant of Vikrama Chola

The rutting elephant,
ornamented
and trumpeting always at

the auspicious time,
moves from his place
and stands outside the
palace.

Hearing the sound of the
thunder

he grows angry thinking it
his enemy.

But then he touches the sky
with his trunk

and realizes that the thunder
does not possess

jewels and tusks and a
curving trunk,

and he is appeased.

He is like Yama's
thunderbolt.

Angry, he can stand alone
against
the king's enemies with
only his tusks as weapons.
He can crush and destroy
all the peaks of the
mountains with his tusks.
Such is the strength of the
royal elephant
with killing tusks,
incomparable in his rutting.
Such is the anger of the
king's murderous elephant.

His ichor flows everywhere.

He does not bear any other
rutting elephants in the
world
but protects all of his own
clan.

Able to fight even with the
elephants of the eight
directions,
he protects the king
Ahalangan who with his
two arms
rules the whole earth in
victory.

If he grows despondent
when he thinks

his king does not possess
the whole earth,
he goes to fight the eight
elephants of space
and then, seeing their backs,
and realizing that they are
retreating,
he is pleased because he
knows his king
will protect them also.

When his king opposes his
enemies
of other countries who come
to fight,
he kills them and feeds their
lives to Yama.

Such is the strength of
Airavata, the elephant of the
king. (101- 128)

The king goes on his
procession

The king climbs on the back
of his elephant
stepping on the female
elephant for support.
He is shaded with a
beautiful royal umbrella of
victory
and cooled by two thick
fans that gives fresh cooling
air.

With the victorious sound of
the conches,
the bracelets of the women
rattle.

The musical drums play.
The soldiers with swords
march surrounding him.
Heroic kings approach him
with respect.
His victorious murderous
tiger banner is raised.
Such is the procession of
Vikrama Chola. (129- 135)

The Escort of the king
Vikrama Chola

Thondaiman, the chieftain fought and defeated the kings of Southern lands, Malava country, Singala country, Konganam and other famous kings. When he conquered the mountain lands of kings, a poet praised him in a Parani poem. He escorts the king in procession.

Puhalmunaiyarkon is a famous minister who advises the king

Anahan in his assembly
where many kings bow
to the king's feet decorated
with sounding anklets.

The minister has the honor
of giving

a fragrant thumbai flower
garland

and clothes for the king to
go to the war.

He escorts the king in
procession.

The chieftain Cholakon,
accompanies the chola king,
when the king arched his
eyebrows in anger,

bent his bow, fought and
defeated the Kangar,
the Maratar, the Kalingar,
the Kongar
and the warriors of Kudagu
country.

Cholakon who bent his bow
and fought with the enemies
escorts the king in
procession.

The soldiers carry swords,
and armors
in their long arms,
protect the king and escort
him in procession. CHECK

The king's relatives, and his
wise ministers
all escort him.

Thirumaraiyon Kannan
from the city of Kanchi,
surrounded with forts and
groves of trees so tall
that they tear the clouds in
the sky.

He escorts the king.

Varisilaikaivaanan opposed
his enemies in a terrible war
and gave their bodies to
ghosts.

The horrible Yama took

many lives in that war.
He made their beautiful
wives take off their
earriangs.

He escorts the king in
procession.

Kalingarkon raised his
heroic banner, CHECK
fought with the countries of
Vengai, Vilinam,
Kollam, Konam, Viraadam
and Ottam
where he made his enemy
kings flee.
He escorts the king.

Kadavan the king of Senji
that has thick impregnable
forts
covered with pure golden
walls.

His happy elephants are tied
to a post
to show that there are no
enemy kings for him.
He escorts the king.

The king of Venadu
removed from the earth
the terrible famine that
destroys the world
and made his people happy.
He escorts the king.

Anandapaalan protects the
land
from Kanyakumari to the
Ganges river
gave abundant gifts to poets
and all.
He escorts the king.

The king Vattan fought with
his enemy kings
in a tremendous war and
destroyed
the three walls of the city of
Vadamannai
with his strong elephants.
He escorts the king.

The warrior and ruler of
Sethithirunadu
fought, destroyed
the strong forts of the
Karunadu.

In the battlefield the corpses
stood up and danced.
He escorts the king.

Karanaikaavalan tied herioc
anklets on his feet,
and fought the enemies.
He bound their hair and
imprisoned them.
He escorts the king

Adihan destroyed the army
of the Vadakangai country
where he chased his strong
enemies
to flee from the battlefield.
He escorts the king.

Kudainulamban, with a
sword, and a rutting
elephant,
set out beneath his royal
umbrella,
seized the fishermen's land
of Kottaru
and the country of Kollam.
He escorts the king.

