Honour Matters: Social Group-Based Narratives as Sources for the Study of Situated Honour Practices and their Sets of Emotions in Early Modern Tamil-Speaking South India

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Abstract: What do we know about honour-based emotional practices of the various social groups in early modern Tamil-speaking south India? And which emotions were involved in honour practice? This case study applies a well-known approach in emotion history studies to this new terrain, a terrain that is largely uncharted and deserves to be explored. By examining two honour-sensitive social groups and their respective key narratives—on one hand, a lower status group, on the other, an elite and privileged group—it will be shown what kinds of practices were highlighted or evoked in conflict settings, and how honour-bound emotional practices came to the fore. Against the backdrop of a pre-modern Tamil culture, where practices were shaped by traditional normative social attributions and demarcated group boundaries, this study offers ample details of the fluid boundaries in the new literary genres of the time, where gender-specific emotions compete strongly with the clear boundaries for emotions in normative orders. The study will further show that an investigation of pre-modern Tamil emotion treatises, lexicons/glossaries (*nikaṇṭu*), moral canons, and proverbs counter the Western tendency of considering honour an emotion. Examining community-specific situated honour practices and the sets of emotions surrounding them not only gives us insight into the self-understanding, emotional life and needs of these groups. It also provides insight into questions pertaining to new political facts, internal literary dynamics, and social expectations. These insights are also relevant to questions about honour concepts and practices in India today.

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INTRODUCTION

Studies on Emotions

Since the canonical studies by Peter and Carol Stearns (emotional styles, 1988),[2] Barbara Rosenwein (emotional communities, 2006), William Reddy (emotional regime/refuge, 2001) and Monique Scheer (emotions as a kind of practice/embodied emotions, 2012) it has been standard in scholarship on emotion that emotion has a history.[3] Few humanities scholars would place themselves at the 'universal and timeless' end of the spectrum in their understanding of emotions. Most would see emotions as bio-cultural and socially constructed, rather than merely hard-wired or visceral.[4]

The body of scholarly work on emotion histories mentioned above has provided a rich vocabulary as well as a set of analytical categories. Among these, emotives, emotional communities, regimes, refuges, and emotions-as-practice are now indispensable concepts.[5] Particularly Rosenwein's 'emotional communities' (2002, 2006 & 2010a & b) and Scheer's 'emotions as a kind of practice' (2012) can be easily transferred beyond geographical boundaries.

Scholars of emotion histories have moved into terrain traditionally occupied by other disciplines, such as literature, art, philosophy, anthropology,

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[2] Also Gammerl (2012).

[3] On the English word 'emotion' and its history, see in particular Dixon (2004), and Frevert et al. (2014). An overview of the international state of research on the history of emotions is found in Boddice (2018). — On pre-modern Tamil thinkers' interest in emotion across time, and pre-modern shifts in Tamil emotion knowledge, see Schuler (2022: Chapter 1).

[4] For a recent inclusion of aspects of neuroscience in studies on emotions, see Boddice & Smith (2020). About cross-cultural research that has been done on affect, see Fontaine, Scherer & Soriano (2013). — For the neurobiological dimension of emotions, see e.g., Roth (2021: 54f.): the lower limbic level, the hypothalamus, controls life-sustaining functions, such as fleeing when threatened or reacting in anger if there is an obstacle.

[5] A promising concept is also 'emotional arenas' (e.g., courts of law, homes, parliaments, opera houses, etc.) coined by Seymour (2020). There was also an attempt by Gerd Althoff to introduce 'staging' (*Inszenierung*) of emotion as a new approach; see Althoff (2010). In the last twenty years in Europe, there have also been revisions in historical research on emotions. There were critical responses (Rosenwein 2006: 6 & Rosenwein 2012a: 9) to the research approach of Huizinga (1997 [1921]) and Elias (2010 [1939]).

sociology, and law. But more recently, they also have taken interest in the affective sciences.[6]

As a number of emotion historians have made clear, despite recognition from at least the time of Lucien Febvre that emotions profoundly shape history, the importance of emotions in the past has not always been acknowledged.[7] Indeed, what can be said about the emotions that were experienced by people who are long dead? To answer this question, the historians of emotions have engaged in particular in debates about sources. According to the Routledge guide on *Sources for the history of emotions* (Barclay et al. 2021), there is a wide range of available and useable sources, including rituals, relics, religious rhetoric, prescriptive literature, medicine, science and psychology, legal records, visual and material sources, and fiction.[8]

Emotions have been extensively studied in recent decades across many academic fields: by sociologists (Hochschild 2003 [1983]; Illouz 2018), anthropologists (Lutz 1988; Röttger-Rössler 1989, 2004 & 2009; Rosaldo 1980), psychologists (Averill 1982; Ekman 1999; Strongman 2003), philosophers (Nussbaum 2001), historians (Althoff 2010; Chaniotis 2012; Frevert 2011, 2014 & 2015; Reddy 2001; Rosenwein 1998 & more; Stearns 1988 & 1989), Sinologists (Harbsmeier 2004; Santangelo 2006a & b; Messner 2006; Eifring 2004), literary scholars (Benthien et al. 2000; Schnell 2004), and linguists (Kövecses 1998; Wierzbiecka 1999). Also, scholars of Indian Studies have undertaken research in this direction.

If looking at the publications, there are quite a few Indological works on primary emotions such as love, anger, disgust and joy.[9] But only since the

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[6] See National Centre of Competence in Research (NCCR) “Affective Sciences – Emotions in Individual Behaviour and Social Processes” (University of Geneva), one of the world’s first interdisciplinary research networks to examine emotions in a comprehensive manner; and Max-Planck-Institut für empirische Ästhetik “Ästhetische Gefühle” (Frankfurt a. M.); see also Duke et al. (2021).

[7] See Seymour (2020: 8, Introduction), who refers to Lucien Febvre (1973 [1941]).

[8] In addition, the Routledge guide offers introductions to emerging fields, including ‘comparative emotions’ and ‘intersectionality and emotions’.

[9] S. A. Srinivasan (1987): the Tamil emotion word *uṇar, uṇarcci*; Trawick (1990a & b): family love; Vamadeva (1995): *vaṉṉaṉpu*, violent love; Monius (2004): love, violence, disgust; Orsini (2006): love; Ali (1996): pleasure; Eichinger Ferro-Luzzi (2003–2004): expression of emotion in the 20th century; Gnoli (1968), Colas (2004), Cuneo (2009), Pollock (2012): the concept of *rasa*, emotion as aesthetic experience in poetics and dramaturgy; Hara (2001, 2006): anger, Sanskrit *manyu*, *krodha*; shame, Skt. *vrīḍā*, *lajjā*, *hrī*; Torella (2009): *passioni-emozioni*; Oranskaia (2007): lexical representation of Hindi ‘fear’; the research group “History of Emotions in

research centre "History of Emotions" was established at the Max Planck Institute for Human Development (MPIB), Berlin, has work also been done on the history of emotions in India.[10] Encouragingly, in 2021 two collected volumes on emotions in South Asia appeared: *The Bloomsbury research handbook of emotions in classical Indian philosophy*, edited by Maria Heim et al., and the special issue "Studying emotions in South Asia", in *South Asian History and Culture*, edited by Margrit Pernau. These were preceded in 2017 by the collected volume *Historicizing emotions: Practices and objects in India, China, and Japan*, edited by Barbara Schuler.

Studies on Honour

One aspect that has received little attention in Indian Studies until now is the history of emotions associated with honour, as well as honour concepts and practices. Indeed, the vast majority of publications on India offer very little about how honour and the emotions linked to it has been described, represented or culturally formulated in texts of different periods or social groups. Nor has it been addressed what emotions have been related to certain categories of honour (gender-specific honour, group honour, honour of elites, family honour). Thus, there is still a lot of open terrain for research in Indian Studies.

Also on the semantic meaning of honour far less research has been done in Indian contexts than in European ones.[11] Indeed apart from Pamela Price's research on honour of the Maṟavar in the seventeenth to nineteenth centuries (1996: 19–32) and on postcolonial and contemporary Karnataka and

India" at MPIB Berlin: male anger, female malice, decency, disgust; Menon & Shweder (1994): the cultural psychology of 'shame' Oriya *lāja*, *lajjā*, *lājyā* (also Shweder 2003); Rozin (2003): the psychology of 'shame', 'happiness'; Lynch (1990): emotion as a social construction; Kapferer (1979), Michaels & Wulf (2011), Schuler (2012): emotions in rituals.

[10] See the publications of Margrit Pernau's research group, which deal primarily with Muslim north India. An exception is the volume by Rajamani, Pernau & Schofield (2018).

[11] For research that has been done in Western contexts and domains, see Peristiany 1966, Frevert 1992 & 2011, Miller 1993, Stewart 1994, Schreiner & Schwerhoff 1995, Palmer & Brown 1998, Bowman 2006, Rodriguez Mosquera et al. 2008, Speitkamp 2010, Christiansen & Thaler 2012, Oprisko 2012. The state of international research from the 1960s to the end of the 1990s on honour in the Western sense was presented by Martin Dinges (1989). Longer gender-specific studies on honour in Europe can be found in Frevert 1992 and Burghartz 1995; more recent research on honour in Asia (e.g., Indonesia) can be found in Röttger-Rössler 1989 & 2009.

Andhra Pradesh (2013: 210–238 & 260–290), no systematic historical research can be found that focuses on the south Indian Tamil context, despite the fact that honour is a central phenomenon in that culture and has been textually transmitted in many ways. As a result, in the current research literature there is a clear lack of studies on historical honour semantics, concepts,[12] communities and practices in various eras, not to mention a systematic overview (also lexicographic), which is completely missing.

Honour is a multi-layered concept; it is more complex and intricate than is usually thought. There is considerable variance among scholars about whether honour is an emotion. Anthropologist Frank Stewart (1994: 33) argues against equating honour with 'sentiment', whereas sociologist Pierre Bourdieu (1966: 191) speaks of 'sentiment of honour', and anthropologist Julian Pitt-Rivers (1966) describes 'sentiment' as being an aspect of honour. In turn, emotion historian Bettina Hitzer (2011: 30) refers to honour and trust as 'more complex emotion concepts'. Ute Frevert (2015), who does work on the history of emotions, and ethnologist Birgitt Röttger-Rössler (2004 & 2009) consider honour (like shame) to be a 'social emotion'.

Several scholars (Rodriguez Mosquera et al. 2008; Palmer & Brown 1998; Schreiner & Schwerhoff 1995) have shown that honour is linked to various combinations of emotions (indignation, anger, revenge, shame, pride, envy). It therefore makes little sense to view honour isolated from emotions. The present study on honour is guided by this thought.

While honour seems to have largely lost its significance in today's Western cultures (Frevert 1992, 2011; Stewart 1994: 9), in pre-modern times honour was connected to a multifaceted and sophisticated system of social communication and interaction (Schreiner & Schwerhoff 1995: 9). In-depth research on honour as a socio-cultural phenomenon has shaped the understanding of honour decisively in the relevant literature. Above all, honour is no longer considered a moral concept. The idea that honour can be defined without any contradictions has also been abandoned (Schreiner & Schwerhoff 1995: 9).

