

Jainism under the Ancient Cheras, of Kerala

M. S. DHIRAJ

M.S, Dhiraj, Assistant Professor, School of Historical Studies, Malayalam University, Kerala.
E-mail: haihaidhiru@gmail.com

Abstract: *In the absence of required sources, reconstructing the glorious but unrevealed Jaina antiquity of Kerala region has been a herculean task for historians and researchers. The main reason behind the scarcity of sources is the high density of population which led to the rapid urbanization leading to the encroachment and obliteration of historical sites and evidences. Furthermore, most of the monuments were constructed with the perishable wooden materials. To compound the problem still further, researches into historical archaeology focusing on systematic, problem oriented explorations and excavations are very few and far between. Because of the aforesaid factors, scholars of Kerala History are generally reluctant to venture into the Jaina studies. Against this backdrop, the present study is based on some native as well as extra-native inscriptional evidences associated to the Ancient Cheras which have a significant bearing on the historical developments of Kerala. The analysis of those records can clearly shed fresh light into the dark corners of the history of Jainism in Kerala; as also a landmark in the politico religious history of the region, as it is evidently affiliating Jainism with the Ancient Cheras. These crucial records in Tamil-Brahmi and Tamil-Malayalam Vatteluttu scripts with old Tamil and Malayalam languages provide some vital missing links in the early history of Kerala.*

Keywords: *History of Kerala - Jainism in Kerala - Ancient Chera Dynasty - Jainism under the Cheras - Epigraphical Sources - Tamil Brahmi Inscriptions - Sangam Classics - Jaina Athan –*

Received : 09 April 2022

Revised : 29 April 2022

Accepted : 2 May 2022

Published : 15 July 2022

TO CITE THIS ARTICLE:

Dhiraj, M.S. 2022. Jainism under the Ancient Cheras, of Kerala. *South Asian History, Culture and Archaeology*, 2: 1, pp. 87-99.

Introduction

Jainism is one of the oldest and non-theistic religions in the world. The historical penetration of Jainism into Peninsular India before the Common Era is an established fact[Desai1957:1-3, 32]. Jainism is believed to have spread into Kerala, as per the legendary accounts, in the 3rdCentury BCE soon after Chandragupta Maurya came to Shravanabelagola. The Jaina monks who accompanied him are said to

have moved further south, into present day Kerala and Tamil regions, in search of suitable places for their meditation as also for the propagation of their faith. By the end of the Pre-Common Era, Jainism seems to have well established in Kerala. The Cheras were the native rulers of Kerala. Asokan edicts [Hultzsch 1925: 2-3] called them *Keralaputras* (*Ketalaputo*). Studies on the Ancient Cheras up to the first half of the 20th Century relied entirely on the literary evidences in the form of Tamil Sangam and allied literatures such as *Pathitruppathu*, *Akananuru*, *Purananuru*, *Pattupattu*, *Manimekalai*, *Silappadikaram*, etc. The *Pathitruppathu* text, deals exclusively with the ten Chera kings who ruled over the regions of present day Kerala and contiguous parts of present Tamil Nadu, was considered as the principal source material for these studies. In this light, the present paper, largely based on local as well as non-local inscriptional evidences corroborate with the literary evidences, have a significant bearing on the ancient Chera history in general and their Jaina affiliation in particular.

Early Tamil - Brahmi Inscriptions

Discovery and reading of a large number of short label Tamil-Brahmi inscriptions greeting a revolution in the Jaina studies of Tamilakam. It was initiated by the epigraphists, viz., Venkayya, Krishna Sastri, K. V. Subrahmanya Ayyar, C. Narayana Rao, T. N. Subramanian, T. V. Mahalingam, Kamil Zvelebil, R. Nagaswamy, R. Panneerselvam, and M. S. Venkataswamy [Mahadevan 2003: 69-85]. But the most comprehensive decipherment, reading, rereading, and interpretations were made by the renowned epigraphist Iravatham Mahadevan. Most of these inscriptions from the caves of Tamil land and those from the Chera territory, except a couple, have Jaina affiliation; out of the 89 records, 84 have been identified as having Jaina affiliation [Mahadevan 2003: 128]. The Ancient Chera territory contributed 22 inscriptions to this corpus. Among them 19 directly or indirectly speak about their association with Jainism. Some of the records found in the Chola and Pandya territories of Tamilakam also help in reconstructing the early Jaina history of Chera country. These all records roughly belonging to the period between 2nd Century BCE and 4th Century CE. Some of these clearly corroborate with the Tamil classical literary accounts. On the basis of these early epigraphs, it is safe to establish that Jainism was one of the first organised religions inroaded into the present day Tamil - Kerala regions. One among them from Kongar Puliyankulam near Madurai [Mahadevan 2003.No.12: 334] says that one “*Cer-atan*(*Chera Athan*) gave for carving this section” (“*kuru-kotalkuittavan-cer-atan-on*”). This record has been assigned to c.2nd Century BCE. This *Chera Athan* could be one of the Chera kings who usually affixed the term ‘Athan’ with their names. We have a number of Chera king’s names affixed with ‘Athan’, such as Udayan Cheral Athan, Neduncheral Athan, Adu Kottu Pattu Cheral Athan, Selvakkadunko Valiya Athan, etc., [Pathitruppathu 2012: 32-33]. The Chera king of the present record might have endowed or caused to be carved out the cavern in which the record has engraved. Kongar Puliyankulam inscription could be the earliest mentions to a Chera king, as also on Chera’s Jaina affiliation and patronisation.

Another inscription from Muttupatti in Madurai [Mahadevan 2003.No.56: 395] speaks of a *Kothan* (*Kotan*) of *Muziri* (*Muciri*) and an *Antai* of *Nakaperur* together donated the cave to a Jaina monk (“*nakaperur-ataiy-muciri-kotan-elamakan*”). This record has been assigned to c.1st Century BCE. *Muziri* could be the Muziris, the famous ancient port city of Kerala coast described by the author of Periplus, Pliny, and Ptolemy [Bostock and Riley 1890: 65; McCrindle 1885: 48, 51; Schoff 1912: 44, 128, 203-205, 208, 212]. *Akananuru* [2021.Poem: 57, 149] and *Purananuru* [2021.Poem: 343] gave a vivid picture of Muziri, the port city of the Chera kings. Vienna Museum Papyrus of 2nd Century CE describes the commercial importance of Muziris, situated close to the ancient Chera capital Vanji [Mahadevan 2003: 155]. There is a heating debate among experts that the recently discovered