Tihathan with his elephants
that have strong trunks
destroyed the Kongu
country and its mighty fort
and crushed the peaks of
Kudagu mountain.
He escorts the king.

The chieftains of the
countries
of Vallam, Kosalam,
Maagadam, Maalavam,
Keralam, Pandiya country
and Pallava country,
and other kings, fought in
victorious wars,
and the members of the

royal assembly
all surround the king from
front and rear,
as they escort his
procession.

Such is the escort of the
king Vikrama Chola. (136 -
180)

The beauty of the gathering
of women

The women whose shining
bracelets are even brighter
than gleaming diamonds,
gather on the streets.

They are as lovely as
Krishna's women once were
in glorious Dvaraka city
when Narada, the great
ascetic, entered.

The place resembles a
beautiful land
ruled and protected by
lovely, wide-hipped,
dolls like women,
wearing mekalai ornaments.

They are like the ranks of
Kama, the god of Love
and enemy of rishis who
could not even think of

coming near women.

They are like a flock of wild
swans
wandering on the sand hills
of the seashore
where Thaalai flowers
bloom.

They shine like bolts of
bright lightning in the
clouds.

They glisten like the
pleasant spray
of the water of breaking
waves.

They are like lovely

peacocks
gathering on every hill.

Their moonlike foreheads
are beaded with sweat.
Their eyes and thoughts
wander everywhere
as they come and fill the
street.

The jewels on the
ornaments in their hair
glow.
The lines of diamonds
studding
their other ornaments
sparkle.

Their pearl-garlanded
breasts are full,
pressing against each other,
as sweet as jars of nectar.

They come, their heads
bowed,
their glances cruel as
poison.

Their mouths prattle like
parrots,
and their sharp teeth torment
the men who see them.

Such is the beauty of
women who come to see the
king. (181-200)

The music and dance of the
women

As lovely as divine nymphs,
they come moist with sweat
and gather
on the lower balcony of the
palace as high as a
mountain.

With their lovely fingers,
some play the veena, or the
lute, or the flute
or the drum bound with
leather.

Others' feet dance to the

rhythm of music.

As they come and gather on
the white marble balcony
of the palace so tall it is
covered with clouds
they resemble divine
women,
for when they dance,
their collyriumed eyes do
not blink,
their flower-like feet do not
touch the earth,
their lovely cool fragrant
garlands do not wither.

With their beauty, the way

they shine,
their feelings, and their
words,
they are like heavenly
women.

They come crowding the
balcony,
where the beautiful
moonlight never fails to fall.
And they approach the king
on the street and praise him.
(201-212)

The women see king
Vikrama Chola and praise
him

They say,
“The strength and
excellence of his arms have
no comparison.

Not even the earth created
by Brahma
could measure his
shoulders.

“Look, he is the lord of the
earth.

How is it his chest is so
humble
that the lovely Laksmi could
reside on it?

He could not be the god
Murugan

because he has only two hands.

He is surely the king of spring.”

And as they say these things,
they grow thin from desire.

“The king will do whatever we want.

His eyes are like the ocean of compassion.

Even if someone says that the ancient lineage of Manu is eminent because of this great king, it is still not enough to

describe
the glory of Vikrama
Chola.”

Their breasts covered
with pollen from their
garlands
become golden and pale.
They clasp their hands
together
to keep their bracelets
from growing loose and
falling. (213-224)

The beauty of the pethai, the
innocent one

She is like a crescent moon
born and raised on the earth.
She is like a soft, sprouting
shoot
that has yet to flower.
She is like a peacock
with lovely new feathers,
not yet fully grown.
She is sweet like a stalk of
sugarcane
grown for the sole purpose
of defeating Kama the god
of love,
who was once conquered
and burnt by Siva.

She sings sweetly

like a fledgling cuckoo bird.
When she walks she moves
like the young of a wild
swan.

She prattles like a newly
born parrot.

She is decorated with
ornaments
elegantly like a branch
where corals grow.

Her large eyes do not know
to cheat.

She is innocent
and still does not understand
much.

She is so young

that she has never been
separated from her mothers.
Such is the innocent one,
the pethai.

How the pethai plays

Her dolls, deer, peacocks,
green parrots,
Puvai birds and swan follow
her with love.

She takes the Ammanai toy
decorated with pearls from
Pukar city ruled by the king
where the Kaveri river
flows.

And she takes rice that

looks
like the cool pearls from
Korkai city ruled by the
Chola king,
and she takes anything else
she needs to learn to cook.
All the girls wearing golden
bracelets
follow her to the street and
play.
Such is the way the innocent
one plays.

At that time....

The three drums in the
procession

of the Chola king
Uthungathungan
who destroyed the famine
that came in Adi yuga
sound like the roaring
clouds.