Cultural and social psychological studies as well as anthropological research describe societies as India (also Pakistan, UAE, Turkey, Russia, Poland,

[12] As has been explained by Andy Blunden (2012: 4), we can speak of a 'concept' if you 'know what it is', 'what it's for', 'what it's called', or 'who it belongs to and where it came from'.

Spain, and others) as being highly oriented towards honour (Maitner et al. 2022: 264–266; Cross et al. 2014; Leung & Cohen 2011).[13] Academic literature distinguishes honour cultures from dignity cultures (Germany, United Kingdom, United States, and others) and face cultures (China, Japan, Indonesia, and others). There has been a considerable amount of research investigating honour-related behaviour cross-culturally, but differences between social groups within a single South Asian culture, for instance, have rarely been addressed.

The present study examines the topic of honour and its accompanying emotions through a praxeological lens (mainly based on the theoretical model of Monique Scheer (2012: 209–217).[14] Examining practices allows us to compare sources from different historical groups and contexts. It sees honour and emotions as being something people 'do' in a concrete social context and shaped by social preconditions and knowledge from past experience. In this approach, language, social hierarchies, honour appraisal, goal relevance, emotion rules, and gender are all of importance. Under the assumption that emotions are a central component of honour experiences, it seems of particular interest to examine the components of emotions (that is, the evaluation of the event communicated in bodily reactions such as tears, or expressions, verbalised, gestural, postural), and to identify aspects of coping or actions that are involved.[15] This includes a focus on the emotional communities (as coined by Barbara Rosenwein, groups of people who adhere to the same norms of emotional expression and values, or who devalue the same or related emotions), and the honour styles practiced by such emotional groups.

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[13] See Maitner et al. (2022) for further references; for Turkey as an honour culture, see Cross et al. (2014).

[14] Scheer describes emotional practice in terms of four basic categories.

[15] On the five components of the emotion process (appraisal, bodily reaction, action tendency, expression, feeling), see Fontaine, Scherer & Soriano (2013). See also Scheer (2012: 214). On a similar component process in a Tamil theory of emotions, see the references to medieval Tamil thinkers below ('Tamil key terms for emotion the Tamil way', note 49).

APPROACHES AND SOURCES FOR THIS STUDY

Social Groups as Emotional Communities

The Maṟavas of pre-modern times, traditionally seen as both warriors and thieves, are one of two honour-sensitive groups I will examine here.[16] The other is the Vēḷāḷas, an elite agriculturalist group.[17] Maṟava and Vēḷāḷa are both caste names.[18] Traditionally, a caste's social and economic functions were clearly defined and governed by sets of rules. This also holds true for emotional patterns, as is evidenced by the seventeenth-century Tamil

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[16] Quite a few scholars have dealt with the history of the Maṟavas/Kaḷḷars social group. See Sathyanatha Aiyar (1924), Vriddhagirisan (1942), Sathianathaier (1956), Kadhirvel (1977), Blackburn (1978), Shulman (1980), Dumont (1986), Dirks (1993), Shulman & Subrahmanyam (1993), Rao, Shulman & Subrahmanyam (1998: 264–304, "The South: Maṟavar, Kaḷḷar, and Maraikkāyar"), Bes (2001), Pandian (2009). For *maṟavaṉ*, see *Tamil Lexicon* (TL), *s.v.*; for *maṟam*: 'valour', 'bravery' (*vīram*); 'strength' (*vali*); 'cruelty', 'harshness' (*koṭumai*), 'fearless-ness' (*taṟukaṇmai*), 'anger', 'wrath' (*ciṉam*), see *Varalāṟṟu muṟait tamiḻ ilakkiyap pērakarāti/Glossary of historical Tamil literature (up to 1800 AD)* (*VMTIP*), vol. 5 (2002: 1931 *s.v.*). For the Maṟava self-understanding and self-ascription as hunters, thieves, and military chiefs, see the unpublished chronicle *Ūttumalai pāḷaiyappaṭṭu vamcāvaḷi*, Manuscript D 3583 GOML. This chronicle of the Ūttumalai Maṟavas (one of the eleven Maṟava sub-groups) will be discussed in a separate article (in preparation). For the paradoxical joint role of half watchman, half cattle rustler and bandit, see the oral-tradition ballads *Palavēcaṉ cērvaikkārar katai* and *Cantaṉattēvaṉ katai*. In particular, Palavēcaṉ's story points to the Maṟavas' significant histor-ical importance in village policing systems (*kāval*). This hybridity of thief–watchman was not a contradiction, nor was the culture-specific group of institutionalised thieves and robbers, which as official *jāti* (caste: Maṟava; Kaḷḷar) belonged to the social order. See also Shulman (1980). On the pre-modern practice of seasonal cattle raiding, and 'publicly tolerated […] small-scale violence, such as plundering or thieving', see Gommans (1999: 303, 304).

[17] The two forms Vēḷāḷa and Veḷḷāḷa are in usage. However, the former is considered to be the older of the two. For the history of the landowning peasant elite community of the Vēḷāḷas, see Ludden (1989: particularly 67, 85, 87 & 91–94). — In a collection of didactic verses dating to c. 650–700 CE (*Tirikaṭukam*, 12, 42), the Vēḷāḷa is portrayed as good person/*Gutmensch* (*vēḷāḷa ṉeṉpāṉ viruntirukka vuṇṇātāṉ*) and land cultivator (*vēḷāṇ kuṭikku*) who is helpful, cour-teous and hospitable (*vēḷāṇmai*) (*Tivākaram nikaṇṭu*, *s.v.*, in *Tamiḻ nikaṇṭukaḷ*). For the dating, see Zvelebil (1995: 666).

[18] The 'Portuguese-derived' term 'caste' (Tamil *kulam*, Sanskrit *jāti*) is defined by Gijs Kruijtzer (2009: 106 & 140) as 'any named status group of which membership was generally perceived to be based on descent'. — Note that there exist native Tamil classifications that are themselves historically conditioned, namely *maṟakkuṭi* and *aṟakkuṭi*, the martial group versus the virtuous group. While the term *maṟakkuṭi* according to the *VMTIP*, vol. 5 (2002: 1930 *s.v.*), is attested in the literary composition of the *Cilappatikāram* 12.6 (first millennium CE) and in the glossary is equated with *vīrar kulam*, the term *aṟakkuṭi* has not entered the glossary. However, both terms, *maṟakkuṭi* and *aṟakkuṭi*, found entry into the twentieth-century *TL s.v.* For a more precise dating of the *Cilappatikāram*, see the recent monograph of Shulman (2016: 334, note 103).

grammar *Ilakkaṇa Viḷakkam* (and its auto-commentary) by Vaittiyanāta Tēcikar. It lists the Tamil emotion word *taṉmai*, meaning the nature of a caste, as one of the thirty-two auxiliary emotions (*meyppāṭu*s).[19]

This Tamil idea that social groups adhere to specific norms of emotional expressions and behaviour is easily compatible with Rosenwein's notion of 'emotional communities', where the groups can be of different types and sizes (e.g., military, professional classes, members of specific elites, kings, intellectuals, religious bodies, families, people of the same sex, peers). By examining emotional communities, it is possible to extract honour-bound emotion practices and concepts based on group-specific styles and affective patterns.[20] How a community evaluates emotions and thus prioritises or negates them is an interesting question connected to this process.[21]

Norm-Governance in Practices, Honour Functions, and Oral Culture

Considering honour-related practice to be situated practice—that is, situated in a particular time, space, body, and community—I shall argue that honour in the given context is used for various ends and in different emotional styles. The Sanskritist Sheldon Pollock has noted that by the period under discussion, and in traditional India in general, virtually all aspects of human

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[19] For *taṉmai*, see *Ilakkaṇa viḷakkam*, *Akattiṇaiyiyal*, ed. Tāmōtarampiḷḷai, 526–527, verse 579; see also Schuler (2022: 85, note 223). The *Ilakkaṇa Viḷakkam* auto-commentary (by Vaittiyanāta Tēcikar as well, 17th c.) reproduces the same set of topics in play from the period of the early thirteenth-century emotion theory commentator Pērāciriyar. For Pērāciriyar's discussion of emotions (*meyppāṭu*s) not usually found in Western lists of emotion words, see Schuler (2022: 79): Among the thirty-two auxiliary emotions (*meyppāṭu*s) is also the term *taṉmai*, which is explained by Pērāciriyar as 'things specific to certain castes', which he portrays in small scenes. '*Taṇmai* means the nature of a caste', e.g., 'a king walks with an erect/straight neck (*eṭutta kaḻuttu*) and a battle-scarred chest (*aṭutta mārpu*)' (*TP*Pēr 260, p. 41). Vaittiyanāta Tēcikar, whose work is also called 'little *Tolkāppiyam*' (*kuṭṭit tolkāppiyam*, p. 2), does not add his own explications or readings to his auto-commentary, a commentary based one-to-one on Pērāciriyar's commentary. On the traditionalist Pērāciriyar and his dislike of innovations, see Schuler (2022: 26).

[20] When using the word 'emotion concept', I refer to a script that is the result of repeated experiences in terms of stimuli, evaluations, physical reactions, emotional consequences, and the regulation of emotion and action.

[21] Cf. Briggs (1970) on how anger is little valued by the Utku Eskimos; and Foolen (2008: 377), on anger as a prominent emotion in Tahiti.

practices had been treated systematically in treatises,[22] whether thievery or emotions.[23] This makes it obligatory to take into account relevant emotion treatises of the period as well. Particularly if we assume that theorising does not exist in a vacuum, but rather is a purposive practice in and of itself, one that shapes and is shaped.

While a highly normative control of cultural practices was the rule, the ordering of knowledge, defined as a means of communication, was largely oral. In oral cultures, as has been postulated by Barend ter Haar, people are group-oriented and live based on reputation.[24] This, I argue, is also what shaped models of honour and their accompanying emotional styles in pre-modern south India. In the following I shall offer evidence for these views.

The Time Period

In the present study, I will focus on the sixteenth to eighteenth century. Why do I choose this time period? Early modern[25] south India witnessed huge changes, both economically and politically.[26] There were transformations in

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[22] For a Sanskrit culture-related discussion of the pre-modern domination of theory (*śāstra*) over practical activity as part of an Indian 'centrality of rule-governance in human behaviour', see Pollock (1985: 500).

[23] Regarding the 'science of thievery' (*steya-śāstra*), see Das (2001), Strauch (2001), and George (1966).

[24] The Sinologist Barend ter Haar, who has done many years of research on the history of orality and textuality, argues that oral cultures are collective and cannot exist without a group. They require peer pressure. Further, he argues that orality is performance and that in orality, a person exists through reputation that, again, is based on performance (inaugural lecture at the University of Hamburg, Germany, October 2018).

[25] The current common consensus is to consider India's early modern era to have begun in the early sixteenth century; see Kulke (2005: 104).