archaeological site in the coastal region of Kodungallur called 'Pattanam' as Muziris. However, the present Muttupatti record could be an earliest inscriptional evidence which speaks of Muziris, the Emporium of the Classical Western World. According to the Muttupatti record [Mahadevan 2003. No.56: 3950], *Kothan* was the *Elamakan* from *Muziri* ("muciri-kotan-elamakan"). Here the word 'Kothan' and 'Elamakan' deserves discussion. *Kothan* could be derived from two words such as 'Ko' + 'Athan'. 'Ko' is the usual Tamil term denotes King. We have a c.3rd Century CE record from Edakkal cave in Wayanad which read by Mahadevan[2003.No.82: 122,435]as "kov= atan"and hetrans lated as "Athan (Atan), the King(Ko)". The two Chera records of c.2nd Century CE from Pugalur [Mahadevan 2003.No.61-62: 122,405-407] also indicates 'Ko Athan' alias 'King Athan'. It is also remembered that the term 'Athan' affixed with most of the ancient Chera rulers like Udayan Cheral Athan, Neduncheral Athan, Adu Kottu Pattu Cheral Athan, Selvakkadunko Valiya Athan, etc., which clearly illustrated in the Sangam classic *Pathitruppathu* and other works. In that sense, *Ko Athan* in the Muttupatti record could be a member of the Chera family. *Elamakan* in the Muttupatti record may indicates the junior prince or younger son, because the Tamil word 'Ila' means young and 'Makan' means son¹. In that sense, it can be interpreted as *Elamakan* of *Muziri* or a 'younger son' or 'junior prince' from *Muziri*. It is reasonable to suppose that the *Elamakan* of *Muziri* could be an heir apparent or a male member of the Chera royal house of *Muziri*.

According to the Muttupatti record[Mahadevan 2003.No.56: 395], donation of the cave to a Jaina monk made not only by *Kothan* of *Muziri* but one *Antai* of *Nakaperur* as well. The place *Nakaperur* of the *Antai* in the record also might be a place situated inside the present geographical territory of Kerala². A Jaina vatteluttu inscription [Varier 2012: 36]from Poothadi in Wayanad mentions one *Nagapura* (*Nakeraporai*)³.According to the record, the twelve *poti* revenue from *Nagapura* has to be given to the temple of Yaksha for the purpose of perpetual lamp [Varier 2012.L.6-7: 36]⁴. *Nakaperur* in the Muttupatti inscription and *Nagapura* in the Thazhekavu inscription could be the present Pambra village near Sulthan Bathery. The Sanskrit word 'Naga' means Dravidian 'Pampu' denotes snake [Williams 1899: 532]. In that sense the Sanskrit *Nagapura* become Tamil-Malayalam *Pampupura* evolved as *Pambra*. A medieval Sanskrit inscription from the site [ARIE 1960-1961. No.239: 195;Dhiraj 2016a: 57; 2021: 168-175]shows that Pambra alias *Nakaperur* was an established Jaina settlement of Wayanad, and it also attests that the fame of the Pambra *Palli* has been protracted beyond the boundaries of Kerala. A brief discussion of the term 'Antai' is necessary. As many as eight inscriptions assigned to c.2nd Century BCE from Muttupatti[Mahadevan 2003.No.25-28,30-32: 353-357,359-362] mention the 'Antai' attached personal names of Jainas, viz., *Antai Ariyiti*, *Antai Iravatan*, *Antai Vissuvan*, *Antai Sentan* (*Centan*), *Chantan Antai Chantan* (*Cantan*), *Antai* of *Patinur*, *Kuvira Antai*, and *Kuvira AntaiVel*. All these names were engraved on the walls or surrounding rocks of the Jaina cave complex on Muttupatti hill. Another c.2nd Century BCE dated record [Mahadevan 2003. No.20: 345]from Vikkiramangalam in the Chellampatti Taluk of Madurai region mentions a Jaina personal name *Antai Pikkan*. A Mangulam inscription of c.2nd Century CE [Mahadevan 2003.No.3: 319]refers that the cave was caused to be carved by one *Antai Assutan*. Two Pugalur records of c.2nd Century CE [Mahadevan 2003.No.65,66: 412-413,599,601]refer to one *Pittan*, the *Antai* of *Nalliyur*. Another Pugalur record of c.3rd Century CE [Mahadevan 2003.No.67: 415,601] mentions *Korran Antai Ilavan* who donated the forecourt to the cave shelter. A Kudumiyamalai (Pudukottai in Tamil Nadu) record of c.3rd Century CE [Mahadevan 2003.No.77: 429]as well talk about *Korran*, the *Antai* of *Nalal*, as a donor of cave *Palli* (hermitage) at Kudumiyamalai hill. *Akananuru* [2021.Poem:77,143] describes *Pittan Antai* as the commander-in-chief of the Chera king. Five songs in *Purananuru* [2021. Poem:168-172] are about *Pittan Kotran* alias *Pittan Korran Antai*, the son of *Pittan Antai* [Dorai 1968:

122-124; Mahadevan 2003: 599]. *Pittan Korran Antai* was also the army chief of the Chera king [Dhiraj 2021: 182]. It is not unreasonable to suppose *Pittan* and his son *Pittan Korran* were the Chera chieftains from *Nalliyur* and *Nalal* respectively. The history of the *Pittan* family of Sangam age will be discussed in the following pages. The above facts tell us that the term ‘Antai’ largely used to denotes the chief of the kings in ancient Tamilakam. But the ‘Antai’ was never solely used to denote king’s chief. For example the Mangulam record [Dhiraj 2021: 93-94, 182; Mahadevan 2003.No.3: 319, 548-551] mentions *Antai Assutan* as the chief of a *Nikamam* (*Nigama*- merchant guild). The term *Antai* is however found exclusively in the Jaina records. On account of that it seems safe to conclude that the *Antai* of *Nakaperur* in the Muttupatti inscription could be a Chera chief/commander who was also a follower of Jainism, and the cave shelter at Muttupatti was caused to be given by the younger son and heir apparent of a Chera king of Muziri together with his *Antai* of Nagapura.