Her mothers come and bow
to the procession.

She bows as her mothers do
and repeats what they say.

The glory of the king in the
eyes of the pethai

She praises him as her
mothers do:

“The brightness of the
crown of the Chola king,
handsome as the god
Murugan,
defeats the radiance of the
sun,
source of his lineage, and of
the moon.”

“The flowerlike glance of
the goddess Laksmi,
whose lovely form rests
joyfully on her lotus,
cannot be compared to the
compassionate glance of the
king
that melts the hearts of his

people.”

“The light of the divine
moon
that falls on the earth
is not equal to the glow
of the smile that blossoms
in the king’s mouth red as
coral.”

“The world that he protects
is not as wide as his
beautiful eyebrows.”

“The beauty and the
brightness of the lotus
flower

cannot be compared to the
king's face
decorated with a tilakam.”

“When his large, exquisite
arms
are extended, they will not
fit into all the eight
directions.”

“His fame is so wide
that even his large chest
could not contain it all.”

“No flower can be
compared
to his faultless flower-like

hands.

And no flower has a form
lovely enough
to be compared to his eyes.
There is truly no flower
as beautiful as his handsome
body.

Such is the radiance of the
king in the eyes of the
pethai.”

The desire of the pethai for
the king’s garland

Her eyes and mind are
attracted to the garland
of Kaluneer flowers worn

by the king.

Full of love in her heart she says, “Oh, my mothers! come!

Get me the king’s beautiful garland and give it to me.”

The mothers reply, “You are sweet as nectar, do not be afraid of the king, our lord.

Can we go and tell him to give us his exquisite garland?

It is not easy –it is very hard.”

Because she is a little girl

whose sweet words are like
honey,
hearing her mothers, she
sheds tears
and they flow down her
chest.

That day there is planted in
her mind a seed
of love for the king which
will increase,
as it would in the hearts of
the other women.

She forgot completely how
she wanted to feed
the play rice of sand to her

young friends. (224 - 268.)

The beauty of the pethumbai

Giving her childlike speech
to the parrot

she stole the sweet music of
the excellent flute.

Giving her bright smile to
the blooming mullai flower,
she took a smile bright as
white pearls.

Leaving her innocent,
childish glance with the
deer that she
had raised, she took instead
a killing glance

so her eyes resembled
spears.

Letting the Madhavi creeper
have the lustre of her body,
she assumed the thin form
of lightning in the sky.

She gave up her dolls and
left them
with the thriving Kuravam
trees
whose fragrant flowers are
doll-like,
and she shone as she carried
the green parrot and the
Manina bird.

Leaving her lovely innocent
walk with the wild swan,
she began to sway like a
young female elephant.

The crown of her hair is
decorated
with a shining golden
ornament
inlaid with strings of corals
and pearls.

Her mouth is so red
that it makes even the heroic
Murugan fall in love with
her.

And the eyes of the god of
love grow red in envy
because she has taken on his
work.

Her full breasts are like the
buds of the Kongu tree.
The loveliness of her neck
out does
the marvel of the blooming
Kamuku tree.

The dream of the pethumbai

Her friends and mothers do
not wake her up.
She gets up herself and

walks slowly to her mothers
and says,

“Mothers, I saw a dream
and I am happy.

A soft vine with many
growing leaves

mounted a branch of a
strong tree

with rich golden coconuts
on its crown.

That soft vine stayed there
emitting its fragrance

as bees swarmed around it.

That is the dream I saw and
I am happy.”

The mothers say, “Come,

come,
you are as innocent as a
parrot, give us a kiss, a
kiss.”

They embrace her and
shower her with love
and bless her, saying
“Your breasts are growing
like buds.

You look like an Apsaras!
You will embrace the large
arms of the Chola king
and marry him soon.”

At that time....

Abhayan, Ahalangan,

the king comes there
on his rutting elephant, tall
as a mountain
and tied with a rope on his
neck.

The pethumbai comes out to
see the king

She runs to the buzzing
street with her friends.
She stands on the balcony
where the clouds roar.
She is as brilliant as gold
and her eyes are like lovely
fish.
She comes out and stands

like lightning filled with
every possible beauty.

The glory of the king
Vikrama Chola in the eyes
of the pethumbai

To plant his tiger banner
that takes away the lives of
enemy kings in the war,
the king Vikrama Chola, the
warrior
scooped up a mountain with
his Chendu weapon
in his strong hands.
Such is the heroism of the
king.

When the earth goddess fell
and cried,
suffering from the
unceasing troubles of
famine,
he removed her grief
and embraced her with his
arms.
Such is the marvel of his
arms.

