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Digital Tēvāram/kaṉiṉ it tēvāram, with the complete English gloss of
the late V.M.Subrahmanya Ayyar (IFP) and furnished with a full con-
cordance of the Tamil text accompanied by 6 hours of MP3 audio
recordings (illustrating all the 24 paṇ-s), various maps (showing all
the 274 talam-s) and other related material.
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The *Tēvāram* constitutes the first 7 books of the *Tirumuṟai*, the
Tamil Śaiva canon of devotional texts considered the Tamil *Veda*. It
consists in about 800 hymns composed by the Mūvar, the great trio of
Śaiva mystics and poets and also the most famous of the Nāyaṉmār:
Tiruñāṉacampantar, Tirunāvukkaracar or Appar, and Cuntaramūrtti
(VII-IX cent. A.D.). Early expression of vernacular *bhakti*, the
Tēvāram shows a special attention to pilgrimage to holy places and
originates a sacred geography where the god is considered as belong-
ing to each particular place. This *corpus* of sacred hymns is of
immense literary, religious, social and historical value for the life of
Tamil people, and therefore the appearance of this *Digital Tēvāram* is
an important event and is particularly welcomed.

The genesis of the work lies in the decision to accomplish an English translation project of *Tēvāram* that started in Pondichéry in the seventies and resulted in an unpublished manuscript of about 3500 pages containing an English rendering of the hymns, authored by the late V.M. Subrahmanya Ayyar. The above English version of the *Tēvāram* together with the Tamil text forms the bulk of the CD-ROM.

The text of 798 hymns is based on the *Tēvāram* edition by T.V.Gopal Iyer and F.Gros, published by the Institut Français d'Indologie of Pondichéry in 1984-1985, and is in the *paṇmuṟai* order i.e. collecting the hymns by their musical mode. The English rendering (a pre-translation) of the *Tēvāram*, written by the late V.M.Subrahmanya Ayyar in 1976-84, is in the *talamuṟai* order i.e. classifying the hymns according to the places mentioned and sung in them. It is copiously annotated, the notes recording variant readings and discussing textual and prosodic problems, or translation issues.

Most conveniently both the arrangements of the hymns in the *talamuṟai* order and in the *paṇmuṟai* order are simultaneously available, and it is also possible to simulate the content of smaller collections of the texts.

The arrangement in the *paṇmuṟai* order is accompanied by an audio section containing information on the musical modes (more than 20) used as an organizational principle for the hymns and hyper-linked to the relevant texts. The section is composed by 109 audio recordings (totally about 7 hours) of 63 hymns interpreted by several performers and in different styles, illustrating the today variety of the vocal rendering of them.

The arrangement in the *talamuṟai* order is accompanied by more than 100 digital maps. They show the location of all the sacred places sung in the *Tēvāram* and allow the user to locate the various sites mentioned in the hymns. All of the maps are electronically linked by hyperlinks to the hymns referring to the places and some of them are zoomable maps.

Impressive is the patient, demanding, meticulous description that accompanies this topographic material, a substantial contribution in its own right. In order to precisely identify and locate the sites, for each of them are indicated the modern and the traditional name, all the administrative specifications concerning it, district and taluk where it

can be found today, old administrative location, nearest railway station, location and name according to Umāpati Civācāriyar's *Tiruppatikkōvai* (which is the basis for the arrangement of the *talamur̲ai*), reference in the *Madras Annual Report of the Epigraphist*, links to zoomable and non-zoomable maps and to a Draft route map, total number of hymns devoted to the site and link-reference to the hymns themselves. A virtual pilgrimage with an identifier referring to the site position inside the *talamur̲ai* allows the user to experiment a virtual tour of all the places recognized by the tradition. An alphabetical list of the traditional names of the sites is appended, with a list of clickable shortcuts towards the various possible initial syllables of those names. A page contains also various miscellaneous information on place names and administrative divisions of Tamil Nadu. All is rounded off by 269 pictures of 31 shrines in their present conditions, that reinforce the feeling of atmospheric richness.

A very useful section of the work is devoted to concordances, and contains in alphabetical order the occurrences (about 200 000) of all the word-forms (about 45 000) recurring in the *Tēvāram*, each linked with the corresponding passage both in the T.V.Gopal Iyer's edition and the English rendering of the hymns. This constitutes a pre-dictionary of the *Tēvāram*. A Technical vocabulary contains various technical explanations – mostly on prosody – given by V.M.Subrahmanya Ayyar. An Incipit-s list is added, showing the first lines of all the hymns. A V.M.Subrahmanya Ayyar biography sketch is complemented by pertinent illustrations and photographs, and an essential bibliography is also provided.

As to the technical requirements, the CD-ROM contains data in HTML format and has been tested on PC running Windows XP and Macintosh running OS X. The only software needed is a browser accepting frames; however some of the pages containing zoomable maps can only be accessed by users having SVG compatible browsers. The data being multilingual by nature, a font installation process might be required.

Many persons have assisted the Editor and the Assistant editor in the preparation of the *Digital Tēvāram* and they are listed in the Credits page. To all of them and in particular to the organizers Jean-Luc Chevillard and S.A.S. Sarma, an unstinted measure of praise is

due for this solid, reliable, minutely detailed, comprehensive CD-ROM. It contains a vast amount of data made easily accessible and of great practical value for all the scholars interested in Tamil Śaiva devotional literature. It is a very important contribution to the study of the *Tēvāram*.

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