[26] Prior to the momentous political and economic shifts of early modern period, the power structure was the following: during the late Cōḷa dynasty of the twelfth to fourteenth centuries, the powerful agricultural landowner Vēḷāḷas called on Maṟava warriors for military services and gave these retainers land grants (*amaram*; *TL s.v.*) for their service. Again, in the twelfth century a new urban social stratification existed, with three categories: 1. Brahmins, 2. Vēḷāḷas; (1. + 2. in control of land), and 3. Right and Left-Hand castes, the latter a division 'to determine the social and caste status of the artisans and craftsmen [e.g., weavers] apart from new ethnic and economic groups' (Champakalakshmi 1996: 321). (On the control of land, see Veluthat 2011: 130). Two powerful organisations also existed: (1) the Five Hundred (*ai-nuṟṟuvar*) merchant association, which was an inter-regional/overseas trade organisation, dominant in 1201–1350 during the late Cōḻa period (on the dating, see Karashima, Subbarayalu & Shanmugam 2011: 152), whose members represented several castes and religions and also included soldiers; and (2) the Cittiramēḻi Periya Nāṭu, an agricultural and elite

knowledge about markets, trading conditions, and political etiquette (Subrahmanyam 1993: 276).[27] The powerful south Indian imperial state fell,[28] and various local power holders and political adventurers emerged.[29] The political idiom was the celebration of martial valour. The Europeans were on the scene;[30] and a Deccani influence in south India became visible.[31]

Precisely during this period, between 1600 and 1800, a considerable number of historiographical traditions in various genres emerged, including ballads, dramas, and chronicles. The new genres (e.g., *katai* or ballad/narrative poetic composition) enabled rising marginal social groups (e.g., Maṟavas and Kaḷḷars) to become visible and make a mark in history. One of many significant contributions of the scholar trio Rao-Shulman-Subrahmanyam was to demonstrate that these emerging literary genres presented history in various historiographical modes that interweave fact and fiction.[32] This makes it clear that history in India was not written in a genre resembling that found in the European tradition.

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organisation with its emblem the 'plough' (*mēḻi*) (late 12th–14th c.). Both organisations exercised joint authority from the thirteenth to early fourteenth century (Champalaksmi 1996: 319, 320 & 322).

[27] Interestingly, by 1700 India's share of world trade was almost twenty-five percent, the subcontinent roughly on par with Europe. (After English colonialism, in 1950 this percentage had fallen to four percent, as the economist Angus Maddison has calculated.) See Maddison (2006).

[28] Vijayanagara 1336/46–1565; at its height 1509–1529.

[29] See the Nāyakas of Telugu origin. For a genealogical chart, see Bes (2018a: 214). See also Bes (2018b); and Rao, Shulman & Subrahmanyam (1998).

[30] In this period, we witness an increase of monetisation and the emergence of individual traders (Champakalakshmi 1996: 325). The economy of the Indian Ocean around 1700 was linked to economies in Europe, and the dissemination of firearms is attested (Subrahmanyam 1993: 276).

[31] Nagaswamy (1987: 210) states that the Deccani influence was received through Telugu artists, not directly. See also Figs. 2 and 3 below. On the Deccan Muslim-ruled Sultanates, see Fischel (2016). The Deccan Sultanates comprised mainly Aḥmadnagar, Bījāpūr, Golkonda. As Fischel states, '[u]nder […] growing pressures, Bījāpūr and Golkonda collapsed and their territories were annexed by the Mughals in 1686–87'; Aḥmadnagar lost its political significance following the Mughal conquest of 1600 (Fischel 2017; also Alam & Subrahmanyam 2012: 171 & 203). See also Fischel (2020).

[32] As they argue, the presence of the fictive does not discredit the historical value of such texts; it is possible for readers to distinguish between the factual and the non-factual based on internal textual clues ('texture'). On this, see the discussion referring to Rao, Shulman & Subrahmanyam (2001): Mantena (2007); and Rao, Shulman & Subrahmanyam (2007). Cf. also post-narrativism representative Munslow (2007: 116): 'It is the function of the reader to determine […] why some views of the past are plausible, satisfactory or convincing and others are not'; and a critique of this approach, Kuukkanen (2015: 152).

The Sources

In this case study, I will focus on two pre-modern Tamil texts, one fictional, the other factual (first half of the 17th c.), in the two performance-oriented genres of *katai* and *ammāṉai*. In both cases, the texts are long folk-poetic narratives.

Why have these sources in particular been chosen? Most obviously, because honour plays a special role in them. Despite their surface differences in subject matter, there is a deep affinity between the texts, an affinity resting on their shared focus on the complex circumstance of honour. Both texts can be seen as key narratives to the self-understanding of the respective honour group and its habitus. Moreover, they have been chosen because both sources show characteristics of intertextuality, in one case with higher literary registers, in the other with testimony in the form of letters. The literary and social worlds of south India of the period in question were porous. As has been well established, high literary forms not only shaped popular forms, they were also shaped by popular forms (e.g., Hardy 1992; Schuler 2009). Thirdly, since both texts are vernacular-poetic performative works (sharing presentation and literary conventions such as formulas and repetitions) and since both play in conflict settings, they can easily be compared.

Concentrating on these two genres (*katai, ammāṉai*) for examining the sixteenth to eighteenth centuries makes sense, because their body of source material from this period is by far the best. The special value of such 'folk narratives' lies in the worldview they describe. The ballads are full of colloquial expressions and other indications of a local oral environment. The *ammāṉai* text under discussion has also proven to be a historiographic narrative. For neither text, however, do we know the author, or the exact year and context of composition.

Fiction versus Historiography

In this study I follow the claim that historiography is no less a form of fiction, as has been observed by Hayden White (1986: 146).[33] In his view, the

[33] '[...] die Geschichtsschreibung nicht weniger eine Form von Fiktion ist' (146). White has examined the extent to which the discourse of the historiographer and that of the author of fictional literature overlap, have similarities, or correspond ('inwieweit der Diskurs des Historikers

historiographer and the author of fiction have the same goal: to give a linguistic account of reality ('sprachliches Abbild von der "Wirklichkeit" geben') (145). Both use figurative procedures. The image of reality that the author of fiction constructs is, according to White, no less real ('nicht weniger "real"') than that described by the historiographer (146).[34] The juxtaposition in the present study of two genre-related texts, one fictional, the other historiographic, is based on this view.

Difference of Emotions in Fictional versus Real-Life Contexts?

Many authors now reject the idea that there is a paradox of fiction, that is, a difference between the emotional reactions to fiction and real-life emotions. The nutshell of the debate is the question of why we respond emotionally to fiction and feel moved by characters we know do not exist. Ingrid Vendrell Ferran is among the majority of authors in the contemporary Western debate who accept that emotion does not always require belief, let alone belief in the existence of the object towards which it is directed. In her view, emotional responses to fiction are as real as emotions towards reality. One does not feel the same as what a depicted character is supposedly feeling; one rather experiences an emotion of the same type (Vendrell Ferran 2018: 220).[35] Today's students of literature looking for parallels to the so-called paradox of fiction debate in Tamil emotion theories will find it interesting that a collapse of the categorical boundaries between artistic representation of emotions and real-life emotions is encountered in texts by Iḷampūraṇar, a late thirteenth-century emotion theory commentator.[36] The theoretical view presented there is also that of the present study.

und der des Autors fiktionaler Literatur sich überschneiden, Ähnlichkeiten aufweisen oder einander entsprechen'; 145).

[34] See also Latour (2018, Chapter 9), who argues that characters in fiction are beings that are authorised; they are not mere products of the imagination.

[35] On the current Western state of research on the (pseudo) 'paradox of fiction' debate, see Vendrell Ferran (2018).

[36] For the collapse between the Tamil technical terms *cuvai* (Sanskrit: *rasa*) and *meyppāṭu* (Sanskrit: *bhāva*), see Chapter 2, *Meyppāṭu* source readings, *s.v.* Iḷampūraṇar, point e, in Schuler (2022).

Methodological Issues and Limitations

Although in theory there is little that might seriously challenge the analytical tools of the 'honour-emotion-as-practice' approach, there are a few points that should be kept in mind.

First and foremost, any study on honour and emotion, especially those involving pre-modern non-Western texts, is confronted by the problem of Eurocentrism and the inappropriate use of modern terms and concepts. There is ample evidence that it is incorrect to assume that other cultures define, describe, practice, and evaluate honour and emotion in the same way contemporary Western cultures do (cf. Harbsmeier on China; Röttger-Rössler on Makassar; Lutz on Ifaluk; Rosaldo on Ilongot).[37] The best means for avoiding this pitfall in the present study is to employ a methodological strategy in which we are on guard for differences in semantics and connotations between the English term of 'emotion' and the Tamil term(s) for emotion we have identified. This also includes keeping in mind the difficulty and lack of consensus in defining emotion in Western contexts (see note 46 below). Moreover, it is right to call into question the overall category of honour, since it is so easy to take for granted that pre-modern Western practices of honour (e.g., duels between aristocrats, or honour killing in the Turkish culture) were also practised in Tamil-speaking social groups. What is more, even if we agree on a Tamil term for honour, it does not follow that it meant exactly the same thing in different Tamil social groups, let alone in Tamil-speaking culture as a whole. In the following I shall attempt to tackle these issues, on the one hand, through conceptual-historical enquiries into Tamil treatises, lexicons, and other compendia, and on the other, by examining the narrative sources through a praxeological lens, in order to understand how different early-modern social groups conceived honour and its set of emotions, and played it out in different contexts and situations. It can be anticipated that this will enable an understanding of the multidimensionality of honour. In this regard, a role is also played by autochthonous or emic concepts (including traditional

[37] On the problem of merely hypothetical conceptual-semantic congruence, see the example of the ancient Indian word *ṛtú* and the cultural misunderstanding of the term in Slaje (1998). There are different contending approaches; also Hacker (1978: 18–32). Regarding methodology, see also the introduction in Barschel (2016: 3–24).

normative social attributions, self-ascription, and ascription by others) that govern behaviour.

Secondly, we have no evidence in principle that the descriptions of emotions from the pre-modern period are authentic. They may also have been staged (cf. Althoff 2010).[38] However, since we are not investigating into what honour 'felt' like, but rather how honour and its set of emotions were practised, this does not necessarily limit our interpretative and explanatory means. On the other hand, we should be aware of the polyvalence of physical expressions and the problem of reliability (for example, there can be various reasons for blushing, including embarrassment, envy, anger, humiliation, and shame; cf. Miller 1993: 103). More recently, the affective sciences are increasing our knowledge on this topic.[39]

To conclude this discussion of the approaches and sources of the present study, it is worth noting that a shift in attention requires new theories and methodological approaches. Indological studies not only contribute to theories in other disciplines, they also greatly benefit from them, as has been, in my view, clearly shown by the Indologist and Religious Studies scholar Axel Michaels.[40] In 2004, he argued for a close collaboration between Indology and the cultural turn and insisted on the significance of theories ('there is no way without theory'). Meanwhile a new route, that is, the 'emotional turn' has opened up, initiating new theoretical debates pioneered mainly by emotion historians. Scholars of Indian studies are now invited to contribute to an understanding of emotions in the South Asian world.[41]

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[38] Take for instance ritualised weeping and real weeping. Ritual weeping styles (welcome tears, tears of sorrow, etc.) are cultural forms that are socially learned and transmitted. Cf. Charles Darwin's insights that even the simulation of an emotion tends to arouse it in our mind (1872: 365).