A c.1st Century BCE inscription from Ayyarmalai in Karur district [IAR 1973-74.No.38: 40] refers to the gift of a stone bed by one *Vessan* of *Panaithurai*. The name ‘Vessan’ was interpreted by Iravatham Mahadevan [2003.No.50: 387, 58-581] as one of the members of the Vaishya community. But it is reasonable to identify this *Vessan* as an individual’s name. There is no controversy in identifying the Ayyarmalai caves as hermitages of the Jainas. Gift of a stone bed to the Jaina monk in a cavern by a Jina follower namely *Vessan* seems little more logic. Sculpting of stone beds called *atitanam* for monks in the caverns by their followers is an exclusive feature of the Jaina monastic history of ancient Tamilakam. The place name *Panaithurai* deserves special discussion. Mahadevan [2003: 580] splits the place name *Panaithurai* as ‘*panai*’ (Palmyra tree) and ‘*thurai*’ (shore). But it is correct and logical to read *Panaithurai* as ‘*Panithurai*’. The Tamil word ‘*pani*’ in Sangam classics means cool (cold) and ‘*thurai*’ signifies port or seashore [Pathitruppathu 2012.Poem: 23,27,30-31,33,48,55: 87-91,99-102,106-122,125-127,173-175,202-205]. *Pathitruppathu* [2012.Poem: 31,48: 117-122,173-175] refers to the term ‘*Panithurai*’ to denote seashore or port city of the Chera kings. Poet Parananar exalts Cheran Chenguttuvan as *Panithurai Parathavan*; thus, “*Oh! Lord of the sea with cold shores (Panithurai Parathavan)! You entered waters and battled at sea, seized enemy wealth and achieved great fame difficult to ruin*” [Pathitruppathu 2012.Poem.48: 173-174]. We have reference to the *Perumthurai* (*perum+thurai*) in *Pathitruppathu* [2012. Poem.30. 55:106, 111, 203] to indicate big port of the Cheras. *Vessan* of *Panithurai* who donated the *atitanam* to a Jaina monk could be hailing from one of the Western coastal towns of the Chera kingdom than the banks of the river Kaveri as interpreted by Mahadevan [2003: 580]. Twelve inscriptions [Mahadevan 2003.No.61-72: 405-421] from the ancient Chera territory Pugalur near Karur deserve special attention. Among them six are dated to c.2nd Century CE and another six to c.3rd Century CE. All these records were engraved inside or peripheral areas of the caverns on the Arunattarmalai hill which were once used by the Jaina monks for penance. All these records speak about the endowment of *Palli* (hermitage) or *atitanam* by prominent personalities including rulers, chiefs, and merchants [Dhiraj 2021: 176-178]. Some of them carry the names of ascetics who resided in the caverns.

Two of them are vital to identify the relation of the Ancient Cheras with Jainism. Both of these records [Mahadevan 2003.No.61,62: 405-407] refer that “*the abode of the senior Jain monk (Mootha Amana), Yarrur Senkayapan (Cenkayapan)*” and that “*the rock shelter was caused to be carved when Katunkon Ilankatunko, the son of Perunkatunkon, the son of King Athan Chel Irumporai, became the heir apparent (Ilanko)*”. Here the three names *Athan Chel Irumporai*, his son *Perunkatunkon*, and his son *Katunkon Ilankatunko* can be identified as the Chera rulers *Selvakkadunko Valiyathan*, *Perum Cheral Irumporai*, and *Ilam Cheral Irumporai* respectively, referred to in the 7th, 8th, and 9th decades of *Pathitruppathu* [2012: 21; Mahadevan 2003: 117]. Three more records from Pugalur talk about the

members of *Pittan* family of Sangam classics. Two of them dated to c.2nd Century CE [Mahadevan 2003.No.65, 66: 412-413,599,601], detail the gift of a cave *Palli* a long with *atitanam* by a lady named *Kiran Korri*, the younger daughter of one *Pittan Antai* of *Nalilyur*. The third record of c.3rd Century CE [Mahadevan 2003.No.67: 415,601] refers to one *Korran Antai Ilavan* (*korran-tai-ilavan*) who caused to be given a front yard (*munru*) to the same *palli* which is already mentioned in the first two records. *Korran Antai* could be the son and ‘successor chief’ (*Antai Ilavan*) of *Pittan Antai*. It is above said that the term ‘Antai’ denoting a chieftain or chief, is mentioned in a large number of Jaina records. The ‘Ilavan’ in the *Korran Antai Ilavan* may denote ‘junior/younger’ or ‘son/successor’. *Korran Antai Ilavan* might also be the brother of *Kiran Korri* who endowed the cave shelter and stone bed. The Sangam classics sung a lot about one *Pittan* and his son *Pittan Kotran* alias *Pittan Korran* [Akananuru 2021.Poem: 77,143; *Purananuru* 2021.Poem:168-172; Dorai 1968: 122-124; Mahadevan 2003: 599]. Poet *Mathurai Ilanakanar* in *Akananuru* adulates *Pittan* as the commander of a Chera king, is as follows:

“The long beads of tears from her eyes, like the perfect spear blades of the charitable Chera commander *Pittan* with curved bow, happy with alcohol, who fought battles with enemy kings, will give me great anguish” [Akananuru 2021.Poem: 77].

Poet *Alamperi Sathanar* [Akananuru 2021.Poem: 143] says that “the faultless *Pittan* with unfailing sword” was the owner of *Kuthirai Malai* (*Kuthirai* Mountain). Mahadevan [2003: 599] identified *Pittan* as the commander of the Chera king *Perunkatunkon* alias *Perum Cheral Irumporai* of the *Pugalur* records. But *Purananuru* [2021. Poem: 172] makes clear that *Pittan Kotran* (*Pittan Korran*), son of *Pittan* was the chieftain of the Chera king *Kotha*. Five poems in *Purananuru* [2021.Poem: 168-172] are dedicated to *Pittan Kotran*, and he was also referred as the ruler of *Kuthirai Malai*. *Pittan Kotran* fought many successful battles for his lord *Cheraman Kotha*. Poet *Vadama Vannakkan Thamotharanar* sung about *Pittan Kotran* as:

“*Pittan* with swift horses is lord of a mountain country, where, should a fire kindled by guards in a wild-rice field go out; the light from bright gems will dispel darkness. May his spear that wins harsh battles, his generous King *Kotha*, and even his enemy kings, live for a long time!” [Purananuru 2021. Poem: 172].

The King *Kotha* in the poems might be belonging *Athan* line of Chera rulers who reigned from *Makothai* (*Vanji*) than *Irumporai* line they seated at *Karur*. Two silver portrait coins from *Karur* dated on the palaeographic grounds to c.3rd Century CE [Mahadevan 2003: 63,118], carry the names of “*chera-kuttuvan-kothai*” and “*chera-makkothai*”. Mahadevan [2003: 118] identified the *Katumiputta* of the *Edakkal* cave inscription as *Kuttuvan Kothai* of the *Karur* coin. It should be mentioned here that majority of the later Chera rulers (Perumals of Kerala) prefixed/suffixed the surname ‘*Kotha*’ with their name such as *Kotha Ravi Vijayaraga* (c.883-913 CE), *Kotha Kotha Kerala Kesari* (c.913-943 CE), *Indu Kotha* (c.943-962 CE), *Ravi Kotha Rajasimha* (c.1021-1036 CE), *Adithyan Kotha Ranaditya* (c.1036-1089 CE), and so on [Narayanan 2013: 65-67,70-71]. It is reasonable to assume that the ‘*Kothai*’ or ‘*Kotha*’ patronymic of the ancient and later Chera rulers could be an evolved form of ‘*Ko Athan*’. The ‘*Chera Makotha*’ on coin denotes the Chera capital ‘*Makothai*,’ which have a number names such as *Muziri*, *Vanji*, *Mahodayapuram*, *Muyirikkodu*, and so on [Narayanan 2013: 15-16,48,102,151,153,158,170]. The *Cheraman Perumal Puranam* part of *Periyapuram* of *Sekkizhar* mentions the *King Kotha* of *Makothai* as “*makothaiyena-kothaiyarachar*” [Narayanan 2013: 170]. Thus it is reasonable to suppose that the *Pittan Antai* and his successor *Korran Antai* in the *Pugalur* records were the *Pittan* and his son *Pittan Kotran* eulogised in the *Akananuru* and *Purananuru*