His handsome, virile chest
is never separated from the
tight embrace
of the lovely breasts of the
beautiful, goldlike queen

He is like the dark,
marvelous Vishnu
with lovely hands like lotus
flowers,
feet like blossoms, divine
eyes
and a mouth sweet as fruit.

The feelings of the
pethumbai upon seeing the
king

The young girl cannot take
her eyes away from the
king.
She cannot open her hands

folded to worship him.

She cannot know the way to bring back her mind that has gone to him.

She is agitated with passion which gives her terrible pain.

Her hair grows loose and her garland falls down.

She stands alone and no one can fathom her desire.

After the kings of the Kerala and Pandya countries have worshiped him, the hero among all the Cholas,

the king leaves that place
and proceeds.

Maaran, the God of Love
who tries to shoot his flower
arrows at that girl,
leaves the place folding his
bow
because she is not yet ready
to fall in love. (269-324)

The picture of the king in
the mind of the mangai

Another woman, a mangai,
with dark hair
is like a wild swan happily

resting
on a sand hill of the Ganges
blooming with flowers.

When she was a pethumbai,
she had know in her heart
the love for the monarch of
the Chola country,
the king of kings, the best of
his lineage and the ruler
of the Pandya and Chera
countries.

Now that love grows
stronger.

To calm her increasing love
for him

she pictures him in her mind
all the way from his
beautiful lotuslike feet
to his pure golden crown.
And then she paints his
likeness with her hands.
All day she sees him in her
painting
and at night she sees him in
her dreams.
In her abundant love she
cannot see anything else.

At that time.....

She hears that Jayathungan,
the king

wearing garlands that shed
pollen,
is coming on the street on
his fighting elephant,

She asks her friends to bring
her
all her diamonds and jewels.
She puts them on, she
decorates her hair
with fragrant garlands,
and wears new golden
garments.

She smears herself with
sandalwood paste
and puts on her marvellous
ornaments.

The beauty of the mangai

She sees in the mirror her
lovely face
more beautiful than the lotus
flower,
shining like a blossom.
Her spearlike eyes are like
the weapons of Kama.
They move from side to side
as if they are asking for
leave to go somewhere.
They reach to the end of her
ears
ornamented with long
shining earrings.

Her thick long dark curly
hair is divided into
five parts and braided.

She wears on her round
bamboolike arms
handsome golden bracelets
studded with pearls.

Her large full breasts
standing like mountain
peaks
are smeared with fragrant
sandalwood paste
that is marked by the
rubbing of her garlands.

Her hips decorated
with a shining golden
waistband are wide,
but her small thin waist
suffers wearing it.

Seeing her own increasing
beauty
that could make even the
gods fall in love with her,
she is afraid and says,
“I no longer see and know
the form
that I had when I was
younger,
the form that the generous

king saw before.
I have lost the form that I
knew before
and now if he sees my face,
he will not know me.
What can I do?
I will bow to the king and
see what happens.”
She comes and stands
among her dear friends.

The beauty of the king's
body in the eyes of the
mangai. CHECK she sees
all these in the king and
feels happy.

She sees the faultless one,
the king,
the chief of Kumari country.
He brings glory to all his
ancestors.

She sees his flowerlike
hands
that protect the world with
justice
are like the hands of Vishnu
who churned the ocean of
milk.

•
She sees his feet
ornamented with golden
anklets

are like the feet of Vishnu,
from whose navel a lotus
grows
and who with only one foot
measured the whole earth.

She sees that his look is
compassionate.
The goddess of wealth,
Laksmi, lives on his chest.
See that his strong
mountainlike shoulders
could terrify all the enemy
kings.

She sees his ears,
ornamented with shining

makara rings,
are so lovely that people
melt in joy when they see
them.

She sees his eyes gaze
everywhere
and enjoy the pale golden
color of women.

She sees his bright beautiful
red mouth
that steals away the gleam
of coral.

She sees that his lovely face
never loses its grace.

She sees that even as he
grows older,
his body remains handsome
and young always.

As she loves and desires his
body, it calms her pain.
Seeing the king her joy
increases
and she is like the happy
ambal flower
when it sees the crescent
moon and blooms in love.

As she sees the king, she is
happy and her life is
fulfilled.

But then the murderous
elephant carrying the king
leaves.

The day and night of the
mangai after the king leaves

After the king has left,
her heart finds happiness
only
when she sees him in the
painting during the day
and when she dreams
sweetly at night.

She cannot sleep,
for she feels that the

elegance of his body
can never be painted fully.
In her love sickness,
she leans on her friends'
arms and faints.
Such is the state of the
mankai in love. (325 - 384)

The beauty of the
madanthai.