[39] See, for instance, Vingerhoets & Bylsma (2016).

[40] Michaels (2004), particularly 469–471.

[41] It seems to me that there are good reasons for joining the theoretical debate and not to leave it to non-Indological researchers. For non-Indological works on pre-modern South Asia, see the work of emotions historian Reddy (2012), Chapter 4, "The Bhakti troubadour: Vaishnavism in twelfth-century Bengal and Orissa", which still lacks a review by an Indologist. See also the scholar of Classics, Kirby (2022: 240–256 on India).

TAMIL KEY TERMS FOR EMOTION THE TAMIL WAY

As I indicated above, if I use the meta-category 'emotion' as the term is employed in English academic writing, I do not suppose an easy conceptual-semantical equation with the Tamil terms I have identified below.[42]

The Tamil language limits itself historically to one, or respectively, two key terms: a generic term (*uṇarcci*)[43] and a technical one (*meyppāṭu*), the latter used in the Tamil theories of poetics.[44] The two terms do not designate a dualistic polarisation between emotion and rationality.[45] Both potentially have a wide number of meanings. There is no conceptual symmetry with the English term 'emotion'.[46]

Lexically, the generic term *uṇarcci* derived from the verb root *uṇar* and has a broad semantic range: 1. to be conscious of, know, understand; 2. to think, reflect, consider, 3. to examine, observe; 4. to experience as a sensation; 5. to realise; 6. to feel.[47]

The technical term *meyppāṭu*, in turn, is based on the theories of poetics and is broadly equivalent to Sanskrit *bhāva*, 'ordinary emotion',[48] in contrast to aesthetic emotion (Sanskrit: *rasa* or Tamil: *cuvai*). While there is consensus among Tamil scholars that the interpretation and thus the translation of *meyppāṭu* is difficult, it is nonetheless clear that the term emphasises the

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[42] See the section on methodological issues above.

[43] Srinivasan (1987); see also the *Tirukkuṟaḷ*, Chapter 79, v. 785.

[44] On the Tamil theories of poetics and the history of the technical term *meyppāṭu* (from the early Common Era to the 17th c.), see Schuler (2022). The theories of poetics considered emotions as an important part of literary knowledge.

[45] On emotion and rationality, see also Lynch (1990: 23).

[46] According to Dixon (2004), this is a quite late English term (having its predecessors in 'passion', 'affectus', 'sentiment'). — On the difficulty of defining emotion in Western contexts, as well as the lack of a consensus, see Dixon (2012), as well as Russell (2012: 337), and Mulligan & Scherer (2012). For the conceptual history in other European languages (e.g., German: *Begierde*, *Leidenschaft*/*Passion*, *Gemüt*/*Gemütsbewegung, Stimmung*, *Gefühl*, *Emotion*), see Frevert et al. (2014).

[47] *TL s.v. √uṇar*.

[48] I follow the Sanskritist Sheldon Pollock and translate Sanskrit *bhāva* as 'emotion'; see Pollock (2016). On the question of equivalence between Tamil *meyppāṭu* and Sanskrit *bhāva,* see Schuler (2022: 34). In contrast to the Sanskrit term, what in sum is called *meyppāṭu* does not introduce any functional terms, such as stable emotions (Sanskrit: *sthāyi-bhāva*), or transitory emotions (*vyabhicāri-bhāva*), etc.

physical basis (*mey*◦) of emotions.[49] In the Tamil theory of poetics, the chapter on emotions develops an eight- and a thirty-two-point list of emotions;[50] each emotion in the eight-point list corresponds to four causal factors that bring that emotion into being (for example, the emotion of *perumitam* [excellence or pride] arises from the four causes *kalvi, taṟukaṇ, pukaḻ, koṭai* [scholarship, bravery/fearlessness, fame, and generosity]).

The treatise treats poetic conventions, these being largely fixed stock formulated in stanzas (*sūtra*s). The tradition it presents was still valid in the seventeenth century in the *Ilakkaṇa Viḷakkam*.[51] Even though from 1600 to 1800 a number of new literary genres were introduced, in the contemporary emotion treatises new ideas were not added.[52] And although a type of treatise

[49] For medieval Tamil thinkers of the eleventh to thirteenth centuries, 'emotions' (*meyppāṭu*) are somatic, have a cause-object, involve a sense organ and a physiological change, and are registered by the mind (see Buddhist *Vīracōḻiyam* author Puttamittiraṉ and his commentator Peruntēvaṉār; also Iḷampūraṇar and Pērāciriyar). This conception of emotions endured until the seventeenth century. On a detailed history of Tamil theorisation of emotions, see Schuler (2022). — However, we do not know what the term *meyppāṭu* originally meant. Much hinges on the multiple meanings of *mey*, which range from 'body' to 'truth' or 'reality'. Lexicons such as the *VMTIP* note that the first occurrence of *meyppāṭu* is in the grammar *Tolkāppiyam* and translate it as 'emotion'. On the various translations of *meyppāṭu* by scholars of Tamil, see Schuler (2022: 33–34).

[50] See Vaittiyanāta Tēcikar's seventeenth-century *Ilakkaṇa Viḷakkam*, whose view is based on the authority of the *Tolkāppiyam, Poruḷatikāram* (*TP*), emotion chapter "Meyppāṭṭiyal": *TP*Ilam, 7: 247; 15: 256 (edition with the commentary by Iḷampūraṇar [hereafter *TP*Ilam]). This links the seventeenth-century author to the earliest extant Tamil tradition of theorising emotions in poetry, since Vaittiyanāta Tēcikar builds one-to-one on the emotion knowledge of the early Common Era. On Vaittiyanāta Tēcikar and his conservatism, see Schuler (2022: 27–30, 83–87). On the conservative views of Vaittiyanāta Tēcikar, see also Wilden (2014: 351).

[51] This Tamil pre-modern literary theory of emotions had, of course, its counterpart in practical and philosophical knowledge, as for example in Tamil *siddha* medicine, which is based on bodily humours, the causal role of emotions in disease and recovery, and the link between diet and emotion. (This medical science of the emotions that developed in the eleventh and twelfth centuries was just one part of a much broader investigation into a mental-somatology of the emotions). In contrast (also different from Christian doctrine, e.g., Tommaso d'Aquino/Thomas Aquinas), most schools of Indian philosophy (in Indian traditions, there are no formal distinctions made between religious texts and philosophical texts) do not give a central role to the emotions. It is rather taught that one should overcome emotions (e.g., Sāṃkhya-Yoga). Only when leading a devotional *bhakti* life are emotions welcomed; those emotions, however, that are directed towards god. — For various philosophical accounts of emotions, see Tuske (2021).

[52] With the exception that the theory of literary emotion spilled over to thinkers on religion (both Tamil and Sanskrit ones). For Tamil and the sixteenth-century *alaṇkāram*-grammar of figuration treatise of Vaiṣṇava *bhakti*, by the Teṉkalai Śrīvaiṣṇava and Vēḷāḷa merchant Tirukkurukaipperumāḷ Kavirāyar, who composed the examples himself (using the poetic

emerged again in the sixteenth century, the *pāṭṭiyal* handbook (describing and prescribing forms, types, genres, and subgenres of medieval and early modern literary texts, including the *ammāṉai* genre; see *Citamparap-pāṭṭiyal*), it did not include a contemporary systematic theoretical treatment on emotions or a thorough understanding of emotions based on time, place, or constituency.[53] Thus, the emotion canon of the seventeenth-century *Il-akkaṇa Viḷakkam* remains a theoretical reference for the present study. While the longevity of such a treatise might seem unusual to Europeans, this was not uncommon for India.[54] In pre-modern India, lack of change was not considered a defect or something negative.[55]

If we compare the pre-modern Indian list of emotion words (*meyppāṭu*s) (*TP*Ilam, 7: 247; 15: 256) with Western pre-modern lists of words describing emotions (Rosenwein 2008), it is striking that in the Tamil treatise, various functional aspects are pooled under the single umbrella term of *meyppāṭu*. Some of the listed emotions are very close to Western ones, as for example disgust, joy, affection, jealousy, and sloth.[56] But other words for emotions are closer to mental states (remembering, doubt, and dreaming).[57] Still others

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technique of triple entendre, including a lover, the Nammāḻvār saint [who lent his name Māṟaṉ to the treatise], and the god), see *Māṟaṉalaṅkāram*. See also Schuler (2022: 26–27 & 81–83). – For Sanskrit and the sixteenth-century theoretician of Bengali Vaiṣṇava devotional *bhakti*, Rūpa Gosvāmī, who adopted aesthetic emotion (*rasa*) conceptions of secular literature, see Pollock (2012: 431 & 432).

[53] *Pāṭṭiyal*s, 'literary genres'; nature/quality (◦*iyal*) of poetic compositions (*pāṭṭu*◦). I could not find any theoretical treatment in the chapters in the *Citamparappāṭṭiyal*, dating to the sixteenth century and encompassing *uṟuppiyal*, *ceyyuḷiyal*, *oḻipiyal*, *poruttaliyal* and *marapiyal*. On the list of *pāṭṭiyal*s and their dating, see Zvelebil (1995: 540). See also Kōpālaiyar's *Tamiḻ ilakkaṇap pērakarāti*, vol. 16, *poruḷ*: *pāṭṭiyal*, 12, 35 & 163.

[54] Although, of course, it can be argued that even if a tradition remained the same, it would be different because its context had altered, since the world is constantly changing.

[55] See Pollock (1985: 499). As for the Tamil theory of emotions, it was homogeneous over perhaps some fifteen hundred years, supported by an unbroken regulating commentary tradition. This is not documented here since it can be verified elsewhere; see Schuler (2022).

[56] *TP*Ilam, 7: 247; 15: 256: Tamil *iḷivaral* ('disgust'), *uvakai* ('joy'), *aṉpu* ('affection'), *poṟāmai* ('jealousy'), *maṭimai* ('sloth'). — On *acedia* and that 'sloth' has gone out of fashion in today's Western emotion vocabulary, but in Thomas Aquinas' medieval Europe, 'sloth' was seen as an emotion, even a deadly sin, see Frevert (2011); and Harré (1986: 11).