respectively. We have a c.3rd Century CE record from Kudumiyamalai (about twenty kilometres from Pudukottai in Tamil Nadu) which speaks about a cave *Palli* endowed by one *Korran Antai* (*Korrantai*) of *Nalal* [Mahadevan 2003.No.77: 429]. Probably *Korran Antai* of Pugalur and Kudumiyamalai records could be one and the same. From the above discussion it becomes clear that *Kiran Korri*, one of the members of the Chera subordinate's family was a follower of Jainism. Probably her father *Pittan Antai* along with her brother *Korran Antai* too were the worshippers of the lotus feet of Lord Arhat. Here it is remarkable that, not only the Chera rulers but their subordinates and their family members also appear as patrons of Jainism.

Jaina Athan

The prefix or suffix 'Athan' was frequent for early Jainas of Tamil country [Mahadevan 2003: 611]. Kongar Puliyanukulam record [Mahadevan 2003.No.12: 334] refers to the *Chera Athan* who endowed a cave to the Jaina monks as it is Muttupatti record [Mahadevan 2003.No.56: 155, 395] of the King *Athan* of Muziri. The "*Athan, the Ko*" (King *Athan*) of Edakkal cave was a Chera ruler of Kerala who lived around 3rd Century CE [Mahadevan 2003.No.82: 435]. Some of the Chera rulers sung by *Pathitruppathu* poets [2012: 21] are 'Athans' such as Udayan Cheral Athan,' Neduncheral Athan,' Adu Kottu Pattu Cheral Athan' and Selvakkadunko Valiya Athan.' The Jaina practice *Vadakkirikal* (*Sallekhana*) of Udayan Cheral Athan is attested by *Akananuru* [2021.Poem: 55, 246] and *Purananuru* [2021.Poem: 65-66]. Selvakkadunko Valiya Athan (*Valiya Athan - Big Athan*) alias Athan Chel Irumporai,' and his son Perum Cheral Irumporai, and his grandson Ilam Cheral Irumporai of Pugalur caves were Jainas [Dhiraj 2021: 197-1990]. Anthuvan alias Anthuvan Cheral who caused to be given a cave shelter to the Jaina monks during c.1st Century BCE at Tirupparankunram (near Madura) was also a Jaina [Dhiraj 2021: 198-199]. Selvakkadunko was the son of Anthuvan Cheral and he married the sister of Neduncheral Athan who could be a Jaina ruler of ancient Kerala [*Pathitruppathu* 2012: 32-33; Sreedhara 1998: 74-78]. The term 'Athan' was not exclusively used by rulers. One of the Kongar Puliyanukulam inscriptions of c.2nd Century BCE [Mahadevan 2003.No.13: 335] mention the cave as an endowment of one *Per-Athan Pittan* (*Peratan Pittan*) of Pakanur. Three Alagarmalai Jaina cave complex inscriptions of c.1st Century BCE [Mahadevan 2003.No.36, 40, 46: 369,373,381] refer to the donors '*Athan Athan, the gold smith*'; '*Athan Athan, the son of Athan, the accountant*'; and '*Ela-a Athan, the cloth merchant*'. The *Venni Athan* was an oil merchant (*Ennai Vanikan*) in the Pugalur cave record [Mahadevan 2003. No.70: 419]. The *Athan Chathan* (*Atan Cattan*) is recorded in the Kunnakkudi inscription of c.3rd Century CE [Mahadevan 2003.No.74: 425]. It is reasonable to claim that all 'Athens' in the Tamil-Brahmi inscriptions were patronised Jaina monks and nuns, because all the records mentioning 'Athan' are found in the Jaina caves and the inscriptions also either directly or indirectly related to Jainism. The 'Athans' were Jainas but not exclusively kings, merchants, or professionals.

Ilanko of Kuna

The Mannarkoyil short label inscription deserves a discussion in the study. Mannarkoyil is a village near Ambasamudram in the Tirunelveli district of Tamil Nadu. All the previous political and geographical study considerations on Mannarkoyil region was as an Ancient or Medieval Pandya history. But this perception must be reconsidered. Right from ancient period onwards the political fortunes of Mannarkoyil shifted between the Cheras to the Pandyas. Practically, Mannarkoyil region was under the administrative control of a petty ruling dynasty of southern Tamil-Kerala region called *Ay* whose kingdom acted as a buffer zone between the two warring powers and they periodically performed the

role of feudatories of the Cheras and the Pandyas. The Mannarkoyil inscription under discussion is dated to c.2nd Century CE [Mahadevan 2003.No.89: 447], which is engraved on the stone bed in front of a Jaina cave, refers to the gift of a *Palli* caused to be made by one *Ilanko* of *Kuna* (“*kunavin-ilanko-ceypita-palli*”). Mahadevan [2003: 620] observes *Ilanko* in the record as a sub-caste among the *Vaisyas* of Mannarkoyil region who “lived in the area from before 7th Century CE down to at least 13th Century CE”. On the contrary, the term ‘*Ilanko*’ in the ancient Tamil-Brahmi records were primarily used to indicate a crown prince [Dhiraj 2021: 179; Mahadevan 2003.No.61-62: 405-408,596]. Tamil term ‘*Ila*’ (*Ilaiya*) means ‘young’ and ‘*Ko*’ generally signifies king or prince [Mahadevan 2003: 587, 602, 611]. *Ilanko Adikal* was a Chera prince and the younger brother of King Chera Chenguttuvan because of that his name starts with ‘*Ilanko*’ [Mahadevan 2003: 596]. The name of the hill from where the record was found is also traditionally known as *Rajakkal Parai*, signifies ‘The Kings’ Rock.’