Her mouth is red like all the
redness
gathered together from the
eyes of Kama, the god of
love, CHECK
when he was burnt up by

Siva and lost his form.

The corners of her eyes
are like the darkness at the
end of the universe
when all the seven oceans
gather together
with endless turbulence
to destroy the world.

Her rounded breasts
bound tightly with a bra
are like the messengers of
cruel Yama
come to finish their job of
destroying the world.

With her lovely waist,
like Maaran the god of love
himself,
she could prevent the
highest rishis
from achieving their goal.

Her hips have grown wide
to support her thin waist
because
they are afraid her thin
struggling waist
will surely break without
support.

The madanthai plays ball

Talking sweetly to her
friends and embracing them,
she climbs to the courtyard
where moonlight falls
and says, “O you all are as
lovely as flowering vines!
Let all of us join in a line,
run and play ball.
The dancers will see us and
be pleased.
If you win you can take my
garland,
but if I win, you should get
the garland of my king
and bring it to me.”

As fast as lightning, she

throws the ball.
Her hair falls down
and the bra binding her
breasts grows loose.
She catches all the balls
quickly
and throws them
beautifully.?
She plays as if she is
desperately
fighting to make her friends
lose.
Many balls inlaid with
pearls fall around her
and bounce and bounce.

She looks like the goddess

Laksmi
who lives on a lotus
and emerged from the
breaking waves and foam
when the milky ocean rose
and grew wild.

The bangles on her arms
jingle.
They seem to open their
mouths and shout,
“Her palms lovely as kandal
flowers
will grow red, will grow
red.”

Her mekalai ornament

laments softly
that her waist as thin as a
vine
trembles and pains.

Her anklets feel pity for her
lovely small feet,
quiver and say in a
sorrowful voice,
“Why do the bees buzz so
sadly?
Is it for her hands
that are raised and opened
so often?
Is it for her waist that pains
so?
Is it for her lotus feet that

tremble?”

The madanthai asks her
friends to bring the garland

That beautiful madanthai
plays ball
with her friends and wins.
She says, “Our king
Ahalangan shines like the
sun.

Bring me the garland on his
arms
fragrant with sandal paste.”

To make them hear her
request,

she pulls the lovely ends of
their saris,
desperate for them to go
fetch the garland.

At that time ..

The king comes in
procession

The royal parasol provides
shade.

The white fans give a
breeze.

The king rides on his
elephant
surrounded by his marching

soldiers.

Many conches blow.

The ornaments of women
studded with coral and

pearls

shine everywhere.

Long lines of women gather
on the streets

looking with their eyes as
lovely as makara fish

The padalai drums and the
madalai drums

are loud and sweet as they
roar

on the elephant that carries
them.?

The fishermen who support
their poor families
with whatever small work
they can get,
approach the king humbly
from the side,
as he goes in procession.

The beloved king
Thiyagasundaran,
the ocean of sacrifices,
rules the land from the
southern city, Kanyakumari
and upto the northern cities
where the rivers Narmada,
Ganges and Sindhu flow.

He is the king of lustrous
Pukar
where the Kaveri flows
flourishing the Chola land.
He, with his just scepter,
approaches the street in
procession.

The feelings of the
madanthalai on seeing the
king.

Her mind is not on the game
that she is playing with her
friends.

She cannot help as the

bracelets on her arms
and the mekalai waistband
around her hips
grow loose because of the
love she feels.

She approaches the king and
worships him.

Then, tired and weary,
she shivers, cries and feels
alone.

When her eyes are not
looking,
her lovely diamond-
ornamented breasts
tell her hips, as the perfect

garments that cover them
and the gleaming golden
ornaments drop down,
“Here, you can have
my precious chain of pearls
and my pure golden silk.”
Her breasts give the
ornaments and clothes to
her hips
and they accept them.

Her friends approach her but
she faints in their arms.
She struggles with invisible
Kama
who fights her, filling her
with the desire of love.

Her wise mothers shiver
looking at her.

They mix sandal paste and
smear it on her,
they sprinkle rose water on
her,
they put her in the
moonlight to cool her
and fan her.

But even though her
mothers try to cool her,
the fresh breeze that flows
from the fan burns her.
Do they leave her alone?

Her heart takes her life

and as if it were water
rushing down a valley
it follows the generous king.
Both her loving heart and
soul
go to the king on the noisy
street
yet somehow the innocent
woman survives. (385- 454)

The beauty of the arivai

Among women she is like
the nectar churned from the
sea.

Her fragrant garlands drip
with honey

and bees swarm around
them.

Her hips are so ample that a
chariot wheel
would seem small in
comparison—
two hands cannot
encompass them,
covered with a silk garment
and decorated
with a golden emerald-
studded kalaabaaram
ornament.