[57] *TP*Ilam, 15: 256: Tamil *niṉaital* ('remembering', 'recollecting'), *aiyam* ('doubt'), *kaṉavu* ('dreaming'). Cf. recent neuroscience research which has shown that emotions have an integrated functionality in our mental life. See Barrett & Satpute (2017).

are of a physiological nature (trembling, weeping, laughter, perspiration, and horripilation).[58]

IS HONOUR AN EMOTION? – AN ENQUIRY INTO TAMIL TREATISES, LEXICONS AND GLOSSARIES, MORAL CANONS, AND PROVERBS

The question of whether honour is an emotion has been raised at least since Birgitt Röttger-Rössler (2004 & 2009) and Ute Frevert (2015), who regard honour (in Indonesia and Europe, respectively) as a 'social emotion'. But does something that applies to Indonesia and Europe also apply to pre-modern India?

Māṉam (most commonly translated as 'honour') as a specific emotion is not found in the eight- and thirty-two point lists of *meyppāṭu*s ('emotions') in the Tamil theory of poetics.[59] Nonetheless, shame and loss of position are causal factors for the emotion of *aḻukai* ('weeping').[60] And further, fearless-ness/courage and fame are causal factors for the emotion of *perumitam* ('ex-cellence'/'pride').[61]

In Tamil lexicons and glossaries (Nikaṇṭu)[62] from the ninth to eighteenth centuries, the term *māṉam* is found. This word, which can have various meanings, is a Sanskrit loan word.[63] Among its manifold meanings are 'hon-our', 'sense of shame'/'disgrace', 'chastity'/'modesty', 'dignity', 'status', 'es-teem', and 'respect'. It was obviously redefined across time, with changing yet synonymous terms. While in the ninth century, its meaning was limited to esteem, respect, and a sense of shame, in the seventeenth/eighteenth century its meaning became more varied. Between the eleventh and six-teenth centuries, the Tamil honour term *māṉam* seems to have been lexically

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[58] *TP*Ilam, 7: 247; 15: 256: Tamil *naṭukkam* ('trembling'), *aḻukai* ('weeping', 'crying'), *nakai* ('laughter'), *viyarttal* ('perspiration'), *meymmayir cilirttal* ('horripilation').

[59] Nor are other terms.

[60] *TP*Ilam, 9: 249: Tamil *iḻivu* ('dishonour', 'shame'), *acai* ('loss of position'); 'causal factor' (Sanskrit: *vibhāva*, Tamil: *ētu*).

[61] *TP*Ilam, 13: 253: *taṟukaṇ* ('fearlessness'), *pukaḻ* ('fame').

[62] The source 'lexicon'—unlike the Western lexical tradition—has not proven very fruitful, nor are debates reflected in such purely additive lexica, which do not take a position one way or the other.

[63] Sanskrit *mānapamāna*, n., 'honour and dishonour', see Monier-Williams, *A Sanskṛit-English Dictionary*, 809 *s.v.*

dispensable (also other honour-related termini, such as *kauravam, matippu, perumai* and *mariyātai*, are not lexically documented). What is striking is the historical change (or new wording) of the synonymy/polysemy expression for *māṉam*: in the ninth century (*Tivākaram nikaṇṭu* glossary), the synonyms for the key honour term *māṉam* are *nāṇam* ('shyness' as a feminine quality; 'esteem'/'respect'; 'shame') and *nāṇ* ('sense of shame', 'modesty'). In contrast, in the seventeenth/eighteenth century (Nikaṇṭu-Lexica *Vaṭamalai, Arumporuḷ viḷakka, Potikai*) synonyms for *māṉam* are *veṭkam/ilaccai* ('sense of shame'/'shyness') and *perumai* ('greatness', 'dignity', 'excellence', 'grandeur', 'power', 'renown', 'pride'). Thus, in this later period is there not only a change in the term for 'shame' (from *nāṇam* to *veṭkam*), but also an expansion of the lexical semantics of *māṉam*, the key honour term. Again, in the *TL s. v.*, in addition to the above-mentioned terms of the seventeenth/eighteenth centuries, the lexical semantics of *māṉam* are primarily *kauravam* ('dignity'/'honour', 'pride'), *matippu* ('esteem', 'respect'), *kaṟpu* ('modesty'/'chastity'), *avamāṉam* ('disgrace').[64] The lemma *mariyātai* ('respect') that is commonly used today (for instance in the term *kulamariyātai*)—occasionally as a synonym for *māṉam*—and that is primarily associated with temple rights does not appear historically-lexically as linked to *māṉam* (see also *VMTIP*, vol. 5, 2002: 1911 *s. v.*).

The Tamil moral canon, which functions in an advice mode, explicitly refers to the field of tension between honour and humiliation, insult, disgrace, and the loss of honour. The high status of honour can also be seen from the fact that the across time most frequently cited moral/didactic text, the sixth-century *Tirukkuṟaḷ*, devotes an entire chapter to each of the termini *māṉam* ('honour') and *nāṇ* (sense of 'shame', 'modesty') (respectively, Chapters 97 and 102).[65] It also refers to the link between honour and corporeality, including the retreat into death: 'Honour is to be regarded as higher than life'.[66]

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[64] See also *VMTIP*, vol. 5 (2002: 1972) *s.v. māṉam*. Emeneau & Burrow (1962: 54, v. 297) reduce *māṉam* to the meaning 'shame, disgrace, ashamed'. For the Nikaṇṭu glossaries, see *Tamiḻ nikaṇṭukaḷ*.

[65] For the term *māṉam* in connection with 'valour' (of a king or an army), see *Tirukkuṟal*, Chapters 39, v. 384; 77, v. 766. On the author of the *Tirukkuṟaḷ*, Tiruvaḷḷuvar, as a collective persona, see Shulman (2016: 94).

[66] For this semantic reach, see *Tirukkuṟaḷ*, Chapter 97, v. 970: '*iḷivariṉ vālāta māṉam uṭaiyār / oḷi toḻutu ēttum ulaku*'; in the 'moral' (*nīti*) canon, see also the possibly ninth/tenth-century *Nalvaḻi* by the poetess Auvaiyār, v. 14: '[…] *māṉam aḻiyātu uyir viṭukai cāla uṟum*' (cited from

In collections of Tamil proverbs, the twin formation 'honour–shame' (*māṉamum nāṇum*) is often attested.[67] The advantage of didactic collections of sayings and proverbs is undoubtedly that unlike lexica, they reflect existing social voices and values, and depict many different points of view.

In conclusion, the current results indicate that there is no evidence for the assumption that honour in Tamil is an emotion *per se* in treatises, lexica, or proverb collections. Honour and specific emotions are considered inextricably linked with one another, but these emotions also arise outside the honour domain.

HONOUR AND ITS SETS OF EMOTIONS IN CONFLICT SETTINGS

I would now like to present two 'key narratives' that offer ample details about honour-group-based emotions in conflict situations, as well as about conflicting emotions. Key narratives and their transmission may spring from different emotions (e.g., pride), values, and needs. They are important parts of the collective biography and 'cultural memory' (Aleida Assmann 1999 & Jan Assmann 1992).[68] I will start with a historiographic narrative that I consider a key narrative of the Maṟava warrior elite, followed by a key narrative of the Vēḷāḷa agricultural elite. In the first narrative, it is significant that although the Brahmin commander Rāmayyaṉ/Rāmappayaṉ provides the title for the *Irāmayyaṉ ammāṉai*, the Maṟavar Cataikkaṉ Cētupati is its real protagonist and hero. The way the events are described shows that certain form of explanation is being endorsed.

Aṟavāṇaṉ 2011: 614, v. 1576); see also a first-millennium *Nālaṭiyār* poem: '[…] *māṉam talaivaruva ceypavō* […]' (cited from Kuḻantai 2015: 419, v. 928). This semantic reach is also emphasised in the Tamil proverb 'What is more valuable, honour or life?' (*māṉam peritō pirāṇaṉ peritō*) as found in Jensen (1993 [1897]: 177, v. 1617). Cf. also the eighteenth-century French political philosopher Montesquieu, who assumed 'that an integral part of honor is the conviction that death is preferable to a life devoid of honor' (cited from Speier 1952: 42).

[67] *Paḻamoḻi nāṉūṟu*, 16, v. 22: *māṉamum nāṇum*. This is an early collection of proverbs (ca. 700? CE), belonging to the *patiṉeṇkīḻkkaṇakku* (18 short classics). Another collection that has been consulted is Jensen's thematically ordered proverb collection of 1897.

[68] For Tamil narratives as part of a memory culture, see Schuler (2010).

Narrative 1 – Irāmayyaṉ (Irāmappaiyaṉ) ammāṉai[69]

It is the first half of the seventeenth century. The Brahmin commander[70] Rāmappayaṉ of the Telugu Nāyaka king of Madurai, Tirumalai Nāyaka, is undertaking a campaign against Cataikkaṉ Cētupati, the Maṟavar leader of a peripheral Tamil region who has challenged the established rules of the greater kings and refused to pay them tribute.[71]

On the one side is the Nāyaka commander, Rāmappayaṉ, a tiger-like, heroic, triumphant and proud Brahmin, sitting in a palanquin in the midst of his marching army:[72] 600 elephants, 700 camels, 6,000 horses,[73] and uncountable numbers of soldiers. To the sound of kettledrums, a thousand other heroes in palanquins are around him. Actors announce his awards and honours; poets praise him. The Brahmin commander's appearance makes the young women of Madurai, with their dishevelled hair, unable to control their emotions and they sigh heavily upon seeing him.[74]

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[69] *Irāmayyaṉ ammāṉai (Irāmappaiyaṉ ammāṉai)*, which is one of the numerous unpublished manuscripts in Tamil that was selected in 1949 by the Government Oriental Manuscripts Library (GOML), Madras/Chennai, to be published. My sincere thanks go to Dr G. John Samuel, Director of the Institute of Asian Studies, for having given me a copy of this text in December 2014. The *Irāmayyaṉ (Irāmappaiyaṉ) ammāṉai* (hereafter *IA*) belongs to the *ammāṉai* genre of the oral tradition and represents one of the historiographical modes of its time. For a list of the proverbs (*paḻamoḻi*) used in the ballad, see *IA*, 21. For a study of the text, see Kamaliah (1975) (underlining its historical value, 43).

[70] The Brahmin caste is, theoretically at least, not associated with warrior functions, but there are numerous examples of Brahmins training for military activities (also attested in the Indian epics). Interestingly, in the Telugu work *Āmukta-mālyada* ("The woman who gives a garland already worn"), written by the Vijayanagara emperor Krishnadevaraya (r. 1509–1529), in the *raja-nīti* section 4.207, the royal author advises making Brahmins commanders (Rao, Shulman & Subrahmanyam 2011: 90).

[71] Telugu Tirumalai Nāyaka, king of Madurai (r. 1623–1659), Tamil Caṭaikkaṉ Cētupati of Rāmanātapuram/Ramnad (r. 1635–1645). For the dating, see *Irāmayyaṉ (Irāmappaiyaṉ) ammāṉai*, preface, 22. For the genealogy of the Cētupati or Tēvar lineage, see Sewell (1884, vol. 2: 228–232). Since at least 1600/1604, Cētupatis held royal titles (Ramanatha Ayyar 1924: 7–18, "Copper-plate record of a Ramnad Cētupati: Kollam 945"). They also displayed marks of royalty, such as carrying royal paraphernalia or granting and receiving honours, and had temple-related privileges (donor and protector role of temples and their deities), with the deity as the source of honour. See the Rāmanātapuram palace murals in Nagaswamy (1987).