The ‘*Kuna*’ in the record might be a place name. The Jaina epic *Silappadikaram* [1939: 77; Narayanan 1972: 48] refers to ‘*kunavayir-kottatharachu-turandhiruntha-kudakkocheril-ilankoadikal*’ (“*Kudakkocheril Ilanko Adikal who had renounced his royalty and was permanently residing in the hermitage of Kunavayir Kottam*”). *Kuna* could be the *Kunavayir Kottam* where the Chera prince *Ilanko Adikal* spent his ascetic life and said to be authored *Silappadikaram*. Atiyarkkunallar, the commentator of *Silappadikaram* designates *Kunavayir Kottam* as *Trikkunavayil* [Narayanan 1972: 17]. Historians were of the opinion that Mathilakam near Kodungallur in Kerala was the ancient *Trikkunavayil* [Narayanan 1972: 17-22], which has to be agreed in the light of recently discovered medieval vatteluttu inscription from Mathilakam refers to ‘*Tirukkunavay*’ [Dhiraj 2021: 208.Fig:6]. Another Mathilakam record which commemorates the *Sallekhana* of a monk certifying the Jaina affiliation of *Trikkunavayil* [Dhiraj 2021: 276-279. Fig: 4-5]. A large number of vatteluttu inscriptions from different parts of Kerala refer to the *Kunavay* [*TAS*, Vol.V.Part.I.1924. No.13: 45; Narayanan 1972: 17-22; 2013. Index.A62, 71, B1, 23, C28: 465,469-470,475,484,495], as the model for other Jaina temples of Kerala [Dhiraj 2021: 201,208]. The Medieval Sanskrit and *Manipravala* works viz., *Kokasandesha*, *Sukasandesha*, *Bhramarasandesha*, and *Unniyachi Charita* called *Trikkunavayil* as *Kunavay*, *Kunaka*, or *Gunaka* [Narayanan 1972: 20-21]. *Kokasandesha* [2007. Slokas.45-48: 58-60] describes *Kunaka* situated inside the ‘*Mathilakam*’ (place surrounded by fort/wall; in Tamil: *Kottam*) It is not unreasonable to suppose that *Ilanko* of *Kuna* was the *Ilanko Adikal* of *Kunavayir Kottam*. A junior Chera prince named *Ilanko Adikal* was probably lived about 2nd Century CE, and the place *Kuna* (*Kunaka*, *Gunaka*, *Kunavay*, *Kunavayil*, *Kunavayir*, *Trikkunavay*, *Trikkunavayil*) and her Jaina temple might have existed even before. If it is true, the author of *Silappadikaram* belongs to c.2nd Century CE; but, there are many controversies on the period and composition of *Silappadikaram* [Dhiraj 2021: 59-61]. However, *Ilanko Adikal*, the saint prince of Chera family was a historical figure. He was the younger brother of Chera king Chenguttuvan [Silappadikaram 1939.Pathgam.1-9: 77; Kanakasabhai 1979: 208; Narayanan 1972: 17]. *Silappadikaram* explains the incident which led to the conversion of the prince to become an ascetic thus:

“*In the audience hall of ancient city of Vanji, when you (Ilanko Adikal) were seated by your father’s side, you frowned upon the astrologer who predicted indications of your succeeding to the throne, so as to relieve the affliction of Chenguttuvan famous for his chariot forces and his fragrant Kongu garland. You then went away to the Kunavayir Kottam and standing before eminent saints (Patiyori) you renounced all thought of the burdens of this earth in order to secure the kingship of the vast realm afar-off and of eternal bliss, incapable of approach by even the faculty of reason*” [Silappadikaram 1939.Canto.xxx: 343-344].

If *Ilanko Adikal*, the Chera prince was a Jaina monk, then the obvious question that arises is what was the faith of his elder brother Chenguttuvan? We may identify the ancient Chera ruler of Vanji named *Elini*, who was the worshipper of Jaina *Yaksha* and *Yakshi*, as Chera Chenguttuvan.

Elini, the Yavanika

A medieval inscription belonging to one *Vidugadalagiya Perumal* alias *Vyamukta Sravanojvala* of the Chera family which also speaks about his father *Rajaraja* alias *Vagan* and their ancient forefather *Elini* alias *Yavanika* [EI, Vol.VI.900-1901: 331-332; SII, Vol.I.1890.No.75-76: 106-107; Ekambaranathan and Sivaprakasam 1987.No.338: 269-270; Dhiraj 2021: 211-212]⁵. This crucial epigraph is incised on the outer wall of the entrance which leads to the famous painted cave on the Tirumalai hill near Polur in the Tiruvannamalai district of Tamil Nadu. Availability of a large number of inscriptions and other archaeological remnants shows that Tirumalai was one of the biggest Jain establishments (*Perumpalli*) since ancient period. Even though this inscription was published in the second part of 19th Century, it is being identified for the first time as a vital source for the history of Kerala. Although this record is roughly assigned to 11th Century CE on palaeographic ground by government epigraphists [Ekambaranathan and Sivaprakasam 1987. No.338: 269-270], on the basis of some other records speak about the contemporaneity of the king *Vidugadalagiya Perumal* with the Chola king *Kulothunga III* (1178-1218 CE), it has to be assigned to 12th or 13th Century CE [EI, Vol.VI.1900-1901: 332-333]. The script consists of both Tamil and Grantha. The text has three parts, written in Tamil prose, Sanskrit verse, and Tamil verse respectively, repeating the same content [EI, Vol.VI.1900-1901: 332].

Elini, the *Yavanika* is described as the *Vanjiyar Kulapati* (The Lord of Vanji) who was a Chera ruler of Kerala (“*sera-vamsattu elini/srimat-kerala-bhubhrita-yavanika...vanji-kulapati*”) [Dhiraj 2021.L.1, 3-4, 7: 211]. Vanji was the Chera capital which was also known as Muziri, Makotha, Mahodayapuram, and Muiyirikkodu, which is located in the present day Kodungallur or peripheral areas of central Kerala [Narayanan 2013: 15-16, 48, 102, 151, 153, 158, 170]. *Rajaraja* is described as the Chera king “*who was the ornament of Yavanika’s race; the foremost on the right path, who came Elini’s race*” [EI, Vol. VI.1900-1901: 332]. *Vidugadalagiya Perumal* was the son of *Rajaraja*, who also came from the Chera family of Vanji [Dhiraj 2021: 211-218]. The two Chengama inscriptions (Tiruvannamalai district, Tamil Nadu) of *Kulothunga Chola III* also talk about *Vidugadalagiya Perumal* and his father *Rajaraja* [EI, Vol.VI.1900-1901: 333; SII, Vol.VII.1932.No.119,127: 50,53; Dhiraj 2021: 216]. *Vidugadalagiya Perumal* and *Rajaraja* have been a remote descendant of *Elini* [EI, Vol.VI.1900-1901: 331]. Chera king *Rajaraja* can be identified as the *Ravi Rama Rajadithya* alias *Adithyan Kota Ranaditya* (c.1036 - 1089 CE), who belongs to the main line of the Chera-Perumal family ruled from Mahodayapuram [Narayanan 2013: 70-71]. He must be identical with the *Irai Irayar* alias *Rajaraja* in the Thiruvannur inscription discovered from the vicinity of Kozhikode city [Narayanan 2013.Index.A62: 465]. Another two native records, one from Trichambaram near Kannur and another from Indianur near Malappuram also mention his name [Narayanan 2013.Index.A61, 63: 465]. Two Chola records from Mannarkoyil mentioned this ruler as Chera Mannar *Rajaraja Deva* [Narayanan 2013.Index.A59, 60: 464].