The burden of her breasts
makes her waist feeble.

They are pale in color and
crush each other.

They cover her whole chest
large and proud.

They seem two pots held by
a single shining vine.

With their fullness, they
attract the hearts of young
men.

With her large, lovely,
unequaled breasts,
she seems like a wild swan
in the world surrounded
with roaring oceans.

Her long, dark eyes extend
to the sides of her face

and touch her earrings.
With their captivating lines,
they bring pain to young
men
and make their hearts throb.
Their beauty defeats even
the loveliness
of the kazuniir blossoms.
They are as innocent as the
eyes of a doe.

Her dark, long, thick,
fragrant hair
is smeared with oil and
decorated with flowers
and curls into little ringlets
at the ends.

Her hair seems a garden of
vines
whose tender leaves sway in
the wind
as they sprout, surrounded
by lotus blossoms.
Bees swarm around her hair
and feast on the lotus
flowers.

The arivai desires the king's
garland

She has felt lonely and sad
ever since she saw the king
of the Manu dynasty—
she had seen him one day

when he came on a fighting
elephant on the street.

Her flowerlike hands and
arms
seem not want to keep their
bracelets.

They rattle as if to say,
“The king of glorious Tamil
has captivated us.

If he wants to come and
give us his garland
we will accept it.”

Neither of her eyes can
close
even when she wants to

sleep
and she forgets to decorate
her bright hair with flowers.

Her breasts, warm with
passion,
do not want the golden
bands to restrain them.

Her hips do not want their
precious
golden clothes that protect
them.

Her heart is perplexed, and
does not want
the confusion it feels.

Her purity burns and melts
in the heat of the love that
she feels,
pierced by the flower arrows
of
the sugarcane bow of Kama,
the invisible god of love.

She cannot show her tender
affection
to the singing Puvai birds
and the dancing peacocks.

She cannot bear the talk
of the parrots that come near
her.

She avoids playing
with the chattering young
swan.

She walks away and goes to
the grove
where trees grow thick?
and covered with kuravam
flowers
as if they were a canopy.

The arivai is jealous of the
birds around her

Distressed, she says,
“You, swan, are fortunate

enough
to bathe every day in the
Ponni river
that belongs to the royal line
of the king
whose elephants are
mighty.”

She melts as she says,
“You, cranes, are blessed,
for you fly to the rich city of
Pukar
where the Chola king’s
fame spreads everywhere.”

She speaks incoherently and
says,

“You, dark blue flock of
cuckoo birds,
have glimpsed and lived
in the groves of the Chola
country.”

Growing weak, she says,
“You peacocks, with your
lovely tails,
you have the good fortune
of walking
on the Kolli and Neri hills
of the Chola king.

Confused and amazed, she
says,
“You bees, you sing and

circle again and again
the wonderful garland of the
Chola king
made of cool blossoms.

She is amazed feeling the
breeze
that comes after touching
the water
of the shining waterfalls
on the hills filled with
sandalwood trees
of the king of Thondi city.

The arivai sees the king in
procession

The conches roar out as they precede the procession of the generous king Ahalangan .

The modesty that has never left her and the innocence that she has kept so carefully abandon her as quick as lightning because of her growing love for the king.

She comes in front of him and her face brightens like the lotus on seeing the

bright rays of the sun.

The beautiful mekalai band
no longer fits around her
hips
as they grow large from joy.

Her breasts grow so full
it seems they might crush
her chest
and there is not the tiniest
space between them
for they have regained the
beauty that they had lost.

Her arms become round and
full

recovering the beauty they
had
before she ever laid eyes on
the king.

She insists, “No one but me
is fit
to receive the golden
garland
of the king of Ponniriver
where water never fails to
flow.”

And she gives the king love
of a kind
not given even by the
breasts of the earth goddess,

or the arms of Laksmi
who lives on a lotus flower.
(455 - 524)

The beauty of the therivai

She is like the clear, sweet
liquid essence of a fruit.

She is like a golden branch
whose tender shoots
are rich with unopened
buds.

She is like the full moon,
but without its blemish.

She is like sudden lightning
in the sky

not dispersed by a storm.

She is like a painting
made so skillfully it seems
entirely natural
and not to belong to this
world.

She is like the branch of
Kalpaka tree,
never touched by the bees
that sing the seven musical
note.

She is like a young peacock
with a beautiful tail that has
no dark spots.

Every day she is like wine
of the palmyra
that brings joy to everyone
without the usual
intoxication.

She is like a precious
diamond
that cannot be bought for
any price.

She is like the nectar
that never grows bitter for
those who drink it.