[72] *Irāmayyaṉ (Irāmappaiyaṉ) ammāṉai (IA)*, 20.8–10 (citing page and line).

[73] *IA*, 23.27–28: *āṉai aṟunūṟu āṟāyiram kutirai oṭṭakai eḻunūṟu*.

[74] *IA*, 21.1–11. Young women's (*maṅkai*) lovesick emotions are a literary convention found in scenes of a hero in a splendid procession (cf. theory of functional beauty). The term *ulā* is used for the Tamil poetic genre that describes the procession of a hero through the streets. For the *ulā* genre, see Shulman (2016: 156).

On the other side is the Maṟava leader, Cataikkaṉ Cētupati, who flies into a rage[75] when his spy tells him about the Brahmin's plans. Proud of his past combat victories, he proclaims: 'I wonder who is able to defeat me?'[76] This self-confidence and pride is underlined by a proverbial statement made by his son-in-law: 'Can a jackal jump on a tiger?'[77] Not hiding their emotions of pride and insolence, the two compose and send by messenger a letter on a palm-leaf showering verbal insults of utmost contempt on their Brahmin opponent:[78] 'My name is not Cataikkaṉ Cētupati Maṟavar and my weapon in hand is not a weapon if I do not tie a coconut to the Brahmin's tuft of hair, blind him, and drive him to wander in the forest.'[79] The Maṟavar's son-in-law then tops this insult with one of his own: 'I will remove your sacred Brahmin thread from your chest and replace it with a cow's neck-rope.'[80] Like oil poured into a burning fire, this inflames the anger of the Brahmin, who furiously responds to his enemy, contrary to all decency and etiquette, with a deliberate and well-placed counter-affront using sexualised insults (also written on palm-leaf): 'The womenfolk with Cataikkaṉ, we will cut their marriage badges and hang them criss-crossed at each gate of the palace.'[81] In their verbal combat, the rivals lack any of the basic attributes of cultured warriors.[82] Fearing accusations of cowardice and disgrace in the eyes of fellow kings come to the fore, in the disguise of rage: 'Will I pay tribute, allow my hands to be tied and stand in front of him? All the other kings will slander and ridicule me,'[83] says the Maṟavar Cētupati. And the Brahmin commander roars: 'Is only the Maṟavar a man? And all others in the world, are they

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[75] *IA*, 24.14, 16: *cīṟṟam* ('angry snort'), *ciṉam*.
[76] *IA*, 24.29: *eṉṉai melivikka yevarāl muṭiyumōṭā*.
[77] *IA*, 40.5: *puliyai naripāyntu pōkumō*.
[78] For the 'economy of insults' at Indian courts, see Subrahmanyam (2012: 78), who hints to 'the insult as a key factor in explaining political events and their logic [… and] the role that insults play'. On honour's central role in disputes, see also Kruijtzer (2009: 118 & 150).
[79] *IA*, 24.31–33: *kaṇṇaip piṭuṅkik kāṭṭilē yōṭṭiṭāmal / eṉpeyr tāṉ caṭaikkaṉō eṭuttatuvum āyutamō / piṉkuṭumi taṉṉil pērulaku tāṉaṟiya*. Repetition 38.1–3 written on palm-leaf (*ōlai*, 38.4).
[80] *IA*, 27.20–21: *mārpiliṭum pūṇūlpaṟittu māṭṭuvaṭam pōṭṭiṭuvēṉ*.
[81] *IA*, 38.18–20: *caṭakkaṉiṭa peṇcāti tāli taṉaiyaṟuttu / aramaṉai tōṟum ācāra vācalellām / erukku kurukku miṉiviraippē*. It is a threat making the women widows.
[82] Seemingly, this status tussle was how royal affairs in the Nāyaka-Maṟava milieu were conducted when geo-political rivalry was at stake.
[83] *IA*, 25.19–20: *kappamuṅ kaṭṭi kaikaṭṭi niṟpēṉō / iḷittu maṉṉavarkaḷ eṉṉai nintippārkaḷ.*

women?'[84] These elaborate insults serve their purpose; the scene is set for the battle. It lasts several days, with much honour and fame for successful military actions on the Maṟavas' side.

Winning or losing is a question of gaining honour or nothing but disgrace. This forces the Brahmin to use dubious tactics. It is assumed that he has resorted to sorcery, since the Maṟavar's son-in-law falls ill (*IA*, 75.28–31). In response, a counter-spell is sent, causing the Brahmin to get abscesses all over his body, leaving him in great pain (*IA*, 77.6–8). Intense scenes of conflicting battlefield emotions evolve: the Maṟavar Cēṭupati, himself wounded, feels guilty knowing that he did not do his full share when his son-in-law had a fever yet continued to fight. Shaken by an intimate encounter with the gravely ill son-in-law, he beats himself, falls down and weeps,[85] remembering with affection and pride his son-in-law sitting on a decorated elephant, broad-shouldered and decked with flower garlands (*IA*, 83.3–5).

The Brahmin, in turn, leaves no cruelty untied: He has the skin of two captured Maṟava warriors peeled off by a carpenter and their bare bones collected in a basket (*IA*, 55.23–31). He commands that the baskets with the husbands' mortal remains be put on the heads of their wives. The women are then paraded around the barracks, accompanied by drumming (*IA*, 56.3–5). Still not satisfied, he decides to ruin the wives' female honour, ordering some hirelings to molest them (*IA*, 56.10). The women escape this shame with dignity by committing suicide, proclaiming: 'Would a Maṟavar hold my hand after that?'[86] Ironically, the Brahmin cheerfully praises the two Maṟavar wives' fidelity and chastity, and directs his men to arrange a ceremonial burial for them.

When the Maṟavar's son-in-law dies (his wife immolating herself on her husband's funeral pyre)[87] and matters grew more complicated since the Brahmin had obtained support from the Portuguese,[88] the Maṟavar Cētupati

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[84] *IA*, 36.17–18: *maṟavaṉō āṇpiḷḷaikāṉ maṇṭalattiluḷḷōṟṟē peṇkaḷō*.

[85] *IA*, 82.22/83.8. We witness humanness and femininity rather than masculinity, the standard for military emotions.

[86] *IA*, 56.11: *maṟavaṉ piṭippāṉo*.

[87] *IA*, 82.20, 84.1.

[88] *IA,* 65.20, Tamil *paṟaṅki* (European, Franks [Portuguese]), Persian *farangī* (Franks). Kamaliah (1975: 38): 'Paraṅkis of Singhala'. For *firangis*, see Subrahmanyam (1993: 258 & 268); and Subrahmanyam (2005: 72). See also Deloche (2011: 62), where, referring to Satyanatha Aiyar (1924: 13 & 123), it is stated: 'Tirumala Nayak himself was on friendly terms with the

resigns himself to his fate and surrenders.[89] He demands to be treated honourably. But the Brahmin takes off the turban, shouting at him: 'Hey Caṭaikkaṉ, take off the coconut you have tied [to my tuft of hair]!' (*IA*, 85.18–19). He triumphs arrogantly, laughing cynically with malicious joy. The indomitable Maṟavar Cētupati disdains the unsoldierly conduct of his opponent, quickly making it clear, with no remorse but rather pride, that he would not be standing before him had his son-in-law still been alive (*IA*, 85.24–25). The Brahmin, determined to humiliate him, orders the Maṟavar to fall to his knees (IA, 85.28–31). In the end, the Brahmin is bathed in gold and the Maṟavar is imprisoned. But, as the ballad has it (switching here to formulae as found in legends), he is freed by the grace of god and the Madurai king, Tirumalai Nāyaka, gives him back his little kingdom and reputation (together with gifts).

Analysis of the Situated Maṟavar Warrior Honour Practice, and the Emotions (as well as Expressions) Involved in it

Generally, in courtly sources the king-warrior ethos is described as to 'not make himself subject to immediate outbursts of emotion, whether it be anger, surprise or pleasure [and] to keep an equanimity in his outward demeanour' (Ali 2007: 13). However, the warrior ethos of the Maṟavar Cataikkaṉ Cētupati is not that of a gentlemanly king-warrior, he is something quite different: he has a lack of humility, is proud in the face of his rivals, is not conscientious, and indulges in cruel words that cause emotional excitement. He is not interested in 'conquering' his senses, nor in defeating his anger. In the literature of the noble court society, this corresponds to the image of men from the frontier (i. e., hills, forests).[90] However, this portrayal is incomplete. Not only historically did the Maṟavas find their way to power (Fig. 1),[91] they

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Portuguese: he obtained their support during the Marava war against the Setupati and the Dutch, and even gave them the right to hold a fortress near Pamban with a Portuguese captain, 50 soldiers and 100 lascars'.

[89] *IA*, 84.16.

[90] For the image of hill and forest men in court literature as 'fierce, given to violent outburst, unrestrained and ignorant of the ways of self-cultivation [...] lack[ing] self-control', see Ali (2007: 15).

[91] See Nagaswamy (1987: 203): Through alliances with more powerful kings, the Cētupatis strengthened their regional small kingdom. The Cētupatis belonged to the traditional Maṟavar warriors of Tamil origin, 'who were appointed around 1600 to look after [... the Ramnad] tract and its sacred temple by the Nayak ruler of Madurai, under whom they served as feudatories.

also adopted the attributes of the noble court society (Figs. 2 and 3),[92] a process amply demonstrated by their adopting a refined, pleasure- and sensuous-based lifestyle (Fig. 4).[93]

But back to the historiographic narrative. It focuses on the wounded honour of the warrior elite, with the accompanying emotions of fear of disgrace/humiliation, arrogance, pride, vengefulness, and rage/hatred.[94] But it also emphasises fame, fearlessness, firmness, and female honour (sense of shame), as well as conflicting emotions such as guilt, despair, affection toward the kinsfolk.

There are plenty of examples of terms describing accompanying (bodily) expressions or emotional intensity. Bodily expressions of rage include 'angry snorting' (*cīṟṟam*), 'burning red eyes' (*kaṇ civantu cīṟutal*) and 'biting teeth' (*pal kaṭittal*),[95] as well as onomatopoetic words for 'shaking' (*kiṭukiṭeṉal*) and 'violent anger' (*cīṟucīṟeṉal*). Terms for intensity include 'uncontrollable fury' (*matattal*) and 'falling into a rage' (*cīṟiviḻutal*). Verbal expressions of arrogance and humiliation include 'shouting in triumph' (*ārppatittal*) and 'ridiculing' or 'mocking someone' (*pakaṭi paṇṇutal*). Bodily expressions of mourning and despair include 'beating oneself', 'falling' and 'weeping' (*aṭittu viḻuntu aḻutal*).[96] The emotions mentioned above work closely in tandem with outer

The first Setupati […] was Udaiyan Raghunatha Setupati. Around 1700, a powerful and energetic Setupati called Kilavan, who raised the principality into an independent kingdom, built a fortification […] erecting the palace […] which has survived to this day. Muthu Vijaya Raghunatha Setupati succeeded Kilavan in 1710'.—For Fig. 1, see also Nagaswamy (1987: 210, image 12).