Vidugadalagiya Perumal was also a Chera ruler of Perumalline, because one of the Chengama inscriptions [EI, Vol.VI.1900-1901: 333; SII, Vol.VII.1932.No.127: 53] says that he was a ‘*Pirantha Perumal*’ (the born Perumal). The surname ‘Perumal’ further establishes his place in the line of Perumals of Mahodayapuram (Medieval Cheras). His name ‘*Vidugadalagiya*’ or ‘*Vidukadalakiya*’ can be interpreted as ‘the Perumal whose abode is at the Sea,’ itself appear that he was from the Vanji coast (Dravidian word: ‘veedu’ = residence; ‘kadal’ = Sea, and ‘agiya’ or ‘akkiya’ = befitted). Here it is to be remembered the title ‘*Kadal Pirakottiya*’ (one who drives back the sea) attributed to the ancient Chera king *Chenguttuvan*; a metaphorical rendition on his naval expeditions against the northern Aryans [Dhiraj.2015.p.308]. *Vidugadalagiya Perumal* may identified as the last Chera Perumal line of ruler than the already identified *Rama Kulasekhara* [Dhiraj 2018a: 487-504; 2019: 58-690]. The Ancient Athan line of Cheras and the Medieval Cheras (Perumals of Mahodayapuram) may have connections.

There are some strong reasons to believe that Elini was an ancient Chera ruler than one belongs to the group of medieval Perumals. The core content of the record says that Vidugadalagiya Perumal repaired and saved from ruin the image of a Yakshi and Yaksha along with a gong and a channel of the *Arhat* (*Engunaivirai*) on the Tirumalai Mountain which was set up by the very pious-minded ancient Kerala king of Vanji named Elini [*EI*, Vol.VI.1900-1901: 332]. Here the shrine and other establishments were in a ruined condition being built by a Chera ruler of an earlier date, and it was Vidugadalagiya Perumal who made some repairs to those structures.

At the present state of our knowledge, it is hard to find any other inscriptional reference to the Chera king with the name 'Elini' or 'Yavanika.' Poetess *Avvaiyar* dedicated some poems in *Purananuru* [2021.Poem: 96,102,158,392] to one *Pokuttu Elini*, the son of Athiyaman Neduman Anji. *Purananuru* [2021.Poem: 158] further refers to Pokuttu Elini as a ruler of the Kuthirai Mountain, probably situated in the Karur region of Tamil Nadu. The same text mentions another ruler *Athiyaman Tagadur Poruthu Veelntha Elini* who was sung by *Arisil Kilar* after the former's death on the battlefield [*Purananuru* 2021.Poem: 230]. Athiyaman Tagadur Poruthu Veelntha Elini was the ruler of Tagadur. According to our present inscription [*EI*, Vol.VI.1900-1901: 332; Ekambaranathan and Sivaprakasam 1987.No.338: 69] Elini was a Chera ruler of Kerala ruling from his capital at Vanji. Interestingly, in the Tirumalai record the title 'Athiyaman'/'Adigaman' was also attached with the King Elini of Kerala [Dhiraj 2021.L.1-2: 211]. The wars fought between ancient Irumporai line of Chera ruler of Karur and Athiyaman chief Neduman Anji proves the existence of Athiyaman chiefs of Tagadur as one of the collateral branches of Chera family [*Pathitruppathu* 2012.Pathigam:8.Poem:78: 274-275,282-283; *Purananuru* 2021. Poem: 87-95,97-101,103,104,206,208; Arokiaswami 1954: 231]. The royal property disputes might have led to internecine war which resulted in the death of Athiyaman Neduman Anji. The Elini in the Tirumalai record and the Elinis in the Tamil classics are different; and, the name 'Elini' could be used by different members of Chera family in time. The 'Athiyaman' title of Elinis in the inscription as well as literatures could be a title like 'Athana' and 'Irumporai,' which largely affixed by the ancient Chera rulers. In the light of Tirumalai inscription, the attached title 'Athiyaman'/'Adigan'/'Adhika' with Rajaraja shows the medieval continuity of this Chera tradition [Dhiraj 2021.L.1-2: 211-212]. Elini, the Kerala ruler in the Tirumalai record might be belonged to the Athana line of Cheras.

Thus we can identify three branches of ancient Chera rulers such as those of the 'Athana' line ruled from Vanji near Kodungallur, the 'Irumporai' line from Karur near Coimbatore, and the 'Athiyaman' line from Tagadur near Dharmapuri (sometimes shifted to Tagadur near Nanjangud). The earliest branch of the Cheras must be the Athana line, which was mentioned in the first seven decades of *Pathitruppathu* [2012: 32-33; Sreedhara 1998: 74-78]. Most of those kings attached to their names with the 'Athana' like Udayan Cheral Athana, Neduncheral Athana, Adu Kottu Pattu Cheral Athana, and Selvakkadunko Valiya Athana. Selvakkadunko Valiya Athana was also known as 'Athana' Chel 'Irumporai' [Mahadevan 2003: 117]. From this ruler onwards possibly the Irumporai line begins. He was the husband of the younger sister of the wife of Neduncheralathan of Athana line [Sreedhara1998: 78]. The Athiyaman line also might have emerged during this period. They fought wars against the Irumporai rulers for the territorial dominance in the Coimbatore-Selam region. The continuity of ancient Athana line was interposed by some unknown reasons. The 'Yavanika' of Elini, supposed to be a title, deserves discussion. The Chera king who installed *Yaksha* and *Yakshi* images on the Tirumalai hill possibly had a 'Yavana' touch. The word 'Yavanika' (Prakrit: 'Javanika') mainly using to get the meaning as curtain which largely used in the theatrical art, specifically in the field of drama [Berriedale 1923: 61]. Sometimes 'Yavanika' has interpreted as 'Greek cloth' [Banerjee 1920: 255]. The 'Yavanis' meaning 'Greek maidens' could be the body guards of the kings [Berriedale1923: 61]. The 'Yavana'

is commonly used to signify the natives of Greece and Ionia, but later the term is indicated all the foreign people including Mohammedans and Europeans in India [Monier 1960: 848]. The 'Yavana-desa' (Yavana Country) has largely applied to the countries like Ionia, Greece, Bactria, and more recently the Arabian countries as well. The presence of 'Yavanas' in Tamil country is referred to in the *Silappadikaram*, which connects the king Chenguttuvan with Yavanas. *Silappadikaram* praises Chenguttuvan as follows;

"Shall we sing to the glory of our king, the lord of men, who protects the earth as far as Cape Comorin, abounding in heavy large stones, with his bow, fish and tiger flags, including the fertile country of the Yavanas of the barbarous speech?" [Silappadikaram 1939.Canto.xxix: 335].