The therivai in her pavilion

Happily, she stays in a
pavilion
made lovely with diamonds,
and the beautiful evening
falls
and the fresh breeze arises,
passing through the
flourishing grove.
The shining rays of the
moon drop down onto the
open floor
and dew drips from lovely
crowns of the pillars
sculptured to look like the
mouths of crocodiles.

Her loving friends anoint

her with sandal paste,
and the jasmine flowers in
her hair,
buzzing with bees, spread
their fragrance.
The bard plays his perisai
lute
with the Virali dancing
woman next to him.

The bard plays and Kama
sends his flower arrows of
love

Taking up his curved lute,
the bard says,
“Let us sing the praise of

the city of Uraiyyur,
the tiger banner, the three
drums, the horse,
the valor of the king, his
elephant Airavata,
his garland, his rule, the
Chola country,
and the Kaveri river whose
rolling waves
flow through his forests.”

As the bard takes up his
curved lute,
Kama, the lord of spring,
swiftly rises
and takes his bow.

The bard strings his tantiri
lute
whose music is sweet as
honey.

And Kama uses his strength
to pull on the strings of his
bow and test them.

The bard and the dancing
Virali begin to sing.

Kama, the glorious god is
aroused and empties his
quiver
as he shoots his flower
arrows.

The bard's lute plays swiftly

many melodious songs of
different styles
and frantically
Kama shoots his flower
arrows faster and faster.

The therivai, bewildered, is
enchanted by the music

Whether it is the sweet
music that comes swiftly
from the lute
or the speed of the flower
arrows of the king of spring,
the terivai with a shining
face falls in love,
her mind is bewildered.

She feels the cool breeze
from the distant hills
and complains, “This must
be the hot summer wind.”

When her friends sprinkle
cold water on her lovely
breasts
so full they cannot stand the
tight halter around them,
she asks “Is this fire?”

She hears the sound of a
small drum
that is beaten to guard the
entire city

and she insists,
“This is the drum of Kama
whose arrows are so lethal
and it is attacking me.”

She sees the lovely
moonlight
falling and bringing joy to
lovers
who rest together on their
beds
and exclaims, “This is the
heat of the sun.”

She says, “The scepter that
protects all the seven worlds
of the king of the city of

Uraiyr, our monarch
Ahalangan,
is a cruel scepter for some
of us.”

And all night, until the
dawn,
she talks incessantly, in her
pain.

The feelings of the therivai
when she sees the elephant
in the procession.

The ornamented rutting
elephant carrying the king
who rules the earth
surrounded by the oceans

and ancient hills
comes in procession.
When she sees it, her heart
that cannot tolerate the
music she hears
and cannot bear any other
assault
grows calm, and she runs to
the street.

She says to the elephant,
“Listen, Airavata,
you bear the king who alone
rules the world
that is carried by the divine
rutting elephants of the
sky/space?”

tied to the hills of all the
eight directions.

You crushed all the northern
mountains
where the proud enemy king
of the Kalingas ran and hid.

You walk so majestically
you resemble the Vindhya
mountain
that fought and destroyed
Mount Meru.

You, incomparable, were
like thunder
when you crushed the

snake-like enemy kings
who fought for their
indestructible dynasty of the
moon,
the divine Potiyam
mountain
and the beautiful and
ancient Kumari river.

I heard the drums at
midnight
and lost my strength of will.
Now it has returned as I
hear the sounds
of the garlanded drums you
bear.

I heard the bells of the cattle
and it pained my ears, but
now
the pain is gone as I hear
your bells.

The wind of the hills made
my large breasts burn
past any healing, but now
they are healed
by the breeze that comes
from your swaying ears.

As the drops of dew fell,
my life seemed to leave me,
but now
it returns as I feel the drops

of your ichor.

When I heard the roaring of
the ocean
with the dark clouds moving
above it,
I suffered, but now that pain
is dispelled
by your incomparable
trumpeting.

All through the night, I
struggled with my desire
brought by the bodiless
Kama, but now
that pain is gone as I see the
king Anahan

riding on you.

Listen, mountain-like one!
If you save my life, all these
bees that bother you
will go away and no longer
swarm
about your ichor.

And if you are distressed
and wish to play and muddy
the water of a pond
then please go to the pond
filled
with the sharp flower arrows
of Kama.

And do not try to drive
away
the bees swarming around
your ichor
that are darker even than the
rain clouds.
Chase away instead the bees
that hover
near the dangerous flower
arrows of the god of love.

Do not desire the sugarcane
in the marvellous hands
of the lord of the earth but
take instead
the sugarcane bow in the
hands of invisible Kama.

Look, you are my very life,
my body, my desire.

Do not move from here, but
remain here to help me.”