[92] On the Cētupati rulers' clothing, see also Seastrand (2013: 350, image 117). Cf. Michell & Zebrowski (1999: 15, image 2).

[93] A life of bodily pleasures is advice for royalty as found in the sixteenth-century Telugu text by the Vijayanaga emperor, the *Āmukta-mālyada* 4.280 (also 271: 'at night […] he plays with women'; and 238), see Rao, Shulman & Subrahmanyam (2011: 106, 104 & 96).—For a Cētupati bird hunting scene, see Nagaswamy (1987: 209, image 10).

[94] On anger and honour, cf. Nussbaum (2013: 401, appendix), were she (summarising Chapter 3 of Nussbaum 2001) states that 'specific forms of anger are strongly shaped by social norms regarding what an insult is, what honor is'.

[95] These are ideal behaviours that make identification easy.

[96] The physiological emotion expression (Tamil *cattuvam*/*viṟal*) is considered an accompanying phenomenon, which is assigned a primary role by medieval commentators on literary and dramaturgical emotions (see *TP*Ilam., 15: 256, 26, 'misery'/'distress' [*iṭukkaṇ*] reflected by shrunken eyes [cf. Greek *enophthalmos*]; for dramaturgical emotion expressions, see scholiast Aṭiyārkku Nallār's commentary [closing decades of 12th c.] on the long narrative poem *Cilappatikāram*). See Schuler (2022).

signs of honour or dishonour, respectively. As for the honoured, outward signs include: a litter or palanquin, a large army, being surrounded by other heroes, panegyric, a 'bath of gold', gifts, insignia, or the grace of the goddess. For the dishonoured, they include: surrendering or going down on one's knees, chains or prison, women committing suicide to safeguarding their modesty (*kaṟpu*).

Narrative 2 – Icakkiyammaṉ (Nīli) katai[97]

A change of scenery and an entirely different honour-based emotional conflict: the key narrative of the Vēḷāḷa agricultural elite, a story that is culturally very well known (Fig. 5). In the search for a key narrative of the agricultural elite, many if not all roads lead to the *Story of Nīli/Icakki*. It is found in various genres, with echoes of its origins dating to as early as the first half of the seventh century. A relatively complete form of the narrative core with the name of the protagonist, however, is not found before the early fourteenth century. Then in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, the story of Nīli/Icakki emerged in full light.[98] This narrative, unlike the narrative 1 above, is available in an edition with a full translation (Schuler 2009: 67–217).

Here is a detailed account: A married Brahmin priest of Kāncipuram, in love with a temple *devadāsī*, is forced by his caste to take back his abandoned wife, who is now living with her parents.[99] While pretending to do so, he kills his pregnant wife, whom he believes has been unfaithful to him, causing him personal humiliation and disgrace: 'Can a woman become pregnant without a man?' In reality, it is a virginal self-impregnation to escape shame.

This Brahmin murderer then also dies, bitten by a snake. He is reborn as a merchant (Ceṭṭi). Although warned not to go north, one day the merchant

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[97] *Icakkiyammaṉ (Nīli) katai*. For a thorough study of this orally transmitted ballad, including history, edition, translation, and *Vēḷāḷa* contextualisation, see Schuler (2009).

[98] Many different genres—such as the *villuppāṭṭu* (bow song) tradition, *yaṭcakāṉam* tradition, *kāppiyam* (Sanskrit: *kāvya*) poetic tradition, medieval religious literature, *viṭutūtu* (messenger poetry), proverbs and puzzles—form a network around the Nīli story and use it for their own purposes, be it in the form of allusions or analogies. In short, there was a shared knowledge and cultural memory of the narrative's core. For an overview, see Schuler (2009, part 1, Chapter 3).

[99] On adultery and the desertion of wives in the Indian context, see Kohli (2000). The author, referring to a ruling by the Supreme Court, points out that abandonment signifies 'the intention to bring cohabitation permanently to an end' (406).

travels north through a forest, protected by a magic sword/protective margosa leaf.

In the forest, the murdered woman[100] from his past life chases him vengefully. She (Nīli/Icakki) dances and sings: 'This is fine! This is good! No matter where the blameworthy man goes, I shall take revenge on him.'[101] He tries to flee, but in vain. He screams, panic-stricken. His mind shrinks, his limbs tremble, his mouth dries up. He wails: 'Fate has come.'[102] 'Who will save my life?'[103] In the village, where seventy Vēḷāḷas live, she pretends to be the merchant's legitimate wife and lays claim to him as her husband, cunningly telling them in detail the merchant's family history. 'On the wedding day itself […] he would go next door to a stranger's house […] a *dāsī*. [Wouldn't my mind suffer?] […] O Elder brothers, render your judgement so that your name will be known and send us back happily! […] He is my husband, who married me by tying on the *tāli*. […] Have compassion (*aruḷ*)! Don't fail to protect my *kaṟpu* [female honour]!'[104]

Since no decision is made by sunset, the two are locked in the *ilaṅkam* building/Kālī temple in the belief that they are indeed a couple. Although the merchant is afraid: 'Now we'll become prey for her,'[105] the seventy agriculturalists promise their own lives as security for them: 'If one should fall a victim to the other out of vengeance, all of us together will repay with our lives for the blame.'[106] When the Vēḷāḷas return in the morning, they find the man covered in blood and dead.[107] They immediately regret that they felt sorry for the fake wife and did not trust the merchant, now dead. The seventy

[100] Now a hungry spirit (Tamil: *pēy,* Prakrit: *peya,* Sanskrit: *preta*, literally in German: *Dahingegangener*).
[101] *IK*, edition Schuler (2009: 100), lines 1102–3: *eṉ paḻi koḷvēṉ eṉṟu* (tr. 174, ll. 1102–3).
[102] *IK*, 101, lines 1117–8: *nīliyetirāka tōṉṟiṉāḷē. Maṉam pataṟi matikuṉṟi meynaṭuṅki. vāy ularntu. viti vantu eṉṟu*. (tr. 175, ll. 1117–8).
[103] *IK*, 118, line 1664: *yārō uyir kāṟppār* – read *kāppāṟṟutal* (tr. 193, l. 1664).
[104] *IK*, 121–123, ll. 1743: *kaliyāṇam ceyta aṉṟē*, 1747: *ayal vīṭṭil pōyiruntu*, 1750: *tāci*, [1624: *nōkātō eṉ maṉam*], 1759–60: *uṅkaḷ nāmam ellām kēḷppataṟkku niyāyam colli vaḻiyaṉuppum cantōcamāka aṇṇē*, 1785: *tāli keṭṭi koṇṭa kaṇavaṉivar*, 1822–3: *kāttu aruḷ* […] *kaṟpu* (lit. 'modesty'/'chasteness') *vaḻuvāmal*.
[105] *IK*, 128, line 1945: *iraiyākum nām iṉimēl* (tr. 202, l. 1945).
[106] *IK*, 128, line 1935: *oruvar paḻi oruvar koṉṟāl okka paḻi pōvōm* (tr. 201, l. 1935).
[107] *IK*, 134, lines 2216–7 (tr. 207, ll. 2216–7).

Vēḷāḷas are true to their word and commit suicide by their own hands/by jumping into the fire.[108]

Analysis of the Situated Landed Peasant Vēḷāḷa and Gendered Honour Practice, and the Emotions (as well as Expressions) Involved in it

In this narrative, a wronged woman is the avenging winner, thus restoring moral justice, while at the same time, the name of the righteous Vēḷāḷa agricultural elite is gloriously held up as representing high ethical ideals and values. In its outline of a crisis, the narrative offers a quite clear message of violence, vengeance, and fame. It highlights wounded female honour, with pent-up anger, pretence, vengefulness, and cruelty as accompanying emotions; further personal male honour and caste/community honour, with emotions of mistrust about the wife's fidelity and fear of disgrace/humiliation by one's peers. But it also emphasises compassion, guilt, firmness of mind and courage to commit suicide on the side of the righteous Vēḷāḷas, as well as conflicting emotions such as fickleness, doubt or trust, delusion, and helplessness.

There are numerous terms describing (bodily) expressions or emotional intensity. The bodily expressions of male fear and terror include 'shivering', 'trembling' (*pataṟutal*), 'retracting of the tip of the tongue' (*viṇ nākku iṟaṅkutal*),[109] 'paralysis'/'torpor' (*uṟaital*), 'perspiration' (*viyarttal*) and 'exhaustion' (*iḷaittal*). In contrast, the bodily expressions of female anger are 'cunningly' (*tantiramāka*) hidden or disguised. They include 'fake tears' (*nīlikkaṇṇīr*) and a graceful goose-like gait.[110] In this narrative, unlike the key narrative 1 (of the warrior elite), the outer signs of gendered honour stereotypes are inverted: to restore their honour, females kill and males commit suicide.

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108 *IK*, 135, line 2243: *paḻitārum paḻipōṟōm* (tr. 207, l. 2243).
109 A common expression in rural areas to describe a person on the brink of death.
110 *aṉṉam* ('goose').

ARE THERE GROUP-BASED FUNCTIONS OF HONOUR?

On the basis of the two key narratives and their settings (that either happened or, respectively, re-emerged during the period under discussion here),[111] I would answer the question of group-based functions of honour in the affirmative.[112] I argue that after the sixteenth century, alongside the function of honour of the agricultural elite, another function and style of honour began to be visible. This seems to have been a response to the historical experience of the economic, political, and literary changes occurring at that time.

With the rise of three little Tamil kingdoms, there came to the fore what I call the 'Maṟava warrior-honour-style', whose literary echo is found in various new genres describing situations and practices of honour. This style's visibility achieved its furthest reach when the Maṟava-Kaḷḷar kingdoms (Rāmanātapuram/Ramnad, Putukkōṭṭai/Pudukkottai, and Civakaṅkai/Sivaganga) became independent in the year 1700;[113] and its function might be interpreted as indicative of the social integration of marginalised social groups that was underway at the time.

Alongside this style, there was what I call the 'Vēḷāḷa agricultural elite-honour-style'. In contrast to the Maṟava warriors's, the honour function of the Vēḷāḷa agricultural elite, I argue, is to be seen as predominantly a means of asserting the community's social distinction as a virtue-based elite.

In conclusion, honour practices play a functional role, differing from social group to social group, and from situated context to situated context in which they arise. They evidently have a place in competitive settings (cf. Handfield 2019: 12; Maitner et al. 2022: 265).

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[111] As I indicated above (note 98), the key narrative of the landowning agricultural elite of the Vēḷāḷas was transmitted over time, but, interestingly, it appeared in many different genres (including the *katai*-ballad genre) during the period under discussion. There is also a relatively complete form of the core events dating to the fourteenth century.