Here the country of Yavanas could be indicating their settlements. The Yavanas had owned fertile land in the Chera country and may have paid tribute to and got protected by Chera Chenguttuvan [Silappadikaram 1939.Canto.xxviii, xxix: 322,335]. They had prosperous trading colonies in Tamilakam [Silappadikaram 1939.Canto.v: 110]. The high rank Yavana swordsmen were employed in the royal army of Tamil kings [Silappadikaram 1939.Canto.xiv: 201]. V.A. Smith [1924: 462] observes:

"there is good reason to believe that considerable colonies of Roman subjects engaged in trade were settled in South India during the first two Centuries of our era, and that European soldiers, described as 'powerful Yavanas, dumb Mlechhas (barbarians), clad in complete armour,' acted as bodyguards to Tamil kings, while 'the beautiful large ships of the Yavanas' lay off Muziris (Kodungallur) to receive the cargo of pepper paid for Roman gold. It is even stated, and no doubt truly, that a temple dedicated to Augustus existed at Muziris".

The three different dynastic emblems, viz., Bow (Cheras), Fish (Pandyas), and Tiger (Cholas) together used by Chenguttuvan [Silappadikaram 1939.Canto.xxix: 335] indicates that he was the emperor lord of other two powers of *Muvendar-nadu* (Sanskrit: *Trairajya*; The Kingdom of Three Tamil Kings). Yavanika could be a title signifying the authority of King Elini alias Kadal Pirakottiya Chera Chenguttuvan; either he overpowered the Yavanas or got protected by the Yavana soldiers, or the Yavana colonies were protected by the Chera king. The installation of Yakshi and Yaksha images along with providing other sacred amenities on the Tirumalai Jaina hill by Chenguttuvan attests that he was a faithful patron devotee of Lord Jina.

Conclusion

Donation of cave shelter by Ko Athan, the younger son and heir apparent of a Chera king of Muziri at Muttupatti could be the earliest evidence, following to the Chera king Athan of Kongar Puliyankulam record, speaks of the Jaina affiliation of ancient Cheras. A Chera prince and his chief made a gift of amenity to the Jainas in the Madurai region being the significant supportive evidence to the donation of the Chera king Athan at Kongar Puliyankulam; both indicate the presence of Jaina community in Kerala even before the Common Era, and also attest the synchronised arrival and development of Jainism in Kerala and Tamil Nadu. It is remarkable that the names attached with the title 'Athan' in a number of Tamil-Brahmi records imply their Jaina affiliation on account of all the Athan records are discovered from the Jain caves and moreover these are either directly or indirectly related to Jainism. This leads us to conclude that the 'Athan' attached Chera kings have affiliation with Jainism; and the Chera Athan of Kongar Puliyankulam cave, the Ko Athans of Muttupatti, Pugalur and Edakkal caves, and Udayan Cheral Athan, Neduncheral Athan, Adu Kottu Pattu Cheral Athan, Selvakkadunko Valiya Athan of the Tamil classics are being the examples. King Athan Chel Irumporai, his son Perunkatunkon, and his

son Katunkon Ilankatunko of Pugalur caves were also the patron followers of Jainism. Observing the Jaina rite of voluntary fasting unto death by Chera Athan king further illustrating the intimate Jaina affiliation of ancient Cheras. Jainism is being linked with the Chera subordinates and their family members by the Pittan family.

Prince Ilanko Adikal was a Jaina at least after his renunciation from the throne. Elini, the Yavanika who installed Yaksha and Yakshi images on Tirumalai hill, can be identified as his brother Cheran Chenguttuvan who was a worshipper of the lotus feet of lord Jina. In the *Silappadikaram* Cheran Chenguttuvan was known for the installation of Kannaki image at his capital Vanji; which is being substantiated the practicing of Buddhist *Pattini* cult by the Cheras. Comparison of the present religious ambiance with the one existed in the ancient past says that there were not many fundamental differences among various faiths. The two mainstream belief systems of the period such as Jainism and Buddhism were followed and patronised by Chera rulers as well as their subjects. Adigaman Neduman Anji, the earliest known Adigaman line of Chera ruler was a patron of Buddhism. His Jambai record clearly says that he was the *Satiyaputto* [Mahadevan 2003.No.59: 399]. The Buddhist 'Putto' is being the Asoka Maurya's Adigaman *Satiyaputta* by the Asokan edicts [Hultzsch 1925: 2-3; Dhiraj 2021: 199]. The 'Putta' of the Chera king *Katumiputta* of Edakkal cave also might have the Buddhist connection [Mahadevan 2003.No.80: 433]. Kannaki and her husband Kovalan followed Jaina ritualistic way of bathing, clothing and eating according to *Silappadikaram* [1939.Canto.xv: 52,214-217], but they were the followers of Buddhism in *Manimekalai*. Kovalan's entire family were Buddhists but Kannaki's entire family were Ajivikas. The best intellectual friendship among Ilanko Adikal and the staunch Buddhist Sithalai Sathanar leads to the latter's composition of epic *Manimekalai*, a work of critical discourse on the Jaina spiritual philosophy. This has to be considered as the unorthodox and optimistic attitude of the great rulers and their subjects towards diverse faiths.

Notes

1. In the light of certain medieval records of c. 6-9th, Mahadevan [2003: 587] claims that it is not logical to interpret *Elamakan* as 'Ilaiyamakan' or younger son. Though the present record belongs to c.1st Century BCE, and the Chera capital Muziri is attached with the *Ko Athan*.
2. Mahadevan [2003: 586] located *Nakaperur* as the Nagamalai hill near Muttupatti. *Nakaperur* might be a village than hill range, because the place name 'Perur' generally denotes a 'big village' (*Periya+Ur*). Absence of the Dravidian word '*malai*' to indicate hill in the '*Nakaperur*' is also significant.
3. M.G.S Naryanan reads *Nagapura* as 'Nakeraporai' [1972: 75], and later 'Nakerporai' [2013.Index.B1: 474]. For further 'Nagapura' discussions, see [Dhiraj 2021: 332nt114].
4. In the reading and translation of Thazhekavu inscription by M.G.S. Narayanan [1972: 75], the "*Iyakkan*" alias *Yakshan* which read by M.R. Raghava Varier [2012.L.6-7: 36] is missing.
5. This record was reread from the new Estampage by Hultzsch himself; for two different understandings, see [SII, Vol.I.1890.No.75-76: 106-107; EI, Vol.VI.1900-1901.pp.331-332].

References

- Akananuru*. (2021). Herbert, Vaidehi (Trans). Web: <http://sangamtranslationsbyvaidehi.com/>
- Annual Report on Indian Epigraphy (ARIE). 1960-1961*. 1984 (Reprint). New Delhi: Archaeological Survey of India.
- Arokiaswami, M. (1954). "Adigaman of Tagadur". *Journal of Indian History (JIH)*. Vol. XXXII. Part. I. Pillay, K.P (Ed). Trivandrum: The University of Travancore.