In this way, the terivai
stands begging the elephant
not to go in the procession
carrying the king. (524-610)

The beauty of the perilam
pen

The perilam pen has a
forehead curved like a bow.
Ready to kill young men,
her round thighs are shaped

like the trunk of the strong
elephant of Anahan,
the king of the city of
Korkai
who has mighty arms.

Her hips resemble the hood
of the dancing serpent
Adisesa
who is cruel and murderous.

Her breasts bend down as if
they feel guilty
to pain her thin waist which
thinks they are its friends.

With her incomparable

beauty,
the terivai steals away the
loveliness of Laksmi,
the goddess who sits on the
lotus flower.

She seems a thief who
would take away even the
seat
of the goddess.

She wears many garlands
and the musk of deer and
pearls born in the ocean.

With her lovely friends and
deer and peacocks,
she is sweet to behold as

she stays in the garden.

Her friends pour strong
palmyra wine
that oozed out from the top
of a young tree
and fill her cup, wiping
away the foam
and shooing off the bees
that swarm around it.

She looks at it without
desire,
and flicks away the foam
with her sharp fingernails.
Then she drinks it, she leans
on her friends and faints.

The dream of the perilam
pen

And in her inebriation, she
has a dream:
the king Thungathungan of
the Manu dynasty
comes and makes love to
her.

Then she wakes up and the
joy and desire
that came to her when she
embraced the king
and sleep itself leave her.

She gets up and sees her

image reflected in a marble wall.

Her clothes have grown loose and slipped away and the only cloth on her hips is a waistband made of golden coins and studded with fresh coral.

Because of the lovely dream that she has seen,
her arms have grown tender,
the fragrant garland on her hair has withered,
the lovely sandal paste on her breasts has come off,
her pursed red lips have

grown pale
her dark eyes are red
and her lovely bright
forehead is beaded with
sweat.

She thought that the dream
that gave her such joy was
real
and, happily, she told it to
everyone.

But then she sees the king
on his elephant
and realizes that what she
saw was only a dream,
and her fragrant garland
dripping with honey withers

and the joy that filled her heart is suddenly false.

The king comes on procession <

The king Jeyathungan approaches on a rutting elephant that inspires fear, shaded with a garlanded royal umbrella to protect him.

With words sweet as honey, she says,
“I just had a dream and

thought it was real
and now I am ruined. It
must have come
from the intoxication of the
wine I drank.

Or is it that such things
come to me
because of what I did in
some former birth
and because I never did
tapas to atone
in this ancient world?

She worships the king and
her distress is
somewhat relieved,
but still the great passion

she feels for him is strong.
In her abundant feeling for
the king
she leans on the arms of her
faithful friends and faints .

Her friends praise the king

Her friends run in front of
the tall elephant
and they say to the king,

“You who have the wheel of
law!

You are the king of the
cities of Vanji, Kanchi,
Madurai

and of Pukar with its wide
spaces.

You are like the sun who
rides on a chariot
protecting all the seven
earths
and you attack the enemies
who do not praise you.

You are like the great mount
Meru
and all the other royal
dynasties are like small hills
before you.

Tirelessly you protect

everything in all the eight
directions
covering them with your
royal canopy.

You are like an ocean of
sacrifices.

Your army went to the
seven parts of the Kalinga
country
and conquered them all.

You are like an exquisite
diamond
on the pure golden crown of
enemy kings
who are proud in battles and

who rule this round earth
with its seven continents.

Listen, you are a friend to
all,

Your land is filled with
jewels of many kinds
and your ocean is filled with
pearls.

King of justice! your
mountains are filled with
diamonds
and the Chola country you
rule
is filled with luxurious
garments.

She worshipped you and

loved you
and you possessed her.

You stole the golden hue of
her breasts,
her long-established purity,
the lovely color of her body
like tender shoots,
and you took from her the
sleep she was accustomed
to.?

Did you do this according to
the sacred books
that the kings of your
ancient dynasty follow?

You are as generous as the

clouds that give rain.
If you give to Kama, the
lord of spring, freely
arrows from the prosperous
Thondai country,
beautiful bows from the
thriving Ponni land,
and chariots from the
auspicious country of the
Pandyas,
then perhaps one day he
may release her from her
passion.

Kama's anger threatens the
life of this wonderful terivai,
whose eyes are like Paanal

flowers.

If she should die, then of
what use in the world
would the bell be that hangs
from the tower of your
palace?

As the women say these
things, worshiping the king,
the invisible Kama grows
angry and bends his bow
to attack them.

So the generous Chola king
proceeds on his rutting
elephant
that attacks the enemy kings

and destroys their valor.
Such is the procession of the
Uthungathungan,
the Chola king. (611-681)

murrum.

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Feel free to send corrections to
the webmaster.