[112] The honour-as-function perspective posits that honour is not arbitrary, but rather that if something has a function, one can use it as a purpose to facilitate goal fulfilment. Focusing on particular functions of honour seems a fruitful way to advance our understanding of group-based honour and its accompanying emotions.

[113] On the declaration around 1700 of the Maṟavar Cētupati Kilavan of Ramnad as an independent kingdom (from the Nāyakas), see Nagaswamy (1987: 203). Rao, Shulman & Subrahmanyam (1998: 266), on the basis of Kadhirvel (1977), suggest a slightly different picture, namely that the goal of independence 'was never truly attained'.

FINAL REMARKS

Between the sixteenth and eighteenth century, south India experienced a period of new caste dynamics, a new landscape of literary genres, and a new understanding of the voice of individual groups. This made it necessary to view the question of honour and its accompanying emotions from a new perspective. There is no doubt that in the sixteenth to eighteenth century, honour was accorded the same importance and priority as in the twelfth to fourteenth century. However, other social groups had come politically to the fore and were claiming their rights to honour, with a different emotional emphasis. Honour as such was constant, but those now being revered were not same. Also functions, situations and practices changed.

There was both female and male honour. While the boundaries are clearly demarcated in the treatises and moral canon, in the new literary genres of the sixteenth to eighteenth century, female honour in a conflict of honour was not necessarily accompanied by the emotions of shame (*nāṇ*) or modesty, *kaṟpu*—a superior female concept and a woman's deeper spiritual being (Schuler 2009: 198, note 334)—but could also give rise to emotions of vengefulness and pent-up anger. The same holds true for male honour. Men did not receive a hero stone only for martial valour; they could also receive one for their courage to commit suicide in order to be true to their word.[114]

In no way do I claim to have exhausted the potential readings of the two key narratives. They are still open to further enquiries. However, I hope to have shown that honour practice and the emotions linked to it must be understood in context; it should not be projected on times, places or social groups where these categories were not (or were differently) in play.[115] This is what makes the investigation on the basis of emotional communities

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[114] Faithfulness to oaths, if we follow Friedhelm Hardy (1988), falls under the Tamil concept of honour, which includes a person's 'self-control, dignified behaviour, firmness of mind, fulfilling commitments, living up to social expectations' (130). On the mentioned norm, see also Kailasapathy (1968: 87–93). Note that for the Tamil concept of honour, Hardy uses the Tamil term *nāṇ*, translating it as a 'sense of honour' (130). As indicated above (see "Is honour an emotion?"), as far as the glossaries are concerned, only the ninth-century *Tivākaram nikaṇṭu* attests the synonymity between the terms *māṉam* and *nāṇ*, respectively *nāṇam.* In the seventeenth-century Nikaṇṭus this is no longer the case since the term has changed.

[115] In the present case study, there are practices of honour, or what we would regard as honour, that appear in one honour-sensitive social group, but not in the other, and vice versa.

(Rosenwein) and emotional practices (Scheer) in particular settings as approaches and analytical tools for Indological historical research on honour and emotion such a fascinating field of investigation.

It is reasonable to posit that the early-modern situated honour practices examined in this study are associated with heroism (*vīram*) (cf. Handfield 2019: 15), courage and revenge that is expressed in a public display. The practice of honour predicts bodily action and has a central role in disputes and conflicts.[116] Being willing to die or kill rather than violate group-norms of honour, but also swearing an oath, are evidently constructed as matters of honour. Moreover, honour as it is understood in the narratives is connected to how one is related to others. It can be acquired but also lost.

Let us take stock: to access the past of situated honour-bound emotion practice in different groups, evidence from many sources and multiple genres must be taken into account. This is limited in the same way all histories are limited: by scarcity of sources, or the partiality or limitations of sources that reflect the practices of only a small section of society. However, in Indology research of this type is still in its infancy.

If I argue for a practice-related approach, this does not mean that conceptual history does not offer us helpful or even indispensable tools. If systematically worked out, both presentations—the conceptual-historical and the praxeological—can in the best case be placed in relation to each other. In this, deviations from the norm or rules can be made visible and multidimensionality recorded.

This study responds to today's scholarly debates and interests within the field of the history of emotion. My hope is that this kind of Indological study will foster mutual cross-cultural interest, or even collaborative research across disciplines.

[116] Especially in narratives, it is typical that they only describe events representing unusual or critical situations.

FIGURES

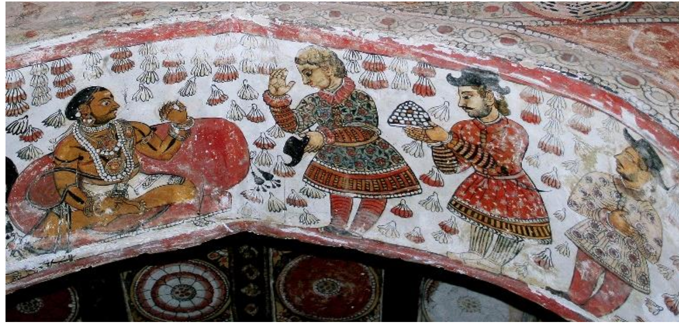

Fig. 1. The Cētupatis of Rāmanātapuram in power
Cētupati murals in the Rāmaliṅgavilāsam Palace in Ramnad/Rāmanātapuram (Tamilnadu). Europeans paying tribute to the Maṟava king, who wears his traditional costume, a short *dhoti*. (Courtesy: Virtual Academy, Chennai)

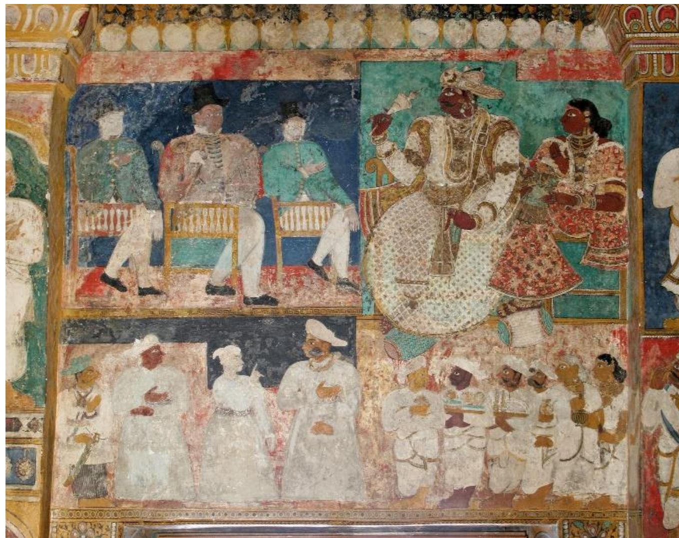

Fig. 2. Cētupati Maṟavar with turban conversing with Europeans
Cētupati Rāmaliṅgavilāsam Palace in Ramnad (Tamilnadu). The green background, signifying a royal portrait, is a convention in Deccani painting (Seastrand 2013: 195).
(Courtesy: Virtual Academy, Chennai)

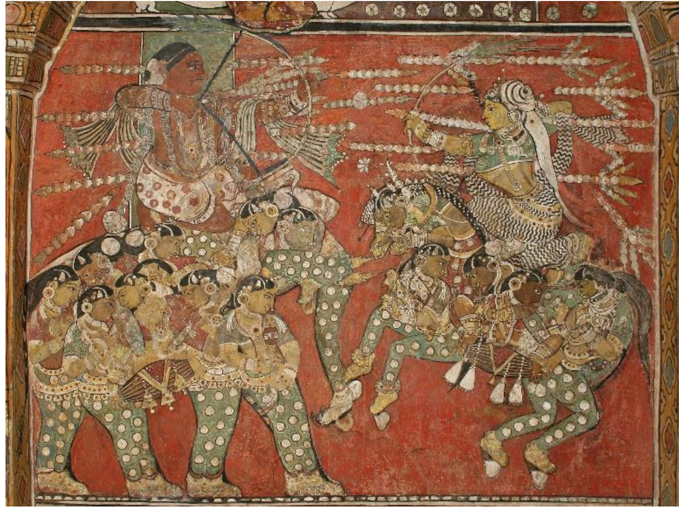

Fig. 3. Deccani art influence
Composite horses or elephants made up of several women (seven, nine or more) are a favourite theme of Deccani artists. A large wall panel in the Cētupati palace shows this type of elephant and horse formed of several women, on which are seated the king and queen sportively aiming flower arrows at each other, similar to Maṉmataṉ/Kāmaṉ and Rati. The hairstyle that is worked into a bun on the side and its covering are typical of Nāyaka costume (Seastrand 2013: 196, note 87). (Courtesy: Virtual Academy, Chennai)

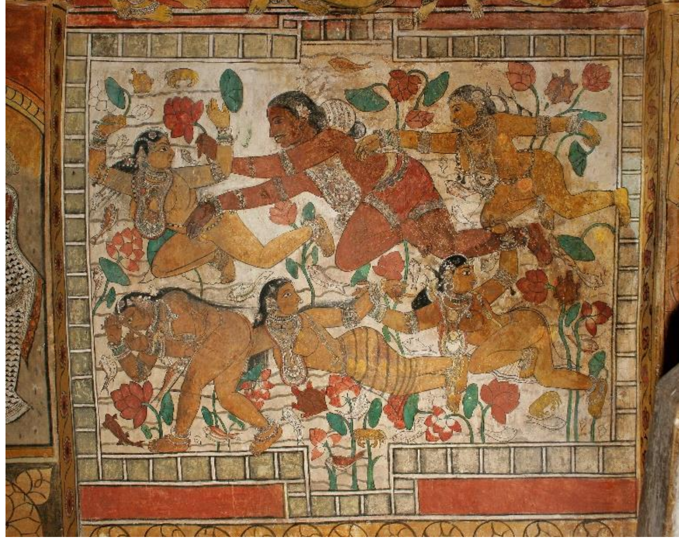

Fig. 4. Amorous sports of swimming (one of four causal factors of the emotion of joy) Cētupati mural in the Rāmaliṅgavilāsam Palace in Ramnad (Tamilnadu) in the upper-floor bed chamber. The king enjoying the amorous sport (*viḷaiyāṭṭu*) of swimming. (Courtesy: Virtual Academy, Chennai)

Fig. 5. The seventy Vēḷāḷas (agricultural elite), stone memorial at Tiruvālaṅkāṭu, Tamilnadu, (© Barbara Schuler)

ABBREVIATIONS

IA	*Irāmayyaṉ (Irāmappaiyaṉ) ammāṉai*
IK	*Icakkiyammaṉ (Nīli) katai*
TL	*Tamil Lexicon*
TPIḷam	*Tolkāppiyam, poruḷatikāram, meyppāṭṭiyal, Iḷampūraṇam*
TPPēr	*Tolkāppiyam, poruḷatikāram, meyppāṭṭiyal, Pērāciriyar urai.*
VMTIP	*Varalāṟṟu muṟait tamiḻ ilakkiyap pērakarāti/Glossary of historical Tamil literature (up to 1800 AD)*

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