- Banerjee, Gauranga Nath. (1920). *Hellenism in Ancient India* (2nd Edition). Calcutta: Published by the Author.
- Berriedale Keith, A. (1923). *The Sanskrit Drama in Its Origin, Development, Theory and Practice*. London: Oxford University Press.
- Bostock, John & Riley, H.T (Trans). (1890). *The Natural History of Pliny*. Vol. II. London: Henry G. Bohn, York Street, Covent Garden.
- Desai, P.B. (1957). *Jainism in South India and Some Jaina Epigraphs*. Sholapur: Gulabchand Hirachand Doshi, Jaina Samskriti Samrakshaka Sangha.
- Dhiraj, M.S. (2015). "Kadamba Kerala and the 'People of Kadambu Tree' in the Tamil Classics: A Discourse". *The ideological Hegemony of the Tamil Classical Literature on the Socio-Cultural and Political Life of Tamil Nadu: Through the Ages*. Thomas, (Ed). Tiruchirapalli: Jazym Publications.
- _____, (2016). "The Dynamics of a Supra-Regional Power: Hoysalas in the Medieval History of Kerala". *Heritage: Journal of Multidisciplinary Studies in Archaeology*. Vol. IV. Rajesh, S.V, et al., (Ed). Thiruvananthapuram: Department of Archaeology, University of Kerala.
- _____, (2016a). "Jaina Vestiges of Kerala: An Analytical Study". *History Today: Journal of History and Historical Archeology*. No.17. Tewari, D.P (Ed). New Delhi: The History and Culture Society.
- _____, (2017). "The Nilambur Plates of Ravivarma Kadamba: Earliest Evidence of Brahmin Settlements in Kerala". *Kailashnath Hetu: Essays in Prehistory and Historical Archaeology* (Festschrift to Shri. K. N. Dikshit). Vol. II. Kumar, Ajit, et al., (Ed). Delhi: New Bharatiya Book Corporation.
- _____, (2018). *Jainism in Kerala: A Historical Perspective (with special reference to Wayanad region)* (Unpublished Doctoral Thesis). Pondicherry: Pondicherry University.
- _____, (2018a). "Kollam Pillar Inscription of Rama Kulasekhara: The Last Chera Record of a Jain Perumal of Makothai." *Heritage: Journal of Multidisciplinary Studies in Archaeology*. Vol.6. Rajesh, S. V. et al., (Ed). Thiruvananthapuram: Department of Archaeology, University of Kerala.
- _____, (2021). *History of Jainism in Kerala*: Sharada Publishing House: Delhi.
- Dorai Rangaswamy, M.A. (1968). *The Surnames of the Cankam Age, Literary and Tribal*. Madras: University of Madras.
- Ekambaranathan, A & Sivaprakasam, C.K. (1987). *Jaina Inscriptions in Tamilnadu: A Topographical List*. Madras: Research Foundation for Jainology.
- Epigraphia Indica (EI), Vol.VI.1900-1901. Hultzsch, E (Ed). Calcutta: Government of India.
- Ettuthokai-Natrinai*. (2021). Herbert, Vaidehi (Trans). <http://sangamtranslationsbyvaidehi.com/>
- Hultzsch, E (Ed). 1925 (New Edition). *Corpus Inscriptionum Indicarum (CII)*. Vol. I. *Inscriptions of Asoka*. Oxford: Clarendon Press.
- Indian Archaeology (IAR) 1973-74-A Review*. 1979. Thapar, B.K. New Delhi: Archaeological Survey of India.
- Kanakasabhai, V. (1979). (Reprint). *The Tamil Eighteen Hundred Years Ago*. New Delhi: Asian Educational Services.
- KCHR Annual Report (KCHRAR) 2010-2011*. Thiruvananthapuram: Kerala Council for Historical Research.
- Kokasandesam*. (2007). Achuthanunni, Chathanath & Raghava Varier, M.R (Ed). Sukapuram: Vallathol Vidyapeedam.
- Mahadevan, Irvatham. (2003). *Early Tamil Epigraphy: From the Earliest Times to the Sixth Century AD*. Chennai: Cre-A and Harvard University: The Department of Sanskrit and Indian Studies.
- McCrimdell, J.W. (1885). (Reprint). *Ancient India as Described by Ptolemy*. London: Trubner & Co.

- Monier-Williams, Monier. (1960). (Rev). *A Sanskrit-English Dictionary*. Oxford: University Press.
- Narayanan, M.G.S, (1972). *Cultural Symbiosis in Kerala*. Thiruvananthapuram: Kerala Historical Society.
- _____, (2013). (Reprint). *Perumals of Kerala: Brahmin Oligarchy and Ritual Monarchy*. Trissur: Cosmo Books.
- Pathitruppathu*. (2012). Herbert, Vaidehi (Trans). Chennai: Kondari Publishers.
- Purananuru*. (2021). Herbert, Vaidehi (Trans). <http://sangamtranslationsbyvaidehi.com/>
- Raghava Varier, M.R. (2012). *Jainamatham Keralathil* (Jainism in Kerala). Kottayam: Sahithya Pravarthaka Co-operative society-National Books.
- RHYS Davids, T.W & Stede, William. (1952). (Reprint). *The Pali Text Society's Pali-English Dictionary*. Part.I (P-Ph). London: The Pali Text Society.
- Schoff, Wilfred. H (Trans). (1912). *The Periplus of the Eritrean Sea*. New York: Longmans, Green, and Co.
- Silappadikaram*. (1939). Ramachandra Dikshitar, V.R (Trans). London: Oxford University Press.
- South Indian Inscriptions (SII)*, Vol. I. (1890). Hultzsch, E (Ed). Madras: Government Press.
- _____, Vol.III.Part.III-IV. (1987). (Reprint). New Delhi: Archaeological Survey of India.
- _____, Vol.VII. (1932). Subrahmanya Aiyar, K.V (Ed). Madras: Government Press.
- _____, Vol.XIX. (1967). Srinivasa Rao, G. V (Ed). Delhi: The Manager of Publication.
- Smith, V. A. (1924). (4th Edition). *The Early History of India from 600 B.C to the Muhammadan Conquest: Including the Invasion of Alexander the Great*. Oxford: At the Clarendon Press.
- Sreedhara Menon, A. (1998). (Reprint). *A Survey of Kerala History*. Madras: S. Visvanathan (Printers & Publishers) Pvt. Ltd.
- Travancore Archaeological Series (TAS)*. Vol.V.Part.I.1924. Ramanatha Ayyar (Ed). Trivandrum: Government Press.
- Walshe, Maurice. (1995). (Reprint). *The Long Discourses of the Buddha: A Translation of the Digha Nikaya*. Boston: Wisdom Publications.
- Williams, Monier. (1899). *A Sanskrit-English Dictionary*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.